

## Forler and Bloom shine at Speedway

By Ben Deatherage  
CG Speedway

The final night of the 2018 Marvin Smith Memorial Grove Classic would be a thriller on Sunday, May 27th. Despite only two classes on the schedule both divisions would thrill the crowd the entire night. Those two divisions were the 360 Sprints and the Street Stocks.

Michael Kofoid, piloting the Doug and Kathy Rutz owned entry, would seize the initiative of the forty-one lap 360 Sprint feature on the opening start. The Penn Grove, California teenager would have his hands full when he hit slower traffic around lap three. Despite having to make the split second decisions and constant pressure from behind he would retain the race lead for quite some time.

However, on lap fourteen Jason Solwold would make an incredible pass for the lead. Solwold, racing for car owners Mike Anderson and Monica Baca, kept his mount ahead of the field but unfortunately would get caught up in an incident after the caution flag waved on lap twenty-two. The Burlington, Washington veteran was able to restart but was put to the tail end of the field and it gave first place back to Kofoid.

Michael Kofoid again would try and pull away from the rest of the pack but again he would have challengers rise to the occasion. Logan Forler, of Boise, Idaho, managed to put himself in a position to challenge late and obtained the top spot on the thirty-eighth circuit.

Two consecutive red flag stoppages, both of which involved drivers running inside the top five, would keep the drama building in the final stages. On the ensuing restart Forler would master the timing and propelled himself to a comfortable lead. He would go on to win the feature and become the fourth different driver in five years to win the prestigious event.

Jason Solwold tried to challenge late but was a noble second while Clarksburg, California's Justyn Cox placed third. The balance of the top five would consist of fourth finishing Lucas Ashe, of Cottonwood, California, and Quilcene, Washington driver J.J. Hickle, in fifth.

Earlier in the evening Lucas Ashe and Michael Kofoid were the quickest drivers in their respective groups while Kofoid would go on to win the dash and start on the pole. Heat race winners were Medford's Seth Nunes, Tyrell Mead of Winston, Mill Creek, Washington chauffeur Cam Smith, and Sutherlin teenager Cooper Desbiens. Allison Journey, from Lincoln City, won the consolation feature.

In the Street Stocks Aaron Houseman, of Monroe and racing for Roy Moore, got out in front early. Jasper's Andrew Langan made it around Houseman on lap four and began to pull away from the pack. He would be hunted down by Ray Bloom, from Cottage Grove, in the last half of the race. Bloom managed to track Langan down and pull off a last lap upset with a big win for himself and his team.

Andrew Langan was a respectable second followed by Eugene's Hunter Bloom, in third. Aaron Houseman ended his evening in fourth while

**SPEEDWAY** see B2

# Creating her own destiny



PHOTO BY DAVE NISHITANI/OREGON STATE ATHLETICS

Destiny Dawson, the javelin record holder for OSU, competes at a meet at Oregon State earlier this season.

## Cottage Grove alum has had a journey to the NCAA Championships

By Zach Silva  
zsilva@cgsentinel.com

While at Cottage Grove High School, Destiny Dawson was a good athlete.

The 2014 grad was on varsity soccer, basketball and in her sophomore year, was convinced to go out for track and field.

Dawson dabbled in a little of everything; she sprinted, she jumped, she threw and even, for a brief moment, considered pole vault. She was fine at everything but not yet great at anything in the sport.

"The coolest thing about her story is that in high school, she wasn't necessarily

a star," said Cottage Grove track and field coach Ricky Knutson.

"She was going to go to the state meet but you don't necessarily think, 'This is going to be a kid that is going to be a D1 NCAA qualifier.' That's the awesome thing about her story."

Dawson is representing Oregon State University at this week's NCAA Track and Field Championships at Hayward Field. And while there are plenty of stories of athletes finding their event and instantly becoming a phenom, that is not quite Dawson's story with the javelin. It took time to get there.

After her first year of throwing javelin in high school, Dawson, who had a personal best of 98 feet, had to convince her coaches to let her continue to compete.

