

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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B1

## Masks to be worn on the court unless vaccinated

Season 4 culminating week to be run like Seasons 2 and 3

By RONALD BOND  
Wallowa County Chieftain

SALEM — The masking rules for businesses put in place by Gov. Kate Brown earlier this week will apply to the playing surface, too.

The Oregon School Activities Association announced late Wednesday, May 19, that it received clarification from the Oregon Health Authority on how to handle masking for athletic events. The ruling for indoor sports is that students, staff, volunteers and spectators who are fully vaccinated are not required to wear masks as long as the vaccination status of that individual has been checked by the school. Previous social distancing and capacity rules are still in place.

That means unvaccinated players on the wrestling mat or basketball court will have to be masked,



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

Umatilla's Oscar Campos is fouled by Angel Beltran, of Irrigon, during a nonconference game on Thursday, May 20, 2021, in Irrigon. The Oregon School Activities Association announced late Wednesday, May 19, that students, staff volunteers and spectators who are fully vaccinated will no longer be required to wear masks so long as schools verify the vaccination status of the individual.

OSAA Executive Director Peter Weber said.

"These provisions are optional

for the venue operators," the press release from the OSAA states.

"School districts, charter schools,

and private schools may still choose to require face coverings at these events."

OHA guidance deems a "fully vaccinated" individual as someone who is 14 days past receiving full vaccination — two shots of either Pfizer or Moderna, or one shot of Johnson & Johnson.

Vaccination verification is "documentation provided by a tribal, federal, state or local government, or a health care provider, that includes an individual's name, date of birth, type of COVID-19 vaccination given, date or dates given, depending on whether it is a one-dose or two-dose vaccine, and the name/location of the health care provider or site where the vaccine was administered," according to the press release.

Weber said each school will make the call on how they handle checking vaccinations.

"I'm not sure every school is going to check the status. They may keep everyone masked," he said.

He added the OSAA does check

on schools that they hear are not following the standards in place.

"In general the responsibility is on the school to be sure they are following regulations," he said.

Mike Somnis, athletic director at Pendleton, said the school is still working through how it will proceed with the new stipulations that are in place. School officials met on May 20, and he said they'll be meeting again on May 24. Pendleton's first basketball games are on May 25.

"I'm hoping early next week we'll have a clear version," he said, adding the school may try a hybrid of the options currently in place. "We have to do what is best for our school, our community and our constituents."

Masks are no longer required at outdoor sporting events, though social distancing is still encouraged.

The OSAA also announced that its Season 4 culminating week events will be carried out in the

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## SWIMMING TO NEW ADVENTURES

Hermiston's Abby Sharon is headed to Southern Virginia to swim for the Knights

By ANNIE FOWLER  
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — It's hard to find public pool to swim in during a pandemic.

For Hermiston's Abby Sharon, that meant roughly a year without being able to put in the work she'd like, but that didn't deter Southern Virginia University from offering her an opportunity to swim at the college level.

Sharon recently signed a letter of intent to swim for the Knights, an NCAA Div. III program that competes in the Coast-To-Coast Athletic Conference.

"It's hard to choose between swimming and track, I appreciate them both in different ways," Sharon said. "Something about being in the water is so peaceful. Swimming clears my mind. I like the individual aspect of the sport. You have to work hard to improve yourself. No one is going to do that for you."

Sharon competes in the 100 butterfly, the 200 freestyle, the 4x200 free relay and the 4x400 free relay.

She qualified for state in 2019 in the 100 fly after finishing third at regionals. She did not place in the top eight at state.

"She has been swimming most of her life," Hermiston coach Sara Sargent said. "It's great she's continuing that. She makes it look so easy. From the first time I met her to now, she has come into her own. After the year they have had, it's a great opportunity for her to go to a school and swim."

