

Column

Don't bet against LA

Don't have a Cow man | The Rip's Sports Editor picks the next NBA World Champion

With the NBA playoffs this weekend, it's time for me to give you a break and tell you who is going to take the Larry O'Brien Championship Trophy.



Zak S. Cowan

The Los Angeles Lakers will give Phil Jackson his 12th championship as a head coach.

They will get there not for Jackson, but because of Jackson.

If you are planning on putting money down on a team, be sure to not bet against Jackson.

Jackson is known around the league as the "Zen Master," and I have no doubt he'll pull his team together and carry them their 18th NBA championship.

With all the talk about the Miami Heat and how they were going to dominate the Lakers, I think one has to denounce their previous opinion after watching the entire season unfold.

I have absolutely no experience playing or coaching basketball, but I have watched countless games and drank countless beers while watching them. Rest assured, I am a pro at this aspect of the sport.

One does not need any more knowledge or experience than that to see that the Lakers are clearly the goliath of the league and that they will take it all for Jackson's fourth three-peat.

Teams like San Antonio and Oklahoma City will push the Lakers to six games or so, but neither will truly have a chance.

Picking the Lakers' opponent in the Finals is more of a dilemma.

You have three or four teams that have a chance to win the Eastern Conference to get their chance to take on the two-time defending champions. With Miami, Boston, Chicago and Orlando all battling it out for the Finals berth, the East will be flat-out great television.

Miami will not be able to finally get the chemistry they've been trying to achieve all year, and LeBron and Wade will both miss game-winning shots.

Orlando just doesn't have enough outside presence to get past either of those teams, although I wouldn't be surprised if Dwight Howard again dominated enough to get them to the Finals—but it's a long shot.

So that leaves Chicago and Boston. Boston will beat Chicago sometime in the tournament, setting up the third time in four years the two most storied teams in the league will face each other, with the Lakers taking it in five.

As the years move on, with Kobe aging, Phil retiring, and a crucial offseason in 2012, it will be hard to keep championships in the Lakers' future, but I wouldn't be surprised if a move was made to assure that they are.

Kids get a chance to shoot with the pros

By Zak S. Cowan
Sports Editor

This summer, Bakersfield's youth will be able to hone their basketball skills with training from professional ball players.

The Basketball Universe Academy is a youth-training program in Bakersfield that was founded by Kyle Shiloh, Dwan Rice and Richard "Zeek" Andrews in 2008-09.

The program consists of training sessions, a developmental league, and a cheerleading program.

Shiloh graduated from Garces Memorial High School in 2003 before gaining a scholarship to play for the University of Nevada, where he became the winningest player in the school's history, won four conference championships, and had one Sweet Sixteen appearance in four NCAA tournaments.

Shiloh is using BUA to reach out to young basketball players in the Bakersfield area and help the youth grow in the game of basketball, as well as in life.

"Growing up I didn't have too many direct role models, only older players who I watched play in high school and played against growing up.

"I would watch them, take bits and pieces from all of their games, and try to put it all together on the court which I believe helped me get to where I am today," Shiloh said.

"I think I can be a role model to my kids in BUA by sharing my experiences in my career and

as a kid [and] athlete growing up. I never really had anyone to tell me about the things I would encounter as a young athlete going through life, and I think I can do that for these kids."

Shiloh's vision for BUA is to eventually expand to more cities around the country, and the organization will add a second location next summer in Reno.

As of right now, Shiloh is focused on Bakersfield and the basketball community in the area.

"My goal right now for [BUA] is to transform the way basketball is viewed in Bakersfield," he said. "Year after year there is always so much talent in this town, but the problem is that talent never develops to its full potential."

"People are not aware of the hard work that is required on and off the court to get where they want to go as far as athletics. I think I can help change all of this by continuing to build BUA and help develop these youth."

Shiloh credits his interest in starting a youth-development league to his father, who started one of the first Amateur Athletic Union teams in the Bakersfield area.

"It was because of the years I spent traveling on my father's team that I was exposed to some of the best AAU teams on the west coast and experienced different academies similar to BUA," he said.

Of all of Shiloh's achievements, which include being the



COURTESY OF KYLE SHILOH

Kyle Shiloh is the co-founder of Basketball Universe.

first of his siblings to earn a college degree, he credits BUA as his biggest.