"My coaches told me I wasn't allowed to be a javelin thrower when I started ju-

nior year because they said I'm not a jav thrower until I throw at least 100 feet," recalls Dawson. "So, I think I might have thrown 100 feet the first or second meet of the season and they're like, 'Okay, you can be a jav thrower now.' So, that's when I fully changed over to javelin."

Her junior year she took second at districts and seventh in state while, her senior year, she was again second in Sky-Em and then finished fifth in state.

"It was cool," she said of competing at Hayward Field for the state meet. "Truthfully, I don't remember much except I wish I had done better both times."

Dawson's personal best at the time of 128-09 was good for a distant third place on the all-time Cottage Grove javelin list and for a walk-on at University of Hawaii at Mānoa. University of Hawaii checked the boxes of being not in Oregon, hav-

ing both an engineering and architecture program and a track and field program that she could join. After communicating with a coach who then left the program, the new coach didn't know who Dawson was.

She joined the team all the same. But as nice as Hawaii was, it was also full of hard work.

"Everyone assumes you're going to just live in paradise. I think I went to the beach once a month, maybe. When I did go, it was amazing and it was what everyone says it is. But it's not as leisurely as everyone thinks," she said.

Struggling throughout her first season, Dawson finished the year with a fifth-place finish at the Big West Championships that saw her set a personal record of less than a foot better than her high

**DESTINY** see B3

# A grand time at the Gran Fondo



PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

Riders fill Main St. at the start of the Gran Fondo on Saturday morning.

## Cyclists flock to Cottage Grove for annual event

By Zach Silva  
zsilva@cgsentinel.com

Last Saturday, Cottage Grove welcomed over 250 cyclists to town for the sixth annual Gran Fondo. Meaning "big ride" in Italian, riders from around the state and five different states rode one of four courses that had lengths of 40 miles, 71 miles, 117 miles or 134 miles. The route started and finished on Main St.

"Cycling is something most people don't see themselves doing after childhood," said event organizer Mike Ripley. "These folks have not given up a childhood dream. It's fun, it's playful."

The event, in its sixth year in Cottage Grove, is part of a three-part bike series around the state that include the Oregon Coast Gravel Epic and the Sasquatch Duro.

During the race, Ripley served as a "grocery store on wheels" as he drove through various checkpoints on the course offering what he could to the racers.

"Between the six aid stations and getting every single individual their supplies including bike racks, water jugs, and food -- oh hell," said Ripley. "The course spread out over 130 miles of road, that is a unique logistical challenge."

It was well worth it for Ripley who got to fulfill his dream in providing a personal favorite at one of the aid stations in the form of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich with a glazed doughnut as the bread.

"The most amazing thing ever," he said. In addition to those competing in the event, the Gran Fondo also relied on over

80 volunteers throughout the course. The volunteers did everything from handing out water at aid stations along the route to announcing riders crossing the finish line.

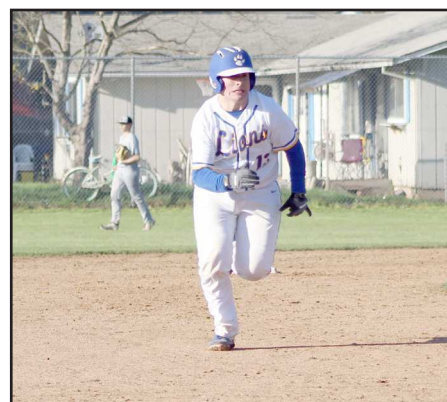
From Ripley's perspective, nearly everything went right for the race except for several markers being stolen from the course and causing riders to get lost.

"Somebody took the main corners down during the event. So we had some riders that got off course and went to Drain. So that was the first time we had the community sabotage the event," he said.

## Athletes of the Week



This week's athletes of the week are Cottage Grove's Jaace Cross (left) and Payton Frieze (right). The pair were named to the first team Sky-Em baseball team.



PHOTOS BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL