

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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Gertsch has Vikings XC program off and running

Umatilla assistant takes over for Josh Ego, who stepped down after last season

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

UMATILLA — When Josh Ego stepped down as coach of the Umatilla cross-country team at the end of last season, assistant coach Cathy Gertsch threw her hat in the ring for the job. She was hired.

It's her first head coaching job, but she's more than qualified.

"I used to be Josh's coach 20 years ago at Hermiston when I was a volunteer assistant," Gertsch said. "Four years ago, he said he needed an assistant. It has come full circle."



Gertsch

Gertsch, 49, who owns Achieve Yoga & Fitness in Hermiston, also is an avid runner. "My dad (Rudy Alaniz) was a runner and I used to run with him and his Army guys," Gertsch said.

Gertsch ran at Walla Walla High School. She then married and started a family, but it wasn't long

before she was back on the road.

"When I turned 30, I decided to run 10 marathons," she said. "Ten turned to 20, and then 28."

She has run the Portland Marathon several times, and her most recent adventure was the Eugene Marathon in April.

Gertsch is Road Runners Club of America certified, and a member of Marathon Maniacs. She's not dragging the Vikings on any 26.2-mile runs, but they have been out on the trails this summer in preparation for the upcoming season.

"We didn't have that many kids last year, and we have just four returning, but we've had 19 kids

show up," Gertsch said. "We have a lot of new kids. We are also trying to get the middle school involved with some fun runs."

The Vikings have been running at 6 a.m. Monday through Friday.

"The fact they wake up that early is something," Gertsch said. "We have fun. There is a nature trail that goes across into Washington. There is a cave at the end of the trail they can explore."

Being a personal trainer and yoga instructor, Gertsch offers her runners a variety of activities.

"We are trying to build a culture," she said. "We will play Ultimate Frisbee, go through an obsta-

cle course at my house, and do a little yoga. At state, some teams are doing yoga, and that is nice to see. I think they are learning a lot."

Two of Gertsch's dedicated runners are Abby Cardenas and her cousin Julie Cardenas. Julie is the sister of former Umatilla state champion Fabian Cardenas, who now runs at University of Idaho.

Though things seem to be off to a good start, Gertsch has a few first-year jitters.

"I still have a little stress and anxiety," she said. "You hope the kids will turn out and that we will have full teams with seven girls and seven boys."

NEED FOR SPEED



Photo contributed by Mitch Myers

Mitch Myers receives last-minute advice from crew chief Jim Rizzoli before a race in Las Vegas this spring.

By BRETT KANE
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — In 2004, Mitch Myers set a world record with his elapsed time of 5.10 seconds as he crossed the finish line to win the National Hot Rod Association Finals in Pomona, California. Then, he retired.

He was quick to step away from the sport, returning to his hometown in Hermiston to focus on his various business ventures. Nowadays, he owns and operates the Nookie's sports bar, Hermiston Brewing Company, and hose protector manufacturer EPHA, Inc.

"I retired as No. 1 in my class in the world," said Myers, 62. "I won my class, and I walked away from it."

But 15 years later, the allure of racing hot rods again became unavoidable.

Larry Miersch, head of the Southern California-based Larry Miersch Racing, and crew chief Jim Rizzoli



Photo contributed by Mitch Myers

Myers' nitromethane-fueled dragster rests before hitting the Mopar Express Lane NHRA Spring Nationals in Houston, Texas, in April.

convinced him to come out of retirement and take the wheel once again. Myers is now in the midst of a 10-race deal with Miersch, and next week will

drive Miersch's A/Fuel nitro dragster in its only Pacific Northwest showing of

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AP Photo/Rick Scuteri, File

Seattle middle linebacker Bobby Wagner (54) reacts during a game Nov. 9, 2017, against the Arizona Cardinals in Glendale, Ariz. The Seahawks have agreed to a three-year contract extension with All-Pro middle linebacker.

Wagner agrees to contract extension with Seahawks

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — Bobby Wagner took on the challenge of representing himself when it came to negotiating a new contract with the Seattle Seahawks.

The risk paid off. Wagner and the Seahawks reached agreement on a three-year contract extension Friday night, locking up the anchor of their defense for the foreseeable future. The lengthy negotiations came to a conclusion on the second day of training camp and keep the All-Pro in the only uniform he has played in as a professional.

"We feel blessed that we were able to draft Bobby in 2012, keep him here on a second contract, and now to have him sign a third contract is a huge deal for us," general manager John Schneider said in a statement. "Everyone in the whole building is excited, I'm sure his teammates are going to be very excited. He exemplifies everything that we're all about, his professionalism, intensity, the way he handles himself off the field. There's no doubt in my mind that he'll go down not only as one of the greatest Seahawks, but also as one of the greatest middle linebackers in NFL history."

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SPORTS SHORTS

Caeleb Dressel breaks Phelps' world record in 100 butterfly

GWANGJU, South Korea (AP) — Caeleb Dressel broke Michael Phelps' world record in the 100-meter butterfly on Friday at the world swimming championships.

The American won his semifinal heat in 49.50 seconds — 0.32 seconds better than Phelps' mark set at the 2009 world meet in Rome at the height of the high-tech suit era.

Dressel was out in 22.83 seconds — 0.53

seconds under Phelps' pace — and came home in 26.67 to lead eight men into Saturday's final.

He was a whopping 1.44 seconds ahead of Andrei Minakov of Russia, the second-quickest qualifier.

It's the second world record of Phelps' to fall at this year's worlds. Kristof Milak of Hungary won the 200 fly in 1:50.73, bettering Phelps' mark of 1:51.51 also set in Rome.



United States' Caeleb Dressel prepares to start in his heat of the men's 50m freestyle at the World Swimming Championships in Gwangju, South Korea, on Friday.

AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein