
THE CrossFit LIFE

Throwing Down the Gauntlet

Hilary Achauer recaps the first CrossFit Kids and Teens competition for girls and boys ages 13-18.

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All images: Danell Marks

It came down to a battle between Cole Dick and Garrett Janda. They had five minutes to find their 1RM squat clean. First, Janda cleaned 250 lb. Then Dick stepped up and cleaned the same weight, sending the two into a tiebreaker. Janda approached the bar, took a deep breath, and squat cleaned 255 lb.

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The kids and teens showed off their hours of hard work in a competition that tested their stamina, strength and skill.

Impressive numbers, but even more so when you learn that Dick is 15 years old and Janda 18. They were competing in The Gauntlet, a CrossFit Kids and Teens competition for athletes ages 13-18. The competition included three divisions: novice, junior varsity and varsity. Boys and girls competed together in each division.

The event was held on Oct. 16 at CrossFit Brand X in Ramona, Calif., and featured three workouts, with variations for the junior varsity and novice athletes. Jeff Martin, the event organizer and the co-founder of CrossFit Kids, restricted the event to 35 competitors due to size and staffing limitations. He had to turn people away, and teens came from as far away as Wisconsin to compete. There were athletes from Texas and Colorado, and a pair of brothers who CrossFit out of their parent's garage. The older brother, Josh Brydon, placed third in the varsity division.

In the first workout, the varsity athletes had a chance to show off their double-under skills. They had 2 minutes to do as many double-unders as possible, then they moved on to 3 rounds of a 250-meter hill sprint, 10 overhead squats (95/65 lb.) and 15 box jumps (24/20 inches). Valerie Calhoun, a 16-year-old from Sacramento with a 2:38 Fran time, fit in 155 double-unders in 2 minutes, and then finished the workout with a time of 7:57. Janda did 169 double-unders in 2 minutes and finished with a time of 7:34.

In the second workout, titled "Karen Interrupted," the varsity athletes had 3 minutes to work their way through 150 wall-balls. After 3 minutes, they had 5 minutes to get a 1RM squat clean, then it was back on the wall-balls until they reached 150. Janda and Dick's squat cleans were sandwiched in between 150 wall balls, making their numbers even more impressive.

Martin said he was blown away by what he saw in the competition.

"I have not seen that kind of focus and intensity outside of the regionals and the CrossFit Games," he said. "Their technique and movement was spectacular—it was inspiring."



Different ages, different weight on the bar—same amount of heart.

The last event of the day was called “The Last Man Standing.” With a continuously running clock, the athletes had to do 1 push press and 1 bar-facing burpee in the first minute, 2 push presses and 2 bar-facing burpees in the second minute, and 3 push presses and 3 bar-facing burpees in the third minute, continuing on until each athlete failed to complete all the movements in 1 minute. The novice push-press weight was 45 lb., the junior varsity weight was 55 lb. (both girls and boys used the same weight in novice and junior varsity), and the varsity weight was 65 lb. for girls and 95 lb. for boys.

The winner of the novice division, Max Vargas, finished with 9 rounds plus 10 push presses and 8 bar-facing burpees. Also competing in the novice division was Trenton Lambert. He had to scale the push press, which prevented him from winning, but he made it through 11 rounds, showing incredible heart.

“He just kept going,” said Martin. “He was in the moment and did a whole round more than the winner. Even though he knew he couldn’t win, he just kept going because he could. It brought tears to my eyes.”

The Gauntlet was just the beginning for CrossFit Kids and Teens competitions. CrossFit Kids will be holding a powerlifting competition at CrossFit Kids Headquarters in Ramona on Saturday, Nov. 19, for kids and teens ages 13-18. The next CrossFit Kids competition will be on Jan. 29 and 30, 2012, at the Los Angeles Fitness Expo. This event will have twice as many competitors as The Gauntlet, although space is still limited.

For information about any of these competitions, or to learn more about CrossFit Kids, send an email to info@CrossFitKids.com.