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2023 GRAND AMERICAN

BY SEAN HAWLEY



After five days of Preliminary Grand American competition, it was finally time for Grand Week. Many shooters compete in both weeks, however attendance does swell as the Grand Week moves forward with the Championship events and the chance for a coveted Grand American Championship Ring nears. There were shooters from all 50 States as well as from 5 Canadian Provinces. There were even competitors who traveled to Sparta from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Brazil. The Brazilian contingent numbered 85 shooters. It only makes sense though, as The World Shooting and Recreation Center is truly a world class facility. The weather in southern Illinois at the beginning of August can be dicey and this year was no exception, with wind, rain and oppressive heat all coming into play throughout the week. Trapshooters are a tough lot though and they battled the elements as they always do.



WINCHESTER SINGLES CLASS CHAMPIONSHIPS

AAA	BRANDON DEAL	PA	200
AA	DOUGLAS WORRELL	PA	199
A	BREYDON PAXSON	IA	198
B	CRISTIANO CEOLATTO	BZ	200
C	JIM GODEZ	FL	194
D	CARLOS ZUCHI	BZ	193
LD1	ELIZABETH TERNES	OH	198
LD2	DONNA NATCHER	PA	196
SUB JR	PAYTON WOTTOWA	IL	197
JR	LONDON SIEVERS	IL	199
JR GOLD	JACOB BONSER	PA	200
SUB VET	MICHAEL KEMPEL	ND	200
VET	WILLIAM SERGENT	CA	199
SR VET	LARRY TAGTMEYER	TX	199
CHAIR	ZIGGY TKACZENKO	MO	187

BRANDON DEAL



MONDAY

Monday kicked off the quest for the High Over All with the Singles Class Championship. The wind howled pretty much all day and the scores reflected the challenging conditions. In an event that has seen over fifty 200 straights in previous years, this

year only saw 11 shooters who were able to break them all. Peter Walker (MN), Cristiano Ceolatto (BZ), Michael Kempel (ND), Richard Marshall Jr (NE), Brandon Deal (PA), Patrick Stacey (OK), Zach Nannini (MO), Christos Tsementzis (ON), Austin Jacob (OH), Shane Biser (MD) and Jacob Bonser (PA) were all,

PETER WALKER



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somehow able to crack the wind code and break 200 straight. There was only one shooter who broke them all and did not earn a trophy and that shooter was former Clay Target Champion and Trapshooting Hall Of Fame member Patrick Stacey. Brandon Deal finished as the AAA champion following another 200 in the Clay Target Championship and a very long shoot-off afterward. Richard Marshall Jr was the AAA Runner-up, with Walker, Nannini and Jacob finishing as 3rd, 4th and 5th place winners in AAA class. Ceolatto was the B class winner without a shoot-off, while Bonser, Biser and Tsementzis ended up as Junior Gold 1st through 3rd in that order. Michael Kempel converted his 200 into the Sub Veteran trophy without any need to carryover. Douglas Worrell (PA) was near perfect with his 199 to capture the AA trophy and Breydon Paxson (IA) shot just one less to win the A class award. Jim Godez (FL) and Carlos Zuchi (BZ) shot scores of 194 and 193 to finish as C and D class champions.

TUESDAY

The weather was great for the second day of Grand Week and the shooters took full advantage. There were four

PRESIDENT ED WEHKING HANDICAP BY PERAZZI

CH	THOMAS STOE	ND	100
RU	MICHAEL FONTELLO	DE	99
3RD	RYAN GLOW	NE	99
4TH	FRITZ CARLSTEN	DE	99
5TH	GARRETT HELMS	IL	98
6TH	JEREMY HESS	KS	98
LD1	ALLIE WATSON	TN	98
LD2	SANDRA JO JACK	WI	97
SUB JR	COLSON ALLEN	NC	98
JR	STEVEN MARGHERIO	IL	100
JR GOLD	DAGEN VOIGTMAN	NE	100
SUB VET	GEROGE HASS	WI	99
VET	FRED DAGUE	WV	97
SR VET	STEPHEN RUSSELL	TN	98
CHAIR	ZIGGY TKACZENKO	MO	89

