

SPORTS & RECREATION

Houlton honors soap box derby champ from Hampden with parade

HOULTON — An 11-year-old girl from Hampden who has raced for several years as part of the Northern Maine Soap Box Derby Club was recently crowned the All-American Soap Box Derby Super Stock Champion and was honored for her efforts in Houlton.

Mallory Bruen won the Super Stock division Saturday, July 16, in Akron, Ohio, beating out a field of more than 100 racers through a series of five races. To celebrate the occasion, a parade and reception was held Sunday at the John A. Millar Civic Center in Houlton for the Bruen family. Mallory is believed to be the first racer from the Northern Maine Soap Box Derby to win a national title in the group's 20-year existence.

Her accomplishment was all the more impressive as she was runner-up in the regional race in Houlton June 18, coming in second to Sara Heath in the Super Stock Division. But when Heath decided she could not make the 1,928-mile round trip to Akron, Bruen took the opportunity and rolled with it.

The Northern Maine Soap Box Derby is the only club in Maine and gets drivers from across the state traveling to Houlton to compete each June in the regional races.

Bruen already has an impressive resume of racing accolades. She raced in 2013 in the stock division in Houlton and came in fourth when she was just 8 years old. She also received the Committee Award. Later in the fall she competed in the Stock Rally "Aimee's Race," earning enough points to qualify for a trip to Akron in the 2014 Stock Rally. She did not place at that event, but gained valuable experience.

In 2014 she raced again in Houlton, placing fourth in the stock division; and in 2015, at the age of 10, she was runner-up in the local super stock division and received the award for best decorated car.

The Bruen family has formed several strong relationships with other racing families in Houlton, and were quick to jump on the phone and share the news



JOSEPH CYR/THE HOULTON PIONEER TIMES

Mallory Bruen of Hampden was welcomed to Houlton Sunday, July 31, as the newly-crowned Soap Box Derby All-American Super Stock champion following her victory in Akron, Ohio July 16.

when Mallory won.

Houlton Town Manager Butch Asselin unveiled a banner that will be displayed inside the civic center, featuring a photo of Mallory standing next to her derby car.

"You have helped put Houlton on the map," Asselin said. "We are very proud of

that and proud of you. Your name will always be remembered here in Houlton."

The Bruen family has made four trips to Ohio to compete in races, as Mallory's older brother Chris twice qualified for the Akron championships.

Trisha Bruen said the family wanted to hold the

recognition ceremony in Houlton instead of their hometown because they were friends with so many of the other racers in the local area and wanted to share that excitement with them.

"There are no racers down in Hampden," Trisha said. "Our racing family is here in

Houlton since 2011, so it made sense to do it here."

Mallory said having already been to Akron once before helped her be better prepared for racing this time around and she was thrilled to learn she had an opportunity to represent the Northern Maine Soap Box Derby Club.

SQUIRT CHAMPIONS



COURTESY PHOTO

Pictured above are the 2016 Squirt Champions at the Bardown Summer Hockey Classic held at The University of Maine's Alford Arena July 29-31.

Former assistant coach returning to UMaine women's basketball

ORONO — Former University of Maine women's basketball assistant coach Jhasmin Player is returning to the staff, head coach Richard Barron announced Friday, July 29.

Player will serve as the Director of Player Development and Community Relations and be in charge of all program operations.

"I am thrilled to be able to bring Jhasmin back," Barron in a news release. "Jhas was a valuable and well-respected member of our staff and our players benefited greatly from her experience. Now, after a second tour of professional basketball, she will be back to mentor a young but talented team. Equally important, Jhas loved her time in Maine and chose to return, which

speaks volumes about what a wonderful community we have at UMaine."

Player was a charter member of Barron's staff. The 2009 Baylor University graduate arrived at UMaine after playing two injury-plagued seasons of professional basketball overseas. Player spent three seasons (2011-13) as an assistant on the UMaine staff before returning to Poland for her second professional basketball stint.

UMaine men's hockey adds Hungarian national team defenseman

ORONO — Six players with eligibility remaining have left the University of Maine's hockey program, but the team has added a 6-foot-7 Hungarian defenseman to help replace point-producing workhorse blueliner Dan Renouf, who

passed up his senior year to sign with the Detroit Red Wings right after last season.

In addition to Renouf and winger Brian Morgan, who graduated but had a year of eligibility remaining and decided to play for the University of Connecticut next season, goalie Sean Romeo transferred to Ohio State University and forwards Brady Campbell, Justin Rai and Jack Musil won't return.

Like Morgan, Campbell graduated but still had a year of eligibility.

Rai, who would have been a sophomore, and Musil, who would have been a junior, have left school to pursue other opportunities. Both were seldomly used last season.

(By Larry Mahoney, BDN)

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Wesley-18 Acres \$13,900*
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Mount Chase-50 Hilltop acres! \$39,900
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Oakfield-44 Acres \$23,900
Oso-135 Acres! \$80,900

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Mount Chase-50 Hilltop acres! \$39,900
New Limerick- 33 Acres- \$14,900*
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T3 R9 NWP - MAP PE006 PLAN 01 LOT 13F
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