

MERA continues biking competitions

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Last month, cyclists took part in a socially distanced, month-long mountain bike race around three trails at Mt. Emily Recreation Area near La Grande.

"I would say wildly successful is pretty accurate by La Grande standards," Blue Mountain Singletrack Club member Elijah Romer said. "Our Strava club is up to 61 members. We got a ton of positive feedback."

The BMSTC is carrying the competitions into the summer — four weekly challenges for club members to determine the king and queen of the mountain when it comes to downhill racing, as

well as a daunting challenge.

Beginning June 20 and running to the end of the month, the Everest Challenge is an effort to climb the same amount of elevation as the highest mountain in the world, 29,029 feet.

Romer pitched the idea to the club after seeing a similar challenge described on Strava, a cycling app that tracks rides.

"I can't take full credit for it. The Strava app will do push stories embedded in your feed. Somewhere in the middle of May I saw two guys had done one at their ski resort."

Romer is among at least three individuals who are going to try the task in a day, which could mean biking up MERA

anywhere from 10-15 times, depending on their starting point.

"You go through the ebbs and flows of 'This is the stupid things I've ever done' and (feeling) euphoric," he said of the challenge.

The club is opening the challenge for 11 days and gives examples on its website of how to break up the task into multiple sections. The challenge, which also will have prizes, is being used to bring awareness for a "pump track" BMSTC is trying to bring to La Grande and has a Go Fund Me page set up for.

This summer BMSTC also is doing a "SoloDuro" competition, which on its website is called "an opportunity for BMSTC mem-

bers to compete against each other for best time on a predetermined point to point downhill course on MERA."

According to the website, there will be a total of four courses or stages throughout the month of June — one each week. Weekly prizes are available to the winner of each stage at the end of a week for that stage's "KOM" and "QOM," and the overall king and queen will be determined at the end of the month.

The SoloDuro courses all have an elevation drop from start to finish. The first week's course went down 778 feet in elevation from start to finish over 3.25 miles, and Week 2's, which

concludes Sunday, has a drop of 1,869 feet over 6 miles. The Week 3 stage will be announced as the previous stage wraps up, and Week 4's announcement will follow.

A SoloXC contest also is taking place on a weekly basis for riders who don't want to do only a downhill ride. Both courses have about the same increase and decrease in elevation in their duration, and random prizes are available for club members who complete them.

"I've seen a few people attempting the downhill that you can tell by their times it's not their thing, but they're trying something new," Romer said.

NAIA outlines plan for upcoming fall season

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics has outlined what the Fall 2020 sports season could look like.

The NAIA's Council of Presidents last week approved recommendations for their collegiate sports, one that gives a tentative start date for matches, a practice plan and the number of games that a team could play.

All fall sports are still currently on the table, as is a postseason late in the fall. Under the plan, soccer, golf, volleyball and cross country would begin their seasons as early as Sept. 5, and football would start a week later. The timeframe would give football four weeks of practice from an Aug. 15 first-practice date, and the other sports three weeks.

The number of contests will be lessened, however. Teams can have a maximum total of nine football games, seven cross country meets, 14 soccer matches and 22 game days for volleyball.

A threshold system will trigger the start of each individual sport's season.

"The threshold goal is for about half the participating institutions in each sport to receive clearance from local authorities to return to competition before the season can begin," according to a letter from the NAIA announcing



Observer file photo

Eastern Oregon University receiver Josh Mendoza, right, tries to get around a College of Idaho defender during a game last season. The NAIA has put forward a proposal for the 2020 fall sports season that gives practice and game start dates, and possibly a shortened season for fall teams.

the plan.

The example stated in the letter notes there are 95 NAIA schools that have football. The NAIA would OK the start of the football season, then, when 47 of the schools can proceed with football, the letter states.

At Eastern Oregon University, there is a sense of cautious optimism among coaches in the reality that the NAIA is working out a plan to get the season started, even if it is shorter and starts a bit late.

"Obviously games are better than no games," EOU women's soccer head coach Jacob Plocher said. "I can't complain too much in that

regard."

One coach who surely isn't complaining about the proposed format is cross country head coach Ben Welch. His teams traditionally have not competed in even the seven races annually that are allowed as part of the adjusted schedule, and weren't going to start practice until Aug. 31.

"The max has typically been eight, but we normally do four and occasionally five," Welch said. "They dropped it back to seven but that doesn't affect us."

Women's soccer and volleyball will be harder hit, and perhaps volleyball the worst of the two. Volleyball coach Kaki McLean-Morehead



Observer file photo

Eastern Oregon University volleyball player Jet Taylor, right, attempts a kill during a match against Walla Walla last season. The NAIA has put forward a proposal for the 2020 fall sports season that gives practice and game start dates, and possibly a shortened season for fall teams.

typically takes her teams to two or three preseason tournaments. But with 22 game dates and now 12 volleyball programs in the Cascade Collegiate Conference with Lewis-Clark State College joining this fall, those 22 days will be filled with 22 CCC battles.

"I am disappointed that I don't get a preseason. It's going to be tough," McLean-Morehead said. "Having eight new (players) and not being able to play a preseason, I think it's going to be a factor."

Plocher will run into a similar problem, with just two preseason dates available for matchups the women's soccer

team traditionally uses for junior college tuneups before entering CCC play.

Both teams do have two scrimmage/exhibition dates they could use. Plocher figures to use his, but McLean-Morehead said the volleyball team won't.

