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It's official: No youth baseball this summer

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

They held out for as long as possible, but last week, both McNary Youth Baseball (MYB) and Keizer Little League (KLL) made the decision to cancel their respective programs for the summer due to COVID-19.

MYB officially made the decision to cancel on Wednesday, May 27, while KLL followed suit on Sunday, May 30.

The final decision from the MYB board of directors wasn't unanimous according to MYB President Bo Lane.

But in the end, the board ultimately concluded that the logistics of trying to run a baseball and softball season were too difficult to strategize.

"It was super tough to make the decision. But with all the restrictions and lack of field space, accompanied by the fact that tons of other programs were pulling out left and right, we felt like this was our best course of action," Lane said. "Right now, kids can't even share a baseball together. We felt like we couldn't keep asking our families to wait."

— Bo Lane, MYB President

However, due to the un-

foreseen circumstances, MYB will be unable to offer full refunds to their families — in large part, due to their league change.

"Because we joined Clackamas County this year, our season would have started three weeks earlier than normal. We had already purchased jerseys, hats and insurance in preparation for the season well before things closed down. Families will be refunded as much as possible," Lane said.

Lane says that MYB still wants to put together some scrimmages and/or clinics if Gov. Kate Brown eases up on the restrictions in Marion County.

Even though they aren't able to play games, MYB has organized a four-week batting practice at the Salem-

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Josh Grossman rounds the bag after a base hit in a McNary Youth Baseball game last season. File

Facility access still restricted for prep athletes

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

Last month, the OSAA, in conjunction with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), released guidance to all member schools on a summer reopening plan that could potentially take place in some areas of the state within the next week.

However, Salem-Keizer schools likely won't begin that process until July.

"It's still such a fluid situation. We're hoping to be able to open facilities back up by July. But it's tentative at this point," said Larry Ramirez, the director of high school education of Salem-Keizer Public Schools.

Back in April, Gov. Kate Brown had ordered school facilities to close down until June 30 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, OSAA received clarification from the Oregon Department of Education that the date was set to align with districts that are the latest to finish the school year and that districts can reopen their facilities the day after their school year ends.

"We obviously don't want to have a large opening. We just want to give the kids a chance to get re-acclimated," said OSAA executive director Peter Weber.

separated into three different categories, which signified the individual sport's infection risk.

Cross country, track & field, swimming, golf and tennis were considered low-risk activities.

The moderate risk activities were volleyball, soccer, baseball, softball and basketball, while the high-risk ac-

tivities were football, wrestling, cheer and dance/drill.

Outside of conditioning, there is not a lot of leeway with each sport in phase one as sharing personal equipment is discouraged. In some of the team sports, players are allowed to work on individual ball-handling skills in volleyball, basketball, and tee-work is allowed for baseball or softball players, but players should not share or come in contact with one single ball.

Personal contact is not allowed in any of the sports

and coaches and athletes are "strongly encouraged" to wear masks.

"These guidelines are not requirements, but it is important for athletic directors to put thought and plan into what they chose to do," Weber said.

OSAA is planning on sharing additional guidance later this month.

"When we feel like it's safe for kids to re-engage, then we're going to do that. We know that people are chomping at the bit."

— Larry Ramirez, Director of SKPS High School Education

re-engage, then we're going to do that. We know people are chomping at the bit," Ramirez said.

When we feel like it's safe for kids to re-engage, then we're going to do that. We know that people are chomping at the bit."



Julie Dieker takes on a defender in a McNary soccer game last fall. File

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publisher@keizertimes.com
 2019-2020 President
 Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association



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- SUBSCRIPTIONS**
- One year:
 \$35 in Marion County,
 \$43 outside Marion County,
 \$55 outside Oregon
- PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY**
 Publication No: USPS 679-430
- POSTMASTER**
 Send address changes to:
 Keizertimes Circulation
 142 Chemawa Road N.
 Keizer, OR 97303
- Periodical postage paid at Salem, Oregon



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