

SPORTS

Keeping Girls in the Game



Women compete in track and field event. Photo courtesy of Sports Oregon

Sport Oregon Offers \$125,000 in Grants

Sport Oregon today announced that the organization is opening its 2023 SHE FLIES Community Grant cycle Thursday, Feb. 2, with \$125,000 available this year through the Sport Oregon Foundation. Grant-seeking organizations aligning with the SHE FLIES mission and corresponding focus areas are encouraged to apply for 2023 grants at SHEFLIES.org.

SHE FLIES is the flagship initiative of the Sport Oregon Foundation, with a mission to connect girls and women across Oregon to sports, and to create inclusive communities through its programs, partnerships and networks. It aims to do so through three focus areas: keeping girls in the game, empowering women in coaching and promoting fitness for life.

For Sport Oregon COO Mai-ka Janat-Vennemann, “Last

year was really about building a network and constructing what SHE FLIES is, and can be. As a connector and trusted voice in sports, Sport Oregon is uniquely qualified to uplift girls and women in sport. When girls are in, we all win.”

In 2022, SHE FLIES awarded grants to six deserving groups, including Active Children Portland, The Children’s Course, Hood River Outrigger Canoe Club, Ophelia’s Place, the Rose City Rollers and Skate Like a Girl.

Thanks to a substantial financial commitment from Alaska Airlines, Sport Oregon has increased the amount awarded through the SHE FLIES Community Grants program, from \$25,000 in the program’s first year to \$125,000 in 2023. Alaska Airlines has committed \$200,000 in support of the SHE FLIES Community Grants program over the next two years (\$100,000 per year for 2023 and 2024).

“At Alaska Airlines, we believe everyone deserves the

opportunity to play, grow and thrive in athletics,” said Harry Cheema, public affairs manager at Alaska Airlines. “We are proud to support Sport Oregon through the She Flies Community Grant program to level the playing field for girls and women in sports. Alaska is committed to improving access to sports and contributing to the growth and development of athletes, and this partnership allows us to reach communities all across the great state of Oregon.”

The application period for this year’s SHE FLIES grants will end Friday, April 7 at 5 p.m. and applicants will be notified in early May. Sport Oregon will recognize the 2023 SHE FLIES grant recipients during its second-annual SHE FLIES Festival later in May, and funds will be distributed to grantees in June.

In addition to the community grants program, Sport Oregon annually produces a number of special events and relevant programming in support of the SHE FLIES initiative.



AP PHOTO/ BRYNN ANDERSON/ MATT ROURKE
Kansas city chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes and Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts

First Black Quarterbacks to Meet in Super Bowl

Philadelphia Eagles and The Kansas City Chiefs face off

(AP) — Black quarterbacks have come a long way in the NFL since Fritz Pollard became the first to play in the league in 1923 and Doug Williams was the first to start and win a Super Bowl following the 1987 season. Now, Patrick Mahomes and Jalen Hurts will be the first Black QBs to face off in a Super Bowl. It’s fitting that a season which began with 11 Black QBs starting in Week 1 will end with a historic matchup.

Mahomes can become the first two-time winner if he leads the Kansas City Chiefs to victory over the Philadelphia Eagles on Feb. 12. Hurts aims to become the fourth Black QB to win the Super Bowl, joining Williams, Mahomes and Russell Wilson. Steve McNair, Colin Kaepernick, Cam Newton and Wilson also started in the Super Bowl and lost.

Michael Vick was the first Black QB selected No. 1 overall in the draft in 2001. McNair became the first Black QB to win MVP in 2003. Mahomes and Lamar Jackson won it back-to-back years.

They all had to overcome stereotypes to get to this point. Hurts began his NFL career in 2020 as an all-purpose QB after the Eagles took him in the second round. Playing behind Carson Wentz, Hurts had 12 rushing attempts, one catch and threw just three passes in his first nine games before taking over as Philadelphia’s QB.

He clearly has not forgotten

that the decision to draft him in the second round of the 2020 draft was widely criticized by reporters and fans.

“My first year here, (people) probably didn’t even want to draft me here,” Hurts said Sunday. “It was probably one of those things. But it always handles itself.”

Neither Hurts nor Mahomes celebrated their conference championship wins too much. The main goal remains ahead. They each want one more win.

“I know I’ve been through a lot personally, but I don’t want to steer away from the direction of how good this team has been at playing together, being together, and challenging one another,” Hurts said. “When we experience some painful times and some tough times, we always found a way to overcome. You want to be going into a situation like this, and we have a chance to go out there and win it all, so we want to prepare to go do that.”

Mahomes battled through an ankle injury to help the Chiefs beat the Cincinnati Bengals 23-20 to advance to their third Super Bowl appearance in four years. He had no intention of lighting up a victory cigar after a hard-fought win.

“I don’t think we have any cigars, but we’ll be ready to go at the Super Bowl,” Mahomes said, poking fun at Joe Burrow’s penchant for puffing those after big wins.

Only one QB can win the Super Bowl. Whether it’s Hurts or Mahomes, it’s another victory for the Black QBs who were overlooked throughout the years.

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