

Captures Illinois State Fair crown

Hills youth blows away bubble competitors



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

By Roger Hart
staff writer

What started out as a trip to visit relatives turned into the Illinois State Bubble Gum Blowing Championship for 14-year-old Matt Brauer of Farmington Hills.

Brauer, along with his mother and brother, traveled to Decatur, Ill., last week. While there, he decided to attend the Illinois State Fair.

The red-headed, freckle-faced sophomore at Catholic Central High School entered the Bubble Gum Blowing Contest and proceeded to blow a bubble that measured 1 1/4 inches, good enough to win his division and also take the honors of the largest bubble of the day.

"They gave us two pieces of bubble gum and we chewed them both together. We got three chances to blow a bubble and then the largest one counted," Brauer said.

"At first I didn't want to go to Illinois because it is a six-hour drive in the car. But my mom made me go and she said we could do something interesting while we were there, so we went to the fair.

"Each day in the newspaper there they list all the events that are going on at the fair. So we went to the fair, rode on the rides, ate a lot and saw the exhibits and then I entered the bubble gum contest," Brauer said.

"I was really surprised to come home and see my picture and story in the paper."

Following the contest, Brauer's photo was taken by a wire service photographer and the photo appeared in the Detroit News on Sunday.

Brauer's picture also will appear in a calendar to be produced by the Nabisco Co., the makers of Bubble Yum, the bubble gum that was chewed during the bubble blowing contest.

"I chew about two packs of gum a week. Most of the time I chew sugarless because of it being better for your teeth, but the regular is better for blowing bubbles," Brauer said.

"I've been chewing for about eight or nine years and even though this is my first time entering a contest, I think I've had lots of experience."

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Matt Brauer owns the title of Illinois State Fair Bubble Blowing Champion. He relaxes around the house by blowing an average bubble while his dog Woodstock watches.

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