

Timber show entertains at festival

By Stephanie Sisson
Oregon Daily Emerald

SPRINGFIELD — Crossing the bridge into Island Park at the Fourth Annual Springfield Filbert Festival Labor Day weekend was like stepping into an era long gone.

Mountain man exhibits, pony rides and a Wild West magic show were just a few of the events offered at the "Happy Trails"-themed festival.

Entertainers in pioneer dress roamed over the festival grounds, adding to the old-time, county fair atmosphere.

To top it all off, one of the biggest attractions was a Pro Circuit Timber Show. Professional lumberjack competitors from as far away as McCloud, Calif., participated in the Timber Sports events.

The competition, which was sanctioned by the American Lumberjack Association, included choker setting, log chopping, birling, log-rolling, ax-throwing and sawing.

One of the most popular local competitors in the timber events was Florence resident Matt Lentz, a Creswell native and the 1992 world champion lumberjack in the power hot saw event.

Lentz, who has participated in lumberjack competitions for more than 20 years, began his Timber Sports career in Creswell at the age of six. Now he wins as much as \$2,500 in a weekend of competition.

Lentz competed this year with



Roseburg's Tom Forrester chops his way through a log during the pro timber show during Springfield's Filbert Festival.

34 other Timber Sports participants for a \$5,000 purse. Last year, 32 lumberjacks competed at the Filbert Festival.

Other featured Timber Sports athletes this year were Rolin Eslinger of McCloud, Calif., the 1992 ESPN/Stihl series world champion; Rob Waibel of Tigard; his father Bob Waibel, also of Tigard; and brothers Tom and Mike Forrester of Roseburg.

The 1993 Filbert Festival Timber Sports featured three levels of competition: professional, which included Matt Lentz and other experienced competitors; intermediate, for loggers who have little experience in competition; and novice, which includes only those events with

a low level of risk for beginning competitors.

While adults watched the Timber Sports Competition, the kids at the Filbert Festival had their own activities center called "Kidspace."

Kidspace, which was for kids up to age 13, continued the Oregon Trails theme by offering games and crafts that pioneer kids might have done for fun on the Oregon Trail. The activities included making books and candles, making puppets and having puppet shows, quilting, spinning and weaving.

Other Kidspace activities offered were face-painting, basket-making, crocheting and painting a wagon train mural.

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