"Off the court, along with being engaged to my fiance, I would say that [BUA] may be one of my biggest achievements considering that everything I have ever gained in life has come from basketball and now I'm able to help others experience everything I did," he said.

"BUA is definitely what I

want to do when I retire from basketball, which, at age 26, could be sooner than I would like being overseas."

The staff of BUA is well rounded in the sport of basketball, with each staff member having played at least at the collegiate level, "and some of them are currently playing professionally in Europe," Shiloh said. Shiloh is currently playing professionally in France and

will be back in Bakersfield after the season ends in May.

"Basketball in France is very physical, very competitive, and is much more popular a sport than people in the [United States] may expect. In the [NBA] they have rules such as defensive three seconds to keep the defense honest and make it more of an offensive scoring league," Shiloh said of the differences he faces playing overseas. "Basketball in France, as well as most European countries, is all defensive, physical leagues. Those two things together, without a defensive-three-second rule, make it very difficult to score. This is why many NBA players come to Europe and do not do well."

"The tolerance of production from players is definitely less in France than in the States, which also adds to the pressure. The French style of play relies more on their physical ability and hard work, rather than in the States where we tend to rely on our God-given talent to play the game."

The registration deadline for BUA, which allows youth in grades 3-12, is June 13, and the fee is \$320 for the developmental league, which comes with advanced training.

Cheerleading registration also comes with training and, "various performance opportunities," according to their Web site. The fee for registration is also \$320.

Play for the developmental league will start on June 27, and go through Aug. 28.

Tennis gears up for championships

By Tyler McGinty
Reporter

Bakersfield College's women's team ended up tying for third place in their conference this season after losing to Santa Barbara City College and defeating Glendale Community College last week.

Santa Barbara almost entirely defeated BC in the penultimate game of the season on April 5, with BC losing 8-1. The only victory BC took was the singles one match, played by Denisa Hromadkova of BC and Elizabeth Sauer of Santa Barbara. Hromadkova won the match 6-1, 6-2.

The first match BC played against Santa Barbara earlier in the season, Sauer defeated Hromadkova for the first time, taking away Hromadkova's perfect record.

"It felt good," Hromadkova said about defeating Sauer. "I played much better this time."

"We had other good matches, but they won," Coach Gene Lundquist said about the Santa Barbara match.

BC ended the season with the match against Glendale on April 7, defeating them 5-4. However, the Glendale team had to default twice due to injuries.

Glendale's number six singles player had to retire against Jay-



JOSEPH COTA / THE RIP

Kassandra A. Beadle of BC returns a serve on April 5 in the team's 1-8 loss to Santa Barbara City College.

lene Chan of BC due to injury, and the last match of the game wasn't played because Phoebe Minette of Glendale sustained an injury during her match against Kassandra Beadle of BC.

Hromadkova won her singles match in two sets, coming from behind each time. She won the first set 7-6 after winning the

tiebreak 6-2, and the second set 7-5. This made Hromadkova's record in the conference 8-2 and 11-2 overall.

This record seeded her as the number two player in the championship tournament for the conference.

Lundquist had said the match against Glendale really came down to the last singles match they played, which was between Beadle and Minette.

"Kassie got beat the first set 6-2, and it wasn't looking good," said Lundquist. "Then in the middle of the second set she turned it around, got back to a tiebreak and won that, and then defeated Minette 6-1 in the third [set]. That got us to four all."

However, BC didn't even get a chance to play their last match against Glendale. The last match was supposed to be a doubles match, but the Glendale coach had to pull Minette out of the last match, making BC's fifth and final victory a default.

"You know, we don't like to win that way, but it worked out," said Lundquist.

BC ended their season tied for third place with Ventura College, but BC beat Ventura in their last game with them.

"So we consider that we're third, behind Santa Barbara and Santa Monica," said Lundquist.

With the season over, the team is practicing for the conference championships where players will compete for individual awards. BC will bring eight



JOSEPH COTA / THE RIP

Kassandra A. Beadle serves to Santa Barbara College tennis player Meike van Hoogenhuijze on April 5.

players to the championships, including the number two seed Hromadkova. These eight players will play eight singles matches and four doubles matches at the championships, which will be held April 15 and 16. If any members enter the quarterfinals of the championships, they will

head to the regional championship on May 4.

Lundquist is looking forward to next season, saying they have a lot of good players already signed up, including four returning players: Hromadkova, Janelle Fivecoat, Beadle, and Sarah Smith.

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Much like the next fan, I love opening day; it is synonymous with a positive beginning.

As great as that day is, I don't feel that it takes the pennant when it comes to significant days in baseball.



Julian Moore

The only day more important during the season is Jackie Robinson day. As a young boy growing up in a Giants-run household with deep San Francisco roots, I learned that only one thing was as important as the game itself. And that was a hate for the Dodgers. And I have typically followed that rule with one exception: The 1947-1956 Brooklyn Dodgers.

Growing up I never understood the impact of Jackie Robinson's career simply because as a child the concept of racism was lost on me. But it didn't lessen the fact that he was and is my favorite player for the simple fact that he impacted the game of baseball more than any other player.

I was in awe of one person opening the door for not just cultures and people at the time, but for the future of anyone looking to make it to the "biggs."

Robinson's impact touched more than baseball, his career opened doors in all sports. The influence reached the nation that was and is sports.

But to have an entire league come together to celebrate a legend like that is what makes it a special day.

Not many sports in today's world can say they have a day in their sport that is bigger than a game that spans across centuries.

The first homage to the first ballot Hall of Fame member came in 2004 when Commissioner Bud Selig stated that April 15 would be Jackie Robinson Day throughout the league. It wasn't until the following year that it was a celebration from season-to-season.

Ken Griffey Jr. added to the tradition in 2007 when he wore Robinson's number 42 after receiving permission from Robinson's wife, Rachel, (which was retired throughout baseball) and soon after became a league-wide celebration.

Whether you agree with teams wearing the iconic number or not, the festivities bring fans and players from all corners of the country together.

Robinson's career had a significant impact on not only the game of baseball but also the lives of fans and players.

The man who made stealing home plate an accomplishment and not just a thought, was an activist and an ambassador for the future of the game with dreams like seeing African-American managers on the field and in the dugouts.

And that was what he hoped his legacy would become, not just numbers and championships, but giving opportunities to others and most importantly respecting every human being no matter who they are.

It's like Jackie once said, "A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives."

Rounding the last base to victory

By Michael Morrow
Reporter

Winners of four of their last five, Bakersfield College's softball team is pushing forward to the regional playoffs with an 18-14 record overall and 7-3 in the Western State Conference.

The Renegades picked up wins against College of the Canyons 5-0, Glendale 6-1 and 5-4 and Cuesta College 15-2.

"The first three games we won were big conference games because College of the Canyons was ahead of us and Glendale was right behind us, so those were three big games," said BC head softball coach Sandi Taylor. "Four-out-of-five, we're playing pretty good and I feel real confident. We only have 8 games left to play and we're right where we need to be."

The loss came when BC played Mt. San Antonio College for the second time this season. The Renegades lost 10-3 in the first game earlier this season March 26 and 5-0 on April 9.

"The score in the first one, 10-3, sounded bad, but in reality there were a lot of singles. Like 11 singles or something like that they put together. Where as this game, they beat us 5-0, but they didn't get as many hits and a

couple of hits they got we probably should have been a little more aggressive on," Taylor said. "I wasn't real pleased with the way we swung the bats against them. We didn't swing with much confidence, although we had a couple chances to score, we just didn't swing the bats the way we're capable of against that caliber of a pitcher."

Taylor mentioned what she learned about her team after the last five games. "What I take away from it is, if we get going and everybody gets on track, and has that belief that we can beat them, then I know we're right there with them physically. It's just a matter of stepping over that hurdle and having confidence."

Up next for the Renegades is a double header at Santa Monica then a home matchup against Citrus College and another double header against L.A. Valley at home. BC then travels to L.A. Mission to finish off the regular season. All six games are WSC matchups, which will determine playoff positioning and seeding.

"I hope they realize that they are capable, I'm sure they're playing with confidence, so that's the key. Not playing with over confidence, but being humble enough to know you have to work at it. But I feel real good about the



MEGAN LUECKE / THE RIP

Cerritos College's Courtney Priddie slides into third base, and Bakersfield College pitcher Annissa Carendar in the second game of a double-header at BC on April 1.

space we're in," said Taylor. As for what Taylor plans on telling the team before the push into the playoffs, she mentioned this week of practice and getting

back to basic was important, but just as important is enjoying the game. "All we're really going to talk about is that it's now time to sit back, relax and have fun with

all the things that they've worked hard to get to. There is nothing going to surprise them, nothing is new, it's just a matter of being fine tuned and ready to go."

BC still holds second in conference after four losses



GREGORY D. COOK / THE RIP

Cougars' Juan Perez slides under Bakersfield College's Enrique Meza's attempted tag during BC's loss to College of the Canyons at BC on April 2.

Baseball results for March 29-April 9

COMPILED BY JULIAN MOORE

March 29

Bakersfield 6, West L.A. 4
Win: Joe Neilson (5-1)
Loss: Jonathan Skura (1-3)
Save: Taylor Aikenhead (4)
Key moment: West L.A. had four errors in the game and prevented the Wildcats from winning the game in the last three innings.

March 31

Canyons 6, Bakersfield 5 F/11

Win: Troy Neiman (5-4)
Loss: Taylor Aikenhead (4-1)
Key moment: Canyons scored the winning run off an error by second baseman Enrique Meza.

April 2

Canyons 8, Bakersfield 2
Win: Kameron Krise (1-1)
Loss: Marcos Reyna (3-2)
Key Moment: Canyons scored four runs in the eighth inning

pushing the game out of reach for the Renegades. All of Canyons runs came unearned.

April 5

Bakersfield 8, L.A. Valley 7
Win: Joe Neilson (6-1)
Loss: David Armas (1-8)
Save: Phillip Valos (3)
Key Moment: The Renegades gave up one run in the ninth but didn't allow the Monarch's to win.

April 7

L.A. Valley 9, Bakersfield 1
Win: Stephen Odachowski (4-0)
Loss: Bryan Maxwell (2-4)
Key Moment: Starter pitcher Maxwell gave up seven runs on ten hits in the game.

April 9

Citrus 6, Bakersfield College 0
Win: Richard Perry (6-2)
Loss: Marcos Reyna (3-3)

Key Moment: BC was held scoreless throughout while all six of Citrus' runs came off starting pitcher Reyna.

BC lost four of its last six with an overall record of 17-12 and is now 9-7 in conference play tied with Glendale College for second place.

Both teams are two games behind current leader Los Angeles Pierce (11-5).

Track and field star shining for BC

This year's track and field team has been all about progression and improvement from meet-to-meet and is closing in on the climax of their season.

"We seem to be improving with every meet," said men's track and field head coach

Dave Frickel. "The men have been improving a lot faster than the women mostly because the lack of depth the women have on the team. The person who far exceeded my expectations was Darien Moore. His continuous improvement from last year to this year has been incredible."

Darien Moore is fourth in the hammer throw in Southern California and is first in shot put in Southern California.

Swimming

Bakersfield College's swim team has been filled with promise and record-breaking performances.

"I would give this year, so far, a B, because we still need to work on some small things, like focusing better," said swimming head coach Charlie Pike. "The most impressive swimmer this year has been Brian Collier, who set a school record in the 200-meter, but even more impressive is he will get in any race that I put him."

"The moments that defined our season are when we were at the Cuesta [invitational]. The girls placed fifth, and that's when Collier set the record," said Pike. Collier broke the meet-record in the 200-meter with a time of 1:56.18.

Men's golf

This golf season started with some promise but recently has been a struggle.

Coach Kalivas said, "this season has been disappointing and inconsistency has been our biggest problem. If I had to give this season a grade it would be a D, D for dumb."

The struggles continued for the golf team on April 11 when they played a conference meet at Rio Bravo.

BC ended up sixth, out of seven schools.

"Not having a consistent team showing up, it's hard for us to build any chemistry as a team and that's a big reason why we haven't shown up consistently. With two matches remaining it is important that we try to end on a good note and to qualify."



GREGORY D. COOK / THE RIP

Bakersfield College's Rufie Fessler tees off on the 13th hole at the Rio Bravo Country Club on April 11.