perfect 100s broken in the President's Handicap to go with six 99s and twenty two 98s. The 100 straights came from Dagen Voigtman (NE), Thomas Stoe (ND), Hunter Strong (IA) and Steven Margherio (IL) and when the shoot-off dust settled it was the 22 yard line shooter from North Dakota who came away with the champion trophy. Voigtman took home the Junior Gold prize, while Strong and Margherio finished as Junior and Junior Runner-up winners. The event Runner-up through 4th place trophies went to Michael Fontello (DE), Ryan Glow (NE) and Fritz Carlsten (DE) with scores of 99. Allie Watson (TN) was the Lady I champion with 98 and Sandra Jo Jack cashed in her 97 to win the Lady II prize. Allen Colson from North Carolina broke 98 and then beat Brayden Deterding (IL) in the overtime to win Sub Junior. George Hass (WI) was the Sub Veteran winner with 99 and Fred Dague (WV) broke 97 and won his shoot-off to take home the Veteran trophy. Stephen Russell (TN) was high in the Senior Veteran category with 98, with Gary Norton (IL) breaking 92 to lead the chair shooters.

The last event of the day saw twenty four shooters break them all. When the carryovers were all settled Matthew Bartholow (SD) was the

WENIG DOUBLES CLASS CHAMPIONSHIP

AAA	MATTHEW BARTHLOW	SD	100
AA	JUSTIN SLATER	PA	100
A	MASON BURRIS	AR	99
B	ANDREW FEIG	IL	99
C	DOUG STENBECK	SC	97
D	MICHAEL STALCUP	KY	94
LD1	ELIZABETH TERNES	OH	100
LD2	DEBORAH OHYE-NEILSON	PA	95
SUB JR	JACKSON PALMISANO	MD	99
JR	AIDAN MASTER	AR	100
JR GOLD	JACK KNAUS	MN	100
SUB VET	KENNETH DARROCH	PA	100
VET	DOUG STANEK	IA	99
SR VET	FRANK PAYNE	IL	99
CHAIR	ZIGGY TKACZENKO	MO	82

AAA class champion, with Grant Williams (ID) and Mitchell Loveless (TN) as AAA Runner-up and 3rd. Justin Slater (PA) and Andrew Barrett (MA) both broke 100s and finished as AA champion and Runner-up, while Mason Burris (AR) broke 99 to win A class. B class was won by Andrew Feig (IL) with a 99 and Doug Stenbeck (SC) was the C class winner with 97. Michael Stalcup (KY) was the D class winner with 94. Lady I was won by Elizebeth Ternes (OH) with 100 straight and a carryover win against Elaina McCarthy (OH) who took Lady I Runner-up. Deborah Ohye-Neilson (PA) and Sue Smith (RI) broke 95s in the Lady II category, with Ohye-Neilson coming out on top. Five Junior shooters broke 100s and that meant that two would not receive trophies. Aiden Master (AR), Jack Holland (KY) and Drake Reynolds (KY) finished 1st, 2nd and 3rd in Junior after the carryover. Six Junior Gold shooters broke them all and Jack Knaus (MN), Logan Henry (AR) and Shane Biser (MD) took home the three trophies in that order. Kenneth Darroch (PA) and Russell Pierce (ID) were Sub Veteran champion and runner-up after the two had shot 100s in the event, while Doug Stanek (IA) and Frank Payne (IL) were the Veteran and Senior Veteran winners with scores of 99.

Larry Norton won the Chair Shooter category with 87.

WEDNESDAY

The first event on Wednesday was the Champion of Champions 100 target Singles. This is a special event that is for all of the open and category State Champions to compete. This year 209 shooters took part and represented their states and provinces and of those shooters there were 33 perfect 100s scored. In fact, of the 27 trophies available only six were won with less than perfect scores.

Jonathan Baker (MS) broke all of his targets to claim the Open Champion trophy after a carryover. Wisconsin shooters Brianna Thompson and Sandra Jo Jack were the Lady I and Lady II winners with perfect scores. Cody Meredith (FL), Brody Lenington (KS) and Hayden Miller (MO) all broke perfect scores to secure 1st place in the Sub Junior, Junior and Junior Gold categories. Sub Veteran, Veteran and Senior Veteran were won by Scott Moore (WA), Steve Smith (CA) and Greg Holden (AZ) with 100s.

