

SPORTS: Plans are not yet definitive for fall activities

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that fall sports of cross country, volleyball and soccer will begin official practice at the original start date of August 17 — but contests will be delayed until September 23. That delay will give schools more opportunity to get the academic year underway and for other details, such as spectator policies, multi-team events, and scheduling considerations to be worked out.

Football, along with cheerleading and dance/drill, are considered full contact activities, and as such, are currently prohibited under Oregon Health Authority guidelines. They do not have a planned starting date at this point. In its press release, the OSAA stated, “Based on strategies provided by the OSAA Football Contingency Group it is necessary that any football restrictions be lifted by September 28 in order to have a modified regular season this fall that would include some type of restructured postseason.”

The recommendations came out of a three-day work session that spanned July 20-22.

Sisters High School Athletic Director Gary Thorson, who recently accepted the position as football coach, said, “At first glance I was disappointed that there was not very much detail to this plan, but then, after re-reading it I realized that there is so much we still don’t know that the OSAA was wise to not commit to more specifics just yet.”

Washington and California, which have laid out much more specific plans, including Washington’s design of doing four shortened seasons during the school year rather than three longer ones and

redistributing what time of year different sports will play.

The OSAA press release stated, “If fall activities aren’t able to be held in the regular time frame, the OSAA Executive Board is committed to working with its contingency groups to exhaust all options for these activities including shifting, condensing, or stacking seasons, like our neighbors in Washington and California, with the fundamental objective of providing participation opportunities for students. These changes may ultimately force schools into choosing which programs they will offer and students into choosing between activities, but the Board believes that a potentially difficult choice is better than no choice.”

Thorson acknowledged the planning done in neighboring states.

“If health issues don’t improve and we can’t get started in the fall the way that OSAA hopes right now, the four season idea might work in Oregon as well,” he said. “We could start the year with the lesser contact sports and move things around in hopes that the virus will be much more contained as the months pass.”

Thorson says he is getting a lot of calls and messages from people wanting to know the plan for fall.

“I wish I could be more

specific, but we all are going to have to wait, be patient and then work together to make the best of whatever plan is available to us,” he said. “We are in uncharted territory, but it is my hope that we can offer as much as possible, even if it means shorter seasons and less travel, rather than what happened this past spring.”

For cheerleading and dance/drill teams, the OSAA and contingency groups are working to develop possible modifications as to choreography, stunting and lifting that would make those activities meet safe health guidelines.

More information regarding requirements for face coverings for indoor sports and other considerations will be forthcoming, according to the OSAA.

Other guidelines that came out of the meeting included limiting sports practices to one per day not to exceed three hours, and athletes would be restricted to one hour of weight training per day in addition to their practice time. In addition, all fall sports athletes will be required to complete nine practices before being eligible for competition.

The OSAA Executive Board is scheduled to meet again on August 3 as they anticipate more information to be available regarding the reopening of schools.

CITY: Traffic measurement will provide data

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year and the start of another while meeting all guidelines related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The City is also temporarily down one full-time staff member/department head and others have stepped in to fill that gap.

• The appointment of a short-term work committee is being considered to study the City’s disbursement of transient room tax receipts, a major percentage of which must go for tourist-related services, activities, and marketing. They will most likely be meeting during the fall, with an eye toward completion and recommendations prior to the year-end holidays. The committee’s task would be to draw up a strategic tourism plan for how

those TRT funds will be spent.

• Traffic data recording equipment was recently purchased by the Public Works Department to improve the City’s ability to collect relevant data regarding numbers and types of vehicles traveling on City streets, their speeds, and the percentage of different speeds traveled, including the time of day or night. This information will help inform the Deschutes County Sheriff’s officers assigned to Sisters where and when to patrol for traffic speed enforcement and safety.

The data will also inform the City regarding the need for speed zone adjustments and possible installation of traffic mitigation equipment such as speed bumps, traffic calming installations, and speed signs. The recorders are initially scheduled to be used on 12 streets, with more in the future.

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