Men's tennis

Men's tennis was rained out April 7, and did not play any games. They are tentatively rescheduled to play against Glen-

dale College on April 14. BC had one player, Nik Jacobs, placed in the conference championships, which will be played April 15 and 16 at an undecided location.

BC's golden voice speaks

By Kevin Foster
Reporter

For 35 years, athletes have come and gone through Bakersfield College, but Carl Bryan, 65, has stayed as the announcer for the majority of BC sports.

Bryan likes to refer to himself as the "voice of the Renegades." After seeing all the sports he has announced, one could see why.

Bryan has announced 156 seasons of Renegade athletics.

The sports include: football, track and field, and basketball just to name a few.

His start came in 1981 when then track coach Bob Covey was about to retire and suggested that Bryan try his hand at some announcing.

Bryan doesn't seem to want to

stop anytime soon.

"I would do this until I'm 90 if my old age allows it," Bryan said. "Thank goodness for the new handicap ramps in the baseball and softball fields."

As if that wasn't enough, Bryan announces more than just BC athletics.

"I cover all track and field," Bryan said. "I graduated East High, so I announce their football and basketball games as well."

Bryan can be seen in Sacramento this summer announcing the Track and Field World Masters.

"I'll be getting room and food at the event, but I feel like I'm getting paid in the experience to do this," Bryan said.

He commented about some of the other major events he has

had the privilege of announcing.

His first year announcing softball, he got to announce the State Championship.

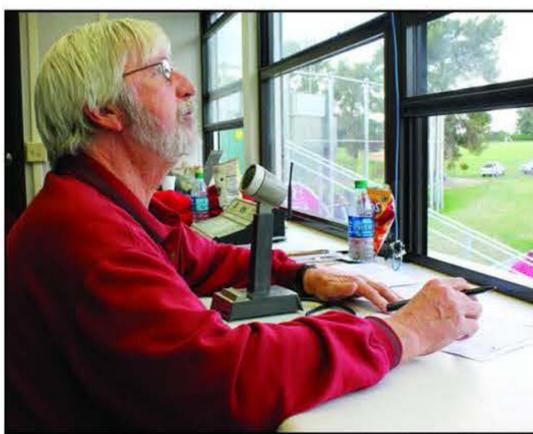
Bryan has also announced the last eight cross-country state championships in Fresno. He has announced four national championships in track and field.

With all that announcing, Bryan talked about his pay rate.

"I don't fill out the papers that Stuebbe gives me, I just write my name and the rest just comes together," Bryan said. "Hell, I would do this for free if my wife let me."

After current athletic director Jan Stuebbe retires, Bryan will be on his fourth different athletic director.

Stuebbe talked about Bryan's



MARTIN CHANG / THE RIP

Carl Bryan, who has been an announcer for 35 years for BC, announces a softball game on March 28.

announcing at the BC sports events.

"We wouldn't trade Carl for the world, he loves what he does and we are lucky to have him here," Stuebbe said.

Bryan does much more than announcing.

He currently is a substitute teacher working for the Kern High School District.

"I subbed for an advanced algebra class at Centennial [high school], and those are some of the most well-behaved kids I have taught in high school."

Column

We still need Tiger

Open Mike | A column about the everyday happenings in sports.

Boxing used to be a big time sport, with names like Muhammad Ali and "Iron" Mike Tyson, while Tiger Woods made huge



Michael Morrow

waves for golf. But in recent times, both have fallen off the radar. Soccer on the other hand, has never had that type of draw in America, but is just a few simple steps away. To get these sports back to the top and to put soccer into the forefront, I have the answers.

With the Masters at Augusta passing by and Woods nearly winning, but sputtering late again, a thought crossed my mind.

When is Tiger going to get back to the top and how is it that seven people had a chance at the world's number one ranking? Ten of the last 10 major tournament winners have been different players each time, with Woods not being one of them.

Rankings aside, Woods struggles have been well documented. Seventeen tournaments in 17 months Woods has entered since the unraveling of his life, with no wins to show for them. Woods is working on a new swing with a new coach, which has affected his game.

