

Sports+Outdoors



Kids spring for glory in Turkey Trot

By SPOKESMAN STAFF

Young runners blast off from the blocks on Thanksgiving morning for a kids fun run, which took place before the Turkey Trot 5k and 10k at Sam Johnson Park in Redmond.



Nick Rosenberger/Spokesman

Skateboards line the walls of the Redmond Snow and Skate shop at

Winter

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A former skateboarder, he realized the local skate park was crowded with youth who were forced to go to Bend for new boards, shoes and accessories after the last Redmond skate shop closed 10 years prior. Castro said the idea for a new skate and snowboard shop began to form and it became a reality in 2017.

The reception from the community over the first five years has been phenomenal, Castro said.

Aside from the gear selection, customers come in for their ski and snowboard services, including waxing and edging. Others have come in for even greater maintenance — such as one customer who exploded his board.

Castro said they trapped all the edges back in, soldered them together, put epoxy inside and clamped everything together. By the end, the customer couldn't even tell it had shattered.

"Most things are fixable," Castro said. "Even edges are fixable."

Castro said another customer came in for a waxing and told him later that he'd never skied that fast before. His friends started coming in to keep up with him.

"My kind of people are skaters, snowboarders, those are my bros," Castro said. "The kind of people we could sit here and talk about concrete and waxing and stupid stuff like that. That's what I like to do."

As time progressed, Castro's more than 30 years of snowboarding experience began to take over as the focal point of the shop.

"I love snowboarding," Castro said. "It's in my blood."

Castro could talk for hours about the excitement of standing at the top of a run in the morning, looking down at a run of untracked powder.

"I get pumped," he said. "There's nothing like that feeling. It's the whole reason that we do it."

It's the reason why he gets up early to get the first lift with his buddies. It's the reason they close the store on Mondays and Tuesdays so staff can head to the mountains and get their own runs in.

"You get to that lift and you're just screaming, you can't get your bindings on fast enough," he said. "And then you're in it. Then you're just hooting and hollering the whole time you're going down ... That's the best dude, just when you get going and then you're just like 'ohhh' get on top of that powder."

The customers who visit the shop feed off of Castro's love of the sport — excitedly talking about runs or gear or time on the mountain. One customer, he said, came back after trying out their specialty 3BT board from Bataleon and said he felt like a ballerina on the snow.

"You can't beat that," Castro said. "That's amazing to be on a snowboard and feel that comfortable. We enhanced his sport, that's why we're here."

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It's not too late to get in shape for nordic skiing in Central Oregon

BY JAMES CAGNEY

For The Spokesman

Want to cross-country ski longer and faster than ever come winter?

If so, you should start building an aerobic base and strengthening key muscles well before the snow flies. This year, although the ski season is (hopefully) not far off, it's still a good idea to use what time we have to improve fitness for the season.

"A good skier is made in the summertime," said Dagmar Eriksson, a regular at local nordic races. The German native transitioned to cross-country skiing in 1995 from her original passion, alpine skiing. Her off-season conditioning approach helped her win three gold medals in cross-country skiing at the 2011 Masters World Cup.

However, nordic skiers of all abilities will be able to ski farther if they build an aerobic base before the season begins, said J.D. Downing, coach and director of XC Oregon. Pretty much any activity will do, he said, including hiking, running, bicycling, paddling and exercise machines. He prefers outdoor activities, particularly with variable terrain.

This comes naturally for weekend warriors in Central Oregon with its myriad of hiking trails and bicycling routes. In particular, Eriksson likes to build a base with long, slow aerobic bicycle rides in the summer. She complements that with strength training at



Courtesy Central Oregon Nordic Club

Nordic skiers enjoy the early snow on Nov. 19 at Meissner Sno-park near Bend.

Central Oregon Community College.

But eventually, skiers should add strength training and introduce more ski-specific exercises. Eriksson might run uphill five times, using different hills to vary the routine. She also mentioned a fall nordic skiing-specific conditioning class through Central Oregon Community College.

While activities such as running tone

the legs, Downing emphasized the importance of building strength, including the upper body. After all, a big part of both classic and skate skiing is pushing off with poles. Strength, particularly in the core, also improves balance.

Downing points to a variety of core and upper body strengthening routines. He suggested wall-mounted machines designed to build upper body muscles

("COCC has them, but I have one in my garage — not everyone does," he said.) Downing also suggested yoga and Pilates for all-around strength, core and flexibility.

Those who want to go the extra mile in their training can also exercise on roller skis, the closest they can get to gliding on snow. However, skiers should start cautiously and not exceed their abilities. Downing pointed out that pavement is not as soft as snow, and control of roller skis is more challenging.

Eriksson emphasized the importance of carefully picking a safe area to roller ski and avoiding steep hills. In fact, even a world-class skier such as herself will roller ski up a hill but then get picked up for a ride back down.

Central Oregonians have no doubt seen exceptionally strong and experienced skiers using roller skis on Century Drive and Skyliners Road. However, safer areas with lower and slower car traffic would include paved trails such as the Haul Road Trail paralleling Cascade Lakes Highway to the Deschutes National Forest Welcome Center or the Sun Lava Butte Trail connecting Sunriver to Lava Butte.

Ultimately, whatever workout program you decide upon, get going sooner rather than later. Then you'll be ready to go when the snow flies — and go farther and faster than ever before.

James Cagney is a member of the Central Oregon Nordic Club

Four easy holiday hikes in Central Oregon

BY JANAY WRIGHT

CO Media Group

After the indulgences of Thanksgiving, the outdoors will be beckoning. But when family and friends of all ages and abilities gather, it can be a challenge to choose an activity suitable for all. These four easy-to-moderate hikes are likely to satisfy everyone at the dinner table.

Big Tree via Cougar Woods Trail is a 1.5-mile out-and-back in La Pine State Park. The trail is easy, well-marked and fea-

tures "Big Tree," the biggest ponderosa pine ever recorded. Although "Big Tree" has lost half of its crown over the years due to the weather, the approximately 500-year-old tree remains the largest of its species in circumference at 28 feet, 11 inches, according to the Oregon Heritage Tree Program.

Ancient Juniper Trail is a quiet 3.1-mile loop in the Oregon Badlands Wilderness. There's very little elevation change and after a layer of freshly fallen snow, the trail is

still easy to follow thanks to the footprints of fellow hikers. There's not much variation on this route, but the twisted ancient juniper trees lend a grandeur to the desert landscape. Extend the length of the hike to 7.5 miles by adding on the Flatiron Rock Loop at the Flatiron Rock-Ancient Juniper Trail Junction.

Located in the heart of Bend, the Deschutes River South Canyon Trail is a hike worth visiting time and time again. The popular 3.1-mile loop trail

hugs the Deschutes River. It dips through the trees and over outcroppings of rock, crossing the river via the Conley Brooks Bridge at the midpoint of the loop. On the east side of the river, the trail narrows and is rocky in some places, which could pose a challenge to some hikers.

For those looking for a little extra challenge, there's a breathtaking outlook over the Crooked River Gorge from Chimney Rock. The trail up to the summit is similarly re-

warding with views of the 600-foot-high basalt walls up to cut into the gorge by the Lower Crooked River. The most difficult hike on this list, it involves a series of switchbacks with a total elevation gain of 623 feet, according to AllTrails. The trailhead for this 2.6-mile out-and-back is located on the east side of the Crooked River Highway opposite Chimney Rock Campground.

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