

# GROVER

Continued from 1B

was — he was Russian, and we were still pissed at the Russians at the time — and how high the bar was set for him, I think that's what made me say, 'Yeah, I think I'll do this for a while.'"

Now, as the head official for horizontal jumps at the U of O, Grover has grown fond of a new generation of athletes, including local multi-event icons Ashton Eaton and Brianne Theisen-Eaton and blooming long jump star Marquis Dendy — each of whom has charisma and grace on par with Bubka.

"Some of the athletes who have been doing this for quite a while aren't so nice; it's their living and they're not very sociable. But a lot of them are. I remember at a postseason barbecue for officials, I asked Theisen (then a sophomore at U of O), 'What can we do to make you feel better?' And she said, 'You can smile, because when you're out there and you don't smile it scares us to death,'" Grover said.

The sport of track and field is largely

driven by its sponsors, and in Eugene that means Nike. Over the past decade policies about branding at Hayward Field have become increasingly stringent. Grover and the other officials are required to dress alike, and more often than not that apparel is adorned by The Swoosh; except at the 2014 World Junior Championships, meet sponsor Adidas made sure to cover any of its rival's many markings around the facility and outfitted the officials in black and orange Adidas gear. However, the corporate agendas don't make Grover cynical.

"I think it's a good thing because we all know that Uncle Phil Knight (Nike's founder and Oregon alumni) pays for track. I think it's dear to his heart, and he contributes a lot of money to the program," he said.

The support of Nike has helped produce the recent boom of Track Town, USA. In addition to the success of the men's and women's Oregon programs, the community has had success drawing larger events to Eugene. This past

spring it was announced that the 2021 World Championships will be staged at Hayward Field — the first time in the 33-year history of the competition that it will be contested on U.S. soil.

"You get bigger meets, bigger crowds, and it means a lot more to the organizers if you do a good job officiating; it helps them when they bid on bigger meets," Grover said. "You have a lot of personal pride to do the best you can, and we're all volunteers. But it's also more responsibility. The language barrier for the international meets can be a challenge."

For all of the major meets to come to Hayward Field, however, Grover said that his favorite may be the Oregon high school state championships, and in particular for the recent decision to bring each classification to Eugene.

"The first year they did it (2014), we thought it would be absolute chaos. We thought, '1A-6A, we'll be there all day.' And we do have some long, busy days, but to see the looks on the faces of the 1A, 2A and 3A kids when they

walk into Hayward... They come from all over, and they deserve to be there because they're working hard too," he said.

Since Grover first began officiating, the technology used for judging a competition has also evolved tremendously. While the Hayward Field crew has for some time benefitted from plasticine, a form of clay used on the boards to help determine if a jump is fair or foul, more recently — and especially in high-profile competitions — the crew uses technology that includes a video review system for take-off board accuracy and a laser-based measuring device. While this technology produces highly accurate measurements, Grover calls it a "giant pain in the ass." At this year's Prefontaine Classic the electronic measuring system went down and the officials had to work by hand.

Even with the technology, however, Grover said that the knowledgeable fan base of Hayward Field can't appreciate the margin between a fair and a foul jump.

"The fans see the final attempt. And if it's a big jump and scream, 'ooh.' But they don't see how close their feet are to the foul board, and a foul is a foul. The fans raise hell because they don't know the rules. You don't get (an argument) from the athletes because they know. The really good ones can adjust their strides by quarters of an inch — they're that finely tuned," said Grover.

At this point, Grover said he plans to continue officiating until he can no longer do it or loses the enjoyment for it. Which would be fine, he said, because he would then have a chance to actually watch the meets. But Grover recognizes a looming issue for Track Town.

"Our group is getting older and older, and it's getting hard to recruit young people to do it," he said. "They don't want to spend their Saturdays there for a hamburger and a bag of potato chips."

"I think you're doing a public service, and as long as the university still appreciates us, we'll still be there."



photo by Matt Hollander

Civic Stadium, where the Eugene Emeralds played from 1969 to 2009, was destroyed by fire on June 29.

## CIVIC'S LESSONS

Continued from 1B

Players fresh from a season of college heroics sat wide-eyed but confident in the reserve seats for pre-game interviews, and baseball scouts and salty reporters filled the hours between with years of well-worn stories, talk rife with statistical salads and the relentless ribbing of their grizzled colleagues.