While Woods struggles, the world waits and watches patiently for Tiger to make a comeback. I know I can't wait for the day when Woods passes Jack Nicklaus in major titles won. It'll be one of those moments in history where everyone looking back will stop and think 'where was I,' and 'what was I doing when Tiger passed Jack.' The world needs its Tiger.

In a different world, soccer is the bee's knees, while in America soccer is a bust of a sport.

Major League Soccer was supposed to blow up and become the next major sport in the country. Apparently, with the addition of players like David Beckham and Thierry Henry and this last World Cup, the American team brought some slim hopes to MLS. Now that Beckham in the United States was a bust, and the buzz about getting a World Cup bid has died down, it's back to the cellar for MLS.

Recently, NFL wide-receiver Chad Ochocinco tried out for Sporting Kansas City. This hype brought some needed attention to the game, but when Ochocinco bows out and heads back to the Cincinnati Bengals, the hype will die.

MLS needs to find players that are bigger, stronger, faster, more physical and more athletic.

Another way to help the game is by setting dimensions that are smaller than they are now. But, with bigger-better players, maybe that doesn't matter as much.

A newer sport based off of several other fighter sports is Mixed Martial Arts. MMA is just that, mixed fighting styles in combined fashion: boxing, karate, wrestling, etc.

MMA is being blamed for the death of boxing, but in reality, boxing is the death of boxing. With horrible promoters reaching and grabbing for every penny they can get out of the sport and the commissions running the sport into the ground allowing the promoters to do as they please, no wonder it hasn't progressed in years.

Right now, boxing has two fighters who are at the top of their game. Floyd "Money" Mayweather and Manny "Pacman" Pacquiao have had their verbal shots at each other, but no physical punches have been thrown. More than likely, the promoters won't let it happen until they get the payday their after. The promoters need to be banned from the sport.

The sport needs a sanctioning body; Football has the NFL and basketball has the NBA. In individual sports, tennis has ATP and golf has the PGA. Boxing needs to wake up already, before MMA runs away with the title.

Cheer team quests for new talent

By Chrystal Fortt
Reporter

Once a year, a week before spring break, a group of aspiring cheerleaders hopes to make Bakersfield College's cheer team for next semester.

This year, there were 28 women trying out with eight being returning members from last year. The women get less than a week to prepare before the judges critique them.

The first day they learn the traditional BC pom routine, the second day they learn a dance, and the third day they learn three cheers.

Not only do the women need to know how to dance, but also they need to have confidence.

Heather Witcher has been on the cheer team for two years and has taught the cheers and dances to all of the women trying out.

"I keep telling them it's about confidence, you have to smile, you have to want to be a cheerleader, not 'I'm so good at this, I'm better than you,'" said Witcher. "You have to smile, that kind of coincides with everything because you have to be loud. In order to be loud, you have to be confident. In order to smile, you have to be confident. It's just confidence."

Witcher explained why the judges would be looking for confidence and smiling.

"If you do a dance and you're



MEGAN LUECKE / THE RIP

Bakersfield College student Metiqua Eng (center) performs a routine the team has been practicing all week during the cheer-team tryouts in the BC gym April 1.

like 'I'm over it,' when you're on the field you just have to keep smiling, you're out there for almost four hours, it doesn't matter how tired you are, you just have to keep smiling."

Returning sophomores know what the judges want. Kylie Weldin said, "I feel confident, just because I'm a returner and

I know what the judges want, so I'm not like a deer in the headlights. Last year I had no idea."

There are usually women that return from a year before, and to keep the judging fair, there are different judges every year so they don't know any of the women.

They try to give second chances

to women who they think might have potential but didn't do as well on their first try.

"Once everybody tries out, [the judges] call people back and if there's a girl they're not sure about, if she messed up and they think she can do better, they'll say, 'I want to see 7, 12, and 15 again,'" Witcher said.

"They also want to see different girls together in different groups. If there's somebody next to you and you're not comfortable with her, you don't do as good. If you mix it up a little bit you could do better. It changes the dynamics a little bit."

Many of the girls waited to be critiqued by the judges. They practiced the dances Witcher taught them. The girls had mixed emotions of nervousness and excitement for the tryouts.

Metiqua Eng was trying out for the first time at BC but has cheered for Cal State Bakersfield.

