

Ninth annual Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony bridges the past and present

Current students were honored along with the class of 2016 inductees

In 2008, Bill Thompson and the late Michele Portmann started the idea to begin a Hall of Fame for Cottage Grove Athletics. This year's ninth class included a total of seven parties: Jerry Braunberger, Curtis French, Shauna Pupke, Lynn Wiltse, David Dawson and Jason Saunders. The seventh party was the entire 1979 football team.

The evening started off with a social hour outside of the cafeteria. Thompson and Athletic Director Gary Roberts showed people to the current Hall of Fame, where guests saw the achievements of well-known athletes and community contributors such as the locally famed Bud Taylor. After the mingling, a dinner was hosted by school staff and student volunteers before the ceremony began.

The first inductee of the night

was Jerry Braunberger. Braunberger was the athletic trainer of Cottage Grove High School for 10 years, the athletic director for 13 years and also served as the South Lane Recreation Coordinator for 15 years. Braunberger was a contributor to the development of the Bohemia fields and acquiring the property that the current high school sits on.

"This event validates that somebody noticed the work you put in," Braunberger said. He also noted that he was especially honored to be inducted into the Hall of Fame with several past athletes that he coached, two of which being Shauna Pupke and Jason Saunders. While Braunberger was the athletic director in the early 70s, Cottage Grove was the smallest school in the 5A District One, constantly competing against schools with at least 2,000 students or more.

The second inductee was unfortunately unable to be represented by any relatives. Curtis French coached the Lions from the 30s to the 40s where his nine-year career at Cottage Grove saw a record of 36 wins, 17 losses and six ties. From 1936 to 1945, French's football team won five league titles. In his last season, French took his team to a perfect record of 7-0. Gary Roberts accepted the award on behalf of French.

"I think something that was lost in there was how difficult of a job it would have been to coach and teach kids with a war on the horizon. He coached before and during World War II, and many of his players most likely went to fight overseas, and that must have been extremely difficult."

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Photo by Sam Wright

From left to right: Jason Saunders, Jerry Braunberger, Shauna Pupke, Lynn Wiltse and David Dawson pose with their personal Hall of Fame awards.

Boys place third, girls sixth at Springfield Invitational

Tharpe breaks personal record on high hurdles

BY SAM WRIGHT

The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Still being faced with the depth of competition against 5A and 6A schools, Cottage Grove track and field is showing signs of significant improvement. The Springfield Rotary Invitational hosted one 3A school (La Pine), two 4A schools (Cottage Grove and Crook County), three 5A Schools (South Albany, North Eugene, Springfield) and one 6A school (West Albany).

Surprisingly enough, it was the Crook County boys that won the meet, while South Albany took the girls' competition. Cot-

tage Grove finished third and sixth in those respective categories, and it was an especially great day for the boys' squad.

For starters, the boys' 4x100 relay team took home a gold medal. The addition of Connor Howard helped the Lions shave nearly 1.5 seconds off of their time from last week's Marist Classic. Michael Tharpe, Jacob Woods and Brynden Howell made up the rest of the relay team, finishing in a time of 44.1 seconds. With Tharpe starting the race and Howell as the anchor, Cottage Grove seems to have found the answers with Howard and Woods in between

them.

Howard continued to succeed by placing first in the 200-meter dash with a time of 22.70 seconds. Chris Clure, who finished 15th at Willamette High School, finished in fifth place and took 1.1 seconds off of his time by running the race in 23.50 seconds.

The most notable finish came from Tharpe in the 110-meter high hurdles. Last week, Tharpe finished in second place with a time of 15.36 seconds, just outside his personal best of 15.22.

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Photo by Sam Wright

Michael Tharpe hands the baton off to Connor Howard in the 4x100 relay where the Lions took gold.