Southern Virginia University is in Buena Vista, Virginia,



East Oregonian, File

Abby Sharon poses for a portrait following a swim practice in 2019.

about 3 hours southwest of Washington, D.C. If not for a family friend, Sharon may never have heard of the school.

"When the swim coach (Jennifer Moore) was younger, she knew my grandma when they lived in Wisconsin," Sharon said. "Jennifer's family is really good friends with my grandparents. She reached out to me, and I visited the campus in January with my mom (Liz)."

The SVU campus features historic buildings, as well as top-notch athletic facilities, but other aspects also appealed to Sharon.

"It's a small school (approximately 1,100 students), which I like," Sharon said. "The school is associated with the The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-

day Saints, which is important to me."

Being a Div. III school, SVU does not offer athletic scholarships, but Sharon said she has a couple of academic scholarships that will help cover tuition and other costs.

SVU is a liberal arts college, but Sharon said she is undecided on a major.

"I was hoping to do my generals, explore and see what interests me," she said.

Back in the water Sharon just finished the track season on May 6, where she competed in the 100 meters, 400 meters, and the 4x100 and 4x400 relays.

She was back in the pool and ready for a meet just a few days later.

"I felt a little worried since it was my first meet and I didn't get to practice much," she said. "I didn't feel as out of shape as I thought I'd be. My times weren't the worst, but better than I thought I'd be."

Sargent was impressed with Sharon's times.

"Seriously, with all the girls, especially Abby, you can't tell they haven't been in the water much," Sargent said. "With track, Abby's endurance was up, but she's a natural born swimmer. She makes it look so easy."

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the pools at the Boardman Pool and Recreation Center and the Hermiston Family Aquatic Center that the Bulldogs use for practice were shut down. There were a few days here and there, but nothing on a regular basis.

"I went to a few practices in Boardman, then track started up," Sharon said. "Lately, we have been practicing at the Hermiston pool. They opened it up for us."

Sargent appreciates both facilities working with her team during a pandemic.

"We have a good relationship with Boardman Rec and Hermiston Aquatic," Sargent said. "Having those relationships are important right now."

With the Columbia River nearby and safe swimming areas at Hat Rock State Park, Sharon still preferred to wait for a pool.

"Open water scares me," she said. "I prefer the pool. I don't know what's in the (river) water."

The Mid-Columbia Conference swim schedule is short this season, but Sharon is grateful to have one.

"I'm glad we were able to have a season," she said. "It's kind of like a sense of urgency. I'm counting down my last few high school meets. It makes me want to improve in a small amount of time."

### COLUMBIA BASIN YOUTH FOOTBALL

## Hermiston 7-on-7 team going after league title

### Youth program is 12-2 going into CBYF playoffs

By ANNIE FOWLER  
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The Hermiston Bulldogs are primed and ready for the Columbia Basin Youth Football 7-on-7 playoffs on Saturday, May 22, at Carmichael Middle School in Richland, Washington.

The Bulldogs, who compete in the 7-8 grade division, are 12-2 heading into the playoffs. They finished third in the league standings during the regular season.

The Columbia Basin Youth Football League has more than 70 teams, and there are 16 in the Bulldogs' division.

The Hermiston team has players from Sandstone Middle School and Armand Larive Middle School, led by quarterback Aiden Alvarez.

"Most of our 14 players have been together for a couple of years," Bulldogs assistant coach Sergio Alvarez said. "They placed third in a tournament in Salem last fall."

The rules for 7-on-7 football differ from that of regular football.

On offense your team has six players — one quarterback, one running back and four receivers. Though there is a running back, he can only move the ball with a reception.

The defense has seven players, all defensive backs. There are no linemen, though there is a team from Richland comprised of all linemen.

The game has a 25-minute running clock, and when your team has the ball, you get three downs to try and reach the end zone. If not, the ball goes to the other team.

The ball starts on the 35-yard

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### ON THE SLATE

Schedule is subject to change

#### SATURDAY, MAY 22

Prep boys basketball

Chiwana at Hermiston, 5 p.m.