"I'm a little nervous, but I try not to be nervous. You've got to be really confident," said Eng. "You have to let your ego go through the roof because the more confident you are you're not even going to think about it if you mess up. You just keep shaking and moving."

Trying out for the cheer team isn't just signing up for cheering. It requires more work.

"Being a cheerleader here is like a second job. You have practice for 15 hours a week and then you have volleyball games, basketball games, football games, volunteer work, community service. We have so much to do," said Witcher. "You have to bring in your transcripts and you have to have a minimum 2.0 [GPA]. If you fall below a 2.0, you get dropped."

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16th Annual Scottish Games and Gathering

A day of throwing stones, bagpipes and celebration

By Esteban Ramirez
Reporter

People go to the Scottish Games to watch the events, shows, listen to music, learn about Scottish heritage and enjoy the atmosphere.

This year's Scottish Games were on April 2 and was the 16th year they were held at the Kern County Fairgrounds.

They had different types of events and shows like the Caber Toss, Hammer Throw, Haggis Toss, The World's Tallest Leprechaun, Black Gold Cloggers, George the Giant and many more.

Ted Miller, 72, who went for the first time to the Scottish Games said, "my favorite parts of the day were the sporting events and the music. This is something I want to keep doing, but next time I'll bring my camera." He also said, "I really think the Haggis Toss is interesting and I would love to participate in it, but I'm too old for that."

Other people liked the displays for sale and the atmosphere. Some have been going to the Scottish Games for a while and like Miller, this was the first year some people attended.

Betty Stewart, a member of the Kern County Scottish Society, said, "our main goal for the Scottish Games is to make people aware that they have Scottish blood in them and to show them the Scottish heritage."

She said that part of the profits from this event goes to the general account for the Jamison Children Center, which is an emergency shelter for kids that provides a safe, warm and nurturing environment. Stewart said, "the kids also get free entrance to the Scottish Games."

Stewart said that they don't have any requirements for people who want to join any of the events, so you can be any nationality to join in on any of the events. Stewart said that she was not Scottish, but married into it.

Stewart said, "my favorite part of the day is all the food, music, vendors and events, but it's all good. All these years I've been here I still don't know how those skinny guys can toss the caber."

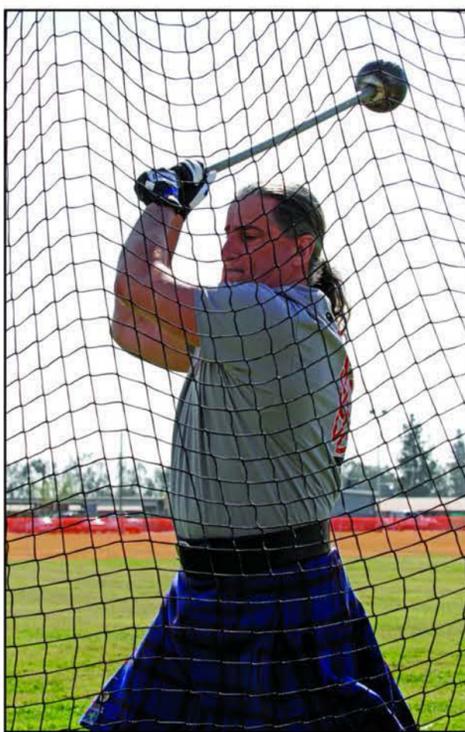
The Kern County Scottish Society had 33 clans this year but Stewart said that her clan is the oldest because it has been a part of it since they started it.

"It's great to be Scottish," said Stewart.



GREGORY D. COOK / THE RIP

Miguel del Gallego competes in the Braemar Stone event at the Kern County Scottish Games and Gathering on April 2.



Above: An athlete competing in the heavy athletic events winds up to throw a 22-pound hammer for distance.

Above right: A combined pipe and drum band leads a procession of clans during the opening ceremonies of the gathering.

Right: Reverend Nancy McMasters leads a memorial service for clan members that have passed away over the last year.

Left: Piper Kevin Briley of the group Whiskey Galore performs on the Budwiser Pavilion stage.

Above left: Musician CJ Henderson of Wicked Tinkers plays a didgeridoo. While not traditionally a Scottish instrument, the didgeridoo's low, rumbling tones blend nicely with other Celtic instruments.