

Pearce hits mark with World Team

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Paige Pearce is all smiles with all arrows in the center X ring after her finish at the JOAD Nationals.

Thirteen-year-old Paige Pearce of Red Bluff is living her dream, and there is no stopping her.

Pearce has broken, and, or, currently holds over 85 National, State and Star FITA records.

And as if that is not impressive enough, on Aug. 4-10, Pearce competed in the Junior World Trials at the Olympic Center in Colorado Springs, Colo. and secured one of the three coveted positions on the Compound Cadet United States Junior World Team.

Pearce will be traveling with the team to Antalya, Turkey to compete in the Junior World Championships in October.

After shooting her first few FITA tournaments last year, Pearce wanted to make a United States Archery Team, so at the 2007 Outdoor Nationals held at the Olympic Center in Colorado Springs, Pearce decided to jump two age divisions ahead (from bowman age 8-12 into cadet age 15-16) just to see how she would do against the older kids, shooting the farther distances at 60 meters.

Pearce ended up winning that tournament and breaking over 19 National and Star FITA records.

"Well, this summer has been a busy one," said Pearce, "We were on the road for over a month."

The Pearces drove from California to Oklahoma City where Paige and her nine year- old brother Kaden Pearce, shot the four-day Junior Olympic Archery Development (JOAD) Nationals.

Jumping up into the Cadet Female Compound Division (age 15-16), Pearce finished with a silver and a bronze medal in the Nationals and a silver medal in the team event.

"From there we drove to Yankton, South Dakota, where we shot for seven days straight," said Pearce.

Pearce then finished second in the 3-D Unmarked Nationals and won the Field Nationals breaking more records. Kaden Pearce won the Unmarked 3-D Nationals and placed second in the Field Nationals.

"Then it was on to Colorado Springs to shoot the 124th Outdoor National Target Championships at the Olympic Center," said Stacy Pearce, mother of the two children, "and Paige would also be competing in the Junior World Trials with the hopes of making the United States Team. We were so lucky.

The opening ceremonies for the Olympic Games were happening while we were there. A huge group of archers met at a theater inside the Olympic Center on Friday night and watched the opening ceremonies together. It was awesome!"

This was the first time Paige had competed in this type of tournament. The 124th Outdoor National Target Championships took place during the first four days of shooting and competitors earned ranking points for placements. These ranking points would determine the seeding for the Junior World Trials that would take place on the final day. Only the top eight ranked archers in each division would move on to compete in the Junior World Trials.

During the Nationals, archers would shoot two complete FITA rounds. A FITA round in the Cadet division consists of 36 arrows at 60 meters, 36 arrows at 50 meters, 36 arrows at 40 meters and 36 arrows at 30 meters. In the Bowman division, Kaden would be shooting the same number of arrows at 30, 25, 25 and 20 meters. Each arrow scores 10 points each for a total score of 1440.

At the end of the double FITA, Kaden finished the Nationals in second place and broke two Star FITA records. Paige would finish the Nationals in second, breaking or tying, another nineteen records. Her second FITA score was a 1400. Kailey Johnston from Georgia, who will turn fourteen this year, would finish in first and also shoot a 1400 FITA round.

Sunday, Aug. 12 was the Junior World Trials. The double FITA whittled the competition down to the top eight competitors that would then go head to head with each other in the Round Robin Match during the world trials. All arrows would be shot at 60 meters. The match began with a one-arrow shoot off against Tristan Scarvan for the second ranking position as Paige and Tristan were tied in ranking points after the double FITA.

In the first match both girls shot a ten and had to shoot again. Tristan shot a nine, just out of the ten ring, and Pearce managed to put another into the center, scoring a ten and winning the shoot off which placed her in the second ranking position.

During the round robin matches, each archer shoots one time against the other seven archers in a head to head competition.

The archers shoot four rounds of three arrows each at 60 meters, a perfect score being 120 points. The archer that wins the match receives one point, while the other archer receives nothing. Bonus points can also be earned for the scores shot. A score of 111 points or better earns one point, a score between 106 and 110 earns .50 point, a score between 100 and 105 earns 0 points and a score between 95-99 loses .50 a point and a score less than 95 loses one point.

"Paige was so focused and shot the best I have ever seen her shoot," said Stacy Pearce. "During her first match, Paige shot a 119 with 6 X s. The closest score to her was a 113. The lowest score she would shoot would be a 115. She shot a 116, a 118 and the rest were 117 s. Paige's coach, Charley Washburn of the Nevada County Gold Team and I could not have been more proud of her."

Paige shot the highest score during the world trials round robin matches, which gave her 3 ranking points. Second place and 2.75 points would go to Kailey Johnston and third place and 2.50 points would go to Tristan Scarvan. The top three girls lost only one match each, and it was to each other. Tristan lost to Paige, Paige lost to Kailey and Kailey lost to Tristen.

"All three of these girls are so talented," said Stacy Pearce, "They are going to make one awesome team!"

At the end of the shoot, the world team was announced. Pearce was thrilled to learn that she had made the team along with Johnston and Scarvan. Thirteen-year-old Hunter Jackson, from Michigan, placed fourth and is the alternate should one of the girls not be able to make the trip to Turkey.

Paige is the youngest member of the 2008 United States Junior World Team, and since she just turned 13 in March, she is possibly the youngest to have ever made the team.

The team of 24 is made up of 12 Junior boys and girls (age 17-18) and 12 Cadet boys and girls (age 15-16), or the top three male and female recurve and compound archers in both divisions. Mathew Zumbo (Cadet recurve) and Connor Kelly (Cadet Compound), both from Southern California made the team as well.

The team will be traveling to Antalya, Turkey in October to compete in the Junior World Championships. Unfortunately for this group of kids, the trip will not be funded by U.S. Archery. All of the money has gone to the Olympic Games.

Since the kids are located all across the country, they are forced to fundraise individually, instead of as a group. "There is very little time to raise a lot of money," said Pearce.

Paige enjoys public speaking and would like the opportunity to share her love and knowledge of archery with others.

If there are any clubs, businesses, or individuals who would like Paige to do a presentation and/or would like to help support Paige Pearce with her trip to Turkey, you may contact Stacy Pearce at 527-3759.

A "Paige Pearce donation account" has been set up at Wells Fargo Bank. However, if a donation is made directly at the bank, please contact Stacy Pearce and let her know as there is no way to track who has made a deposit.

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