



Garfield students go through the sequence of stacking as they practice before racing a fellow student Thursday in the school's part to help break the record and reach the goal of 500,000 stackers in what Guinness World Records calls the "World's Largest Sport Stacking Event."

Area students participate in world competition

By ROBERT PIERCE

- Leader & Times

Thursday, students at Liberal's Garfield Elementary and at Kismet Elementary joined thousands of others from all over the world in what Guinness World Records termed the "World's Largest Sport Stacking Event."

During the course of the Guinness World Records Day, sport stackers from all reaches of the world were up stacking and down stacking various pyramids patterns at lightning speed for at least 30 minutes, all combined with a variety of fitness activities.

Sights were set on 500,000 stackers participating as sport stacking with Speed Stacks continues to gain popularity around the world.

Jill Fox of the World Sport Stacking Association said official numbers will likely not be available until next week, but hopes are that the record of 483,658 stackers, set last year in the competition's seventh year, will likely be broken as schools from across the globe continue to compete.

Kismet Principal Jerrilynn Wood said at her school alone, 162 students participated in Thursday's activities.



Wood said this is the first time this year's class of kindergartners had participated in sport stacking.

"They enjoyed the experience," she said. "The whole school's participated in the past. They're excited because they've seen brothers and sisters do it."

Wood said Thursday's event was a tune-up for a bigger competition Kismet Elementary hosts in the spring and an introduction into what the school will do with sport stacking this year.

Sport stacking has been termed a “track meet for your hands at warp speed.”

“It is an exciting sport where students up-stack and down-stack 12 specially designed cups called Speed Stacks in predetermined sequences as fast as they can,” said a press release from the WSSA. “Stackers race against the clock, compete in relays and often combine sport stacking with fitness challenges as part of physical education classes.”

Fox said more than 2,800 schools from all over the world, including Garfield and Kismet, were taking part in the event, and tens of thousands were expected to contribute their sport stacking skills from across the U.S. The number of schools participating is up 10 percent from last year’s numbers.

Schools from as many as 36 countries, including Hungary, Germany, Israel, South Korea, New Zealand, Columbia and Taiwan, are also participating in Guinness’s event, and many schools used the event to benefit local communities by stacking up for a good cause.

According to Bob Fox, WSSA founder and CEO, the event is a wonderful way to bring together sport stackers across the globe.

“Sport stacking is an activity enjoyed by all ages and cultures,” he said. “It promotes hand-eye coordination fitness, teamwork, speed and lots of fun.”

This is the eighth year WSSA has teamed up with Guinness World Records.

“We’re excited to have another shot at breaking a world record,” Bob Fox said.

Sport stacking with Speed Stacks is in more than 37,000 schools and youth organizations worldwide.

“It’s appealing to teachers and students because it’s easy to learn but very challenging to master,” the WSSA release said. “Benefits include improved reaction time, hand-eye coordination, concentration and focus.”

Fox said the sport is so popular now that students from elementary to high school, and even some adult education students, are taking part in the fun.

“Any age can do it,” she said.

Fox did say, however, that with all of the age groups involved, the sport primarily revolves around elementary-age children.

The WSSA is the governing body for sport stacking and promotes Stack Meets, Leagues and Tournaments around the world.

To take part in the record-setting Stack Up, schools and organizations around the world are required to register 25 or more stackers with the WSSA.

Once a group completes the 30 minutes of stacking for each participant (anytime during Nov. 14), the organizer and a witness are required to send in an online verification of numbers to the WSSA, who will pass on the total count to Guinness for official recognition.

For more information, go to www.thewssa.com or www.speedstacks.com.