

OPINION

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OUR VIEW

Time to celebrate Knappa, Astoria dynasties

If the outcomes of sports events were inevitable, they wouldn't bother to play the games or run the races.

So, as the public school year comes to an end with graduations and the prospect of busy summer vacations, it's fitting to take a moment to salute some significant achievements on the diamond and the track.

The Astoria High School girls' track team was on the podium in Eugene again, just missing out on a fourth consecutive state championship.

Last year, the Lady Fishermen went back and forth with Phoenix for the lead, but ended the state meet atop the podium to make it an astonishing three in a row.

This year, the girls placed second behind Marshfield — by only 5 points — a tremendous achievement that demonstrates consistency in the program and is a credit to the athletes and coaches. They were spurred by senior Darian Hageman's heroics in three jumping finals, an impressive contribution from Sophie Long in the 800, and field athletes like Kes Sandstrom, who won the discus.

Casual observers might suggest that track highlights individual achievements, but anyone who is close to the program knows it is entirely a team sport. And that does not just mean the accumulation of points. As Sandstrom said, "We had people moving around cheering for each other all day, and I definitely felt my team there for me today."

Knappa repeats

There is a similar ethos in eastern Clatsop County, and it has existed



David Ball/For The Daily Astorian

Astoria coaches place the first-place medal around Kes Sandstrom's neck after her state win in the discus, while Seaside's Gretchen Hoekstre finished second.

for some time. That's why it is also a delight to cue some significant applause for the Knappa High School baseball team.

Coach Jeff Miller and his boys have done it again, winning the 2A/1A trophy with a comfortable win over Pilot Rock.

It is their third state championship in four consecutive years at the finals. They were the favorites and have chalked up back-to-back title wins, just like their basketball team did back in 1999.

But did we say "comfortable?" Not, exactly. The talented young athletes still had to win — and they gave up a run early in the contest to put themselves under some pressure.

Gary Henley's reporting of postseason high school athletics always captures the drama and reveals

the subplots.

The biggest theme in this story is the classy manner in which Knappa's representatives perform.

The boys never brag (though they could be forgiven if they did).

The boys support each other (they serve as a role model for any group striving for success).

The boys do what is asked of them. Every one.

Even when their individual seasons end prematurely, they stay in the fight. Senior Reuben Cruz was crushed when an accidental postgame shoulder injury ruined his final opportunity to play in a Knappa sports uniform. Yet he supported his teammates from the bench, taking almost an assistant coach role to exhort them to victory.

Knappa's drive for success permeates

the entire school district. Walk down the corridors and peer into the classrooms any day of the week and you'll see a whole lot of learning going on.

Some lessons are learned on the field. The best example of this class act is coach Miller. He never takes any of Knappa's success for granted, "Baseball's a scary sport sometimes, and all it takes is one swing," he says, with obvious intensity.

Even as his guys progressed through the quarterfinals and semifinals, he praised the other coaches, commended the other teams and didn't get too excited.

The only bad news here is that nine Logger seniors will graduate. The good news is that's OK — because there are many younger players who have already proved their mettle.

As Henley added, in the punchline to his championship report, "This dynasty is just warming up."

Another dynasty in progress

While this editorial is about spring sports, we would be remiss not to point out that another dynasty is in progress in South County.

The Seaside boys basketball team won its second straight 4A state championship in March. It was their third straight year competing in the title game.

Four of their five starters return next season, and they have one of the best youth programs in the state.

"We're going to be better than ever next year," said junior Chase Januik, a second team all-state selection. "We'll be looking for a three-peat."

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Parking, the hottest summer topic

It seems like conversations about parking in Cannon Beach always start too late.

"There is nothing happening at this point," City Councilor George Vetter said. "The last time I brought this up, other councilors wanted to wait for some kind of initiative from the public and business community."

Nothing is in the works, Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn added. There will be no changes in enforcement and police are not adding any parking limits or signage for the summer.

Former Mayor Mike Morgan presented timed parking to discourage all-day parking downtown as an option in 2008, during his election campaign.

Shuttle service got a trial in 2011 and 2012, but it wasn't

cost-effective.

At a charge to the city of \$47 an hour, "you could take a taxi to the Portland airport for less money," Morgan said at the time.

Study commissioned

Last summer, after impassioned arguments from the community, city councilors voted to table any discussion of timed parking or any other parking solutions until after the summer, the Gazette's Brenna Visser reported.

