

Masks to be worn unless vaccinated

Season 4
culminating week
to be run like
Seasons 2 and 3

By **RONALD BOND**
Wallowa County Chieftain

SALEM — The masking rules for businesses put in place by Gov. Kate Brown last week will apply to the playing surface, too.

The Oregon School Activities Association announced recently it received clarification from the Oregon Health Authority on how to handle masking for athletic events. The ruling for indoor sports is that students, staff, volunteers and spectators who are fully vaccinated are not required to wear masks as long as the vaccination status of that individual has been checked by the school. Previous social distancing and capacity rules are still in place.

That means unvaccinated players on the wrestling mat or basketball court will have to be masked, OSAA Executive Director Peter Weber said.

“These provisions are optional for the venue operators,” the press release from the OSAA states. “School districts, charter schools, and private schools may still choose to require face coverings at these events.”



Cameron Collman dribbles down the court on a fast break during La Grande's season opener against Nyssa on May 20, 2021. OSAA now states that fully vaccinated players competing in Season 4 are not required to wear masks during indoor competition.

OHA guidance deems a “fully vaccinated” individual as someone who is 14 days past receiving full vaccination — two shots of either Pfizer or Moderna, or one shot of Johnson & Johnson.

Vaccination verification is “documentation provided by a tribal, federal, state or local government, or a health care provider, that includes an individual’s

name, date of birth, type of COVID-19 vaccination given, date or dates given, depending on whether it is a one-dose or two-dose vaccine, and the name/location of the health care provider or site where the vaccine was administered,” according to the press release.

Weber said each school will make the call on how they handle checking

vaccinations.

“I’m not sure every school is going to check the status. They may keep everyone masked,” he said. He added the OSAA does check on schools that they hear are not following the standards in place.

“In general the responsibility is on the school to be sure they are following regulations,” he said.

Darren Goodman, ath-



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

A fan at the La Grande vs. Nyssa varsity girls basketball game on May 20, 2021, looks on from the stands midway through the game. OSAA now allows fans who are fully vaccinated to attend games without masks, so long as the school has verified the individual's vaccination.

letic director at La Grande, said the basketball players will wear masks until they’re told not to. Fully vaccinated fans in attendance can show proof of vaccination and watch games without masks.

“It changes daily, but we’re trying to keep up with it and do what’s best,” Goodman said.

Masks are no longer required at outdoor sporting events, though social distancing is still encouraged.

The OSAA also announced that its Season 4 culminating week events will be carried out in the same manner as Seasons 2 and 3 — run at the local or regional level.

Season 4 includes basketball, wrestling and swimming. Each of those

sports were granted additional contests, as well. Basketball can have four additional games, swimming gets two additional dates and wrestlers get one extra date, two added weigh-ins and five more mat appearances.

June 21-27 is the culminating week for Season 4. Seasons 2 and 3 have seen regional and even statewide events put together by schools. Weber said OSAA hasn’t been overly involved in these larger events, but has provided support when schools had questions.

“We’re not in drawing brackets, but trying to be a resource for athletic directors, whether it’s the local tournament, or regional things, or the stuff that is even a little larger,” he said.

EOU names interim head basketball coach

Former assistant
Chris Kemp to take
over men’s program

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Eastern Oregon University named assistant coach Chris Kemp the interim head basketball coach on Tuesday, May 25, according to a press release.

Kemp has been with the Mountaineers basketball program since 2017 and served as an assistant to both the men’s and women’s teams last season. The EOU men’s team is 61-49 overall during Kemp’s time with the team.

The EOU athletics website announced that a permanent head coach will be hired at the end of the upcoming 2021-22 season. Kemp will coach the men’s team under the interim status until that decision is made.

“Having established relationships with the core group of guys here is a huge plus,” Kemp said. “They’re ready to hit the ground running.”

Before his time in La

Grande, Kemp was an assistant coach at North Idaho College in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, and spent time coaching high school basketball in Arizona. Prior to coaching, Kemp played at Arizona Christian University.

The Mountaineers parted ways with Carlito Labarda Jr. on May 10 after four years with the program. Labarda’s teams had winning records in two of his four seasons, but Eastern failed to make the NIAA tournament during his tenure.

Eastern returns several upperclassmen next season, including its two top scorers, Max McCullough and Zane Wright. The Mountaineers finished the pandemic-shortened 2020-21 season with an 8-12 overall record.

“The personal relationships he has with the guys will definitely help on the court,” McCullough said of Kemp. “Everybody loves the guy, so it’s pretty exciting.”

Kemp and the EOU men’s basketball team are set to play a full season next fall after the delayed start this year.

“Our goal is to make the national tournament and see if we can make a run,” Kemp said.

Beason emerging as big-play threat after sensational spring

Freshman receiver
turning into go-to-
guy for Oregon
State offense

By **JARRID DENNEY**
Corvallis Gazette-Times

CORVALLIS — During a spring football practice last month, Oregon State offensive coordinator Brian Lindgren spontaneously gathered his first-string players and set them up in a third-down situation deep in their own territory.

On the first play of the impromptu scrimmage scenario, freshman receiver Zeria Beason caught a short pass on a slant route near the right hash mark, made one cut to evade a linebacker and broke loose for a 70-yard touchdown.

Not five minutes later, in the exact same scenario, Beason lined up on the left side of the field. When the ball was snapped, he out-muscled a cornerback at the line of scrimmage, shrugging off the defender’s attempt to jam him, and broke free down the sideline.

Quarterback Chance Nolan dropped a perfect pass into his hands and



Amanda Loman/Associated Press, File

Arizona State's DeAndre Pierce (2) brings down Oregon State's Zeria Beason (18) during a game in Corvallis in December. If this spring was any indicator, Beason could be ready to emerge as a consistent big-play threat for Oregon State.

Beason walked into the end zone for another 70-yard touchdown. His teammates went ballistic celebrating.

That five-minute sequence epitomizes Beason’s evolution as he enters his second year with the Beavers. He burst onto the scene as a talented true freshman in 2020 and worked his way into the starting lineup by season’s end, putting up modest numbers.

Now, though, he is ready for an encore. If this spring was any indicator, Beason could be ready to emerge as a consistent big-play threat for Oregon State.

“I felt like last year I was just sort of running around,” Beason said. “The game was pretty fast for me. Now I’m understanding coverages and I feel like everything is slowing down.”

Beason’s version of “just running around” still resulted in a major tangible impact for the Beavers. As an 18-year-old freshman, he started five of Oregon State’s seven games and tied for the team lead with three touchdown receptions.

While mainly operating in the slot, he served as a reliable target for Nolan

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SPORTS SHORT



Leon Neuschwander/For The Oregonian

Two amendments to proposed state legislation would permit college athletes in Oregon to be compensated for use of their name, image and likeness.

Oregon bill allowing compensation for college athletes advances

The Oregonian/OregonLive

SALEM — Two amendments to proposed state legislation to permit college athletes in Oregon to be compensated for their name, image and likeness were adopted in committee and the bill has been sent to the Senate floor with a recommendation to pass it.

Senate Bill 5, which permits college athletes in Oregon to earn compensation for use of their name, image or likeness and to retain representa-

tion related to those opportunities, was heard in a work session of the senate rules committee on Tuesday, May 25.

If passed, the bill will go into effect immediately, with Oregon college athletes able to earn NIL compensation beginning July 1, the same day similar laws are set to go into effect in five other states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and New Mexico, with 11 others also having passed similar laws.

Sen. Peter Courtney, D-Salem,

a co-sponsor of the bill along with Sen. James Manning Jr., D-Eugene, explained to the committee that Amendment 7, which removes the unique and controversial royalty payments from “merchandising” deals, was done last week after NCAA president Mark Emmert told state lawmakers the payments that provision called for would make athletes employees and thus ineligible to compete.