

Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Frasure wins, sets new record at Highland Games

GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN, N.C. — After a neck-and-neck battle, defending champion Eric Frasure won the heavy athletics competition Saturday at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, setting a new Games record in the process.

Frasure, 30, of Denver, N.C., won four out of seven traditional Scottish athletic competitions to earn the title after a tight battle with friend and competitor Wes Kiser of Gibsonville.

It was the fifth event, the caber toss, that sealed the deal for Frasure.

In the caber toss, athletes must hold upright a telephone-pole-sized wooden pole and run forward, pitching it end-over-end so it lands in the 12:00 position as though on a clock.

In the first three tosses, Frasure and Kiser matched each other tit-for-tat, and the contest came down to a final tiebreaker toss. Frasure's toss ended in the 12:15 position, edging out Kiser's toss in the 12:30 position.

"I just try to turn my mind off and feed off the energy that the crowd provides," Frasure said.

But it was the final event, the 56-pound weight throw for height, where Frasure made his ultimate statement. His toss of 17 feet, 10 inches barely edged over the bar, but it was good enough for a new Grandfather Mountain Highland Games event record. After four Red Bull energy drinks and a long day of competition in the hot sun, Frasure said he never expected to set the new record, but a supportive crowd helped provide motivation.

"It's really hard to do anything without the crowd," he said. "It makes everything hurt less."

Frasure, who trains at CrossFit Allegiance in Denver, said he also incorporated Brazilian jiu-jitsu at BJJ Inc. into his regimen this year, which helped with his flexibility, grip strength and overall fitness.

For Frasure and Kiser, the competition began not in the infield at MacRae Meadows but in college, where they competed against each other in track and field, with Frasure at East Carolina University and Kiser at Appalachian State University. That

was also the start of a lasting friendship between the two, who occasionally train together, gather for meals and share advice on everything from workouts to reading recommendations.

Kiser said he was ecstatic about his performance Saturday, especially as he prepares for his first appearance at the North American Scottish Athletics Championships at the end of July.

"I threw the best in every event that I've ever thrown at Grandfather," Kiser said. "It was pretty much a head-to-head fight."

He held no hard feelings after the daylong struggle with Frasure.

"It's completely and utterly fun from beginning to end," Kiser said. "That's the whole reason I do it. I love throwing stuff, and I love the people that are here."

Although the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games are just one of many competitions the professional athletes will face this year, several said the brotherhood among the athletes and the support of boisterous spectators made it among the best.

"It's the most beautiful competition, the most beautiful venue," Frasure said. "This is a very special place, and we're honored to be here."

SCOTTISH ATHLETIC EVENT RESULTS

56-Pound Weight Throw for Distance

1. Wes Kiser, Gibsonville, NC: 41' 4"
2. Eric Frasure, Denver, NC: 41' 0"

28-Pound Weight Throw for Distance

1. Wes Kiser, Gibsonville, NC: 82' 3.5"
2. Eric Frasure, Denver, NC: 76' 5.5"

Clachneart (16-Pound Stone Toss)

1. Eric Frasure, Denver, NC: 48' 0.5"
2. Wes Kiser, Gibsonville, NC: 47' 11.5"

22-Pound Hammer Throw

1. Eric Frasure, Denver, NC: 105' 6"
2. Adam Sizemore, Parrottsville, TN: 95' 3"

Caber Toss

1. Eric Frasure, Denver, NC
2. Wes Kiser, Gibsonville, NC

Tossing of the Sheaf (Tossing a 20-pound sack of hay with a pitch fork for height)

1. Travis Gardner, Canton, NC: 34'
2. Eric Frasure, Denver, NC: 32'

56-Pound Weight Throw for Height

1. Eric Frasure, Denver, NC: 17' 10" (GMHG record)
2. Wes Kiser, Gibsonville, NC: 17'

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ATTACHMENTS:

Frasure1: Competitor Eric Frasure tosses the caber Saturday at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, the event that cemented him as the top competitor in the traditional Scottish athletic competition. Skip Sickler | Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation.

Frasure2: Competitor Eric Frasure celebrates a successful day of competition Saturday at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, where he earned top honors and set a new event record. Skip Sickler | Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation.