

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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TOM CLAYCOMB

BASE CAMP

August already, there's still much to do

Wow. It's already August. I don't know about you but my life has been passing by in a blur lately. I've been flying out for three weeks and home for one week this year and I don't hardly know what season it is, much less what month it is. With that said, let's plan out August so we don't wake up and see snow outside the window and wonder what happened to our summer.

OK, I'm super busy right now. We just finished my daughter's wedding, redid the floors throughout the whole house, I have to get in all of my July invoices and I just flew back home Friday. It is Monday and I have to get in this week's article right fast. What should I do? I'll tell you what I need to do. I'm going to get this article finished then I'm going to go grab Orin and Josiah and go crappie fishing. Whew! That decision took a lot of stress off of me. Now I can get my focal point on the far wall and breathe deeply. No wait, that's the Lamaze recommendations when you're having a baby. But since men have a lower pain tolerance it is almost that painful having not been able to fish for three weeks.

I think we'll fish until midnight, put ice on the fish and then fillet them in the morning. If the fishing is still good then I think I'll go fishing twice more this week.

Oh, but the huckleberries ought to be out by now. You don't want to miss the huckleberry season. That'd be a colossal mistake. Huckleberries are the best berries in the world. If you've never picked them you have to go. They make the best ice cream in the world. Make sure to wear a pistol in case you run into an aggressive bear. I remember one year there was a cute little fuzzball cub about 14 inches long eating them by me. I saw him and figured it was time to scatter.

Katy starts school in a couple of weeks. We need to take one last camping trip, don't we? Think I'll try to do a low-profile camping trip. Maybe just go to the mountains and throw up a tent by a river and burn some steaks over a fire. Or maybe I can talk her into camping on a lake and us crappie fish for a couple of days.

Or something I've been wanting to do for a couple of years is to go get a room at the Big Creek Lodge. The original lodge burned down years ago but they rebuilt another

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FARM CITY RODEO



Breakaway roper Jacee Currin of Heppner ropes her calf in 2.5 seconds to win the round on Thursday, Aug. 11, 2022, at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston.

Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

BREAKING AWAY FROM THE PACK

Heppner's Currin electrifies FCPR crowd with hot run in breakaway roping

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The Currin name has been well-known in rodeo circles for generations, and Jacee Currin is the next in line to keep the family's legacy alive. The Heppner native turned in a time of 2.5 seconds Thursday, Aug. 11, to post the top run of the night in breakaway roping at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo.

"This my first Farm-City Pro Rodeo," Currin said. "I have watched my dad, uncles and cousins compete here, and now me and my cousin (Shayla Currin) get to. It's pretty cool. Thanks to the committee for adding this event."

Currin had the final run of the night in the event, and was the only competitor to record a time under 3 seconds.

"My horse Chili has changed my game," Currin said. "It's been a slow summer, but I have gone from the bottom to moving up in the standings."

Bull riding

Braden Richardson has an associate's degree in petroleum technology and science. One would think he would know better than to



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

Tie-down roper Reese Riemer, of Stinnett, Texas, ropes his calf in 9.3 seconds to win the night on Thursday, Aug. 11, 2022, at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston.

get on the back of a raging 2,000-pound bull, but he's pretty good at that too.

Richardson turned in an 88.5-point ride on Gold Rush to move into the lead in the event, moving past Stetson Wright, who had an 85.5-point ride on Thursday.

"It felt really good," he said. "I couldn't have asked for a better bull."

It's Richardson's second trip to the FCPR. He finished second last year. Now, he's trying to move up in the world standings to secure a

trip to the National Finals Rodeo.

"A month ago, I wasn't in the top 50," he said. "Now, I'm sitting 34th with a month to go. I'm coming off a win yesterday in Missoula, Montana. It feels good to get two good bull rides."

Team roping

BJ Campbell and Brushton Minton were last-minute fill-ins Thursday night, but the pair made the most of the opportunity with a run of 5.8 seconds.

"I used to rodeo with his dad

Casey," said Campbell, who is the heeler. "This was our first time roping together. So far, we're pretty good together."

Campbell and Minton also were presented the Gray Ribbon Challenge Award, named for the late Darrel Sallee, who was a longtime FCPR board member.

Saddle bronc riding

Wright got the night started with an 85-point ride on Indian Country, but Tegan Smith came through with an 88-point ride on Umber Bubbles to move into the lead with Zeke Thurston, who had an 88 on Wednesday.

"That is a good horse," Smith said. "I've had some rough luck this year, but I had a good horse here today. I hope it holds up."

Smith is sitting 37th in the world standings, and is nearly \$40,000 out of the top 15. A nice payday at the FCPR would go a long way in helping him move up the ladder.

Bareback riding

It was another lean night in the bareback, with just four men entered. Bill Tutor came away with an 87-point ride on Bigtimin Houston to take over the lead in the event.

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SPORTS BRIEFING

Free physicals for student-athletes in Echo, Stanfield

ECHO — Stanfield and Echo school districts made arrangements with Family Health Associates to provide sports physicals at no charge for student-athletes. With the fall sports season getting ready to kick off, up-to-date physicals are required before starting practice.

The free physicals are available for Echo and Stanfield student-athletes on Wednesday, Aug. 17, 1-4 p.m. at the Echo School District, 600 Jerome St. Valid for two years, students in seventh, ninth and 11th grade, as well as those that did not play a sport last year need to update their physicals.

For more information, visit www.echo.k12.or.us. For questions, call 541-376-8436.

— EO Media Group



GARY LEWIS

ON THE TRAIL

Trouble comes in all sorts of packages. We were headed into the wilderness to fish a mountain creek. Rattlesnakes did not cross my mind.

My daughter, Jennifer, and I had planned this hike and camping trip for a few months. Now we shouldered backpacks and started up the trail. I carried a Model 1873 single action loaded with 158-grain hollowpoints in a holster on my hip, while Jennifer packed her Ruger SR22. Fly rods were strapped to our packs. Our goal was to find a good place to sleep for the night then cast dry flies for wild rainbows in the morning.

After an hour we found a spot



Gary Lewis/Contributed Photo

Jennifer Lewis left a warning for the next campers.

where trail and creek diverged and then a nice place to throw down our sleeping bags.

In the morning, we hiked down the creek, then worked our way back up, pool by pool. The

little rainbows took our dries with wild abandon and when we had both caught close to a dozen, when the only thing on our minds was dead-dripping a Parachute Adams down the next riffle, a

quick movement alerted me.

We were on a narrow ledge between a deep hole in the creek and a rock wall.

Leaves shuddered and the twigs moved and a diamond-patterned snake headed straight away toward the base of the cliff.

"Snake," I warned Jennifer, and then saw its head and tail. "A rattler."

It ran out of options when it got to the cliff wall and gathered itself, cornered. It turned and headed straight back at me on the narrow trail, its head up eight inches in the air. That's when I shot it.

Hit, the snake pushed off the bank and tumbled toward me. I shot it again and once more then stepped out of the way as it went by me into the creek. I fished it out, a gorgeous, hideous fish, and counted three bullet holes. The first was a bit off-center, about six inches down from the

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