

Speedway sees different winners all weekend

Full weekend of races sees host of fresh faces finishing first

BY BEN DEATHERAGE
 COTTAGE GROVE SPEEDWAY

All roads of Speedweek Northwest converged once again to Cottage Grove Speedway on Saturday for one final time. The historic quarter-mile clay oval hosted the fifth and culminating round of the 2019 calendar for the series. It is the third race to take place at the CGS during the week. Twenty-six cars were in attendance with teams traveling from all over Oregon, Washington, California, Idaho and Oklahoma as well as British Columbia in Canada.

The main event was a thriller as Colby Copeland was without a doubt a man on a mission. Despite heavy lapped traffic and several stoppages, the Rocklin, California chauffeur, driving for car owners Jim & Annette Van Lare, scorched the field for most of the race. Unfortunately, coming to accept the white flag his right rear tire started to lose a significant amount of tire pressure. That would result in the flattening of the rubbery object and losing a great deal of speed.

Like the proverbial hungry pack of wolves chasing down their prey, a number of challengers came calling to take over the lead. Somehow Mitchell Faccinto won the dogfight on the final circuit and went on to win his third race of Speedweek Northwest 2019. The Hanford, California gasser had never won at Cottage Grove prior to the night and also recorded his fourth career series win. In victory lane, it was officially announced that Faccinto, and his car owner Stan Greenberg, were the 2019 series champions. That made Mitchell the 15th different champion in twenty-two years and the eighth different title winner from the state of California.

Seth Bergman, originally from Washington but now calling Owasso, Oklahoma home, ended his evening second while Paradise, California driver Kyle Hirst was third. The balance of the top five consisted of Colton Heath, from Marysville, Washington driving for car owners Kelly Welch and Alan Larson, in fourth and fifth finishing Justin Sanders of Aromas, California. Dirt Monthly Magazine/Hoseheads columnist Gary Costa put up \$100 to the driver that passed the most cars in the main. John Clark, from Windsor, California, managed to pick up the Hard Charger Award by passing twelve cars after starting in 20th and finishing the evening in the eighth-place position.

Burlington, Washington's Greg Hamilton did phenomenal in time tri-

SPEEDWAY see B3

CG Rodeo ropes in a crowd



Kyle Bounds hangs on for a first place finish in bareback riding on Friday night. Bounds also won the event last year. PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

Cottage Grove Rodeo celebrates 71st year with two-day event

BY ZACH SILVA
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It was Christmas in July last weekend at the Cottage Grove Rodeo.

"Well, the first part of July, they call it Cowboy Christmas," said the weekend's bareback riding champion Kyle Bounds. It was a weekend full of events for Bounds and the other riders last Friday and Saturday at the 71st annual Cottage Grove Rodeo.

For Bounds, and those putting on the rodeo, this year was a return to having fun at the rodeo.

"The last couple years I just went too hard and kind of turned it more into a job than having fun with it. But shoot, I've just been staying close to home and it's actually been pretty fun, I've won quite a bit this year," said the Cottage Grove native, who was also victorious at rodeos in Salem and Philomath over the weekend.

While Bounds enjoyed his time back in Cottage Grove, event organizers were thrilled about how many people came out to the riding club.

"This was the first year that I've seen the stands packed in years," said Cottage Grove Riding Club

president Jim Tucker. As of this printing, the official ticket sales figures had not yet been tallied.

For Tucker, the majority of the work has come in the weeks and months leading up to the event. There was repairing bullpens that were damaged by last winter's storm, putting new posts in and making sure grass was mowed.

A successful race against the clock to get the venue prepared, once things got going on Friday night, Tucker remained busy with parking, taking money and being the recipient of any calls if something went wrong. The one event he did get to watch happened to be Bounds in bareback riding.

Ultimately for Tucker, the weekend was a successful learning experience.

"It went really well overall. By Saturday we figured out the things we didn't think of Friday night," the first-year president said.

While Tucker, helped by Shannon Sias and the board with the behind the scenes work, Clint Wells was there making sure the rodeo ran right along. And for Wells, the weekend started with the sheer amount of people that showed up.

"It's been the best turnout in terms of ticket sales, people staying and having fun afterwards, having some beverages, it's been the best turnout in years. Years and years,"

said Wells. "Ticket sales were great, lots of people came, lots of people had fun. The rodeo went great, people came up to me from everywhere and said, 'Wow, this is getting great.'"

For Wells, who grew up in Cottage Grove and is back in the area now with his family, the goal is to return the rodeo to what he sees as its heyday about 20 years ago. Wells has been part of the plan from the Cottage Grove Rodeo to help up the level of its product. Wells provides years of experience with rodeos around the state, has served on the local rodeo board and has been a National Pro Rodeo Associ-

ation judge.

But despite where he has been, Wells has a soft spot for his hometown rodeo.

"It's the first rodeo I went to as a kid and it's my hometown with my friends and family surrounding this whole entire place. And we want to make it so that our kids will love it and be passionate about it like we were and we want it to keep going on," said Wells.

"We love the rodeo and we look forward to the date and everybody coming together and finding unity in all of that. That's what we really want."

For rodeo results, see B2.



Recent Cottage Grove graduate Chance Ralston competes in the junior bulls event at the Cottage Grove Rodeo. PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

CGHS names new football coach



Last year Chad Smith was head football coach at Siuslaw High School. PHOTO BY NED HICKSON/SIUSLAW NEWS.

Chad Smith will lead the Lions in the upcoming season

BY ZACH SILVA
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With about five weeks until the first official practice of the year, the Cottage Grove High School football team now has a head coach.

Last Friday, Chad Smith, 32, received the call from CGHS principal Kevin Herington offering him the position of both head coach and PE teacher at the high school.

"They've had success, which is obviously great,

(but) they are great kids here as well. Not just as athletes, but the kids are respectful," said Smith in a phone interview on Thursday. "This is probably one of the better schools I've been at athletically as a head coach."

This will be Smith's fourth different varsity head coaching position in Oregon since 2014. In 2014 Smith was the head coach at La Grande where the team went (5-4). After being an assistant coach at Seaside in 2015, he was named head coach in 2016 and the team went 3-5. In 2017 he served

as an athletic director/PE coach at a Seattle-area middle school before last season heading to Siuslaw where the Vikings finished the season 0-8.

Smith was also the PE coach and girls basketball coach at Siuslaw last year.

"It's an excellent opportunity for me teaching-wise and coaching-wise," said Smith. "This is where I want to be, it's an exciting opportunity for me."

New CGHS athletic director Matt Myers was pleased with Smith's knowledge of Oregon high school

FOOTBALL see B3

Athletes of the Week

This week's athletes of the week are all those who competed at the Cottage Grove Rodeo. For more pictures of the weekend's action, turn to B2 and B10.



A rider in the bareback riding event tries using no hands before falling off. PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL