

3-on-3 tourney now a tradition



By the time I got downtown on Saturday, Takin’ It to the Streets, Hermiston’s three-on-three basketball tournament, was already in full swing. The courts were full of participants playing or shooting. Lines had formed around all the food vendors and the bleachers placed carefully around the intersection of East Main and Third streets had no empty seats remaining.

I saw people from all over: Prosser, Mabton, Yakima, Richland, Kennewick, Pasco, Pendleton, Irrigon, Stanfield, Hermiston, Umatilla. Volunteers bustled around. Fans clapped, cheered, gasped and groaned. It became obvious during the specialty competitions — the slam dunk contest and three-point contest — that people take these things seriously, especially considering slam dunk champ Thane Pierson went between his legs on his first finals attempt to decidedly win the title.

But games were physical. A couple times it looked like the players might try to settle a dispute with closed fists, but the tension always relieved itself with a shake of hands and a few words.

Takin’ It to the Streets was inspired and helped along by Hoopfest in Spokane. Actually, my friend, who attended Gonzaga University in Spokane, told me that it reminded her of the “biggest 3-on-3 on Earth.”

But it’s easy to see why Takin’ It to the Streets has lasted much longer than its predecessor: Shake N’ Bake. For one, as long-time organizer Joe Thompson told me, Hermiston has just gotten better at wrapping itself around things like this. Businesses — regional, national and local — sponsored various aspects of the tournament from courts to teams to simply advertisements sprinkled around the venue. I saw Jake McElligott, Hermiston’s boys basketball coach, and Steve Hoffert, Hermiston’s girls coach, organizing and officiating games. I saw current and former area players volunteering or playing. Former Bulldog Abi Drotzmann and current Bulldog Jansen Edmiston were judges for the slam dunk contest along with Irrigon boys coach Mitch Thompson and Hoffert’s wife, Jenni.

By including recognizable names in positions like that, it, at least, gives the impression that Hermiston is behind the event, that it’s excited to host something like this. Fellow Herald reporter Sean Hart told me it can be close to impossible to get a hotel room in town that weekend because of how many people flood in for Takin’ It to the Streets.

Above all else, though, it was fun. I had fun and all I did was talk to people and take pictures. In 10 years, Hermiston has certainly figured out how to run a good basketball tournament and how to make it enticing and attractive. Here’s to another 10 years of Takin’ It to the Streets. And hopefully another 10 years after that.

— Sam Barbee is a sports reporter for the Hermiston Herald and East Oregonian based in Hermiston. He can be reached by phone at 541-564-4542 or by email at sbarbee@hermistonherald.com. Follow him on Twitter @SamBarbee1 and follow Herald Sports @HHeraldSports.

Echo Outrage ends summer with title

By SAM BARBEE
Staff Writer

The Echo Outrage 18U ASA softball team won three of its four games this weekend and walked away with the top prize at the summer season-concluding tournament in McMinnville.

Bolstered by a leadoff home run from Megan Bailey in the top of the seventh inning of the championship game against the host McMinnville Grizzlies, Outrage held on for a narrow 2-1 victory to take the tournament.

McKenzie Gonzales threw her best game of the summer, coach Bryan Bailey said. The rising junior tossed a complete game, allowing one earned run on six hits while striking out five and walking three.

After Marissa Pratt doubled home Allison Rude in the top of the first for a 1-0 lead and Bailey parked a solo shot in the seventh to put Echo up 2-0, Gonzales found herself in a bit of trouble in the home seventh. After an error, strikeout and single, McMinnville had



PHOTO COURTESY BRYAN BAILEY
The Echo Outrage 18U ASA softball team celebrates after winning the summer season-concluding McMinnville Tournament this weekend in McMinnville.

runners at the corners with one away. Gillian Bonnett then tripled off Gonzales to drive in the Grizzlies’ only run of the day and cut Echo’s lead in half, but McMinnville got greedy trying to send the runner from first, and catcher Erika Parks tagged out the runner to record the second out of the inning. Gonzales induced an easy ground ball to seal the win and the tournament.