WENDELL AUGUST CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS

CH	JONATHAN BAKER	MS	100
RU	JOHN WHITE IV	AL	100
LD1	BRIANNA THOMPSON	WI	100
LD2	SANDRA JO JACK	WI	100
SUB JR	CODY MEREDITH	FL	100
JR	BRODY LENINGTON	KS	100
JR GOLD	HAYDEN MILLER	MO	100
SUB VET	SCOTT MOORE	WA	100
VET	STEVEN SMITH	CA	100
SR VET	GREG HOLDEN	AZ	100

Hunter Spruill and David Shaeffer Jr. (MD) both broke 100 straights from the 27 yard line in the Challenger Ammunition Handicap. Following the shoot-off Shaeffer was the champion and Spruill went home as the Junior Gold winner. Michael

DAVID SCHAEFFER JR.



PHOTO CREDIT: JOSH BUCHIERE

90 was good enough for the Chair Shooter victory.

Sixteen shooters broke 100 straights in this year's Kubota Doubles non HOA event. In the end Garrett Helms (IL) won the carryover to claim the top spot. Shared Oaks (UT) was the event Runner-up and Kaleb Fischer (KS) ended in 3rd place. Layla Workman (AR) and Elizabeth Ternes both broke 100s in Lady I and Workman took home the champion trophy with Ternes settling for Runner-up. Deborah Ohye-Neilson was the Lady II winner with 98 and Jackson Palmisano (MD) broke the same to win Sub Junior. Cole Henning (IA) and Jack Holland were tied with 100s in the Junior category and finished in that order after the carryover. Dagen Voigtman was the Junior Gold winner after his 100 and a carryover, while Kenneth Darroch broke the same score to capture Sub Veteran. Troy Collier (TX) was the only Veteran 100 and Ted Carwile (VA) broke 99 to win the Senior Veteran trophy.

KUBOTA DOUBLES		
CH	GARRETT HELMS	IL 100
RU	SHARRED OAKS	UT 100
3RD	CALEB FISCHER	KS 100
AAA	JOSEPH CHARNIGO	OH 100
AA	WESLEY BEAVER	PA 99
A	ETIENNE CILLIERS	ZA 99
B	JUSTIN MALONE	NJ 98
C	LUCCI KERN	NV 97
D	DEVON HELGET	KS 97
LD1	KAYLA WORKMAN	AR 100
LD2	DEBORAH OHYE-NEILSON	PA 98
SUB JR	JACKSON PALMISANO	MD 98
JR	COLE HENNING	IA 100
JR GOLD	DAGEN VOIGTMAN	NE 100
SUB VET	KENNETH DARROCH	PA 100
VET	TROY COLLIER	TX 100
SR VET	TED CARWILE	VA 99
CHAIR	LARRY NORTON	IL 90

before things were all said and done it would go another 16 rounds on Saturday. Nihtila dropped out first and finished as the 3rd place winner. In the end Voigtman never missed and Deal let one go on that 32nd round. The shoot-off total of 800 was the second longest in ATA history, surpassed only by the 900 straight that Leo Harrison III and Foster Bartholow went before being named Co-Champions back in 2009. An amazing performance was turned in by Sub Junior Champion Bruce Bradley (ID) who made it deep into the second night before falling back to his category. Gregory Hipwell traveled all the way from Australia only to have had his gun not make it

CHALLENGER AMMUNITION HANDICAP

CH	DAVID SCHAEFFER JR.	MD 100
RU	MICHAEL KEMP	OH 99
3RD	MICHAEL SNYDER	WV 99
4TH	GARRETT HELMS	IL 98
5TH	HUGHIE COLEMAN	MO 98
6TH	IAN DARROCH	PA 98
LD1	ALLIE WATSON	TN 96
LD2	DEBORAH OHYE-NEILSON	PA 98
SUB JR	COLTYN SCHUTTE	IL 98
JR	LANDON SIEVERS	IL 99
JR GOLD	HUNTER SPRUILL	MO 100
SUB VET	HENRY WINN	KY 98
VET	ALAN NICHOLAS	IA 98
SR VET	LARRY IVANY	AB 96
CHAIR	LARRY NORTON	IL 90

