

Locals find glory at Youth Olympics in Norway

Games attract top juniors from around the globe; locals Jake Pates and River Radamus win gold, Paula Cooper earns silver

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OSLO, Norway — Both stoked and succinct, Jake Pates said he was excited to be an Olympic champion on Sunday.

And after receiving a score of 93 in the snowboarding halfpipe competition at the Lillehammer 2016 Winter Youth Olympic Games, it's a title he has now earned.

The Youth Olympic Games are the greatest innovation of the International Olympic Committee since the Winter Olympics were launched in 1924. Complete with an Olympic Village that was part of a more than \$10 million dollar investment from the International Olympic Committee, the games are held every four years and invite one male and female competitor from each country who is between the ages of 15 and 18 to compete in each of the winter sports disciplines.

LOCALS IN LILLEHAMMER

Eagle County is well represented at the Games, with several local athletes competing in skiing and snowboarding competitions.

Fresh off his super-G victory Saturday, River Radamus, of Edwards, once again took gold in the combined super-G and slalom event on Sunday. Radamus' combined time was a mere 0.07 seconds over Austria's Manuel Traninger, who also took the bronze in Saturday's super-G.

A former alpine skier turned halfpipe specialist, Paula Cooper, of Vail, claimed the silver medal in the ski halfpipe competition on Sunday.

And Pates, an Eagle resident pitted against fellow Eagle resident Rakai Tait (competing for New Zealand, where he has citizenship along with the U.S.), was able to secure gold and take a victory lap.

"I had the safety of the podium so I just dropped in and did a few slashes," he said.

Tait took sixth.

"The regular Olympics are a goal I have in mind, so it's really cool they're setting this all up for us."

Paula Cooper
Halfpipe specialist

Leading up to the event, Pates said he was excited to experience the energy of the Olympic Village and be a spectator as well as a competitor.

"There will be all the winter sports you can think of at the venue," Pates said. "Hockey, curling, cross-country skiing, all right there in the area. I'm really excited to check everything out."

Pates grew up in Eagle with brother Cole and sister Charlie Sue. His parents, Chris and Amy Pates, have often said chasing Cole helped develop Jake's skills on a snowboard. Cole Pates is a talented freeskiier;



PHOTOS BY JON BUCKLE, INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE YOUTH INFORMATION SERVICES | SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

TOP: Paula Cooper, of Vail, competes in the women's freestyle ski halfpipe finals during the Winter Youth Olympic Games in Lillehammer, Norway, on Sunday. Cooper took second place. **BOTTOM:** Jake Pates, of Eagle, won the Winter Youth Olympic Games men's snowboard halfpipe finals Sunday in Lillehammer, Norway. Pates runs CJ's Board Shop in Gypsum with his brother, Cole, in the summer.

the brothers manage CJ's Board Shop in Gypsum in the summer.

PRELUDE OF WHAT'S TO COME

Now Olympic medalists at the youth level, these local athletes will look to take their skills to the International Olympic Committee's next level of competition.

"The regular Olympics are a goal I have in mind," Cooper said. "So it's really cool they're setting this all up for us."

California snowboarding phenom Chloe Kim also won gold in the snowboarding halfpipe competition, fresh off her win at X Games.

The Lillehammer 2016 Youth Olympic Games will continue through Sunday. Follow along by visiting www.lillehammer2016.com.

The United States Ski and Snowboard Association contributed to this report.

