

Chew appeals largely to young, white males

By Scott Maben
Of the Emerald

Consumption of smokeless tobacco is highest among white males in middle and high schools, primarily in the South and West, according to national polls in recent years.

South Eugene High School Associate Principal Gerry Kosanovic says use of chew by students isn't much of a problem there.

"It's more of a rural phenomenon," Kosanovic says. "You see it more often in Crow and Elmira."

Oregon surveys support Kosanovic's claim. A study of 11th-graders in suburban and rural areas of the state showed that:

- 77.5 percent of 445 males and 34.2 percent of 436 females had tried chew or snuff.
- 22.7 percent of 440 males and .5 percent of 431 females had used it in the previous seven days.

Use is slightly lower in Oregon's suburban/urban areas; however, the habit is formed in the early-adolescent years in both dense and sparse populations.

Kosanovic says he hears more reports of experimentation with chewing beginning in middle school.

"That's a very impressionable age. It's a transition period," he says. "At that level, identity crises begin, and if kids are going to try it, they're probably going to do it then."

One 1985 survey found that 16 percent of males in the country aged 12 to 25 use smokeless tobacco products. However, a current U.S. inspector general's national survey revealed the overall average age at which chewers take their first "dip" is 10.5, in the fifth grade.

The tobacco industry recognizes this target group, as it spends millions of dollars trying to appeal primarily to young, white males. Chewers are exposed to advertisements that emit tones of patriotism and nostalgia, and reflect the rugged outdoor life.

Skoal Bandits, lip-sized pouches of wintergreen tobacco, were introduced a few years back to novice chewers preparing for days of more hardy "chaws."

Displays of snuff and chew usually are set apart from cigarettes in convenience and grocery stores, often placed close to candy and fast-food products, notes a recent article in the Massachusetts Medical Society's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

Smokeless tobacco is now available in two different forms: chewing tobacco (Red Man; Mail Pouch), and dry or the more popular moist snuff (Copenhagen, Skoal).

Occasionally munched, rough-cut chewing tobacco is sold as looseleaf, plug and twist, and often has licorice added to it. Snuff also is sweetened at the factory, hitting the shelves in wintergreen and mint flavors.

Before Congress placed a ban on television and radio ads for smokeless tobacco, effective last August, athletic idols such as Carlton Fisk of the Chicago White Sox and former Dallas Cowboy Walt Garrison, spokesman for Copenhagen and Skoal manufacturer U.S. Tobacco Co., peddled the stuff from stadiums and arenas on prime-time television.

These sales pitches were long deemed vice-laden by the American Medical Association and other opponents of the industry because of the influence the athlete-heroes have on young people.

But U.S. Tobacco Chairman of the Board Louis Bantly has publicly argued that tobacco producers don't attempt to capture the young market. Bantly insists the industry supports a minimum use age of 18.

Currently 36 states, including Oregon, prohibit by law the sale of smokeless tobacco to minors (under 18). These laws, however, often prove difficult to enforce.

At South Eugene, Kosanovic says athletes are prohibited from using any type of tobacco. Before joining a team, a student must sign a contract agreeing not to chew on or off campus, during school hours or not.

Other students may chew only in a specially designated tobacco-use area behind the school. Students caught chewing elsewhere on campus face a two-day suspension.

Kosanovic says he believes such policies present a correlation between education and the chewing habit.

Chew Continued from Page 8

it." Finley's reaction to current health warnings is mild. "Of course it's scary, but I don't plan on chewing after college. It's just something to do for now."

Finley was contacted again recently and says he has not made good on his New Year's resolution to quit. "I changed my resolution to something else," he says.

Eighteen-year-old John Wheeler of the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity also began chewing after a friend in high school offered him a plug of Copenhagen, which he took but didn't really like.

"So I tried some other brands and finally chose Kodiak," says Wheeler, a devout chewer for four years.

Wheeler says the cancer threat does intimidate him, but it hasn't affected his consumption of more than two cans a week.

"I talked to my dentist who told me if I get an infection, I'll first see a white lesion (leukoplakia)," Wheeler says. "So I'm just watching for that." Nationwide, chewing is a habit characterized by use by athletes.