Earlier on Sunday, Echo beat Walport 11-4 behind a

solid offensive effort. Kenzie Blankenship (3 for 3, triple, three runs) and Jaime Christopher (2 for 2, two RBIs) led the way offensively, but Parks (2 for 3, two RBIs), Rude (2 for 3, two runs), Pratt (2 for 3, double, two RBIs) and Monique Montoya (two RBIs) contributed heavily, as well.

Bailey started in the circle and tossed six innings,

allowing four runs (three earned) on eight hits and fanned six. Gonzales tossed a perfect seventh.

On Saturday, Echo split its two games. Salem Mayhem eased past Outrage 18-1 in Saturday’s opener with an 11-run fifth inning. Kelly McLaughlin and Beatriz Aguilera were the lone bright spots with 2-for-2 days.

Echo rebounded with a 4-3 win in Saturday’s nightcap over the Hills-

boro Thunder. McLaughlin put the team out front with two-run shot in the top of the third to give Echo a 3-2 lead. Hillsboro loaded the bases in the bottom half of the third against Bailey, but the right-hander bowed her back and got an infield fly, fielder’s choice and easy pop up to left field to end the threat. Echo tacked on a much-needed insurance run in the seventh when Bailey scored on a throwing error, and it proved huge as Hillsboro pushed across a run of its own in the home seventh to come within a run at 4-3. But Bailey again worked out of trouble and coaxed two ground balls to put away the Thunder.

“Overall, it was a successful summer season for all players involved,” Bailey said. “I’ve seen vast improvement from many players.”

ECHO OUTRAGE 2, MCMINNVILLE GRIZZLIES

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M. Gonzales and E. Parks; Taylor and B. Mالدave.		



STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE
Hermiston 11-year-old Chase Elliott flips to second base with his glove while taking ground balls during the Tri-City Youth Baseball Clinic on Sunday at Gesa Stadium in Pasco.

Pros put on a clinic

Try-City team coaches 30 young ballplayers from northeast Oregon

By SAM BARBEE
Staff Writer

Growing up in West Covina, California, Tri-City Dust Devils first baseman Ty France attended Rancho Camonga Quakes games often, and participated in a number of clinics and camps, getting opportunities to work on the same field as professional ballplayers and learn-

ing from them.

Sunday, the tables turned. No longer was he looking up to the players. He was one now, and he spent two hours teeing up balls on Sunday for children from all over south-east Washington and north-east Oregon at the Tri-City Dust Devils Youth Baseball Clinic at Gesa Stadium in Pasco.

“It’s cool being able to now be in our position where we can give back to these little kids and help them out,” he said. “It’s fun.”

Teammate Mason Smith, an outfielder, agreed.

“I think it’s just a great opportunity to work with little kids who love the

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STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE

A camper from Hermiston gets an autograph from Tri-City Dust Devils outfielder Mason Smith after the Youth Baseball Clinic on Sunday at Gesa Stadium in Pasco.



GO SEE IT

Wednesday, July 22
Men’s Softball
Winner Game 1 @ #1 Preferred Realty, North softball field, Theater Sports Park, 6 p.m.
Winner Game 2 @ Winner Game 3, South softball field, Theater Sports Park, 6 p.m.
If Game, South softball field, Theater Sports Park, 7:30 p.m.

GOLF
City of Hermiston Junior Golf Tournament, Echo Hills Golf Course, 8:30 a.m.
Thursday, July 23
No events scheduled
Friday, July 24
No events scheduled

Saturday, July 25
No events scheduled
Sunday, July 26
Water Volleyball
Hermiston Family Aquatic Center, 6-8 p.m.
Monday, July 27
No events scheduled

Tuesday, July 28
No events scheduled
**If you have any events you’d like to see on the schedule, email submissions to Sam Barbee at sbarbee@hermiston-herald.com*