SINGLES CHAMPION DAGEN VOIGTMAN AND RUNNER-UP BRANDON DEAL



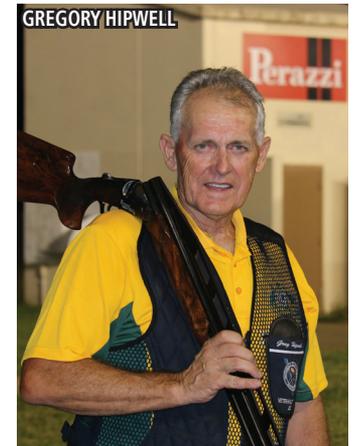
THURSDAY

There were 58 perfect 200 straights shot in Thursday's Clay Target Championship. Add to that the 116 near perfect 199s on the board and you find that nearly 10% of the shooters broke 199 or better. Pretty impressive! Well with a lot of great scores comes a lot of shoot-offs and the overtime rounds for this year's Clay Target Championship were epic. They went eight rounds on Thursday night before calling it quits and then continued again on Friday evening. After 200 more targets were shot the matter still had not been settled, so the shoot-off continued on Saturday. By this point the crowd was down to Robert Nihtila, Brandon Deal (PA) and Dagen Voigtman. They had already gone 16 perfect rounds over the previous two evenings and

ATA WORLD CLAY TARGET CHAMPIONSHIP BY BROWNING

CH	DAGEN VOIGTMAN	NE 200
RU	BRANDON DEAL	PA 200
3RD	ROBERT NIHTILA JR.	MA 200
AAA	RYAN GLOW	NE 200
AA	KURTIS SWIFT	KY 200
A	THOMAS CARTWRIGHT	MI 199
B	PAULO SOARES JR.	BZ 200
C	JUDSON MANN	IL 198
D	KEVIN MORRISON	IL 198
LD1	HANNAH HOPSON	MO 200
LD2	DEBORAH OHYE-NEILSON	PA 199
SUB JR	BRUCE BRADLEY	ID 200
JR	ROBERT GROPP	WI 200
JR GOLD	HAYDEN MILLER	MO 200
SUB VET	GEORGE HASS	WI 200
VET	GREGORY HIPWELL	AS 200
SR VET	LARRY IVANY	AB 200
CHAIR	ZIGGY KACZENKO	MO 187

to Sparta. No problem there mate, he borrowed a Perazzi, ran the 200 and finished as the Veteran champ after a long shoot-off. Interestingly, with the exception of Sub Junior 3rd, Lady II



(1st, 2nd and 3rd) and the Chair Shooter (1st and 2nd) every category had at least three 200 straights. That means that all of the other categories were full of 200 straight winners through third place.

FRIDAY

The Doubles Championship had 1626 shooters in attendance and of those there were 25 who broke perfectos. The shoot-off came down to Matt Bartholow and Zeke Yeager (MS) and in the 10th round Yeager let one go allowing Bartholow to win his third straight Doubles title. Interestingly enough, the last shooter to win the championship prior to Bartholow's three straight was Yeager back in 2020 when the Grand was held in Linn Creek, Missouri. Bartholow had a historic year in Doubles this year by averaging 99.73 on the 1100 targets that he shot. This surpassed Sean Hawley's 2003 average of 99.67. To explain how incredible Bartholow's average is you have to understand that he broke a back to back 99s at the South Dakota State Shoot to start his year, then broke 100 straight at the Iowa State Shoot before going to the Grand and breaking 100s in the first six Doubles events. He missed one target in the Kubota Doubles and then broke his final 100 in the Championship. That's right, he missed a total of THREE targets on the 1100 that he shot at. Congratulations Matt!

Perfect scores were the order of the day from Sean Hawley (UT) in 3rd place, AAA Champion Robert Nihtila (MA), Darrell Farr (MO) AAA Runner-up, Patrick Lamont (MB) AAA 3rd, Foster Bartholow (SD) AAA 4th and Grant Williams (ID) AAA 5th. The Lady I category had only one unblemished score and that came from this year's champion Anna Rawe (MO). Jackson Palmisano was the lone 100 in the Sub Junior



