

Runners find a way to compete

By **Charlie Kanzig**
Correspondent

The high school sports world is still largely shut down due to COVID-19, but Pat Zweifel, cross-country coach at Tillamook High School and owner of a large farm, found a way to offer a meet to a group of runners looking to compete as OSAA's "fall" season is postponed until February.

Zweifel's family owns the Hydrangea Ranch outside of Tillamook where, amidst the rows of flower bushes, Zweifel has carved out a cross-country race course and built facilities to host camps and other running events.

In fact, the Sisters cross-country team used the facility for camps in 2018 and 2019.

Zweifel contacted Sisters head coach Josh Nordell and invited some Sisters kids to run "unattached" in what he dubbed the "Bigfoot Invite."

Five boys and three Outlaws girls made the trip on Friday, October 23 and ran very well, according to Nordell. It is unclear whether Bigfoot showed up or not, according to Nordell.

"I didn't know exactly what to expect, but the kids raced as though nothing had changed and they proved they were ready to take on anybody," said Nordell.

Sophomore Ella Thorsett, the reigning 4A champion, cruised undaunted through rain and mud to win the girls race in 18:19. She finished more than a minute ahead of Tillamook's Sarah Pullen who finished in 19:26. Pullen, a senior, placed sixth at last year's state meet and third the year before.

Pearl Gregg showed that her summer training paid off as she placed fourth in 20:41. Freshman Ella Bartlett finished her first high-school race in eighth with a time of 22:26.

The Outlaw boys flexed some muscle, taking three of the top four spots as seniors John Peckham (15:32), Will Thorsett (15:41), and Ethan Hosang (16:02) finished 1-2-4.

Additionally, senior Sam



PHOTO BY CRAIG MAY

Freshman Ella Bartlett ran her first high-school race near Tillamook.

May placed seventh (17:03) and sophomore Hayden Roth finished eighth (19:00).

While it is unclear whether other races will be available this fall, Nordell appreciated the opportunity for some of his runners to race.

"These kids work hard even during uncertainty," he said. "They don't know what tomorrow will bring with the virus and shutdowns, but they keep on training so they will be ready. That's real dedication in my book."



PHOTO BY CRAIG MAY

Sam May guts it out in Outlaws cross-country action.

LETTERS

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To the Editor:

Given the horrible destruction, including the decimation of existing communities, caused by the 2020 wildfires, I suggest that the Sisters City Council, in conjunction with the Forest Service and other adjacent land owners, should consider implementing a comprehensive evaluation around the City limits to identify where thinning, clearing, or other fire prevention activities are needed, i.e., creating a defensible perimeter.

If such a process is begun now, Sisters has time to become better prepared before next summer's fire season.

Second, installing more signs along the various roads and highways warning of fire danger could be beneficial. For example, the only sign on Elm Street/Three Creek Lake Road is located beyond (south of) the new Peterson Ridge trail parking area; thus, bikers and hikers do not see the sign and are not made aware of current fire danger, the rules re: camp fires, etc.

Lighted signs erected during the peak fire season could also be considered.

Bottom line, increasing the public's awareness of fire danger in our forests is vital. Likely this is the Forest Service or ODOT's responsibility rather than the City's.

While these suggestions will require extra expense, the cost is small compared to the aftermath of a fire.

C. Kearney



To the Editor:

Sisters should do well in re-electing Sheriff Shane Nelson. He has worked with our City to bring in a dedicated policing presence here, led by Lt. Chad Davis, and has afforded Sisters the law enforcement we have asked for.

Law enforcement has met serious scrutiny across the nation. We need Sheriff Nelson's continued professional discipline which includes support for persons challenged with mental health issues. Mental health persons are on his staff.

Sheriff Nelson has always supported productive discourse with our community.

Jack Addison

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RE-ELECT COMMISSIONER PHIL HENDERSON

A thoughtful leader with proven results!

FISCAL PRUDENCE: Twice led successful efforts to lower Deschutes County property tax rates and spends taxpayer money wisely.

PUBLIC HEALTH: In the face of the COVID-19 virus, advocated early for working closely with health providers, sharing full public information, purchasing protective equipment and supplies, increasing access to testing and tracing, and proper use of face masks. Helped plan and complete the new Mental Health Stabilization Center.

FOREST MANAGEMENT: Broadened Deschutes County's commitment to forest fire prevention and advocated for better forest management as a member of the Deschutes Forest Collaborative Project.

PUBLIC SAFETY: Supported extension of the County Sheriff's contract with the City of Sisters.



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Paid for by Phil Henderson