

Local

Sam Black goes to nationals in shooting competition



Submitted Photo.

This was the team representing Oregon at the 2015 National 4-H Shooting Sports Invitational, June 21-26, 2015, Grand Island, Nebraska. From Left to Right: Vern Johnson, Shotgun Coach, Clackamas Co., Don Mowers, Rifle Coach, Yamhill Co., Mike Knutz, Oregon Representative, Yamhill Co., Porter Johnson, Rifle, Benton Co., Jacob Johnson, Shotgun, Clackamas Co., Wyatt Hoy, Shotgun, Jackson Co., Sam Black, Shotgun, Baker Co., Jarrett Coleman, Rifle, Yamhill Co.

• 4H CLUB HAS ARCHERY, FIREARMS TALENT TO SPARE

BY GINA K. SWARTZ
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The Baker County Fair may be over, but for the kids involved in the Patriots 4H Club from Baker County, the shooting club is a year-round alliance.

Club leaders Toni Myers, Don Tholen and Jack Myers coach The Patriots in the disciplines of shotgun, rifle, and archery.

The Patriots have five who shoot shotgun, five shooting rifle and 13 who compete in archery.

This year for the Fair, rifle and shotgun were completed a few weeks beforehand, and the club shot archery during fair.

Hay bales were placed across the street for them to shoot at.

Sam Black placed overall intermediate champion at fair in shotgun.

The way the Patriots compete is by meeting monthly for tournaments with the results mailed in.

Then the top six in the county go to a State competition in Albany, lasting four days, where champions can then qualify to go to the Nationals held in Grand Island, Nebraska the following year in June.

The State competitors' scores must be at least 85% to qualify.

Each state sets their own qualifying standards. For example, Texas will only bring Senior shooters but Oregon did not want to be underrepresented at Nationals, so standards were different.

Oregon has gone to Nationals for only three years.

This June was the first year for shotgun, and local shooter Sam Black represented Baker County.

The Oregon team consisted of five youths from all over Oregon: Jacob Johnson, Shotgun, Clackamas Co., Wyatt Hoy, Shotgun, Jackson Co., Sam Black, Shotgun, Baker Co., Jarrett Coleman, Rifle, Yamhill Co. Porter Johnson, Rifle, Benton Co. Coaches were Vern Johnson, Shotgun Coach, Clackamas Co. and Don Mowers, Rifle Coach.

The coordinator of the team was Mike Knutz from McMinnville.

"Mike was great he coordinated all the kids from Oregon making sure they all got their T-shirts, made sure we all stayed at the same hotel, coordinated some dinners all together. Made sure everyone got to their events at the park okay. He did a great job," said Whitney Black, Sam's mom.

According to Whitney, who attended Nationals this past June 21-26, "It's definitely a higher level of competition than a lot of stuff through 4H."

She added, "Shooting 100/100 clays generally will not even guarantee first place, it will get you a shoot off for first place. The competition was just unreal."

Both Sam and Whitney said that some of the teams in the competition were very large, like Texas and Missouri.

Teams were divided up and Sam had three teammates whom he didn't know beforehand.

Sam said, "You get to meet a lot of new people from all over, not just from Oregon."

The kids were given pins to trade as an icebreaker to help open lines of communication, and get the kids talking to each other.

Each state brought its own pin—some making their own. South Dakota had their pin made from a bullet. There were several very clever pins.

Overall, 36 states were represented at the 20-year-old competition.

Before heading to nationals, Sam did a lot of practicing. He was not able to practice with teammates due to location, but Dan Mitchell from Richland who was on the Navy skeet team and at one time owned his own shooting park teamed up to practice with Sam even lending him some equipment to use when he was not able to get together.

Sam travelled a lot to practice for the events he was participating in, skeet, trap and 5 stand.

"People were so helpful," said Sam who competed in those three shotgun events. "The first day you would shoot 100

practice rounds then you do your event and follow up shooting another 100 practice rounds for the next day. So throughout the week, I shot for three events and I shot 100 rounds per event and another 300 for practice. So all total, I shot about 600 rounds in three days."

Whitney said with a smile, "He got a sore shoulder."

In the end, Sam said, "For sporting clays and skeet I placed in the lower half but in trap I placed in the upper 50%, higher in the ranking, so I did pretty good."

Sam feels shooting sports are growing, in the last four years of his attending just the State competitions the number of participants has gotten higher every year.

He said, "It is a really good program because it teaches safety, gets you comfortable around guns. It is really good to be safe with guns because then you can keep other people safe. Like, say, a friend is being dumb with a gun you can say, 'Hey, you're not being safe, cut that out' and tell them what they are doing wrong and correct that."

According to Whitney at the Nationals in Nebraska there were over 600 shooters with guns.

She said, "Yet you felt great. Everyone was super friendly. I never saw one instance of anyone mishandling anything. They keep everything open until they stepped up to shoot and it was all very safe."

"You just felt perfectly safe and confident that these kids are always safe.

They carry around the guns and they are always open—it was like any other sport carrying their equipment, like a bag of golf clubs, perfectly safe.

