

Former athletes gather in Carson City to renew friendships

But they play to win in annual Sierra Nevada Classic



Aleda Johnson/Special to Carson Times

As part of the recent Sierra Nevada Classic, From the Brickyard player Ron Powell, left, guards Bill Isaman of the Penetrators during play at Carson High School.

By **Tim Anderson**
tanderson@carsontimes.com

A decade ago, a handful of former Carson High School athletes decided to get together for a little fun.

They made plans for competition in basketball and other sports, sandwiched around social activities.

The Sierra Nevada Classic was born. "It was simply about friends getting together to swap stories about the past and to get caught up with what was going on in our lives," said classic founder Mike Borda.

But it was also about getting competitive juices flowing again.

Other former athletes who knew some of the participants heard about the event, and wanted to get involved. Soon, there were 18 who were signed up, and it grew from there.

Last weekend, 30 ex-jocks — two-thirds of them Carson High School graduates — gathered in the capital city for the 11th annual classic.

Competing in three events

They were divided into 10 three-man teams for competition in basketball and Wiffle ball at Carson High and bowling at Carson Lanes. Points were awarded to teams placing first through fourth in each of the events to determine the overall champion.

The Triple Play team — comprised of Mike Berkich, Rob Stoddard and Michael Johnson — took top overall honors. The team finished third the previous two years.

The Colt .45s, champions in 2004, placed second this year. Team members are Jim McHugh, Jim Tierney and Toby Basta.

From the Brickyard, with Ron Powell, Carlos Mendeguia and Paul Kinne, placed third and Let It Ride, with Johnny Borda, Mike Wetenkamp and Bryan Murdock, finished fourth.

Sometimes, the competition gets a little rough. "We all still want to win," Mike Borda said just prior to this year's classic.

As team captains and officials gathered before the classic in the old

Nevada Supreme Court chambers, Gov. Kenny Guinn drew the first tournament seed.

Other team captains said the event is about renewing friendships. But they also said the nature of former athletes is to compete hard for bragging rights. As a result, they said injuries aren't uncommon.

"The entire experience is like a combination of Animal House and the Iditarod," said veteran competitor Kip Perry, a 1990 Carson High graduate who has been part of the classic since its inception.

Gathering among friends

Still, the focus of the event is the camaraderie among participants.

"It's a chance for all of us to gather among friends," said Perry, who lives in San Diego. Mike Borda, a 1986 graduate of Carson High who lives in the Los Angeles area, said he never envisioned the group growing to more than 18.

"But even as some guys dropped out, more wanted to be included. I think we're going to hold it at 30," Borda said.

Competitors range from 25 to 45 years old. Several live in the Reno area.

There's even a former National Football League player involved. Johnson, who grew up in Solano, Calif., and teaches in Sacramento, was a wide receiver for the Chicago Bears and Atlanta Falcons. And Powell, who's from the Los Angeles area, played college basketball at Dominican College in San Rafael, Calif., and for two years professionally in Australia.

A number of others in the classic were on collegiate sports teams.

Several members of the Borda family are actively involved in the classic, including longtime Carson City resident John Borda, a former athlete at Douglas High School and ex-coach in Carson.

John Borda, along with Rick Oxoby of Carson City, officiated during the competition. And the group even had a cameraman, Dustan Page, to record what happened.

Other activities included a golf tournament and social events throughout the area.

ON PAGE 23: A list of participants in the 11th annual Sierra Nevada Classic

Annual capital city event attracts 30 former athletes

A list of participants in the 11th annual Sierra Nevada Classic:

■ **Toby Basta** of Tiburon, Calif. Grew up in Carson City; a 1992 graduate of Reno High School, where he lettered in football and baseball.

■ **Mike Berkich** of Carson City. A 1990 graduate of Carson High School; lettered in baseball; owns landscaping business.

■ **Billy Borda** of Los Angeles. Graduated from Carson High School in 1991; lettered in basketball; played college basketball at Dominican College in San Rafael, Calif.; works as a software consultant.

■ **Johnny Borda** of Los Angeles. A 1992 graduate of Carson High School; lettered in football and basketball; played football at University of California, Davis, and earned a degree in 1997; works in marketing.

■ **Roger Borda** of Elko. Lettered in football and baseball at Carson High School, where he graduated in 1986.

■ **Mike Borda** of Palos Verdes Estates, Calif. Graduated from Carson High School in 1986; lettered in football and basketball; played football at Foothill Junior College and Sacramento State University; works in electronic sales in Los Angeles.

■ **Dave Dodson** of Carson City. A 1992 graduate of Carson High School; lettered in football and baseball; on 1992 state championship baseball team; earned a degree at Brigham Young University; employed as an engineer.

■ **Tim Foster**. Graduated from Carson High School in 1997; has a degree from University of Nevada, Reno; owns Foster Metal Co.

■ **Matt Franz**. Lettered in football at Oceanside (Calif.) High School; played college football at Fresno State University, where he earned a degree; works for Granite Construction in Reno.