But alas, photography was not part of that particular job description, and somehow I seem to have escaped that magical summer without a single shot of a play well made or a portrait of anyone it was my fortune to connect with during the 2008 season. The Emeralds would play one more season at Civic, taking their game to PK Park after 2009, and with the move came at least the feeling that an era had ended.

Then last Monday, June 29, what appears to be a careless act by four young people made quick work of Civic Stadium, reducing the historic structure to ashes within an early-summer afternoon and seemingly crushing the hopes of those who sought to resurrect the stadium for the next chapter of its storied life. Their actions robbed all of us of the chance to see Civic rise again and touched off an outpouring of grief from those who, like me, found solace, beauty and hope between the white chalk lines and sturdy blue boards of one of the greatest homes to ever host America's game.

Like many of you, I've spent much of the last week reliving my best memories at the stadium, and after the initial shock of its loss wore off, it was easy to see the proverbial silver lining:

There is news that the former stadium site may

still play host to youth sports, that those who have harbored a new dream for Civic still intend to see that dream realized. There is the news that a rash act of mischief, not one of evil intent, probably spelled the end of a structure that has enhanced so many lives.

And of course, there are those all-important memories. For in truth, no photograph could have possibly captured the electric feel of an extra-innings walk-off win or the giddiness of a child winning a contest during a campy mid-inning promotion. Nor could a camera do justice to the stadium's pre-game wakeup ritual, with volunteer ushers inspecting and wiping down every reserve seat as they began to welcome early-arriving fans, and young boys and girls hung over the railing vying for autographs of the game's future stars.

Pictures of the line of fans waiting outside the Emeralds office on a gray, drizzly March morning to secure season tickets are likely few and far between, as are shots of the team in transit, boarding buses for road trips in scenes that could have come straight from the script of "Bull Durham."

Baseball and nostalgia are an inseparable pair, and while the loss of Civic Stadium may have struck a blow to the future of sports in south Eugene, those of us who loved the old ball yard now have a responsibility as the caretakers of its storied past to share our recollections, our lessons and — if we can find them, of course — our photographs of the stadium with future generations. For now at least, it's so long, Civic, and thanks for the many memories.

### Week 2 SCORES Standings

Team	W	L	T	Pts.	GD
Dragon	3	0	0	9	+15
Rally	2	0	1	7	+9
Squirrels	2	1	0	6	+4
Brad's	1	1	1	4	+7
House	1	1	1	4	-3
Lions 1	1	2	0	3	0
Lions 2	0	2	1	1	-15
Misfitz	0	3	0	0	-17

### Results for July 1

House 4, Misfitz 3  
Rally 0, Brad's Big Time 0  
Blind Squirrels 3, Lions One 2  
Dragon Ocean 9, Lions Two 0

### Schedule for July 8:

6 p.m. — Brad's Big Time vs. Lions Two  
7 p.m. — Dragon Ocean vs. Rally  
8 p.m. — Misfitz vs. Lions One  
9 p.m. — Blind Squirrels vs. House

### Middlefield Mens Golf

Date: June 29  
Game: 1-2-3 Best Ball

1, Smith, Perkins, Arendell, Gowing BD (-30). 2, Cooney, Gowing, Wamsley, Winters, (-29). 3, Lee, Nellerroe, Pennington, Wilson (-22).  
Low Gross: 1, Pearson 68. 2t, Emery 69. 2t, Kinkade 69.

Low Net: 1, Wilson 56. 2, Pearson 59. 3t, Culp 60. 3t, Gowing 60.  
Closest to the Pin: No. 5, NA. No. 7, Cunningham. No. 14, Hack.  
Longest Putt: No. 1, England.

Date: July 2  
Game: 3-2-1 Points

1, Cunningham, Bryce, Arendell, Cox 99. 2t, Helms, La Cosse, Levings, Beckett 91. 2t, Dorman, Dreiling, Sparks, Hamilton 91. 2t, Cooney, Ingram, Rhodes, Ryan. 2t, England, Nellerroe, Smith, Rowling 91.  
Low Gross: 1, Emery 69. 2t, Helms 72. 2t, Sparks 72/  
Low Net: 1, Bryce 56. 2, Beckett 61. 3t, Ryan 62. 3t, LaCosse 62.  
Closest to the Pin: No. 5, Cox. No. 7, McCarty. No. 14, Bryce.  
Longest Putt: No. 2, Sparks.

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