

RICHARDSON OREGON ALL-STAR SERIES

Beers, Field help North beat South twice

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

CORVALLIS — Pendleton's Ty Beers and Kyle Field had a hand during the weekend in helping the North beat the South in a pair of games in the Richardson Oregon All-Star Series.

The series is for 6A and 5A high school seniors.

Saturday, June 19, the North beat the South 14-4 at Oregon State University's Goss Stadium.

Beers, who played first base, drove in the North's first run with an RBI single in the top of second inning.

The South tied the score in the bottom of the inning before the North slowly pulled away.

The North led 5-1 through six innings, then added four runs in the top of the seventh and five in the eighth. As a team, it pounded out 19 hits and committed just one error.

Kyle Field got two at-bats in the game, but struck out twice.

In the second game June 20, the North jumped out to a 5-1 lead after three innings en route to an 8-5 victory.

In two at-bats, Beers reached once on an error.

Field pitched two innings for the North, allowing three runs on three hits. He struck out one and walked one.

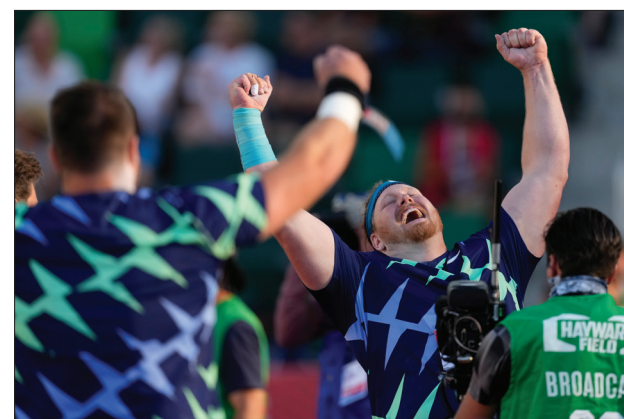
Beers and Field helped the Bucks go undefeated in Intermountain Conference play, win the IMC district title and finish the season 15-3.

Field was the IMC Pitcher of the Year, while Beers was selected as a first-team first baseman.

Field threw 27½ innings over six starts, finishing with a 4-0 record. He had an ERA of 2.56, while striking out 36 and walked just four. He has signed to pitch at Community Colleges of Spokane.



Bob Field/Contributed Photo
Pendleton's Ty Beers, left, and Kyle Fields played Saturday and Sunday, June 19-20, 2021, for the North team in the Richardson Oregon All-Star Series in Corvallis.



Charlie Riedel/Associated Press

Ryan Crouser celebrates after setting a world record during the finals of men's shot put at the U.S. Olympic Track and Field Trials Friday, June 18, 2021, in Eugene.

Ryan Crouser breaks 31-year-old shot put record

Portland native's heave of 76 feet, 8 1/4 inches also qualifies him for the Tokyo Games

By PAT GRAHAM
Associated Press

EUGENE — The record was older than he is.

When Ryan Crouser broke it, "it felt like it was a huge weight lifted."

The 28-year-old who built a training ring at his home in Arkansas to stay on point during the coronavirus pandemic shattered a shot put world record Fri, June 18, night that was set 2 1/2 years before he was born.

On Day 1 of U.S. Olympic Trials, he heaved the massive medal sphere 76 feet, 8 1/4 inches to put his name in the record book and punch his ticket for Tokyo, where he'll have a chance to defend his Olympic title next month.

Just like he always imagined.

"There were so many times that I was throwing a 6-pound shot out behind the middle school, throwing by myself, and let it go and put my hands over my head and be like, 'Oh, new world record!'" Crouser said. "I knew it's been a possibility or potential to do it since 2017."

Virtually everyone in this tightly knit group of throwers knew the record of 75-10 1/4 held by Randy Barnes since May 20, 1990, was in jeopardy. Earlier this year, Crouser topped Barnes' indoor record. Earlier on June 18, during qualifying, Crouser heaved 75-2 1/2 to set the American Olympic trials record.

Crouser was feeling so good in the preliminary round that he thought a world record was possible right then and there. What kept him from going for it was his shoes. Though he had brought a pair of new Nikes to Eugene for the trials, he opted for a more broken-in pair because the shot put ring at newly remodeled Hayward Field was "fast."

"But they take your shoes if you break the world record," Crouser said of World Athletics, which tests all shoes involved in a record. "I thought, 'I don't know, if I throw a world record in prelims, I won't have shoes for the final. I'll have to throw in the (new) Nikes.'"

So, the record held — but only for a few more hours.

Even before the fourth of his six tries on a mild, sunshiny evening had plunked into the dirt, Crouser was lifting his arms to celebrate. When the shot landed, far beyond where any other mark had been made, a collective gasp came from the quarter-filled stands.

About a half-minute passed while officials checked the distance. When the mark came up on the board, confirming that he had broken one of the longest-standing records in the books, he was mobbed by his competitors near the ring.

"Finally timed that one up," said Crouser, who grew up in Oregon, went to college

at Texas and now serves as a volunteer coach at Arkansas. "I think I was celebrating on that one almost before it left my hand."

Among those congratulating him were world champion Joe Kovacs, who finished second, and Payton Otterdahl, who earned the third spot.

"There are three or four guys capable of doing that," Kovacs said. "In Tokyo, there are going to be some fireworks. Every year, we're talking about the records being broken and I think there's more to come."

Several minutes after his record, Crouser was proudly posing on the field. The picture: Him standing next to the scoreboard with both thumbs raised and the words "World Record" highlighted in green on the board next to his new record.