Cottage Grove Speedway opens up 60th anniversary with massive car count

BY BEN DEATHERAGE

For the Sentinel

Cottage Grove, Oregon- Saturday, April 9 would be the first race of the 2016 race season at Cottage Grove Speedway. It also opened up the 60th Anniversary of racing at the historical quarter-mile clay oval. Not only would the pit area swell with a huge car count, it would be complimented with jam-packed grandstands full of fans anticipating the first race of the year in the state of Oregon. Classes in action included 360 Sprints, IMCA Modifieds, Late Models, Street Stocks, and the Quality RV Repair Hornets.

The 360 main would see Quilcene, Washington driver J.J. Hickle take the lead in the opening lap. Hickle would remain in front for quite some time despite an occasional challenge. Unfortunately, he would surrender the lead shortly after a lap twelve restart to Roger Crockett of Medford.

Crockett, piloting his #11 KPC, pulled away. But as the race would continue to remain under green flag conditions, lapped traffic started to come in the picture. With around five to go, Roger was able to maneuver around the tail end of the lead lap field efficiently, as Garen Linde off Central Point started to put a bit of pressure on him. Roger Crockett would hold on to the lead to score his first victory of 2016 after starting sev-

enth in the feature.

The #22 KPC of Garen Linder, was a respectable second followed by Penngrove. California teenager Michael Kofoid was third. Completing the top five would be J.J. Hickle crossing the line in fourth and Eugene's Kyle Miller in fifth.

Picking up quick time was Henry Van Dam of Enumclaw, Washington, Mill Creek, Washington's Cam Smith and Albany teenager Bricen James. An impressive 23 cars from Oregon, California, Washington, Idaho and the Canadian province of British Columbia would be in attendance.

The IMCA Modifieds would attract 24 teams for the first race of the campaign. Corbett's Colleen Winebarger would get out to the front on the initial start. The main event would be plagued with several cautions, seven in total, so restarts were key. The #S Victory Circle of Winebarger would get the job done and lead every lap despite being challenged just a handful of times late in the race.

Cottage Grove native Kinzer Cox would finish second, followed by third place Craig Hanson of Albany. The rest of the top five would consist of B.J. Wild of Redmond and Keizer's John Campos.

Heat race winners included Springfield's Jake Mayden, Lebanon native Kyle Yeack, and

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Parent places on All-State roster, Sentman honorable mention

BY SAM WRIGHT

The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The Lions' basketball team finished its 2014-2015 season at 5-19, and this past season has been a huge change. The Lions went 20-8 and made it to the state tournament after outstanding finishes in unbelievable challenges. Cottage Grove finished sixth in the tournament, but the accolades still keep coming in. After various players making the All-League rosters for the Sky-Em League, Kory Parent and Blake Sentman have found themselves on yet another all-star roster.

Sentman, a junior, received an honorable mention for the All-State roster in the 4A class (one of nine players in the state to receive an honorable mention). Kory Parent finished by placing in the first-team All-State roster. Only one of five players received this honor.

"I'm very humbled and honored and it's going to push me to work even harder," the junior said. "I'm very thankful for my teammates and my coaches who help me improve every day." Parent was the Lions' leading scorer on the season, with Sentman as

a close second. The Lion starter gave his team miracle wins time after time during this season, including a buzzer-beating layup against Baker in the first round of the playoffs to send his team to the state tournament (and his teammate Sentman kept the Lions in the game with a season-high of 29 points).

One of Parent's main inspirations growing up was Kobe Bryant, an all-star himself at the professional level.

"I've always admired his work ethic," Parent said of Bryant. Ironically, Bryant will be ending his long and successful career a week from today against the Utah Jazz. But as a junior, Parent isn't going anywhere. The Lions team will have a lot of returning starters, although they will be missing senior Chance Hopkins, whose size was a big help for the Lions.

"We're always looking to improve, and we'll definitely be chasing that blue trophy next year," Parent said. He also noted that the team has plenty of players that are willing to put in the work. Perhaps next year the Lions could occupy 40 percent of that first-team All-State roster.



Athlete of the Week



Cottage Grove Speedway

Join us April 16th

Clark Printing Extreme Sprints, IMCA Modifieds, IMCA SportMods, Quality RV Repair Hornets