■ **Lance Hammons**. Lettered in basketball at Carson High School, where he graduated in 1993; has a degree from University of Nevada, Reno; works as an engineer.

■ **Sean Harmon**. A 1989 graduate of Manteca (Calif.) High School, where he lettered in basketball; played basketball at Dominican College, where



Mike Borda, the ringleader for the Sierra Nevada Classic, bowls for the Point Shavers during the recent event at Carson Lanes. *Aleda Johnson/Carson Times*

he earned a degree; owns Reno-based Slouch Snowboards and Apparel.

■ **Rich Hutson**. A 1986 Carson High School graduate; lettered in football and track; University of Nevada, Reno graduate; teaches elementary school in Sparks.

■ **Bill Isaman**. Graduated from Carson High School in 1991; lettered in baseball; graduated from California Polytechnic Institute, San Luis Obispo, Calif.; owns an architectural firm in San Luis Obispo.

■ **Michael Johnson**. A 1987 graduate of Solano (Calif.) High School; lettered in football and basketball; played football at Sacramento State; drafted by the Chicago Bears and played for the Bears and Atlanta Falcons from 1987 to 1989 as a wide receiver; teaches school in Sacramento.

■ **Rodney Keinath**. A 1984 graduate of Oceanside (Calif.) High School, where he lettered in football; played football at Sacramento State and earned a degree there; works for Kaiser as an eye doctor in Sacramento.

■ **Kris Kelly**. Graduated from

Ventura (Calif.) High School, where he lettered in football and track; competed in track at Baylor University, and has a degree from Baylor; works in Austin, Texas in the computer industry.

■ **Paul Kinne**. A 1990 graduate of Carson High School; lettered in baseball; has a degree from University of Nevada, Reno; works in Reno as a land developer.

■ **Mark Manning** of San Francisco. Graduated from Oceanside (Calif.) High School; lettered in basketball; played basketball at Dominican College, and has a degree from the college. Works in San Francisco as a consultant.

■ **Carlos Mendeguia** of Carson City. A 1988 graduate of Carson High School, where he lettered in football and basketball; played football at Butte Junior College, University of Nevada, Las Vegas and Long Beach State University; has a degree from University of Nevada, Reno; teaches at Carson High, where he is assistant basketball coach.

■ **Jim McHugh** of Irvine

Calif. Graduated from a high school in New Jersey in 1984, where he lettered in football; played football at Utah State University; has a degree from Utah State and works in sales of plastic raw materials.

■ **Bryan Murdock** of Kansas City, Mo. Grew up in Carson City through eighth grade; graduate of Reed High School, where he lettered in basketball and baseball; played basketball at Yuba City Junior College; has a degree from University of Nevada, Reno; elementary school teacher.

■ **Kip Perry** of San Diego. Graduated from Carson High School in 1990; lettered in football, wrestling and baseball; zone champion in wrestling; played football at University of San Diego, where he earned undergraduate and masters degrees; works in land development in San Diego.

■ **Ron Powell** of Marin County, Calif. Lettered in basketball at Compton (Calif.) High School, where he graduated in 1988; played basketball at Dominican College and graduated from the college; played professional basketball in Australia for two years; works in Marin County for a computer repair company.

■ **Kyle Schellin** of Reno. Lettered in football and baseball at Carson High School, where he graduated in 1994; played baseball at Alan Hancock Junior College and Holy Names College in Oakland,

and graduated from Holy Names; boys varsity basketball coach at Reno High School, where he led them to the 2006 state championship; works in insurance sales.

■ **Scott Schellin** of Reno. Graduated from Carson High School in 1993; assistant coach of Reno boys varsity basketball team; works in insurance sales.

■ **Rob Stoddard** of Bakersfield, Calif. A 1995 graduate of Carson High School; lettered in golf; works in real estate.

■ **Jim Tierney** of Reno. Graduated from Carson High School in 1992; lettered in football, basketball and baseball; was on the 1992 state championship baseball team; works for Southwest Airlines.

■ **Joe Tierney** of Sparks. A 1994 graduate of Carson High School; lettered in football, basketball and baseball; part of state championship baseball team; played baseball at San Francisco Junior College and Sacramento State University; has a degree from University of Nevada, Reno; coaches football and baseball; teaches school in Sparks.

■ **Mike Wetenkamp** of Carson City. Graduated from Carson High School in 1991; lettered in baseball; professional rodeo roper; works in construction.

■ **John Wurster** of San Diego. A 1990 Carson High School graduate; lettered in cross country; has a degree from University of Nevada, Reno;

**The Sergeant Major's
Silver Dollar Saloon**




Every
Thursday
is Karaoke &
Dollar Draft
Night.

**Official Outhouse Races
Headquarters**

October 7 & 8

11 North 'C' Street - Virginia City, Nevada - Est. 1859
Email: 89MSilverDollar@aol.com

Come and cheer on your favorite prize!