

PARENTS TALK BACK

Soccer star keeps goal in her sights

John Garvilla recognized his daughter’s natural athletic talent when she was 5 years old.

Garvilla, who lives in the St. Louis area, is a former college soccer coach and athletic director, so he spotted her abilities early. She was fast, coordinated and loved playing ball.

Samantha Garvilla, now 18, started playing soccer and basketball competitively when she was 8 or 9. She excelled at both, and her father could see her playing as a high-level athlete in the future.

She was 11 when she tore her right ACL. Her father told her she had to choose between basketball and soccer; there was no way she could play both, having suffered this injury. He even tried to push her toward golf.

“I have an artificial knee,” he said. “I didn’t want my daughter to walk like me.”

Samantha chose soccer, and played year-round. She trained hard and stood out on the field.

She was 12 when she tore her ACL again. After the rehab, she was undeterred. She refused to quit the sport she loved.

During her freshman year of high school, she was recruited by Darlington School in Rome, Georgia, to attend the boarding school on a soccer scholarship. She was training four to six hours a day at school, and she loved it.

“It was the best thing that ever happened to me,” she said.

The team was getting ready for regionals the beginning of her sophomore year. She was playing in a scrimmage when she went in hard for a tackle.

“Right away, I knew what it was,” she said. “By the third one, you know.”

It was the ACL in her left knee this time. The surgeon told her that there was no way she could go back onto the field.

“Your knees are not going to hold up,” he told her. “You’re not going to last.” It wasn’t just the three torn ACLs: She has also suffered 12 meniscus tears and undergone 10 surgeries.

She came back to St. Louis to finish her sophomore year. She was devastated to leave Darlington, but still refused to leave the game entirely.

The beginning of her junior year, she decided she wanted to play goalie, a position less prone to the injuries she’s had. In a young athlete’s career, this was a late time to switch positions, but she told her parents she was committed to playing.

“There are certain things you can’t teach,” her father said. “Speed, height, athleticism. She has a teachable spirit. She loves the game.”

He made sure she had access to the best trainers in the country. She didn’t have the experience playing goalkeeper in as many games as her peers, but she was fearless. Her family started getting contacts from Division 2 colleges. They sent her highlight reel to more places, and then the offers from Division 1 schools started coming in.

“What a lot of people saw was raw talent,” John said.

They took their daughter to visit some of the colleges around the country that were recruiting her. They were still considering the offers when Samantha asked her father to take her to the doctor.

She had bruised her back in practice, and her entire abdomen was hurting. The doctor asked if she had been feeling bloated, and she said she had.

She wasn’t injured, the doctor explained after she ran a test.

Samantha was pregnant.

She called her mother, Kim, hysterical. Kim picked her up, and they walked out the back door while the doctor broke the news to John.

When she saw her father, she broke down and said, “Daddy, people are going to point at me and say, ‘That’s the girl who ruined her life.’”

John told her that people may point, but that God had a plan for her.

“You’re going to get through this,” he said. “We’re going to count this baby as a blessing.”

Kim said she went through all the stages of grief about the loss of what her daughter’s future could have been. She suggested considering adoption, but Samantha said she wanted to keep the baby.

Her parents are still raising a 15-year-old and two 13-year-old sons, so they told her this child would be her responsibility, although they would support her and help her as much as they could.

Samantha cried a lot. She told her boyfriend, who was shocked but supportive. She couldn’t accept the idea of giving up her baby.

“I had the ability to raise him. I have the support of my family. There was no reason (to give him up), except it would have been easier for me,” she said.

She delivered her son, Braxton, on Feb. 11.

Shortly after the delivery, Samantha told her mother that it was good that the baby came a few days early: This way, she’d have six weeks off and be back in time for practices by spring break. She would be ready to play when the season starts in her senior year.

After graduating, she will play soccer on a scholarship at St. Charles Community College. She plans to use her financial aid to pay for daycare.

“The dream has never wavered,” Kim said.

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AISHA SULTAN
Parents talk back

OUT OF THE VAULT

Main Street Cowboys exemplify Round-Up spirit

Pendleton has lost its Round-Up spirit,” Mayor-elect Morris Temple told the Junior Chamber of Commerce June 14, 1950, in a plea to return to the spirited community celebrations of the old days and away from just a commercial show. He asked the Jaycees and the senior Chamber of Commerce for their opinions and support on bringing a community show to downtown Pendleton during the Round-Up.

