

Local

Sumpter had new route for this year's Cycling Classic

BY MEGHAN ANDERSCH
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“Those who liked it, really liked it,” said Brian Vegter, Race Director, of the first stage of the Baker City Cycling Classic, “and those who struggled at the back really didn’t.”

Friday, June 26th marked the start of the Baker City Cycling Classic with the introduction of a new route from Sumpter to Prairie City.

The 87-mile route boasts a total ascent of 7500 feet per Baker City Cycling Classic’s webpage (bakercitycycling.org) and the day was *hot*. According to accuweather.com, temperatures reached 99 degrees in Prairie City and 95 in Sumpter, adding another challenging element to this already difficult stage.

Accommodations were made due to the heat. Vegter explained a third feed zone (an area where riders can pick up water bottles and discard empty ones) was added to the course.

He said they have been working with the Northeast Oregon Compassion Center (through the Nazarene Church) for a couple of years.

Volunteers from the Compassion Center did “double-duty” on Friday, manning the first feed zone, then packing up as soon as all riders were through and going straight to the third feed zone.

The FFA group out of the Prairie City school manned the feed zone at Dixie Summit.

Groups who assist with the race receive financial aid from the event. Vegter explained that 10% of the race budget goes to the community. It supports youth sports, education, and community groups: for example, the Compassion Center, the Mock Trial, and girls’ basketball. Young Life, Baker City cheerleaders, and the Medical Springs Fire Department manned feed zones on Sunday.



Meghan Andersch / The Baker County Press

The women’s group at the start, just leaving Sumpter.

Vegter said that as the event grows they hope to be able to do even more for the community. He estimated that over the last 14 years, \$60,000 has gone to help local sports, education, and community groups.

Vegter said he is excited to “give back to the community that loves and supports this event.”

He said 100% of the funds that go to these groups come from outside the community. Support from local sponsors makes the event possible, but the funds that go to support local groups come from entry fees.

Weldon Reedy, owner of the Sumpter’s Depot Inn, said people were very excited about the new stage and said lots had come in to ask about it. Some participants took advantage of accommodations so close to Friday’s start.

Reedy said they had “three rooms full of bikers.”

Racers departed from in front of the Sumpter Museum. Riders were divided into five groups according to gender and racing level.

The groups departed in intervals and were escorted to Highway 7 by Baker County Sheriff’s Department Deputy Brian Scott.

The women’s group was the first out, starting at 12:30 p.m.

The last group, Mens’ 4/5 and Masters 4/5, departed at 1:20. Each group was accompanied by a lead car and several support cars. All support cars carried extra water. Each group received safety instructions for the route prior to taking off. Riders were repeatedly reminded to stay off the pavement until time to line up for the race start.

Race officials worked to make sure area traffic was able to get through, both in town before the race and during the event. Vegter said this is one of the safer courses they’ve had as far as being able to get traffic around groups of cyclists on the road.

Vegter said about 90% of participants loved the stage and the other 10% said they wouldn’t come back if that stage were included again.

He explained that many

competitors come in from hundreds of miles away and don’t realize the effect the elevation has on them.

The soaring temperatures on top of that made for challenging conditions. Vegter said this is one of his favorite routes and that unfortunately, due to their schedule, he and his wife don’t get to ride it very often.

He said, “I so love that route and how supportive volunteers in Sumpter and Prairie City were.”

Prairie City volunteers said they couldn’t wait to do it again next year.

Vegter said he thinks the race had a positive economic impact on Sumpter and Prairie City and that they will look into setting up the route next year as a one-day event, rather than as part of the Cycling Classic.

He explained keeping it as the first stage of the Classic is going to deter some from participating. More pictures of the event and a short video of Stage 1 are available at facebook.com/pages/Baker-City-Cycling-Classic.

Girl injured in dog attack



Submitted Photo.

Chantelle Isham received 51 stitches last weekend due to a severe dog bite.

• DOG HAD HISTORY OF AGGRESSION

BY KERRY McQUISTEN
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Last Saturday night, 21-year-old Chantelle Isham of Baker City was attacked by a pitbull, resulting in serious injuries to her right arm and hand, a trip to the emergency room and 51 stitches both internal and external.

Isham said she was visiting a house of a friend who had her brother’s male pitbull locked up in the bedroom. Isham and her friend were outside the home, but when her friend opened the door and went inside that bedroom, the dog pushed through the door and immediately ran out and attacked Isham.

“I just started punching it in the face,” she said. “Then my friend came and just ripped the dog off me—and then they took me to the hospital.”

The next morning, police came and removed the dog.

Several people acquainted with the pitbull said they recalled three other incidents involving the animal. Isham said she herself wasn’t aware of much the dog’s history, including its age or ownership background.

According to Baker City Police Chief Wyn Lohner, the dog has indeed had a history of aggression, and they had received one previous call about the animal, but in that instance the person who had been bitten had been aware of the animal’s tendencies. After Isham’s injuries, at least one more past incident has been reported regarding the same dog.

