

# 2017 JUNIOR RUNDOWN

**BOYS** The State's top Junior Boy, Seth O'Nan, is two tourneys into the season. After a warm-up 61.6% tourney at Mt. Sterling, Seth really broke loose in Richmond at the Johnnie Jones Classic. Seth was very consistent in his games; 74%, 76%, 78%, 72% & 74%, losing only to Brian Simmons.



Seth went 4-1 for a 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish. Seth's game is really looking good as he makes a push to capture

that Junior Boy's World Title that got away from him last year. Looking good Seth! With a 74.8% finish in Richmond, Seth just may creep nearer to the 80% level. I would not be surprised to see him do it. Jarrett Keith holds the number two spot in Junior Boy's Division. Jarrett has struggled with his confidence since changing to a ¾ reverse Turn from a single flip last season. Change is not easy. It takes a lot of practice to develop a feel for a new turn and generate the confidence in it. When you are struggling you need that time invested to throw those automatic ringers. Jarrett's top tourney this season was 35.6% in Richmond. Practice, focus, practice... lots of shoes Jarrett!! Zach Hankins



has competed in 4 sanctioned events this season, all steadily in the 20% plus range. Zach's high is 24% and most recently came off of a 23.1% tourney in Bardstown. Leland Fuller has competed in one event this year

in Chalybeate and pitched 13.96%. Leland expects to be back in action this Saturday in Elizabethtown. The state's other Junior Boy's, Noah Snellen, Hadden Fuller & James Webb have yet to get going. Noah should be in Elizabethtown and it is unclear if either Hadden or James will continue to challenge the steel.

**GIRLS** The reigning State Champion Abby Rose has had her natural ups and downs

this season. Abby has pitched frequently thus far, competing in 5 events. Abby's best tourney this season was at the Vicki Belcher Open in Mt. Sterling. Abby posted an overall percentage



of 38.6%, taking her first class win of the year. Abby's games were: 24%, 42%, 34%, 46%, 44, 40% & 40%. Abby has great focus and really attacks the stake. She is on a path of continued success. Keep it up Abby, you are doing great! Sarah Neagle's game this season is still in



stationary mode. Sarah has only competed in two events with a high of 23.0% in Campbellsville but Sarah does compete weekly in the ECHPA League in Chalybeate. She is showing signs of being able to break her game open. In last week's set of games, Sarah really had a good outing: 22%, 32% & 32%. Her flip really looks good being smooth and consistently rotated. All of the tools

are there. The only element that is missing is more backyard practice. Sarah, are you listening? Hanna Neagle advanced to the Junior Girl's ranks this year and is more of a happy-go-lucky player, mostly pitching for fun. Hanna has played two tourney's with a high of 11%. Hanna has adapted well to the new distance.

## CADETS

Kentucky has two developing Cadet's this year, Dylan Neal & C.J. Yantis. Dylan was brought in under the tutelage of Tyler Howard. Dylan is pitching a ¾ reverse turn is doing



really well as new player. Dylan has pitched in three events and his tournament averages are: 19.0%, 14.0% & 17.7%. Dylan posted a 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish in the Steppy Colpitts Memorial in Somerset.

C.J. Yantis Started Pitching Horseshoes At the Miller Park Open. C.J averaged



1.00% in his first event and next pitched at the Steppy Colpitts where he averaged 2.00%. C.J. has some work to do to develop his style. It will be interesting to see where horseshoes takes him in the future. He is not lacking in enthusiasm or energy, for sure!

## Practice Tips

There are a lot of things you can do to develop your game early on. The most important thing to do if you want to get better and increase your percentage is to commit some practice time or alone time to the task. If you only pitch a tournament now and then, in most cases you are only going to maintain what you have and not improve that much. You, taking on the challenge to get better requires some regular daily practice with your brain versus the task. You, the shoes and the stake...nothing else..

**TIP#1-** Log your practice. Pitch a set of 50 shoe games daily and keep track of your ringers and your percentage so that you always know where you stand.



**TIP#2-** Practice using 4 shoes. Throw 4 down, throw 4 back. You can get more practice in, using a shorter amount of time by eliminating the extra walking. While this type of practice is good in most cases, don't completely abandon 2 shoe practices. Two shoe practices better mimics a tournament rhythm.

**TIP#3-** Avoid making drastic changes. Small changes can be good and will help hone in your skill but major changes will stall your game. Anytime you switch styles, turns or flips, it will reset your game backwards and will take more time to increase your level. Commit to YOUR style, tweak it and tune it.

**TIP#4-** Playing the imaginary game. Get a scoresheet. If your pitching level is under 30%, put one extra shoe on one of your horseshoe stakes, laying as a ringer. Leave the other stake open. Pitch a practice game. To score on the "ringer" end of the court, you must throw a double on the "ringer" end of the court. One ringer of yours will only cancel and keep your opponent from scoring. On the open end, you will score with any ringers you throw. Close points do no count in this game, ringers only. Try to beat his opponent on a regular basis. It will put more pressure on your focus to do so. If you can beat him, you will be averaging better than 25% to do it. If you can do this easily, then put another extra shoe "ringer" on the other stake and try to beat him in the same manner. To beat this imaginary opponent, you will have to average better than 50%.



**TIP#5-** If you are having trouble achieving "lift" on your horseshoe delivery or are throwing short, you can make yourself raise it by placing an object, like a soda can, about a shoe length from the front of the stake. Practice trying to get over the can to the stake without hitting it. This is an advanced technique for players that have a consistent developed style.

Just setting aside one hour a day for horseshoe practice will make you better. The more time you commit to it, the better you will get.

How bad do you want it? Go get it!