Temple felt that the Round-Up had become too commercialized, and that community support was lacking. Happy Canyon had changed from its Wild West show beginnings to the current pageant, and moved away from Main Street (to property now housing Western Auto and Baxter Auto Parts at Southwest Fourth and Emigrant), so out-of-town visitors had fewer reasons to visit downtown merchants after the rodeo (except to patronize local bars). He proposed bringing back the original idea of Happy Canyon: a place where visitors could go after the rodeo to get a taste of the Old West town that Pendleton used to be and kick up their heels a little with free, family-friendly entertainment.

The original idea, according to current Main Street Cowboys president Don Harsch, probably started in 1949 with conversations between Temple, Monk Carden, Dan Bell and Ray Gilham. In 1950, a group of Pendleton businessmen headed by Temple and including Gilham, Jack Fuquay, Willard Ormsby, C.W. (Swede) Fox, Dr. R.L. Whitford, Tex Bolton, Willard Crawford, William E. Hanzen, Bud Kalley, Del Brown and Lloyd Crawford made a plan to close down Main Street between



RENEE STRUTHERS
Out of the vault

the Bowman Hotel and the Pendleton Hotel to automobiles from the end of the Westward Ho! parade on Friday, Aug. 24 through Sunday, Aug. 26, allowing only horses or horse-drawn vehicles to operate. Burros, oxen, pack strings and other early transportation exhibits were to be on display, blacksmithing and other early settler skills would be demonstrated, and a German band would entertain the crowd both before the Westward Ho! parade and on Saturday morning. Stores decorated with slab-wood false fronts and staffed with store owners dressed in western garb from the early 1900s would display merchandise from the era. On Friday and Saturday nights a block-long square dance was planned in the 300 block of Main Street, an old-fashioned medicine show would set up in the 200 block with a barker, spieler, magician, western music and dancing girls, and a wide variety of musical entertainment with everything from a barbershop quartet to country crooners and accordion squeezers would serenade onlookers. The Main Street show would close by 10:30 p.m. to accommodate those who wanted to attend the Happy Canyon pageant.

Harsch provided copies of notes from the first year’s show, including a list of performers, a proposed uniform for the Main Streeters (western pants, a straw or cowboy hat and a “loud shirt”), a detailed accounting of the hours worked to set up and tear down the show (65.5 hours for the three-day show, plus two days of clean-up, paid at \$1.75 per hour), and a balance sheet that shows the group actually came out ahead the first year, with a profit of \$226.54. The show was a rousing success, and the Main Street Cowboys were off and running. They filed their incorporation papers with the state of Oregon and set about creating “The Greatest Free Show in the West.”

In the beginning, the Main Street show

was held on Friday and Saturday only, but gradually the time frame was expanded along with the offerings. For many years a mock shootout was staged downtown, complete with outlaws, fast-draw artists and “victims” falling out of windows, but this was eventually phased out. Commercial vendors have since ousted the pioneer displays, but the musical entertainment continues with stages on every block and music for every taste. And the group’s eye-catching chartreuse-and-purple shirts mean friendly assistance and a welcoming smile are a cinch to find, even in Round-Up crowds.

The group also provides decorations for the downtown area, including flags, signs and banners, and they sponsor the annual Dress-Up Parade that kicks off Round-Up week each year. And the signature benches painted in Main Streeter colors grace many a community event.

The Main Streeters for many years also served as a welcoming committee for Pendleton. Celebrities, politicians and other dignitaries stepping off a plane at the Pendleton airport could be suddenly surrounded by a group of whooping cowboys on horseback, guns blazing (with blanks), to be “arrested” for various infractions and hauled away to whatever official business they were about. While this function now rests with city government and the Chamber of Commerce ambassadors (sans gunfire), Main Streeters and their female counterparts, the Side Saddlers, continue to serve as ambassadors for the Round-Up City, taking their signature callopie to parades and events across the Northwest to promote Pendleton and its iconic rodeo.

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Renee Struthers is the Community Records Editor for the East Oregonian. See the complete collection of Out of the Vault columns at eovault.blogspot.com

CJ the German shorthaired pointer wins Westminster best in show

NEW YORK (AP) — Now appointed America’s top dog — CJ, the German shorthaired pointer.