Joseph at Nixyaawii, 12:30 p.m.

Prep girls basketball

Hermiston at Chiawana, 1 p.m.

Joseph at Nixyaawii, 11 a.m.

Prep wrestling

Hermiston at Walla Walla, 8 a.m.

Prep baseball

IMC title game: Hood River Valley at Pendleton, noon

2A state semifinals: Heppner vs. Glide, 1 p.m. at Stayton High School

Prep softball

IMC title game: Ridgeview at Pendleton,

2:30 p.m.

Prep track and field

Pendleton at 5A Invitational, Wilsonville, 10 a.m.

2A State Championships: Stanfield/Echo, Heppner, Weston-McEwen, Pilot Rock at Union, 10 a.m.

1A State Championships: Lone at EOU in La Grande, 10 a.m.

#### SUNDAY, MAY 23

College baseball

Blue Mountain at Walla Walla (2), 1 p.m.

#### MONDAY, MAY 24

Prep boys basketball

Hermiston at Walla Walla, 7 p.m.

Heppner at Umatilla, 7:30 p.m.

Nixyaawii at Enterprise, 6 p.m.

Weston-McEwen at Grant Union, 5:30 p.m.

Echo at Sherman, 7:30 p.m.

Prep girls basketball

Walla Walla at Hermiston, 7 p.m.

Heppner at Umatilla, 6 p.m.

Nixyaawii at Enterprise, 4:30 p.m.

College men's soccer

Columbia Basin at Blue Mountain, 4:15 p.m.

College women's soccer

Columbia Basin at Blue Mountain, 2 p.m.

#### TUESDAY, MAY 25

Prep boys basketball

Crook County at Pendleton, 6:30 p.m.

Umatilla at Stanfield, 7:30 p.m.

Pilot Rock at Riverside, 7:30 p.m.

Irrigon at Heppner, 7:30 p.m.

McLoughlin at Weston-McEwen, 7:30 p.m.

Horizon Christian at Lone/Arlington, 7:30 p.m.

Cove at Griswold, 6 p.m.

Prep girls basketball

Pendleton at Crook County, 7 p.m.

McLoughlin at Weston-McEwen, 6 p.m.

Irrigon at Heppner, 6 p.m.

Pilot Rock at Riverside, 6 p.m.

McLoughlin at Weston-McEwen, 6 p.m.

Horizon Christian at Lone/Arlington, 6 p.m.

Prep bowling

Kennewick at Hermiston, 3:30 p.m.

College men's basketball

Blue Mountain at Treasure Valley, 6:30 p.m.

College women's basketball

Blue Mountain at Treasure Valley, 4:30 p.m.

#### WEDNESDAY, MAY 26

Prep boys basketball

Nixyaawii at Powder Valley, 7 p.m.

Grant Union at Heppner, 7:30 p.m.

Dufur at Echo, 7:30 p.m.

Umatilla JV at Griswold, 6 p.m.

Prep girls basketball

Nixyaawii at Union, 5 p.m.

Grant Union at Heppner, 6 p.m.

Prep wrestling

Hermiston at Southridge, 5 p.m.

Prep lacrosse

Chiwana at Hermiston, 7 p.m.

#### THURSDAY, MAY 27

Prep boys basketball

Pendleton at Ridgeview, 7 p.m.

Grant Union at Umatilla, 4:30 p.m.

Irrigon at Riverside, 7:30 p.m.

Pilot Rock at Stanfield, 7:30 p.m.

Echo at Trout Lake, 7:30 p.m.

Prep girls basketball

Ridgeview at Pendleton, 6:30 p.m.

Irrigon at Riverside, 6 p.m.

Pilot Rock at Stanfield, 6 p.m.

Prep boys wrestling

Heppner, McLoughlin at Irrigon, TBD

Prep bowling

Hermiston at Hanford, 3:30 p.m.