

## Oregon supports NCAA transfer windows

By JAMES CREPEA  
The Oregonian

EUGENE — Oregon athletics supports players having the freedom of movement afforded to them by the transfer portal and one-time transfer rule, but would also like to see the implementation of transfer windows to confine player movement to certain periods of the year.

Transfer windows could be coming to college sports as soon as the upcoming season, with the NCAA Division I Transformation Committee recommending to the Division I Board of Directors on Thursday for “additional accountability for schools that receive transfer student-athletes and provide student-athletes with a window of time to enter the transfer portal each year in order to be eligible to compete in the following year.”

Oregon athletic director Rob Mullens doesn’t have an exact number of transfer windows or duration he’d like to see them last, but does think there needs to be more structure than there is currently, with college athletes able to enter and exit the portal at any time with only a May 1 entry deadline for eligibility to compete in fall and winter sports.

“I do think being able to do it 24/7/365 has its challenges; so I do like the idea of basically at the conclusion of a season of having a several week window to be able to explore that and have the opportunity to go there,” Mullens said. “How many of those, I don’t really know. I haven’t given it that much thought, but I think you should have it multiple times in an academic year and it should start at the conclusion of a season. It should be multiple weeks. How many that is, I think that’s worthy of continued debate.”



Isabella Crowley/The Observer

The La Grande Legacy Ford Legends practice at Pioneer Park on Thursday, June 16, 2022. The Legends are a part of the American Legion baseball league that competes during the summer.

# Legends ready to take the field

## La Grande American Legion teams to have familiar faces on roster

By RONALD BOND  
For The Observer

LA GRANDE — Fans watching the La Grande Legacy Ford Legends this summer might have a sense of déjà vu.

That’s because the roster for the American Legion team is loaded with players who were a part of the La Grande Tigers’ squad that just wrapped up a state championship run.

The Legends will have two teams going this summer — an 18U squad and a 16U group — and with the exception of the graduating seniors, head coach Parker McKinley has largely the same team he coached during the high school season.

“The majority of our seniors are moving on,” he said. “They’ll play in a few of the tournaments we have scheduled, our high-level Triple-A tournaments. Some will continue to play with us. Otherwise, it’s mostly the returning high school guys.”

The summer season will provide players with the opportunity to get added games under their belts — the 18U team has between 18 and 26 games currently scheduled, depending on how far they advance in tournaments, while the 16U team will

play as many as 27 games. The extra field time will help lay a foundation for the 2023 season.

“Just trying to get ready to compete for a high run next spring,” McKinley said. “Every summer, I would say, is kind of an opportunity for a new group of guys to start playing together. I say that with a little reserve — it’s not necessarily a new group, but not all the guys have been on the field at the same time.”

Building camaraderie among those returning players becomes a vital piece of the summer, he added.

“Getting the meshing together as a team (is important),” he said. “The summer is a great opportunity to do that, travel (and) play some high-level competition. Keep trying to get better and stronger.”

There has been virtually no downtime from the end of the high school season, but McKinley said that has some benefits.

“I think one of the biggest positives is everybody’s arms are still in shape,” he said. “In baseball something we need to be careful of is arm health. Really, to be able to continue through for the next six weeks or so, we can keep rolling with where we are at with arm health and arm care.”

Pitching figures to be a strength for the Legends, with the likes of Jace Schow, Sam Tsiatsos and Logan Williams — who went a combined 18-0 in the spring for LHS — leading the way.

But McKinley thinks that like the high school team, even with the loss of the seniors, this squad will be well-rounded.

“My opinion might be a little bit biased,

but I think we’ll be pretty competitive,” he said. “I feel like we always have kids ready to go, to jump in when it’s their time to go. I don’t necessarily see this next group being any different. There’s kids that have been working hard since the time they were freshmen. They will continue to work hard all the way through to when they are seniors. That is what allows us to not necessarily rebuild but reload. Time will tell as far as the competitiveness (this summer).”

The approach from the coaching staff from spring to summer will be about the same as well.

“I think one of the things that is a strength for our program is the kids play together in the spring and the summer,” McKinley said. “When it comes down to it, the number of games that our kids have the opportunity to play together is a tremendous advantage over our opponents.”

One difference, though, is that “we can let our shoulders relax a bit in the summer,” he said. “It’s a great time for learning and being able to figure out things that are going well and aren’t going well.”

The 16U team has already opened play with contests against Pendleton and Baker. Along the way, the team is slated to play at tournaments in Walla Walla, Spokane and Pendleton, and will host a wood bat tournament July 9-10. The 18U team begins this weekend with three games at home, and has tournaments in Bend and Spokane on the slate before hosting the district tournament — a state qualifier — July 15-16.

## SPORTS SHORT

### Cheer championships adds ‘Game Day’ division

Polk County Itemizer-Observer

WILSONVILLE — Change can be a good thing.

In the case of cheerleading, the Oregon School Activities Association’s recent addition of a Game Day division to its state championship offerings and winter sports activities is being regarded as a very good move.

The OSAA cheerleading season typically begins in December and January, and its state championships are in February and will be returning to Oregon City

High School.

Now, after approval by the OSAA Executive Board, schools may choose to compete in either the traditional cheering competition or the new Game Day division.

Traditional cheer involves tumbling and stunts.

Game Day is basically sideline cheering as football or basketball fans would see and hear during game situations, such as when one team is driving for a touchdown or attempting to stop the other team.

A Game Day routine

typically takes three minutes, incorporates the school fight song and can include the mascot, signs, banners, flags, poms and megaphones.

“Game Day is a phenomenon happening across the nation,” said Kyle Stanfield, an OSAA assistant executive director. “It brings in schools focused on supporting teams from the sidelines. It’s a way to increase participation and have other teams come for state championships.”

Kelly Foster, the OSAA assistant executive director in charge of cheerleading, first saw Game Day com-

petition at the Texas high school championships about five years ago.

“I thought it was so cool and would be a great fit for Oregon, especially for our schools in areas that are more remote or don’t have the tumbling or strong tradition,” she said. “A lot of people will love it. It really is what a team does on a sideline on a Friday night.”

The 2023 OSAA cheer championships are set for Feb. 11, and Foster said they probably again will have large and small school divisions and take place at Oregon City High.



The Observer, File

Cheerleaders for the Powder Valley team cheer from the sidelines as the Badgers score against Adrian at Baker High School on Saturday, Nov. 27, 2021.

Find up-to-date scores and additional game coverage for your local high school, available 24/7 at [www.lagrandeobserver.com](http://www.lagrandeobserver.com).