



Submitted

Before becoming a coach, Boucher played at Westmont from 2010 to 2012.

## BOUCHER, continued from Page A10

are just as high coming into the 2020-21 season as the Warriors return 10 players from last year's squad — most of whom were recruited by Boucher.

“We had an amazing group last year and nearly all of them are coming back. I'm really excited to have my first year as a head coach be with this group. They are some special individuals who have already had a lot of success in their careers,” Boucher said.

At age 31, Boucher is one of the youngest college basketball coaches in the country, which he believes is an asset.

“Coach Boucher is a big picture thinker who is not just here to win games but also to build on the tradition set before him,”

— Dave Odell  
Westmont ath. director

“I feel like being a young head coach helps me understand our guys from a relational standpoint,” Boucher said.

As a coach, Boucher prides himself on working one-on-one with each of his players, not only for the purpose of improving their respective games, but also to build a relationship of trust.

“I really value doing a lot of individual work with my guys because that was the kind of attention that I received as a player,” Boucher said. “When I was with Coach (Abderhalden) at Chemeketa, he was so devoted to helping his guys get better. Our players are really hungry and motivated and I believe that being a coach that puts in the time on individual improvement will allow players to put their trust

in our staff.”

At this point, it's unknown if COVID-19 will affect the 2020-21 basketball season. If the season does take place as scheduled, Boucher is confident in the direction that his program is headed.

“Even though we're living in wild times right now, I feel like the future of this team looks very bright,” Boucher said.

## SKV, continued from Page A10

obstacles were too much for the MLB to overcome. They would have had to send players to 160 different cities. With each area having different health protocols, it just wouldn't have been feasible,” Walker said. “We're extremely disappointed that we won't be able to provide Volcanoes baseball this year.”

While the organization isn't offering refunds to season ticket holders, Walker promises that everyone who bought season tickets for 2020 will have automatically have their purchases rolled over into the 2021 season — meaning that they will have tickets for every Salem-Keizer home game.

This poses an interesting situation for die-hard

Volcanoes fans. On one hand, there have been multiple reports saying that the Northwest League (NWL) will be expanding their season, which could potentially start in May of 2021.

“We haven't received official word yet, but that certainly seems to be the talk around the water cooler,” Walker said.

“Maybe I have too positive of an outlook, but I still think we could make lemonade out of lemons.”

— Mickey Walker  
Volcanoes CEO

If that does occur, the Volcanoes could potentially play up to 70 home games next year — which is nearly double what they would play during a typical summer — and season ticket holders would be receiving an incredible bang

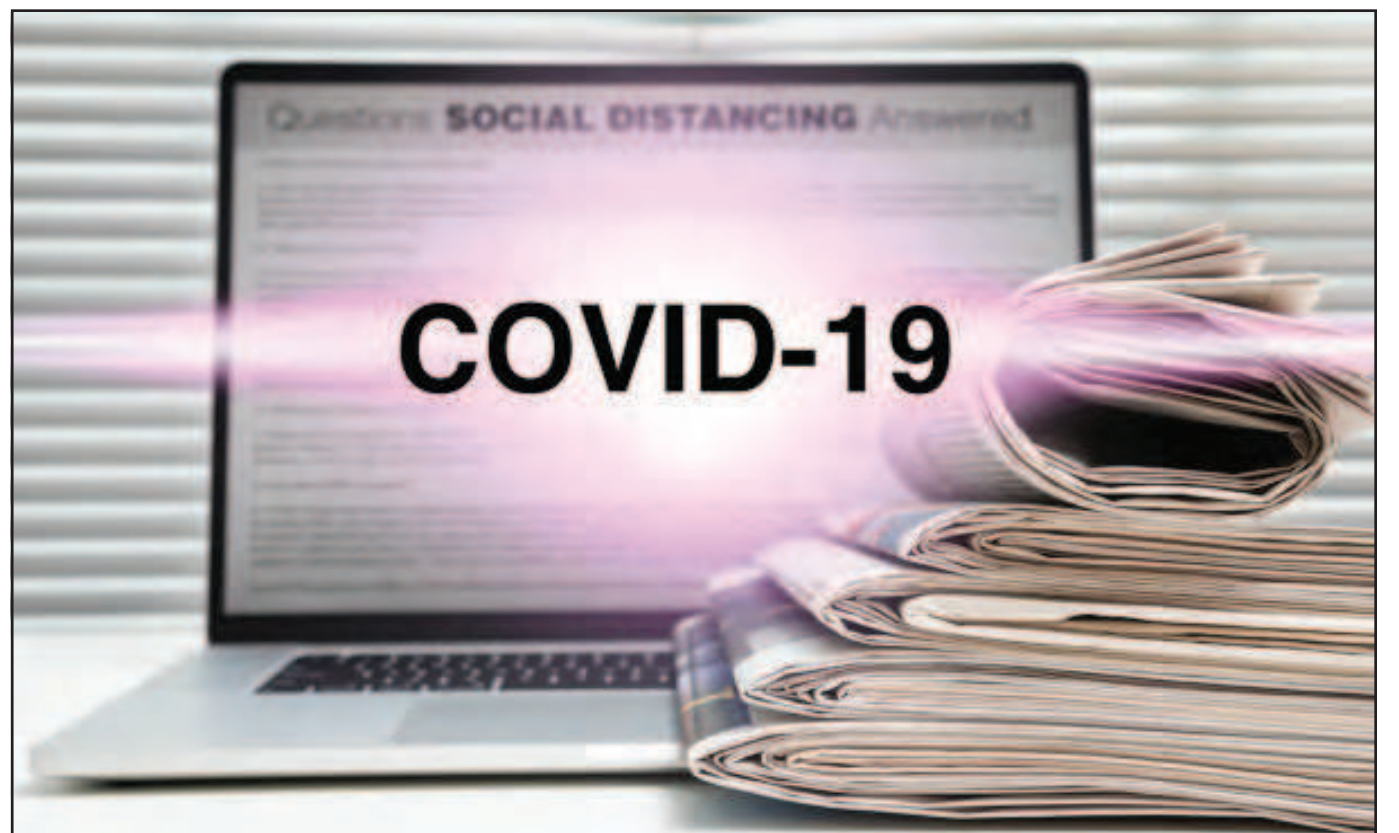
for their buck. However, with the MLB wanting to cut ties with 42 of their current minor league organizations, it's possible that the Volcanoes could lose their affiliation with the San Francisco Giants this fall and

be forced to try and survive as an independent team.

At this point, it's hard to say what independent baseball for would look like for the Volcanoes, but without a Major League affiliation, it's safe to assume that the product value would likely be of less appeal to season ticket holders — as well as the general public.

Walker, however, is approaching the unknown with a positive attitude. With the MLB drastically changing their draft process — the draft reduced from 40 rounds in 2019, to five in 2020, and will be bumped back up to 20 rounds in 2021 — Walker believes that the Volcanoes could still get high-quality prospects, even without an MLB affiliation.

“I think we could potentially get better players than we would get from the Giants, especially since the draft is so short now. I also think being an independent team would allow us more freedom for community involvement,” Walker said. “Maybe I have too positive of an outlook, but I think we can still make lemonade out of lemons.”



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