This after Brian Davis from Lancaster Street Lab presented a parking study driving the timed parking experiment.

The study divided the city into three parking areas — crossroads or major downtown streets, outskirts and lots, and stall counts and types. Almost 400 spaces were not timed. Drivers stayed an average of 3 hours, 13 minutes. Downtown areas were 85 percent full by 10 a.m. on spring break Friday, while lots at more than 90 percent by 2 p.m.

Numbers for a "sunny April Saturday" were roughly comparable, according to the study.

Three-hour parking limit signs on some downtown streets were suggested by City Council last year as a pilot program to see whether timed parking increases turnover as a way to help the city reach the goal of creating 50 new spots by the end of 2018.

But business owners and community members rejected the idea that timed parking would increase business. More than 100 residents and business owners signed a petition against proposed parking time limits.

"The city MUST offer additional parking NOT limit parking areas!" business owner Mary Ann Oyala wrote in a letter to the city.

Timed parking is "against the grain of our naturally family friendly community," jeweler Sharon Amber said.

Alaina and Marty Giguere proposed eliminating RV parking in downtown and midtown and building a parking garage by the recycling area with free parking for merchants and their employees.

'The back burner'

Greg Swedenborg, this year's Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce president and general manager of The Waves, addressed the City Council early this year, after the council announced its 2018-19 top initiatives.

"Parking was not on the list," he said. "When I spoke I asked that as a concerned citizen and business owner that they make time this year for the discussion."

After the tabling of the two-hour limit, the council "just put the topic on the back burner."

Their decision frustrated Swedenborg. "They just took the parking engineering report they paid for and put it on a shelf," he said.

So he offered his own ideas, including the suggestion that Cannon Beach implement a fee-based parking program. "Nobody wants to damage the 'character of Cannon Beach' with the idea of parking meters, increased signage, burden on the locals, but the reality is that for about six months of the year, and probably 80 percent of the weekends we have a parking problem," he said.

Swedenborg took the city's 2017 report to a company called Passport Inc., which has a software-based solution and doesn't require meters or coins.

Using a mobile application, users can be on the beach and repay if time runs out.

In lots, a fee-based parking kiosk program could be rolled out seasonally, limited to summer or prime tourist dates, and locals can be given a sticker that



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

Nick Hansen, Dalton Smith and Keanu Yokoyama, of Cannon Beach police parking enforcement.

allows them to park for free. Prices could be set at variable rates depending on the time of year, and could be enforced with tickets or warnings.

Swedenborg provided examples of communities similar to Cannon Beach that have successfully implemented the kiosk program — Carmel, California, Breckenridge, Colorado and Ocean City, Maryland, among others. He estimates the city could implement this solution on city lots and generate about \$400,000 to \$600,000 a year in parking revenue — more if they include city streets and the Tolovana Wayside.

Swedenborg touts the projected revenue opportunity "that pays for itself" with almost zero capital investment instead of "just putting our head in the sand."

If he gets sufficient backing, he plans on going to the City Council again to share the idea and suggest that they make this issue a priority, he said.

Strategies from Bend

Maybe Cannon Beach can learn some lessons from Oregon's fastest-growing city, Bend — the fourth-fastest growing city in the country.

The city met the problem by hiring a dedicated staffer, David Dietrich, as parking demand manager to handle traffic concerns. The downtown parking district maintains a two-hour parking limit.

"We want to have high circulation," Dietrich said. "Obviously the more circulation, the more customers and visitors who can go, spend and enjoy downtown."

Police mark license plates using a hand-held device, with a requirement that cars move at least 750 feet after two hours. A permit program designates certain lots in the downtown area for employee parking.

"The idea is that we maximize on-street and certain areas for visitors and customers," Dietrich said.

Permit revenue from paid parking pays for infrastructure — painting, striping, lighting and capital improvements. Enforcement pays for itself, he said.

For officials in Bend, the plan is in place to "enhance the customer experience here." To handle future congestions, options would be adjusting time limits based on zones, expanding paid hourly lots, enhancing connectivity and wayfinding, Dietrich said.

"Say you're coming into downtown Bend and a visitor, you're probably going to the first spot you see. If you have wayfinding, we can steer you to the longer, more cost-effective parking. It's like water — we want people to flow to the right places."

R.J. Marx is The Daily Astorian's South County reporter and editor of the Seaside Signal and Cannon Beach Gazette.