

Dan Brynildsen Heads To World Axe-Throwing Championships With High Hopes

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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JERSEY - Dan Brynildsen and his wife, Erika, have put axe throwing for this region on the map nationwide and worldwide with their locations in both Jerseyville and East Alton. This weekend, Dan will compete in the World Championships again in Appleton Wisc., Friday through Sunday.

Dan Brynildsen's axe-throwing odyssey began when he celebrated his birthday in December 2018. That night Dan and his wife thoroughly enjoyed themselves and he was hooked.

"It was a lot of fun, and I'm an active person anyway. It's kind of like bowling, it's active, it's social and it's fun. It's like darts or steroids, we now say at the shop."

Shortly after Riverbend Axe Throwing opened at East Gate Plaza in East Alton, the fan base started. Dan has always had unbelievable enthusiasm for the sport and for spreading that love to others. He has been on the pro circuit for some time now and competed in the world championships last year.

Dan said axe-throwing is good for everyone from age eight all the way to their 90s. A 92-year-old has competed at Riverbend Axe Throwing as has an eight-year-old.

Dan has been ranked in the top 10 in the world this entire season. He said he has gone to a lot of tournaments and he and [14-year-old Jersey phenom Josselyn Allen](#) catch attention at almost every one of them. He said Josselyn made quite an impression when she was invited to a showcase on the sport on ESPN.

The Riverbend Axe Throwing owner qualified in all four of the world championships events.

"There is the standard hatchet competition, the big axe competition, knife throwing, and dual or two-player team category. He said he will compete with Erika in that competition," he said.

Axe-throwing matches are the best-of-three format with each thrower having 10 points to score. The bullseye is worth six points, while outer circles have values from one to five points. In addition, throwers can attempt a kill throw, where there are blue dots in the upper corners of each target. The shots must be called before each attempt, and if the thrower hits either dot, he or she is awarded eight points, but a miss is worth no points. There is a limit of two throws per competitor in each game. Believe it or not, Dan has scored a perfect 64-point before.

Dan said the Riverbend Axe Throwing business at East Alton is a hit with several leagues and constant visits from the public and the Jerseyville location continues to grow. He said he expects with it getting cold outside, the Jerseyville location will have lots of customers through the winter and that axe-throwing is catching on in Jersey.

"I think I have a pretty good shot at winning in a few of the events," he said of the world championships. "The crazy thing is it comes down to every single throw and who has the hot hand and who doesn't miss, it is like a lot of other professional sports."