

Are shot clocks coming to Oregon?

Basketball shot clocks a logistical concern for Oregon schools

By NIK STRENG
The Oregonian

PORTLAND — The OSAA basketball state tournament brings with it drama and excitement every year. Some student-athletes fulfill a dream of hoisting a title, while others face the agony of season-ending defeat.

It also brings up another topic of discussion — a shot clock.

During practically every game in the multiple OSAA basketball state tournaments over the past two weeks, the team that was leading in the fourth quarter used the lack of a shot clock to its advantage. With quick passes and movement, teams can drain minutes off the game clock at a time. In the 6A girls second round, Barlow took nearly three minutes off the clock in the fourth quarter on a single possession against Ida B. Wells. In the state championship game, the Bruins were on the receiving end as Beaverton ate time off the clock with the late lead.

When teams go into clock-killing mode, fans from the opposing team loudly jeer and many take to social media to vent their frustrations.

But why doesn't Oregon have shot clocks for basketball?

That part is simple. The Oregon School Activities Association is required to follow sports rules that are set by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). And until recently, the NFHS's rules stated that high schools are not to have shot clocks for basketball. This will change with the 2022-23 school year as the NFHS Basketball Rules Committee created a rule in April 2021 that allows states to adopt a 35-second shot clock for high school basketball.

Getting shot clocks in Oregon isn't as simple.

According to OSAA executive director Peter Weber, the OSAA Executive Board has touched on shot clocks in the past, but there was no major discussion as it was outside of the NFHS rules. He added it has been a topic of discussion among the Oregon Athletic Coaches Association and the Oregon Athletic Directors Association in the past.

"In general, there seems to be support from coaches and concern from ADs," Weber said.

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HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL

YOUNG GUNS

Youthful La Grande softball team leaning on its seniors for state title push

By DAVIS CARBAUGH
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Spring is in the air, and La Grande's softball stars are ready to take the field.

After graduating five seniors from a team that went 10-1 last season, the Tigers will be looking for younger players to fill some of those voids. Seniors Grace Neer and Kinzy Bowen, both of whom are signed to play softball in college, will be anchors to this year's team as the season gets underway this week.

"We have real strong bats, and the girls hit the ball real well," head coach Cody Bowen said. "We have good defense. We have young players that are very talented and very good. It's just a matter of putting it all together."

The Tigers made it to the 4A state showcase last season before losing to Henley by a score of 8-0 — this year's group will be looking to improve on that mark as this year's group looks for similar success. Cody Bowen is set to take over as full-time head coach this season after serving as an assistant coach for six years.

Kinzy Bowen, who is set to play for Oregon State next year, is La Grande's anchor in the outfield. She posted a .536 batting average in 39 plate appearances, with 14 RBIs, 16 runs and four home runs last season.

Prior to joining the College of Idaho next year, Neer will be the Tigers' ace in the circle this year and play positionally as well.

Last season, Neer posted a 0.90 ERA and struck out 40



Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group, File
Kinzy Bowen swings at a pitch during a game between Baker and La Grande on Thursday, May 6, 2021. Bowen, an outfielder, is set to lead the Tigers into the 2022 season this spring.

batters over 23.1 innings — she allowed just three runs on the year. At the plate, Neer finished with 20 RBIs and scored 21 runs in 39 plate appearances, posting a .543 batting average.

Neer will be a key component in La Grande's success,

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LA GRANDE SOFTBALL ROSTER

Brielle Hood	Kinzy Bowen	Carlee Strand
Grace Neer	Keayra Krantz	Graci Jeffries
Rylie Huddleston	Marti Anderson	Paige Allen
Joscelin Hafer	Kylah Hatfield	Austyn Meuser
Belle Neer	Maya Wilson	Ava Hedden
Carlee Jensen	Nessa Porras	

Union/Cove team aiming high in 2022

Combined softball program looks to build on last season's 14-4 mark

By DAVIS CARBAUGH
The Observer

UNION — Softball season is fast approaching and the Union/Cove team is set to take the field.

The Union/Cove softball program is heading into the 2022 season with high expectations, coming off a 14-4 season last year. Under head coach Paul Phillips, an experienced group is looking to make a playoff push by the end of the season.

"We'll be competitive, for sure. If we can stay healthy, we'll have a good shot to make some noise at the end of the season," Phillips said.

Union/Cove is led by the senior trio of Callie Glenn, Kaylin Nowak and Emma Ricker.

UNION/COVE ROSTER

Jazmyne Gonzales
Callie Glenn
Cabella Gregory
Emma Ricker
Megan Winterton
Kaylin Nowak
Tiffiney Conner
Josie Patton
Hannah Robbins
Aubrey Hall
Evangelyn Spence
Kali Coots
Keelie Jones
Maddy Sturm
Brea Rudd
Tasha Thiesfeld
Amanda Lawyer

Glenn is a four-year starter in the circle who will be the ace of the team's pitching staff. Freshmen Amanda Lawyer and Cabella Gregory are two newcomers who will likely compete for playing time on the infield, while adding pitching depth.

"This year we have eight freshmen, who are a pretty talented group," Phillips said.

Nowak, a shortstop, will

look to be an anchor for Union/Cove in the infield. Ricker, a centerfielder, is the team's third captain, monitoring the outfield this year.

Juniors Megan Winterton, third base, and Jazmyne Gonzalez, catcher, are two solid returners that the Union/Cove program will lean on this year.

Union/Cove is coming off a third-place finish in the 2A/1A Special District 6. Grant Union/Prairie City won the district, while Echo/Stanfield placed second. Union/Cove will host Echo/Stanfield for a doubleheader on Friday, April 15 and travel to face Grant Union/Prairie City for a doubleheader on April 29.

The team opens up the season with a road matchup on March 18 at Toledo, who went 14-3 last season.

"Those girls will be ready to go by Friday night," Phillips said. "We'll be competitive, for sure. If we can stay healthy, we'll have a good shot to make some noise at the end of the season."



Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group, File
Union/Cove pitcher Callie Glenn (2) winds up during a game against Pilot Rock/Nixyaawii on Friday, April 23, 2021, at the Union Athletic Complex. Glenn is one of three senior team captains leading the way for Union/Cove heading into the 2022 season.

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