

Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Brothers battle for Scottish Athlete of the Games title

GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN, N.C.—Two Tennessee brothers, competing against each other since middle school, sometimes even fist-fighting, went at it again Saturday, July 8, on the infield of MacRae Meadows, site of the 62nd Grandfather Mountain Highland Games.

This time, it was for the title of Scottish Athlete of the Games.

Braidy Miller, all 6' 3", 275 pounds of him, was out to unseat the defending Athlete of the Games. That happened to be his younger brother, Brent. The fight would not be settled by fists, but by competing in seven brutal, traditionally Scottish events.

"Sometimes, our competition got really intense, but it was the best thing we ever did," Brent said of their rivalry.

Brent started out strong, leading after three of the seven events. He finished second in tossing the clachneart, a 16-pound stone, to Braidy's fifth-place finish. Braidy came back with a first, a 42-foot toss of a 56-pound weight, a personal record of which he feels very proud.

However, Brent finished second to his brother and then won the 28-pound weight thrown for distance, edging his brother's second-place finish.

The hammer throw, a 22-pound weight on the end of a stick, turned the match. Braidy finished first to Brent's fourth. A second in turning the caber, a 19-foot long, 215-pound tree trunk picked up and flipped end over end, to Brent's fourth, put some distance between the brothers.

Braidy's first in the sheaf toss, a 20-pound sack of hay tossed with a pitchfork over a bar, versus Brent's third-place finished sealed the victory. Braidy tossed the sheaf over a bar raised to 32 feet, one foot short of the world record for his age group. His effort to break the record just missed.

The last event, a 56-pound weight toss for height, didn't matter. Neither did their longstanding rivalry. They came into the event as best friends, training together, pulling for

each other, both school teachers in the Lebanon, Tenn., area, and even coaching football together.

“We have a mental connection,” Brent said. “There is something special going on between us.”

Their father, Calvin Miller, was there to cheer them on. A big man himself, he said he could take his boys until they got into high school.

“My boys knew nothing about Scottish athletics until a friend invited both of them to watch the games in Dunedin, Fla.,” Calvin continued. “Their friend said that since they were very athletic, they would like it. Their friend was right. They fell in love with the sport. Braidy was 40 at the time.”

In golf, older players are eligible for the senior tour when they reach 50. In Scottish athletics, it’s 40, and the participants are classified as “Masters.” Braidy was a Master before he threw his first weight and quickly lived up to the title.

At 46, Braidy and his brother turned pro, and they started competing against the best.

“I was the oldest rookie ever,” Braidy said. “Brent and I toured together, and we were old enough to be half the group in the field’s dad.”

They continue to be among the best competing with the youngsters or against those their age, the Masters.

Braidy is now 48, and he won the Masters World Championship, a competition held all over the world, even in Iceland, and the runner-up was his brother, Brent.

Braidy said he and his brother love the Grandfather Games.

“I love the beauty of the place,” he said. “The Games here are more realistic to how they do the Games in Scotland. The crowds here are fantastic!”

Coming in a close third in Scottish heavy athletics was Wes Kiser of Gibsonville, N.C. At next year’s Games, the Miller brothers come in tied one-one, splitting the last two competitions.

For more information about the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, visit www.gmhg.org, or call (828) 733-1333.

The not-for-profit Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation strives to inspire conservation of the natural world by helping guests explore, understand and value the wonders of Grandfather Mountain. For more information, call (800) 468-7325, or visit www.grandfather.com to plan a trip.

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ATTACHMENTS:

070817_GFM_gmhg_heavy_athletics_braidy_1_SS: Braidy Miller prepares to turn the caber during the Scottish heavy athletic events July 8 at the 62nd Grandfather Mountain Highland Games. Miller was named Scottish Athlete of the Games. Photo by Skip Sickler | Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation

070817_GFM_gmhg_heavy_athletics_braidy_2_SS: Braidy Miller turns the caber Saturday at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games in MacRae Meadows at the base of Grandfather Mountain. Photo by Skip Sickler | Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation

070817_GFM_gmhg_heavy_athletics_brent_1_SS: Brent Miller winds to throw the 56-pound weight for distance during Saturday's Scottish heavy athletic events at the 62nd Grandfather Mountain Highland Games. Miller finished second overall in the Games. Photo by Skip Sickler | Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation

070817_GFM_gmhg_heavy_athletics_brent_2_SS: Brent Miller tosses the sheaf, a 20-pound sack of hay, during the 62nd Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, held July 6-9 at MacRae Meadows at the base of Grandfather Mountain. Photo by Skip Sickler | Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation

070817_GFM_gmhg_heavy_athletics_kiser_1_SS: Wes Kiser winds to throw the 56-pound weight for distance during Saturday's Scottish heavy athletic events at the 62nd Grandfather Mountain Highland Games. Kiser placed third overall in the Games. Photo by Skip Sickler | Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation

070817_GFM_gmhg_heavy_athletics_kiser_2_SS: Wes Kiser tosses the sheaf, a 20-pound sack of hay, during the 62nd Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, held July 6-9 at MacRae Meadows at the base of Grandfather Mountain. Photo by Skip Sickler | Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation