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### BROWNS TRAINING CAMP

## Manziel mania packs stands at first practice



ED SUBA JR./Akron Beacon Journal

Browns fans Kelly Durbin and her daughter Kally Kay of Columbus let quarterback Johnny Manziel know exactly how they feel Saturday on the first day of training camp in Berea.

Football fans, national media converge on Berea to see drills and possibly a famous rookie

**BEREA:** For the past seven years, Steve Hodge has driven from his home in Westerville the night before the Browns open training camp and set up outside the practice fields so he can be the first inside.

But in the wee hours Saturday morning, a skunk nearly foiled his tradition.

The 52-year-old president of the Westerville Browns Backers said his girlfriend had left to find a bathroom and he dozed off. When he woke up around 4 a.m., he thought there was a cat underneath his chair. Soon he wished it were a cat, even a black one.

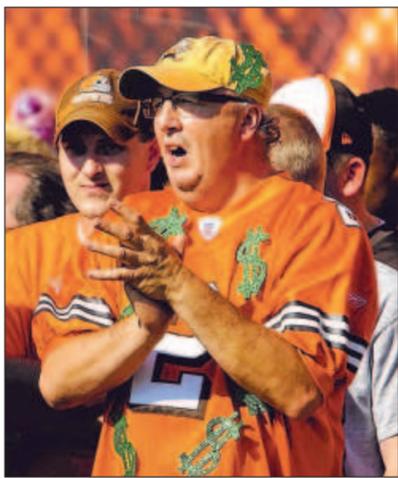
"I was afraid to leave," Hodge said. "Eventually, it meandered off looking for food."

Thankfully, Hodge emerged unsprayed. When the gates opened at 8:30 a.m., he installed himself in the front row, nabbing a corner spot so he could show off his orange No. 2 jersey with glittery green dollar signs pasted on it. It was a recycled Tim Couch, with Manziel pasted over Couch's name.

Hodge wasn't the only one who had



Marla Ridenour



Steve Hodge of Westerville cheers for Browns rookie quarterback Johnny Manziel during drills Saturday in Berea.

"Money Manziel" (the moniker on one of Nike's Johnny Manziel T-shirts) on his mind. By 8:50, the bleachers were packed. Theon Smith said when he and friend Bob Murtha, both of West Akron, arrived at Browns headquarters at 8:15, there were 100 to 200 people ahead of them in line.

Please see **Browns, A3**



## 77th FirstEnergy All-American Soap Box Derby



KAREN SCHIELY/Akron Beacon Journal

Mason Breeden, 13, of Culpeper, Va., gets an unwelcome congratulatory kiss from his mother, Missy Breeden, for his first-place win in the stock division at the All-American Soap Box Derby.

# RACERS TAKE THE HILL

Tallmadge 12-year-old Dylan Theisen wins rally stock division title; five other Ohioans also go home as champions. Nearly 500 compete

By Jim Mackinnon

Beacon Journal business writer

For his first full year of racing, Dylan Theisen did pretty well: A world championship.

The 12-year-old Tallmadge resident won the rally stock division in the finals of the 2014 FirstEnergy All-American Soap Box Derby on Saturday at Derby Downs.

And he found it a bit hard to believe. "It feels absolutely amazing," Dylan said. "I feel amazing. I'm speechless. I've accomplished my childhood goal."

He said he and his father, along with family friends, built the car he raced.

"We spent a lot of time on the car and trying to perfect my driving skills," he said. He plans to race the car in upcoming events.

Dylan, who is going into eighth grade at Tallmadge Middle School, got his first taste of derby racing two years ago as part of a special STEM school program sponsored by the derby.

"He got hooked," said his father, Steve. "We're ecstatic. We thought we'd come here and do one race and go home."

The nearly 500 racers from the U.S., Canada, Germany, Japan and New Zealand had



Dylan Theisen, 12, of Tallmadge (front) hugs friend Logan Gongaware, 12, of Massillon, after finishing their rally stock division heat in first and second place to advance.

Please see **Derby, A10**

### INSIDE

Gov. John Kasich and Ed Fitzgerald have differing views on Ohio job growth, budget cuts, wages and unemployment before election. **A5**

The Beacon Journal is marking its 175th anniversary this year. In September, we'll publish a special section that looks at our past, present and future. We'd like to include you.

Tell us your stories: Have you ever been featured in the paper? Has the Beacon Journal played a part in a major event in your life? Are you a former employee with a fun story to tell about your time here? What do you think a

future newsgathering operation might look like?

We'll publish some of your responses in the special section, and more will be posted on Ohio.com.

Please keep them short, so we can publish as many as possible, and send by Aug. 16 to Features Editor Lynne Sherwin at lsherwin@thebeaconjournal.com or 44 E. Exchange St., P.O. Box 640, Akron, OH 44309.



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