

Former Olympic Grover reflects on the Olympic Trials at Hayward Field

Dyrol Burleson, a former CGHS track star and Olympian, helps convey the experience of attending and competing in the biggest track and field competition in the country

BY SAM WRIGHT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The Olympic Trials just wrapped up in Eugene on Sunday, ending what could be the biggest stage most of the athletes have competed in outside of the Olympics themselves. On such an enormous national platform, Oregon has managed to stand out, with many UO athletes achieving great success. Among this titanic event is a former Lion track star who has had the opportunity to compete at the Trials and also watch the sport develop and grow.

In the 1950s, Cottage Grove High School's track and field program produced one of the top athletes in the country. Dyrol Burleson burst onto the scene under coaches Wally Ciocchetti and the late Sam Bell and went on to receive the first full scholarship for track at the University of Oregon under Bill Bowerman. The scholarship motivated Burleson to make a commitment to never lose a race during his time at the university, and he made good on his promise. To this day, he is the only athlete from the UO track and field program to have done so.

At age 14, "Sports Illustrated" published one of its first issues with track star Roger Bannister

on the cover. That set Burleson's goals of getting on the cover of the magazine, making the Olympic team and winning an Olympic gold medal. Burleson achieved the first two but fell short of a gold medal in his two Olympic appearances. However, Burleson is not regretful and is as enthusiastic as ever when it comes to track and field.

Now that all of the events have been completed and the roster has been set, Burleson has been able to reflect on his track experience, as well as comment on how the sport has changed since he competed.

"I really can't believe how it's changed," he said. "The equipment is better, the facilities are far superior and the training is much more intense." Burleson added that the sport has changed so much that it is genuinely difficult to compare the present and the past.

For instance, in 1960 there was only one 1500-meter race rather than multiple to ensure the top athletes were the ones to go to the Olympics.

"In 1964 they changed it to three races in case some runner didn't perform their best," he noted. Burleson had experienced some of the changes himself, but it didn't change the result: he won the 1500-meter