BRUCE BRADLEY



KATIE JONES



ROBERT NIHTILA



ROMAN BARRETT

CAESAR GUERINI PRELIMINARY HANDICAP		
CH	ROBERT SMITH	TN 99
RU	JASON KRAUSE	NE 99
3RD	MICHAEL FONTELLO	DE 99
4TH	JERROD LIES	KS 99
5TH	JOSEPH CHARNIGO	OH 99
6TH	LYNN HAMLIN	IL 99
LD1	KATIE JONES	MB 99
LD2	YANNI GADDY	TX 95
SUB JR	MASON BARTLOW	IL 98
JR	LONDON SIEVERS	IL 99
JR GOLD	LOGAN HENRY	AR 98
SUB VET	GARY YOUNG	MO 98
VET	DOUG COX	KY 98
SR VET	ROBERT DYER	KY 98
CHAIR	ZIGGY TKACZENKO	MO 93

Jason Krause (NE) took home the Runner-up honors and Michael Fontello was the third place finisher. Landon Sievers won the Junior trophy with 99 and Katie Jones (MB) broke the same score to earn the Lady I trophy.

SATURDAY

division, while Roman Barrett (MA), Tyler Honnold (TN) and Jordan Ziercher (MO) finished 1-2-3 in the Junior category with 100s. Jack

Knaus, Ian Lawrence and Logan Henry also finished in that order following 100s in Junior Gold.

The largest event of the week was the Preliminary Handicap with 1865 shooters. There were no 100s in this event, but there were nine scores of 99 and when the dust settled on the shoot-off fields Robert Smith from Tennessee was the winner.

The Grand American Handicap is the most prestigious Handicap event of the year in our sport and at the Grand they save the best for last. Did you know that it wasn't always done that way? That's right, when the Grand was in Vandalia, OH the GAH was always on Friday and the final day of the tournament had the Doubles Championship and the

ATA WORLD DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP BY KOLAR			
CH	MATTHEW BARTHLOW	SD	100
RU	ZEKE YEAGER	MS	100
3RD	SEAN HAWLEY	UT	100
AAA	ROBERT NIHTILA JR.	MA	100
AA	BRYCE WADE	IA	99
A	ISAAC GREGORY	AR	99
B	SAMUEL WILSON	KY	99
C	DEVON HELGET	KS	97
D	GREGORY HIGH	NC	97
LD1	ANNA RAWE	MO	100
LD2	DEBORAH OHYE-NEILSON	PA	99
SUB JR	JACKSON PALMISANO	MD	100
JR	ROMAN BARRETT	MA	100
JR GOLD	JACK KNAUS	MN	100
SUB VET	JOHN EVICK	OH	99
VET	DARVIN THOMAS	AZ	98
SR VET	JOHN KELLY	WY	99
CHAIR	ZIGGY TKACZENKO	MO	90



DOUBLES RUNNER-UP ZEKE YEAGER AND CHAMPION MATTHEW BARTHLOW

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FIOCCHI GRAND AMERICAN HANDICAP

CH	RICKY MERRIMAN	IL	100
RU	LEVI HINES	KY	99
3RD	AUSTIN JACOB	OH	99
4TH	ELIJAH MEDCALF	IN	99
5TH	DEWAYNE DUMMITT	KY	98
6TH	MICHAEL FONTELLO	DE	98
LD1	ELLIE ALVARADO	CA	98
LD2	JENNIFER HEDRICK	OH	99
SUB JR	PAYTON WOTTOWA	IL	97
JR	COLE HENNIG	IA	99
JR GOLD	WESLEY BEAVER	PA	100
SUB VET	TRACY HOPE	KY	98
VET	DAN CAMPBELL	WI	98
SR VET	ROBERT RIMER JR.	OK	99
CHAIR	ZIGGY TKACZENKO	MO	92

Vandalia Handicap. Needless to say, the final day looked like a ghost town compared to the earlier days. Well thankfully they don't do that anymore and the attendance for the final event was only several shooters short of Friday's numbers. Two shooters broke 100 straights in this year's GAH and due to yardage differences they needed separate traps. 21½ yard line shooter Ricky Merriman (IL) and 27 yarder Westley Beaver (PA) went to their fields to get things figured out. In the end Merriman was crowned the 2023 GAH Champion and Beaver dropped down to be the Junior Gold winner. Levi Hines, a 20 ½ yard shooter from Kentucky, broke 99 and won the shoot-off for the runner-up spot, while Austin Jacob and Elijah Medcalf (IN) finished in 3rd and 4th places with the same score. Jennifer Hedrick broke 99 from 25½ yards to win Lady I and earn her punch to the 27, while Cole Henning and Robert Rimer (OK) broke the same score to secure Junior and Senior Veteran titles.