CJ won best in show at the 140th Westminster Kennel Club on Tuesday night, beating a couple of top favorites at a nearly packed Madison Square Garden.

There was a moment of drama, too.

As judge Dr. Richard Meen from Canada began to announce his choice, German shepherd handler Kent Boyles took a step toward the prized silver bowl. He heard “German” and the “sh” to start the second word, but that was as far as he got.

The 3-year-old CJ bested 2,751 other entries in 199 breeds and varieties to win the nation’s most prestigious dog competition.

“It’s exactly like what I imagined,” co-owner, breeder, and handler Valerie Nunes-Atkinson said.

CJ certainly came from championship stock. His grandmother, Carlee, was one of two previous German shorthaired pointers to win Westminster, taking the title in 2005.

“He’s never done anything wrong,” Nunes-Atkinson said.

A borzoi called Lucy finished second.

CJ also topped a Skye terrier, German shepherd, bulldog, shih tzu and Samoyed. There is no prize money for the win, but there are valuable breeding rights in the near future and a legacy in dogdom forever.

Charlie the Skye terrier finished second at Westminster last year to Miss P the beagle. Rumor the German shepherd was ranked as the No. 1 show dog in the country last year and had won 101 times.

“Vegas odds were not with us,” Nunes-Atkinson said.

As Meen studied each of the final seven dogs, he held up his hands like a picture frame to focus on their expression.

CJ “took me back into the past for what they were bred to do,” Meen said. “He floated around the ring beautifully.”



AP Photo/Seth Wenig
Valerie Nunes-Atkinson and CJ,, a German shorthaired pointer, pose for photographers after CJ won best in show at the140th Westminster Kennel Club dog show Feb. 16 at Madison Square Garden in New York.



AP Photo/Mary Altaffer
Molly, a 13-inch Beagle from Bangkok, Thailand, is shown in the ring during the Hound group competition during the 140th Westminster Kennel Club dog show Feb. 15 at Madison Square Garden in New York.



AP Photo/Seth Wenig
Dario, a Leonberger, tries to get at the treats in Sam Mammano's pocket during the working group competition.

The fan favorite earlier in the night was a large Leonberger, who wanted a treat and kept gnawing at his handler’s suit pocket all the way around the ring.

This was the 18th overall best in show win for CJ, whose initials stand for his path from the West Coast — quite a California Journey, it was, from the city of Temecula.

Earlier in the day, Nunes-Atkinson explained what made CJ so special.

“He has that extra sparkle,” she said. “He’s an old soul.”

Nunes-Atkinson became the first owner, breeder and handler to win Westminster since 1983.

CJ definitely has his rituals. Before romping around the ring, he usually bows down and sneezes.

PETA protest scrapped after ‘greased pig’ dust-up

NEWPORT, N.H. (AP) — An international animal advocacy group launched a protest against a New Hampshire winter carnival event billed as a “Greased Pig on Ice,” but withdrew it after learning there’s no pig in the act — just a man on skates in a pig costume with dollar bills tied to his tail.

Steve Smith, an organizer of the 100th Newport Winter Carnival, said People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, or PETA, launched its alert last week despite his reassurances that no pigs would be harmed during the Saturday event. Smith said he received about 100 emails from concerned

animal lovers.

PETA spokeswoman Daphna Nachmi-novitch said Smith did not clarify what the event would entail. She said the updated information is excellent news for the pigs.

Smith said Thursday that he assured a PETA investigator in a Feb. 5 email that no animals would be harmed during the event. The group never challenged or questioned him about it before writing a detailed email alert, he said. It talked about “subjecting these highly sensitive animals to such a chaotic and violent ordeal rife with screaming participants.” It also mentioned capturing the pigs and stuffing them into barrels.

“How can they know what we’re doing

if they never even bothered to ask what we’re doing?” Smith said. “If they just asked, ‘What are your plans?’ I would have told them.”

Smith, also general manager of WCNL radio in Newport, said the carnival featured greased pig events in the 1930s and continued off and on until the 1980s.

The topic of adding a greased pig event to this year’s carnival did come up during a planning meeting last fall when organizers were brainstorming about possible past events that could be incorporated into the centennial. However, Chamber of Commerce president and carnival doyen Ella Casey was adamant that no pigs be used.

ODDS & ENDS