



for kids  
by kids

# Keizer's own Speed Racer

By **LAUREN MURPHY**  
*Of No Adults Allowed*

To say that 13-year-old Ryan Bese has a need for speed would be an understatement. Not only is Ryan a junior dragracer, but he also runs for cross country and track at Whiteaker Middle School. "I like to go fast," he said.

For the past four years Ryan has been a jr. drag racer at the Woodburn Dragstrip. Ryan is in the eighth grade and currently the only jr. racer from Keizer.

He enjoys having his friends come watch him race, "it's fun because they can experience what it's like," Ryan said.

Even though you have to be eight years old to be a junior racer, Ryan started way before that. "My husband worked on a professional race car team before, so that's how he (Ryan) got started," said Chris Bese, Ryan's mom, "I would drag him out to the races. But he was a baby so he has no recollection of it whatsoever."

That said, when the time came to start racing, Ryan was more than a little hesitant to start driving, "When he turned 8, we encouraged him and he said, 'no.' He wouldn't even sit in the car," Chris said.

With the help of some of his friends from the racetrack he eventually got into his first car, "They put him in the car and literally pushed him down the race track," she said.

"I just didn't want to do it because I was worried about crashing," Ryan said. That fear has been pushed aside now because he's been doing it for such a long time. In his four years of racing the closest he's come to crashing was clipping a wall.

There are three categories at the Woodburn Dragstrip, Jr. Storm, Jr. Thunder and Jr. Lighting. The Jr. Storm category is for ages 6-10, Jr. Thunder is for ages 10-14 and Jr. Lighting is 13-17. Ryan is currently transitioning from Jr. Thunder to Jr. Lighting.

In 2014 (his first year), he won the Rookie of the Year Award, and he's been winning ever since. In 2015, he placed second in the World of Speed for Jr. Storm, the following year he placed second in the World of Speed for Jr. Thunder. He was the Fall ET Jr. Thunder Champion in 2016.

He won the 2018 NHRA ET finals Division 6 Jr. Thunder Championship award in the summer series. He then switched over to Jr. Lighting for the fall series and won



At 13, Whiteaker Middle School student Ryan Bese is rapidly filling up his trophy case with wins on the dragstrip.

each other, they cheer each other on. Sportsmanship is big," Chris said.

That's not all, Ryan was also voted the most improved racer this year by his peers at the Woodburn Dragstrip in 2018. Ryan has competed on the ET Finals Woodburn Team for four years in a row, first in Boise, then Canada, Woodburn and Boise again. Even though he's been on the finals team four years in a row, this was his first year winning.

He said his reason

he keeps going back is, "the sweet feeling of winning."

His biggest supporters have been his parents, which is no surprise considering they literally pushed him to do it. Although some parents would be concerned about safety, the Bese family has total faith in their safety gear. "I actually feel he's safer in his car than in mine," Chris said.

His sponsors are, Wayne Parker's Auto Electric, Taylor Motorsports Products and Westfield Motorsports.

the 2018 World of Speed Fall ET Jr. Lightening Champion. The final race became known as, "the Ryan show." Ryan Dick, his competitor and best friend, was racing against him for the championship. Even though Dick lost, the boys are still close friends. "They're good kids, they support

jokeBOX

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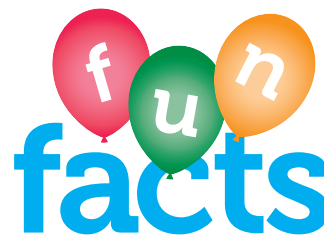
It was in-tents

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