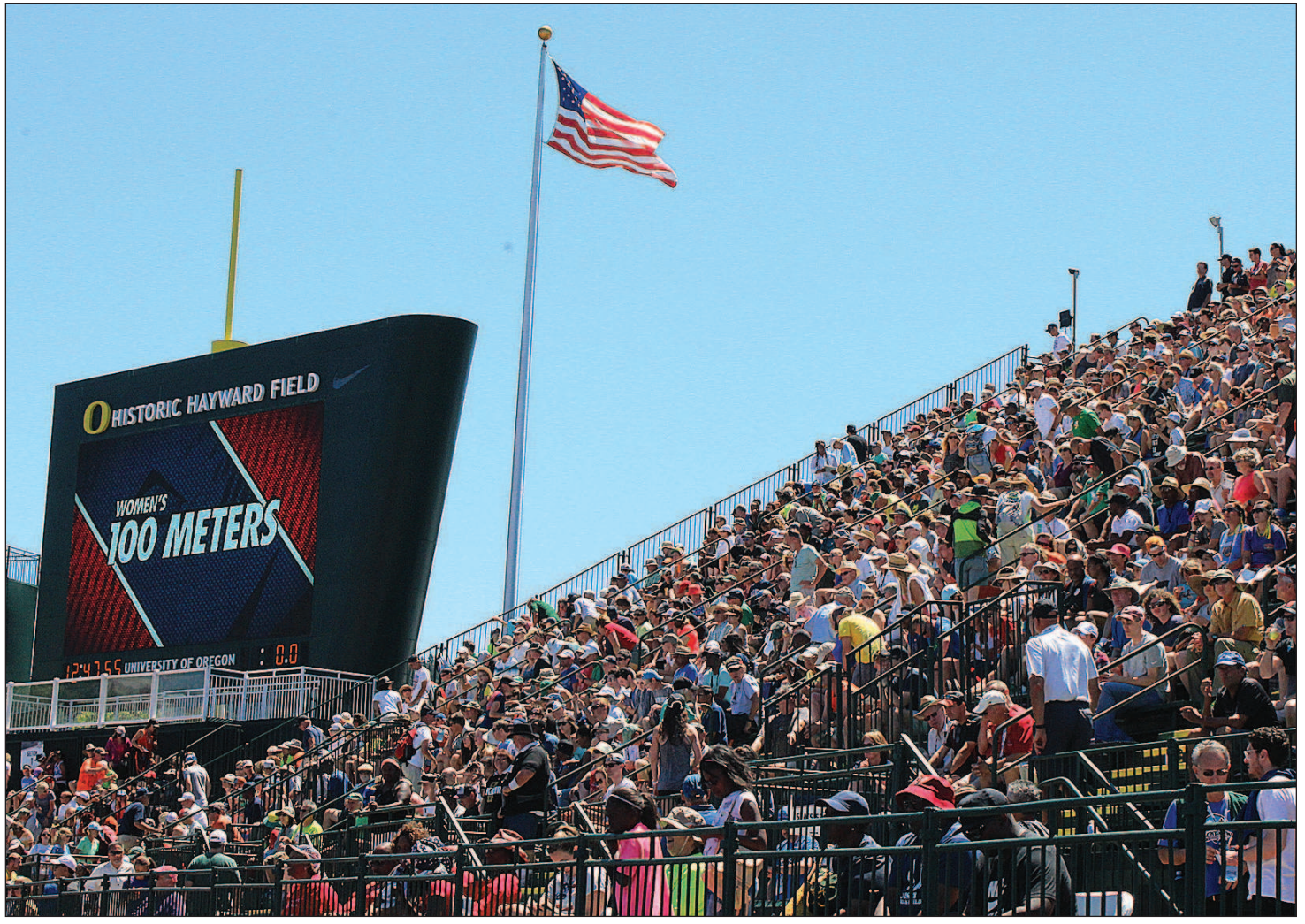


Photo by Sam Wright

Hayward Field hosted over 20,000 spectators over the 10-day trial period.

race in both Trials.

Burleson was supposed to compete in 1968, when he believes he was in the best shape of his life, but he suffered a calf injury and couldn't compete in the Trials.

Unfortunately, due to a health

issue, Burleson was unable to attend the trials at Hayward field but still recorded and watched them every day between July 1 and July 10.

"I am the ultimate track fan," he said. Burleson is just as excited to watch the young athletes

compete as he was when he had his first chance to compete himself in 1960.

"I live vicariously through these athletes," Burleson said.

To add to the excitement is the fact that the University of Oregon has produced so many

competing athletes, and as a former Duck himself, Burleson is ecstatic "beyond belief."

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CG Football Golf Tournament a great success

BY SAM WRIGHT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The first of several tournaments at Middlefield Golf Course teed off this past Saturday, July 9. The 2016 Cottage Grove Football Fundraiser Tournament brought out a sizeable crowd of golf and football enthusiasts.

The tournament helps raise funds for the football team and subsidizes some of the efforts made by football team members who host fundraisers around the year.

According to football head coach and athletic director Gary Roberts, the annual goal of the fundraiser is \$3,500.

Golfers battled the dampness early Saturday morning as looming rain clouds threatened to cancel the event, but the weather held out and the tournament went on. Thirteen teams of four registered to play the 18-hole course. Teams featured all different kinds of Lions supporters, including fans, coaches and even some CGHS alumni

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Athletes of the Week



Photo courtesy of Gary Roberts

Tony Lefler tees off as teammates Joe Brunetti and Ray Bloom watch. The team, including Darren Giffen (not pictured) took first place in the tournament with a score of 14 under.

July 4 sees excitement at Speedway

BY BEN DEATHERAGE
For the Sentinel

Cottage Grove Speedway played host to the second leg of the 2016 Speedweek Northwest schedule. It was another Independence Day thriller at CGS with the best car count of the week as well as a packed grandstand to watch the July 4 action. Thirty-three cars were in attendance representing the states of Oregon, Washington, California, and Idaho as well as the Canadian provinces of Alberta and British Columbia and even a driver from the Southland region of New Zealand.

Roger Crockett got out to the lead on the opening lap. The Medford driver started from the pole and was extremely quick from the get-go. With a long green-flag run, it brought lapped traffic into the mix, but Crockett was able to handle the slower cars extremely well.

A lap-13 caution yellowed the field up and another yellow occurred on the 19th circuit, which ended up being the final stoppage of the race. Shortly after the restart, Crockett had a little bit of difficulty making it around a lapped car, which brought about an opportunity for him to be challenged.

Paradise, California's Kyle Hirst made it around Crockett on lap 25 and looked to close out the race as the leader. Crockett reeled Hirst back in and at the

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New league gives casual soccer fans more options

Along with the familiar SCORES soccer league, South Valley Athletics has brought a new, more casual league to the table. MLS is a new league formed by community members who wish to play a more casual game of soccer. While SCORES is still limited contact, MLS is completely no contact. The league is designed for players aged 30 and older or for younger players with no experience.

The format of the games are a four-on-four field with no goalie on a field about half the size of a regular field in square footage.

"People came to us asking to create a league that wasn't as competitive as SCORES, so we came up with this," SVA director Smiley Glenn said. "There isn't much to it, but it seems to be a good solution for more casual players."

The league has yet to reach the required number to be able to separate into permanent teams, so for now teams are randomly created each week.

The league meets every Thursday at Currin field and is still open for late registration. The form can be found on the SVA website.



Photo by Sam Wright

MLS is a perfect league for novice soccer players and people over 30.

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Cottage Grove Speedway

www.cottagegrovespeedway.com

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