



VERRADO

Modern Community.

Visit Now



SCOTTSDALE 82°

Sunny
Forecast »

Traffic | Weather

News | Sports | Money | Entertainment | Families | Health | Food/Home | Yes | Travel | Photo | Video | Español

Search the site



marketplace

- » JOBS
- » AUTOS
- » REAL ESTATE
- » RENTALS
- classified
- local shopping
- newspaper ads
- coupons

scottsdale

City Guide

Art Scene

School Info

Sports

- Golf
- High Schools

Opinions

Columnists

Traffic

Conditions

Obituaries

Maps

Venues

Scanners

Email

Newsletters

More E. Valley
Local Coverage

- Ahwatukee
- Chandler
- Gilbert
- Mesa
- Tempe

scottsdale republic

» Print Article » Email Article » Most Popular » Bigger Type » Smaller Type » Phone Alerts » RSS Feeds

Bridges rolls to Soap Box Derby win

Scottsdale boy, 11, takes rally stock championship

Weldon B. Johnson

The Arizona Republic
Jul. 26, 2006 12:00 AM

SCOTTSDALE

Rising gas prices don't put a crimp in Michael Bridges' racing plans.
advertisement

Gravity powers his car.

On Saturday, Bridges piloted his gravity-powered racer to the rally stock championship at the 69th All-American Soap Box Derby in Akron, Ohio.

The 11-year-old Scottsdale boy sped down the 989-foot incline in 29.2 seconds.

Last weekend's trip to the national event was Bridges' third, but it was his first victory.

"It was awesome," Bridges said.

Prizes for Bridges' win included a \$3,000 scholarship, a championship ring, a Soap Box Derby clock, a 4-foot trophy and a ride in the Goodyear Blimp.

Including all categories, 518 racers from 42 states and six

related

Gravity-powered racing

Soap Box Derby racing is open to boys and girls ages 8-17.

Racers compete in three divisions:

- Stock division racers must be 8 by the date of their first race and must not turn 14 in the current year. The maximum weight for driver and car is 200 pounds.
- In the super stock and masters divisions, racers must be 10 years old by the date of their first race and must not turn 18 in the current year. Maximum weight for car and driver is 230 pounds in the super stock division and 255 pounds in the masters division.

Racers can qualify for the All-American Race in either the rally division (accumulating points in a series of regional races) or by winning their local track championship.





**Donate
your
vehicle**

1.800.SA-TRUCK



**No Middleman
100% to Charity**

**Tax Deductible
Free Pick-up
Release of Liability**

countries competed in the weeklong derby.

To qualify for the national event in the rally category, Bridges had to earn points based on his finishes in a series of a races throughout the year in Arizona, California, Nevada and Utah.

Bridges had to win four races on the final day to earn his championship. He said the first heat was the toughest.

"My first heat was kind of hard because the rain was hitting (the car) and going in my eyes," Bridges said. "I couldn't really see, that was the hardest one. I won by a car length, even though I couldn't see."

Soap Box Derby racing is something of a family affair for Bridges. His mother's stepfather runs the club in Superior, where Michael got his start when he was 8.

Several family members have competed, and Bridges wanted to give it a try.

"We sent Michael down the hill in one of the club's cars, and he's been racing ever since," said Layla Bridges, Michael's mother.

In fact, it was through that club in Superior that his mother met his father, Shane.

In addition, Soap Box Derby rules require that the driver be actively involved in building the car, which made the construction of the racer a team effort involving Michael and Shane.

Instructions for the kit called for about eight hours of build time. Shane and Michael spent more time than that on his car.

"It took us a couple of months because we put a lot of detail in it and stuff," Michael said.

With the cars being uniform, winning comes down to the skill of the drivers.

"You have to be able to get down (low in the car) to be more aerodynamic," Michael said. "And we put tong oil on the bottom of the car, so it's not all rough. You have to know where to go on the track. And you have to focus and have positive thoughts."

About the cars

Cars are built from official kits in the stock, super stock and masters divisions to assure a degree of uniformity.

In the ultimate speed division, more creative entries are allowed.

About the track

The track in Akron, Ohio is 989 feet long and 48 feet high at the starting line.

For more information visit www.azsoapboxderby.com or www.aasbd.org.

listen in

Stream this article or
Download

- Audio and story links
- Subscribe to podcast RSS feeds
- Frequently asked questions

email alerts

Enter your email address to get **Scottsdale Republic News (Mon.-Sat.)** newsletters.

news update

- Downed power lines, flooding causing traffic headaches
 - Trust land at risk in vote
 - Troon, Rio Verde linked on ballot
 - Museum cooks use food to teach
 - Manross: Transit top issue
- more »**

Related Web links

Sponsored Links

[Pinewood Derby Car Kits](#)

Very low prices and large selection of Pinewood derby kits & supplies
a2zhobbies.com

[Pinewood Derby Video](#)

Build a winning car using the secrets in this entertaining video.
www.maximum-velocity.com

[Pinewood Derby Timers](#)

Electronic Finish Line for Pinewood Derby
www.microwizard.com

Latest headlines by topic:

- [Rubber-Plastics](#)
 - [Manufacturing](#)
 - [Industrial Machines](#)
 - [Goodyear Tire and Rubber](#)
- Powered by Topix.net

top jobs

POWERED BY
REPUBLIC
careerbuilder

**MAINTENANCE MECHANIC,
MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN**
TEMPLE-INLAND

Security Officers
The Wackenhut Corporation

Engineer
SEPARATION PROCESSES

Compliance Supervisor
Cardinal Health

VACTOR OPERATORS
Pro-Pipe

[All Top Jobs](#)

[About Top Jobs](#)

SITE MAP [azcentral.com main](#) | [news](#) | [sports](#) | [money](#) | [entertainment](#) | [families](#) | [arizona travel guide](#) | [health](#) | [food & home](#) | [style](#) | [photos](#) | [video](#) | [shopping](#) | [español](#) | [weather](#) | [classified](#) | [jobs](#) | [autos](#) | [real estate](#)

CUSTOMER SERVICE [terms of service](#) | [contact The Republic](#) | [subscribe to The Republic](#) | [Newspapers in Education](#) | [The Republic in your community](#) | [about The Republic](#) | [jobs at The Republic](#) | [jobs at KPNX-TV](#) | [about KPNX-TV](#)

PARTNERS [USA Today](#) | [Gannett Co. Inc.](#) | [Jobs: CareerBuilder.com](#) | [Cars: cars.com](#) | [Apartments: apartments.com](#) | [Shopping: ShopLocal.com](#) | [REAL Cities](#) Network Member

Copyright © 2006, azcentral.com. All rights reserved.