"The guns are broken open. They never load until they are right on the line to shoot. Even if the guns were broken open, if someone were to swing it around they'd be done. Safety is that important to them."

"Safety is drilled into them so now even at home when Sam cleans his gun if he walks from one point to another, his firearm is broken open. Programs like

this need to grow. It takes a lot of fear away from the parents, too.

"If people haven't been around guns, they can be afraid if them because of all the media hype and unfamiliarity. When you see your kids being responsible and completely in control of a sporting tool, it takes all the mystery out of it."

Sam added, "A lot of people don't see that side of it. They just see the criminals shooting people and decide all guns are bad. But it's a fun sport that is completely controlled and safe."

4H also has specific rules about what to call the firearms. Calling guns weapons is not allowed.

"That implies you are going to hurt someone with them, so we aren't allowed to use that term in referring to our firearms," Whitney added. "I think that if every kid did a program like this in school, there would be hardly any accidental shootings. I mean an accident is an accident, so there are always going to be some, but I'm talking about the ones we call accidental that could have been prevented with some education—like by kids picking up guns and not knowing anything about them like how they work, proper cleaning stuff like that. Those accidents would go away."

Although Sam did not qualify at State to go to Nationals next year, he says it's okay because "even if I would have, I couldn't go. Once you've gone to Nationals in an event you can never go in that event again. It's a one-time thing."

One, however, may be eligible in another event. "It does give others an opportunity so it's not the same kids going every year," he said.

But Whitney said, "Now that we have seen a national competition, I'm like, if we could go another year we could get this down. It is good, though, because you're going to get all different kinds of kids. We saw the level of competition with our own eyes. Some standouts were Texas, Missouri and Minnesota."

18-year-old dies in crash



Photo courtesy of OSP.

Alcohol is thought to have been a factor in this crash, which took one life on Sunday.

Leonard John Radinovich, 18, from John Day, died in a single vehicle crash on highway 26 near milepost (MP) 152 in Grant County.

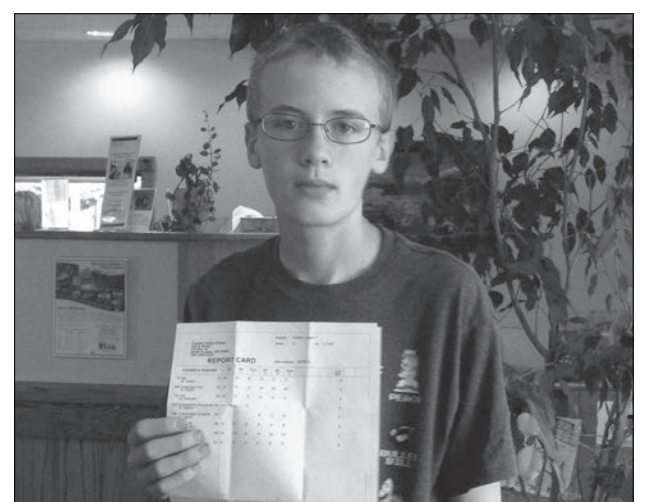
On Sunday, August 16, 2015, at approximately 5:12 a.m., a silver, Toyota 4-Runner, was traveling eastbound on highway 26 near MP 152 when Radinovich lost control of the vehicle. The vehicle veered off the highway, rolled, and came to rest in a near-by field.

Radinovich was not restrained by a seatbelt and was ejected from the vehicle. He was pronounced deceased at the scene of the crash. The passenger, a 15 year old juvenile, was properly restrained and not injured.

Alcohol is being investigated as the contributing factor of the crash. Trooper Weaver is the lead investigator.

OSP was assisted at the scene by Grant County Sheriff's Office, John Day Police Department, and the Oregon Department of Transportation.

Community Bank pays \$12K for good grades



Submitted Photos.

Top: Logan Perkins. Bottom: Kaidan Dalke. Both of Baker City.

The fifth year of Community Bank's Earn While You Learn Program has set an all-time high in pay-outs to student-customers for their academic success. For the 2015 pay out period, 576 students in the Eastern Oregon and Southeast Washington area cashed in on their good grades. Community Bank paid them a total of \$12,581!

Since the bank's program began in 2011 the amount of payouts has steadily increased. In the first year of the Bank's Earn While You Learn Program just four years ago, 190 students were paid \$3895. A total of \$6975 was paid to over 275 student-customers in 2012. A big increase occurred the following year with \$11,173 paid out in 2013; \$11,939 to 531 students in 2014. This brings the program's grand total of academic award money to \$46,563.

In Baker City, 23 students participated, earning a total of \$445.

The program was designed to encourage students in their academic success by awarding them for good grades. During the months of June and July, all Community Bank branches accepted end-of-the-year report cards from students in grades 1st through 12th. For every top grade in a main school subject (A-, A, A+ for middle and high school, and S+, E, etc. for grade school) that appeared on the report card, Community Bank deposited \$1 into their Community Bank Youth Savings Account.

The Earn While You Learn Program is an annual reward of \$1 per top grade, up to \$50 annually per student, with payments given for the whole school year in June and July.