The dog has been impounded, and due to the nature of the attack, said Lohner, the case “will be submitted to the D.A. for potential criminal charges against the dog’s owner.” The owner signed an euthanize order Wednesday.

Isham says she’s “sore” but beginning to heal.

Phantom Kiss

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While backstage, Dunn’s wife informed Gene Simmons that Trevor had formed the tribute and that his stage alter ego was the Demon character conceived and made into an American icon by Simmons. “Gene grabbed my face, squeezed my cheeks, and said, ‘Of course he is, he so good looking.’”

While Phantom Kiss can’t control the behavior of the audience, Dunn emphasized that the band performs a family friendly concert where there is no cursing, just what he calls “toe-tapping rock and roll.” Anyone familiar with the Kiss tradition knows to expect a blood-spewing Demon, rock and roll music played at an unearthly volume, and a dynamic light show.

“We’ve performed in four different states and it is very exciting to do it right here in our hometown,” Dunn said. “Back in the day Kiss may have been considered heavy metal but today it’s just classic rock. Just toe-tappin’ rock and roll.”

Phantom Kiss takes the stage at nightfall about 9 or 9:30 pm, July 10, in front of Barley Brown’s with a closure of the one-block section of Church Street and the usual closure during the Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally of Main Street to accommodate what is expected to be a fairly large audience.

“All the people in the band love Kiss. Between us we’ve probably been to 100 Kiss concerts and we’ve met the band numerous times. This is not about money, we do it because we love it. We play music because of Kiss,” said Dunn.

Ladies bridge

The June 10 1st Flight Ladies Golf winners are: 1st Lavelle Woodcock, 2nd Jennifer Godwin; and 2nd Flight is 1st Virginia Babski. The bridge winners are: 1st Della Steele, 2nd Karen Lewis, and 3rd Margo Kenworthy.

June 24 bridge winners were: 1st Jackie Phillips, 2nd Joan Colton, and 3rd Dianne Ellington.

Fire, chainsaw restrictions on

BAKER CITY, OREGON – Due to increased fire danger and dry weather conditions, Phase A of the Public Use Restrictions (PURS) for campfires, smoking, off-road travel, and chainsaw use went into effect on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest at 12:01 a.m. (PDT) on Wednesday, July 1, 2015. The Seasonal Campfire Restrictions that are currently in place will also be in effect in Phase A of the PURS.

“Phase A is the second level of restrictions, generally implemented when the fire danger is moderate to high,” said Bret Ruby, Fire Staff Officer on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. PURS are phased in collectively, as conditions warrant, and may differ from Forest to Forest.

On Wednesday, July 1 at 12:01 am (PDT), Phase A of the Public Use Restrictions (PURS) will go into effect and will include:

Chainsaws may be operated only between the hours of 8 p.m. and 1 p.m. local time. A one hour fire watch is required after saw operations cease.

Saw operators are required to have an axe (minimum 2 lb. head, 26” length), shovel (8” wide, 26” length), and fire extinguisher (minimum ABC 8 oz.) in their possession. Smoking is allowed only in enclosed vehicles and buildings, developed recreation sites, or cleared areas.

No off-road/off-trail vehicle travel or travel on roads not cleared of standing grass or other flammable material; no vehicle travel on those FS roads where access has been impeded or blocked by earthen berm, logs, boulders, barrier, barricade or gate, or as otherwise identified in the Fire Order.

Seasonal campfire restrictions and requirements described for June 1- October 31 apply.

Campfires allowed only in fire pits surrounded by dirt, rock, or commercial rings and in areas not conducive to rapid fire spread. All flammable material shall be cleared within a 3 foot radius from the edge of the pit and free of overhanging material. Use existing pits wherever possible.

Campfires must be attended at all times, and completely extinguished prior to leaving.

Persons with campfires are required to have a tool that can serve as a shovel and one gallon of water in their possession.

The intent of this requirement is to ensure individuals with a campfire to have the tools necessary to completely extinguish their campfire.

Portable cooking stoves using liquefied or bottled gas and wood burning stoves equipped with a chimney that is at least five (5) feet in length with a spark-arresting screen

consisting of ¼ inch mesh hardware cloth are allowed.

Use of charcoal briquettes is permitted under the same restrictions as campfires described above. The public’s cooperation and awareness of the increasing fire danger is essential to a safe fire season.

“Recreationists, firewood cutters, hunters, and other forest users can all help in ensuring a safe fire season,” Ruby said. The public is responsible for knowing if restrictions are in place.

For more information call our Public Affairs Officer Katy Gray at 541-519-4623, Public Affairs Specialist Matt Burks at 541-523-1208, or one of our Forest Information Hotlines:

- Baker City (541) 523-1234
- La Grande (541) 962-8679
- Joseph (541) 426-5552