



Congratulations to the winners listed below:

Beginners : Austin Butler, Kyle Simpson, Jared Loyd

Intermediate: Cody Baker, Zach Reed, Tristan Hane, Eric Shalaab

Advanced: Corbin, Chris Mata, Charley Barry

Sponsored: Chris Reitz, Colin Miller, Josh Bowlby

For more information on the B-3 Skate Park please visit

www.bonitaspringsrecreation.org

Skateboarding (Published in the Ft. Myers News Press)

Every once in a while some very lucky children grow up in enchanted childhoods where a rare and sacred thing happens. Out of the typical ornaments that are scattered throughout childhood, one makes it into adulthood. The shape and material of this object can vary, but one thing is for sure what was once a childhood toy leads to an adult's coveted career for some very talented kids. We are likely to hear about these once upon a time stories happening to people like Joe Mauer or LeBron James where a young boy's basketball and baseball grew into a man's glamorous career. However, there are other objects that can transition into this magical world as well. One of these is the skateboard. Its not as mainstream nor does it have a history laced deep into America's heritage as the MLB or the NBA might, but with the help of ESPN'S Extreme Games as well the Winter X Games another childhood "toy" grew to become a possible portal to a forever childhood. A world of glitz and glamour, a world of doing exactly what you love to do while getting admired and paid for it. Tony Hawk was one of these blessed children. He was nine years old when his brother changed his life by giving him a blue fiberglass banana board. By twelve, Tony was sponsored by Dogtown skateboards, by fourteen he was pro, and by age sixteen Tony Hawk was the best skateboarder in the world. In the ensuing 17 years, Hawk has entered an estimated 103 pro contests. He won 73 of them, and placed second in 19. By far the best record in skate boarding's history. Tony retired at age 31. Not bad if you ask me. It doesn't matter what childhood sport a child chooses we should encourage them. Not every kid grows up to be Tony Hawk, but many children make memories that last a lifetime during their youth sports. Main stream sport or not, children learn some of the fundamentals of life during it. The B-3 Skate Park in Bonita hosts competitions where all of the Tony Hawk hopefuls can compete. The last competition started with a brown van pulling up outside the B-3 skate park causing the kids hearts to beat a little faster. You could see it in their faces when the door slid open and Brent Sanders gets out. His easy swag and cool demeanor radiates skating as not just a sport, but as a way of life. He doesn't walk in. He skates in. Followed by his entourage which includes; a guy in tight jeans and big sunglasses that looks very seventy-ish retro California boy, a long bearded hippy fellow, a younger boy who resembles Jacob from twilight somewhat, and lastly in skates a twelve year old with features that resemble the king of Brother Hood himself. Quickly they started to set up. Kids swarmed them with hellos and questions. Music filled the park. The competition started and the kids showed their best skating skills. The brotherhood skate shop threw out free giveaways to the skaters. The Bonita Springs Parks & Recreation Department gave away free pizza and sodas. The competition was a success. The only damper was the lighting meter that held the competition on a short delay. Skaters waited out the lighting delay. They skated through the heat. Some ripped clothes after a fall. No matter what, they kept going. Many stayed till the park closed after the competition was over. For these skaters, skating isn't a sport it's a passion. -L.T.