

Soap-box racer heads for Ohio derby

by **Weldon B. Johnson** - Jun. 30, 2008 12:00 AM
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It's not often you find a 12-year-old extolling the virtues of limiting the sugar in his diet, but Chandler's Grant Norwil does.

Norwil is headed to the All-American Soap Box Derby race next month in Akron, [Ohio](#), and says a good diet helped him get there.

"You can't get distracted, and you have to have a diet," Grant said. "You can't be kind of wiggly and stuff. So you don't eat sugary things."

Norwil was steady enough to guide his car through the field of competitors to claim the stock division title at the Central [Arizona](#) championships in Superior on May 31. His local championship earns him a berth in the All-American race.

Norwil began racing about three years ago after he and his father saw soap-box cars at a Boy Scout activity.

Racing the cars (he also has a super stock car) is something they do together. In addition to working on the car, they also go over track conditions and discuss strategy.

"(The) way they look at it is it's a team activity," his dad, Mark Norwil, said. "The kid is responsible for racing it. The parent helps handle the car and does the fine tuning."

The All-American Soap Box Derby begins July 26. This will be Grant's second trip to the event; though it is the first time he qualified as a champion. Last year he reached the national event by building up "rally points" accumulated through participating in various local races throughout the year.

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