Shot putters fashion themselves as part-time physics gurus. They spend hours analyzing their throws from multiple angles, all in the hopes of eking out a few more centimeters.

About the dynamics of his best-ever throw, Crouser said: "I stayed big with my chest and relaxed and let the entry happen. I didn't force it. And once I did that well, I knew the throw was going to be good, so I didn't do anything to mess it up from there."

Crouser, who finished second to Kovacs at world championships in Doha in 2019, didn't miss a day of training in 2020, even with the coronavirus pandemic shutting things down across the globe. He built a home-made shot-put ring that he constructed out of two sheets of plywood and screws from Home Depot.

The opening day of trials also featured strong first-round performances from world 800-meter champion Donovan Brazier and sprinter Sha'Carri Richardson, who chose orange as the hair color of the day and turned in the fastest 100-meter time (10.84 seconds). High jumper Vashti Cunningham — the daughter of former NFL quarterback Randall Cunningham — easily qualified for the final and discus thrower Valarie Allman set a meet record with her throw of 229-8 (70.01) in qualifying.

In the night's other final, Woody Kincaid sprinted the final stretch to hold off Grant Fisher and win the 10,000 meters. Both run for the Bowerman Track Club. Kincaid finished in 27:53.62. Joe Klecker was third.

All received second billing to Crouser.

He's hard to miss at a track meet. The 320-pounder takes down about 5,000 calories a day to keep weight on his 6-7 frame. His diet consists of two big breakfast burritos in the morning, a pound of ground beef for lunch and three of the four portions from a meal delivery service at night.

So, what does a newly minted world-record holder do for dinner? Well, options figured to be limited at the late hour he would get out of the track.

"I'll probably go for a big, old double-double hamburger somewhere," Crouser said.



Kate Page/Contributed Photo

Timbersports Series competitor Kate Page uses a STIHL MS 661 chainsaw during a stock saw event at a competition in this undated photo. Page is a native of John Day now living in Heppner and is looking for a top-five finish in the 2021 U.S. Championships.

Timber: 'It's 50% skill and 50% equipment'

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Page and her husband, Camron Tack, returned to Eastern Oregon in April to be closer to her parents. She works in the Heppner Ranger District on the Umatilla National Forest for the U.S. Forest Service.

"I'm on a fire crew right now," Page said. "We live at the Tupper Guard Station."

Tack works construction in Hermiston and is in the U.S. Army Reserve.

From chemistry class to the wood pile

Page, who will turn 30 on July 9, was a multi-sport athlete at Grant Union High School. She graduated in 2009, then went to Oregon Institute of Technology in Klamath Falls to play basketball.

From OIT, she went to the University of Montana, where she was sitting in a chemistry class when Lara Antonello came to the class to talk about the college's Woodsman Team and Forestry Club.

Page was intrigued. She went to the first meeting and was hooked.

"I thought it sounded really cool," Page said. "I played sports in high school and played basketball in college. I took a year off of school — I really only went to play sports. I moved to Montana and went back to school."

One of the draws of the program was that it offered a chance to travel — if you were good enough.

"She (Antonello) said you can go all over the western United States," Page said. "I showed up to the first meeting and I never left. My second year, I was captain of the Woodsman program. When I started the fall of 2014, it was mostly men, but by the time I graduated there



Kate Page/Contributed Photo

STIHL Timbersports Series competitor Kate Page of Heppner saws through a white pine log with a cross-cut saw during the single buck event at a competition in this undated photo.

were more women than men. I did a lot of recruiting."

Page, who has a bachelor's degree in forest operation and a minor in fire, was a two-time team captain of the Montana team.

The Montana Woodsman team cuts, splits and delivers firewood in the fall to pay for equipment and competitions.

"In the spring we traveled all over to compete," Page said. "I cut 65 cords of wood my weekend and after classes cutting firewood."

Her hard work paid off.

"When I first started in 2014, I did a bunch of the other events, then the STIHL series opened up for women

in 2017," Page said. "The men have been doing it since 1980. We have had some great athletes in this sport."

Page also had the opportunity in April 2019 to compete internationally at the Royal Easter Show in Sydney, Australia.

The sport is not easy, or cheap

In the STIHL Timbersports Series, the men compete in six events, while the women have four — the single buck, standing block chop, underhand chop and stock saw. Everything is based on time.

"It's 50% skill and 50% equipment," said Page,

whose favorite event is the single buck. "Everyone has different equipment, so if you have the best tools and the best sharpeners, you might have better times. Most of our axes come from Australia or New Zealand, and the cross-cut saws are made in New Zealand, New York or California."

Competitors shell out \$300-500 for an ax, while the cross-cut saws run \$1,800 to \$2,300.

In the single buck, competitors make one cut through 19 inches of white pine using a single man cross-cut saw. The piece they cut off is roughly 3 inches thick.

The standing block chop event has the competitor racing to chop through 12 to 14 inches of vertical white pine.

The stock saw event is a test of operator ability. The competitor uses a STIHL MS 661 chainsaw to cut two discs from a 16-inch piece of white pine as fast as possible. All logs have been cut from the same tree. The only thing that differs is the saw operator.

"In the stock saw, we all use the same thing," Page said. "It's the most fair tool that we use. The show provides them, they have mechanics who maintain them."

The underhand chop requires competitors to stand on a white pine log with feet 12-14 inches apart. They chop through the log with their racing ax.

The U.S. Championships offer prize money per event and for the overall winner, and have major sponsors, such as Duluth Trading Company, STIHL, John Deere and Ace Hardware.

The U.S. Championships will be livestreamed on Facebook, and all of the competitions will air on CBS Sports in the fall.