Clark attributes the association between athletes and chewing to a mode established before college. He believes high school athletes take up chewing as a status symbol, and then get hooked, carrying it on into college.

And the tobacco industry doesn't deter the college consumer.

Promotional giveaways on college campuses have served to enhance the image of smokeless tobacco. Manufacturers are regular sponsors on many collegiate rodeo circuits.

U.S. Tobacco Co., which commands 90 percent of the snuff market with Copenhagen and Skoal, sponsors rodeos at Eastern Oregon State College in La Grande "all the time," says EOSC Dean of Administration James Lundy.

"All of the intercollegiate rodeos are sponsored by the tobacco industry, which also provides scholarships," says Lundy, who coaches the EOSC Mounties Rodeo Team.

Lundy says the popularity of smokeless tobacco is very high at EOSC, especially among athletes in baseball, rodeo and football.

"It's part of the culture over here. Sixty percent of our students come from this side of the mountain. They grow up around smokeless tobacco," Lundy says.

He adds that the National Association of Intercollegiate

Athletics is requiring all intercollegiate institutions to establish rules strictly governing the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco. Lundy says EOSC will abide by educating students about the consequences of using these substances, including smokeless tobacco.

When asked if any group of University athletes are obvious chewers, University Athletic Director Bill Byrne replied, "Yes, the coaches."

"I think it's a dirty habit," he says of two particular coaches he knows who chew. "I don't like to see them dribbling down their chins onto their shirts. Whenever I see it, I hate it."

Gary Gray, associate academic coordinator for the Athletic Department, says he, too, has a personal disdain for chewing, and does not allow it in the student athlete study and tutorial sessions that he supervises.

"The people around me know better than to chew," Gray says.

But once on the playing fields, chewing is regulated only by individual coaches' training rules.

Rules for the University wrestling team forbid smoking and alcohol consumption as well as a number of other drugs. Use of smokeless tobacco is not addressed in the rules. Football training rules read similarly.

STEREOS
Repairs • Buy and Sell
STEREO WORKSHOP
1409 Main, Springfield 741-1597

UO Bookstore

LOW Photo PRICES

Film & Photo Processing

- ★ **Guaranteed Lowest Prices**
We'll match or beat the price of any local photo coupon.
- ★ **One Day Service**
In by 4 p.m., back by NOON the next day (C-41).
- ★ **Enlargements, Reprints and Slides**
Good service and great prices in our full service Photo Dept.

Your full service Photo Dept.

We carry KODAK, OLYMPUS, and PENTAX cameras & supplies.

UO BOOKSTORE 13th & Kincaid
M-F 7:30-5:30
SAT 10:00-4:00
686-4331

UO Bookstore

SONY

Audio Cassette Tape Specials

UX-90 List 5.50.....	1.99	UX-ES90 List 7.95.....	2.79
UX-Pro List 9.95.....	2.99	UX-S90 List 6.95.....	2.69

SONY

8MM Video Tape SPECIALS

PG-60 List 13.95.....	7.95
PG-90 List 15.95.....	9.95
PG-120 List 17.95...	11.95

Great deals on Video and Audio cassette tapes in the Electronics Dept.

UO BOOKSTORE 13th & Kincaid
M-F 7:30-5:30
SAT 10:00-4:00
686-4331

MCAT

LSAT • MCAT • GRE
GRE PSYCH • GRE BIO
MAT • GMAT • DAT
OCAT • PCAT • VAT
SSAT • PSAT • ACHIEVEMENTS
SAT • ACT • TOEFL • MSKP
NAT'L MED BDS • ECFMG
FLEX • VQE • NDB • RN BDS
CPA • SPEED READING

Stanley H. KAPLAN
EDUCATIONAL CENTER
Test Preparation Specialists
Since 1938

For information, Please Call
485-5699

Sunny

University SUNNY SERVICE

Foreign & Domestic Cars

Specializing in
Volvo and Volkswagen

- Major & Minor Repairs
- ASE Certified Technicians

1905 Agate St. • 344-0869
Just a few blocks from campus
on the corner of Agate and 19th