Patrick Lamont and Austin Jacob tied with scores of 397x400 in the All Around. After the shoot-off Lamont had earned himself another ring and Jacobs finished as the runner-up. Sean Hawley broke 396 and won his shoot-off to take home 3rd place

RICKY MERRIMAN



ATA WORLD HIGH ALL AROUND BY E-Z-GO

CH	PATRICK LAMONT	MB	397
RU	AUSTIN JACOB	OH	397
3RD	SEAN HAWLEY	UT	396
AAA	MICHAEL FONTELLO	DE	396
AA	JORDAN ZIERCHER	MO	393
A	CURTIS WILKINS	IA	388
B	DORI JONES	MB	389
C	BRAYDEN DETERDING	IL	381
D	BRUCE KYLES	TX	382
LD1	RAYLEE BISHOP	IA	393
LD2	DEBORAH OHYE-NEILSON	PA	388
SUB JR	MASON BARTLOW	IL	392
JR	ISAAC GREGORY	AR	396
JR GOLD	SHANE BISER	MD	396
SUB VET	GEORGE HASS	WI	394
VET	FRANK SICK	IA	394
SR VET	LOUIE MORGAN	OH	392
CHAIR	ZIGGY TKACZENKO	MO	369

honors. Raylee Bishop (IA) and Deborah Ohye-Neilson broke 393 and 388 to capture the Lady I and Lady II titles, while Mason Bartlow (IL) had 392 to win Sub Junior. Isaac Gregory (AR) and Shane Biser carded 396 to win Junior and Junior Gold trophies, while George Hass and Frank Sick (IA) each had 394 to win Sub Veteran and Veteran prizes. Louie Morgan (OH) was the Senior Veteran winner with 392.

Junior shooter Landon Sievers had a tremendous week of shooting and finished with 988x1000 to win the High Over All championship by one target over Michael Fontello, who ended as the runner-up. Patrick

HAA CHAMPION PATRICK LAMONT AND RUNNER-UP AUSTIN JACOB



PHOTO CREDIT: JOSH BUCHIERE

Lamont had 984 to place in third. The AAA class was won by Keith Ditto (KY) with 982, while Wesley Beaver and Breydon Paxson were the AA and A class champions with 974. Greg

ATA WORLD HIGH OVER ALL BY PRIZE POSSESSIONS

CH	LONDON SIEVERS	IL	988
RU	MICHAEL FONTELLO	DE	987
3RD	PATRICK LAMONT	MB	984
AAA	KEITH DITTO	KY	982
AA	WESLEY BEAVER	PA	974
A	BREYDON PAXSON	IA	974
B	GREG SURBER	TX	951
C	BRAYDEN DETERDING	IL	954
D	MICHAEL BECK	MN	934
LD1	RAYLEE BISHOP	IA	972
LD2	DEBORAH OHYE-NEILSON	PA	967
SUB JR	WYATT DEBRIE	NE	964
JR	COLE HENNING	IA	975
JR GOLD	DAGEN VOIGTMAN	NE	985
SUB VET	GEORGE HASS	WI	975
VET	DALE STOCKDALE	IA	971
SR VET	LOUIE MORGAN	OH	961
CHAIR	ZIGGY TKACZENKO	MO	903

LONDON SIEVERS





Surber (TX) and Brayden Deterding (IL) won B and C classes with 951 and 954. Michael Beck (MN) broke 934 to lead D class. Only seven trophies were won by non category shooters throughout the places and classes.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The Grand in Sparta is a great time. The ATA works extremely hard to put on a world class tournament and this year, as usual it was a complete success. The target setting was great, the staff were friendly and the shoot-offs, which can be confusing at a large shoot, were handled well. The campgrounds are fantastic and there are good food options on the grounds. The number of vendors to buy, well, just about anything you can think of that is shooting related are plentiful. All in all the Grand American is a shoot that shouldn't be missed. I hope to see you next year! ■



**2024
GRAND AMERICAN
AUGUST 2 - 12**