Football also will have some rescheduling to do. EOU's first two games of the season were before that cutoff date of Sept. 12, and that day actually is slated as a bye on the current schedule.

Interactions with the teams are another issue coaches are facing. When the NAIA announced this plan, it also forbade practices until the first day of practice in mid-August, though conditioning sessions still are allowed.

Plocher said for the soccer team, that could mean having conditioning and then leaving the players to have an "open field" session afterward.

"We (also) have summer packets they are encouraged to do anyway," he said.

How McLean-Morehead's team comes in Aug. 15 may depend on how much individual or even group work they are able to do at home, and that depends on a player's location. She noted a trio of players in Idaho have been able to be in open gyms already, but players such as her starting setter, Madison Pilon, who is from Washington, haven't.

She hoped to have a week-long session in June with the team, but isn't too concerned about not being able to.

"Not having that is not necessarily a huge hindrance, but it would have been a leg up, especially for the newer kids," McLean-Morehead said.

Welch traditionally gives his incoming cross country athletes a 12-week workout plan for the summer in the lead-up to fall practice and did so again this year. His worry isn't so much about the process leading up to the start of practice and the season.

It's if there will be enough teams for a season.

"That's a bigger concern than the other changes, to be honest. There are 200 schools roughly in the NAIA that do cross country," he said. "We need 100 of them to go forward (with the season)."

He also is concerned about where Oregon could be come August when the season would begin and if the team can indeed proceed.

McLean-Morehead and Plocher both were positive about the changes of the season kicking off.

"Like anything, we don't know. It's wait and see," Plocher said. "(but) I feel pretty confident we'll have a season."

EOU football coach Tim Camp and men's soccer coach Jessy Watson did not return calls for comment.

Portland Trail Blazers founder Harry Glickman dead at 96

Associated Press

PORTLAND — Harry Glickman, the founder of the Portland Trail Blazers and general manager of the franchise's only NBA title-winning team in 1977, died Wednesday. He was 96.

The team announced Glickman's death; no cause was given. In their tweet, the Trail Blazers described Glickman as: "The father of professional sports in Oregon, a true Trail Blazer."

Portland was granted an expansion franchise in 1970. Glickman was part of the original ownership team, along with Herman Sarkowsky, Larry Weinberg and Robert Schmertz, that paid the league's \$3.7 million expansion fee, according to the team's website. Glickman was one of the shareholders who sold the club to Paul Allen in 1988.

Glickman held a number of positions with the team, including general manager, before he retired in 1994. He then became president emeritus.

Under Glickman, the Trail Blazers reached the NBA Finals three times, winning their lone title in 1977. Portland also won the Western Conference championship in 1990 and 1992.

"Harry Glickman laid the foundation and established



Glickman

the benchmark for small-market success in the NBA," said Neil Olshey, the president of basketball operations for the Blazers.

"He was the driving force that set the stage for the 1977 NBA championship, a seminal moment that elevated Portland and allowed it to join the elite of professional sports franchises."

Also while under Glickman, the Trail Blazers set an American sports record with 814 consecutive home sellouts, a feat later surpassed by the Boston Red Sox.

"The Trail Blazers have long been the beneficiary of Harry's vision, generosity, and inspiration," said Jody Allen, chair of the Trail Blazers. "As the team's founder and first general manager, his leadership was instrumental in igniting our city's pride and passion for sports. ... He will be missed by many."

Glickman was born and grew up in south Portland. He graduated from the University of Oregon in 1948 with a degree in journalism. After college, he served three years in the U.S. Army and saw action in the European theater with the 12th Armored Division. He was awarded a Bronze Star.

Glickman founded the Portland Buckaroos hockey team in 1960. In 12 seasons with him as co-owner and president, the team won three titles.

"Harry was the definition of a true Trail Blazer," said Chris McGowan, president and CEO of the Trail Blazers and Rose Quarter. "Through his dedication and

persistence, Harry not only created a successful sports franchise in a small western market, but has united hundreds of thousands of people around the world through a

shared love of basketball."

Glickman is survived by his wife, Joanne, son Marshall, daughters Jennifer and Lynn, two grandsons, and a granddaughter.

Grande Ronde Hospital and Clinics proudly welcomes: Tracey Tracy, MD

To the GRH Regional Medical Clinic team as a Primary Care Provider (PCP)

Tracey Tracy, MD, joins the GRH Regional Medical Clinic primary care team from a family medicine clinic in Clackamas, Oregon. She attended medical school at Oregon Health & Sciences University in Portland, and completed her residency with Providence Milwaukie Family Medicine. Dr. Tracy welcomes patients of all ages and gender identities from infants to seniors, and enjoys taking care of multi-generational families. Her goal is to partner with each patient to achieve optimal management of their chronic health conditions and focus on preventive medicine. In her free time, you'll find Dr. Tracy outdoors. She loves cycling, hiking, golfing, snowshoeing, travel, and exercises daily as well. She spent her childhood in eastern Oregon, then lived in Europe and in the Midwest. After spending over 20 years in the Portland metro area, Dr. Tracy is excited to be back on the sunnier and drier side of the state. Join us in welcoming Dr. Tracy to the Grande Ronde Valley!



Tracey Tracy, MD

GRH Regional Medical Clinic

506 4th Street, La Grande • 541.663.3138 • grh.org/RMC/

Now accepting new patients!

Learn more about Tracy in our online
Provider Directory at www.grh.org today!

