

Puzzled by the Miss America pageant

Usain Bolt is the fastest man alive. He has the world records to prove it. But will there ever be a time where we try to redefine what it means to be fast? What happens if the competition becomes who embodies being fast the most, where a 6-foot-5, quick-twitch explosive athlete could be edged out by somebody who tries harder, works a little more tirelessly and is more in the mold of fast? It sounds completely silly. Winners are the person, or teams, who are the best at the criteria in which they compete. You don't get to be the fastest man alive because your name is Flash Gordon and, on the inside, you have blazing speed. I bring this up to ask -



why exactly is Miss America trying to take looks out of the equation in judging beauty? On Tuesday, Miss America chairman Gretchen Carlson announced the competition - no longer deemed a pageant - will scrap the swimsuits and evening gowns while going to a system where participants will not be judged by physical appearance. Competitors will instead take part in a

lively discussion with the judges, where they will try to "demonstrate their passion, intelligence and overall understanding of the job of Miss America," according to a report from ABC's "Good Morning America" after Carlson's visit Tuesday. The evening gowns are being replaced by attire that makes competitors "feel confident and expresses their personal style." I'll tread lightly here, because the last thing I think would be appropriate is a 32-year-old male to tell women how they should be judged. Instead, I asked around and got the opinions of several of my female coworkers and family members, some of which

are veterans of the pageant process. The general consensus I received was good ridance to the swimsuits, but for shame for getting rid of the evening gowns. As for the overall changes, I'll let them speak for themselves. "I personally think the Miss America pageant isn't a pageant anymore," said Emma Holmes, our new intern and a former Fairest of the Fair winner. "Evening gowns are my favorite part. It's insane they're taking it out. (The changes) are upsetting because little girls in pageants look up to Miss America. They see how strong and beautiful they are and it makes them work hard to get in shape and look

their best." "I'm proud of Miss America for realizing the pageant system needs to evolve and show younger girls that beauty is more than how you look in a swimsuit," said Emily Hobbs Britton, a former competitor in Miss Tennessee who has also served as a pageant coach. "I do wish they would keep the evening gowns because it is a tradition and something the contestants and viewers love to watch. I think the changes will be a shock to everyone at first, but it's a positive change in the long run." "Should we change it from Miss America to Miss Personality?" asked Lisa Hobbs. Nikki Childers added

if they wouldn't judge by physical appearance, then why be subjected to seeing them at all? "Make it like the old blind-dating shows. Put the judges on one side of the curtain and the competitors are on the other. If you aren't going to judge them at all by their physical appearance then you don't need to see them," said Childers. It seems Miss America is looking to curtail defining beauty by strictly physical qualities. Whether they'll succeed, or be around long enough to initiate change, remains to be seen. In the meantime, I'll continue defining the fastest man alive by who crosses the finish line first.

GIRLS 7-9 LEAGUE

Games played June 4 - names provided by league

**FIRST NATIONAL BANK 9
CITIZEN'S TRI COUNTY 7**

FNB HITTING - Abygayle Jones 3H, Leah Mara 2H, Jovanna Turner 2H, Brianna Turner 2H, Alexis Egerton 2H, Kryslin Cantrell H, Adison Shay H, Zara Laxson H, Gaby Jones H

CB HITTING - Taylor Gann 3H, two inside-the-park HRs, Adelaide Daridoff 2H, inside-the-park HR, Lorelei Griffith 2H, Caroline Boyd 2H, Maci Parsley H

**NETHERTON DENTISTRY 17
DENNING & CANTRELL 7**

ND HITTING - Caydence Wiser 3H, inside-the-park HR, Kenzie Hullett 3H, Jenna Mullins 3H, Aubrey Oleksik 3H, Abigail Netherton 3H, Bubbles Ross 2H, Macy McBride 2H, Aryanna Luna 2H, Ashlynn Graves 2H, Chloe Wanamaker H, Cara Rheady H

DC HITTING - Courtland Porter 3H, Samara Hams 2H, Brooke Kesey 2H, Kade Thompson 2H, Kaidence Crouch 2H, Ruby Denning H, Bella Campbell H, Willa Denning H

**CITIZEN'S TRI COUNTY 13
FIRST NATIONAL BANK 4**

CB HITTING - Charley Wilson 3H, inside-the-park HR, Caroline Boyd 3H, inside-the-park HR, Eden Grissom 3H, Adelaide Daridoff 2H, inside-the-park HR, Lorelei Griffith 2H, Taylor Gann 2H, inside-the-park HR

FNB HITTING - Leah Mara 2H, Livia Jaco 2H, Jovanna Turner H, Abygayle Jones H, Peyton Rowland H, Alexis Egerton H, Kryslin Cantrell H



Jeffery Simmons photo
Taylor Gann, right, leads the charge through the postgame high-five line for Citizen's Tri County Bank. Gann hit three inside-the-park home runs in two games against First National Bank Monday.

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Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

Jennings

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With the shared experience, the choice for who would be honored this year was made before a

game was played. "I called Debbie a couple days before Tim died to let him know Wesley would be receiving the award. His dad knew," said Wanamaker. Wesley was one of three seniors on this year's squad, which won 19 games and finished second in the District 6AAA regular season and tournament. Jennings started the majority of the team's games at first base, serv-

ing as a calming presence on the infield. "Wesley was a good teammate to everybody despite going through some personal things," said Trice Powers, who came on as coach this year. "He's pretty resilient. He found a way to keep working and bounce back. It was pretty special." Jennings was the 23rd recipient of the Hilda Lowry Award.

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