

Schools holding out hope for a fall season

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Oregon School Activities Association’s decision Wednesday to delay the start of the 2020 fall sports season grants the state’s high school athletics body flexibility as it tries to prepare for the fall and waits on vital information from the state, according to Executive Director Peter Weber.

The executive board wrapped up three days of closed-door sessions with a call to move the start of the fall season to Sept. 23 for volleyball, cross-country and soccer, while football is still an unknown due

“I honestly would like to see us start later and shorten seasons, but get all three seasons in.”

Darren Goodman, La Grande athletic director

to it being a contact support. State health authorities have deemed contact sports — football and basketball are placed in that camp by health officials — off limits for the time being.

The move allows the board more time to gain guidance from the state, which it hopes to have in time for another round of

meetings set to take place the first week of August.

Weber pointed not only to the state’s guidance, but also to decisions being made by other states and what schools in Oregon plan to do for the fall as factors.

“A lot of these decisions that are being made,

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Observer file photo

The La Grande volleyball team after winning a point in a match in 2019 against Pendleton. The Oregon School Activities Association pushed back the start dates for volleyball, cross-country and soccer to Sept. 23 in hopes of have enough time and flexibility to determine if there ultimately will be high school sports this fall.



Seattle Kraken via AP

This combo of artists renderings released Thursday, July 23, by the Seattle Kraken, shows the NHL hockey team’s new logo and name.

Seattle hockey club releases the Kraken

By Tim Booth
Associated Press

SEATTLE — The name Seattle Kraken seems to have had an air of inevitability around it even during the earliest days of the NHL expansion franchise.

“The first time in our office, there’s only 10 of us in our office, and we put up our NHL Seattle sign on the front door. And the very next morning there was a Post-it on the door that said, ‘Release the Kraken,’” Heidi Dettmer, the franchise’s vice president of marketing, told The Associated Press. “So it’s definitely something that we’ve heard almost as a rallying cry.”

The franchise made those early fans happy Thursday, July 23, when it revealed the team would, indeed, be called the Kraken.

After starting with a list of roughly 1,200 names and suggestions — no matter how outlandish — Dettmer and Seattle’s front office whittled them down to a final group of five.

Each was placed into its own silo, as they called it, and given thoughtful and independent consideration with an eye toward what would be the best brand for the franchise.

Ultimately, Seattle opted to unleash the sea creature from Scandinavian folklore on the rest of the NHL.

“I think that we felt like this is so authentic and noble and we hit all the main things that we really wanted, that we feel really strongly that this is the right choice,” Dettmer said. “I’ve totally fallen in love with this brand and I think our fans will.”

Kraken was the winner over options that may have proven safer and possibly less polarizing. From the start, Sockeyes, Steelheads — even Metropolitans in a nod to Seattle’s hockey history — were among the fan favorites. There was even a push from some for the team to try to acquire the Thunderbirds name from the local junior team.

But those fans that loved Kraken were loud and fervent.

“The Kraken is a name born of the fans. It was suggested and championed by the fans,” Seattle CEO

Tod Leiweke said.

Within their passion, the front office and its brand committee found an opportunity to be a bit unconventional. They opted for a name not everyone may like but one that everyone will talk about.

It was edgy, different and sounded menacing.

The time it took to arrive at Thursday’s announcement had more to do with finalizing the logo and colors, with several delays thrown in. Seattle decided on Kraken around the first of the year, Dettmer said. Then came all the ancillary pieces.

The logo was of major importance. The primary logo is a tentacle shaped into an “S” in the style of the old Seattle Metropolitans jersey and logo. The Metropolitans were the first American team to win the Stanley Cup in 1917.

“We needed a mark that was noble and (Seattle GM) Ron Francis was someone who kept hitting that home,” Nic Corbett, the director of NHL relations with Adidas, told the AP. “It has to be noble, it has to be strong.”

The primary colors are a deep dark blue — almost black — complemented by lighter shades of blue. Corbett said one of the unique aspects of the initial home jersey renderings is that all the white has been removed, allowing the bolder colors to stand out.

“As you can imagine, every train or flight back from Seattle once we knew we were getting close, there were a couple of options without talking too loud on the plane or train, you could just see everybody’s mind not able to shut off and was just going 1,000 miles an hour,” Corbett said. “How do we tie it into the heritage? How do we have it be the mark that everybody’s going to see when it hangs on the banner of the Stanley Cup championship in the arena.”

Dettmer said the franchise understand the name is likely to have its critics. But for a franchise that has the Hollywood influence of Jerry Bruckheimer, who is one of the owners, being bold and aggressive was the play.



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