

KOLBABA

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And that's saying something, considering the career Kolbaba has had so far in two years as a professional bull rider.

He was the youngest competitor at last fall's Built Ford Tough World Finals and is currently ranked ninth in world standings. Kolbaba is hoping to earn a spot at the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas in December, and a win at Chief Joseph Days certainly would help him get there.

Kolbaba was a standout as a high school competitor at Walla Walla High School before deciding to go professional when he turned 18. He currently is on track to be the PBR Rookie of the Year and is also a rising star in the PRCA. Although he'll be com-

peting in front of family and friends, Kolbaba will have little chance to enjoy time with them. He will be coming straight from competing Monday and Tuesday at Cheyenne Frontier Days and will leave right after competing Wednesday night to head to Idaho — then on to South Dakota to compete Friday.

Still, he has no complaints about the schedule.

"For me, bull riding is what I've always wanted to do. My dad was a bull rider, and I come from a rodeo family. I can't imagine doing anything else."

Kolbaba will be available to sign autographs before Wednesday night's rodeo at the Dodge display outside the Thunder Room at the Harley Tucker Memorial Arena in Joseph, just west of Main Street. For more information and to purchase tickets to Wednesday night's rodeo, visit chiefjosephdays.com.

GOLF

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Other happenings

• On Monday, July 18, Eastside Seniors, representing seven clubs in northeastern Oregon including Enterprise, played Alpine Meadows. With two flights scheduled, 57 seniors teed up at 8 a.m. and 14 seniors began their 18 rounds at noon.

Chuck Haines reported

good reviews from visiting Eastside members.

"The seniors complimented Greg Oveson and the greens crew for a well-maintained course, and the clubhouse staff for excellent food," Haines said.

• The course will be closed Friday, July 29 for the Shriener's Tournament. Better yet join up, and play in this fun, fun tournament that serves a great cause.

Rochelle Danielson is an Alpine Meadows member who resides in Enterprise.



Scot Heisel/Chieftain

A lone deer grabs some shade last week below the recently shingled Friendship Feast arbor at the Chief Joseph Days rodeo grounds.

BEST

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Twitchell began his career as a teen chasing the all-American dream of becoming a cowboy. And he got lucky right off, making the acquaintance of some good cowboys who mentored him. Utah pick-up man Virgil Neves taught him "how to make money and work hard without having a real job," Twitchell recalled.

It didn't take long before another mentor, Lewis Field — who also happened to be a rodeo coach at nearby Utah Valley University — spotted Twitchell's undeniable deter-

mination to become a cowboy. Twitchell went to Utah Valley University as a bareback, saddle bronco and bull rider.

He made the move to pick-up man when an accident kept Field away from the college rodeo practices.

"Lewis asked me if I would try it," Twitchell said. "I really think he just could see that my ability as a pick-up man was going to go farther than my rough stock riding."

And so the long, dusty, sometimes lonely ol' rodeo road began. Twitchell started traveling with Lewis and Bob Marriott to rodeos and filling in as a pick-up man.

"Sometimes I would go with Bob just so he would have someone to talk to," Twitchell

said. "We may start out in Nephi, Utah, and I would drive clear to L.A."

He let it be known he was available for work, and he courted the infamous Cody Night Rodeo in Cody, Wyo., to work as a pick-up man during their summer rodeo series.

"At one point I had worked 84 performances in a row in Cody. After that, there always seemed to be a pick-up man job available."

In 2010, Tim Bridwell, an up-and-comer in the rodeo business and partner in Growney Brothers Rodeo, hired Twitchell full-time — sight unseen, on the basis of his reputation.

Growney Brothers, who have supplied stock for Chief Joseph Days for 24 years, al-

ready was renowned, having been named Stock Contractor of the Year in 2000. After partnering with Bridwell in 2005, the company went on to win the 2008 PRCA Remuda Award and many others. It remains a top rodeo company to this day.

The pairing of Growney Brothers, Bridwell and Twitchell created life-long friendships and propelled Twitchell to his first Wrangler National Finals Rodeo showing in 2013. And just two years later, Twitchell claimed the pick-up man award.

"This is a perfect life for me," Twitchell said. "Years from now the mark I want to leave is that I was a good guy, a cowboy."

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- Intercity Transportation to La Grande** Mon-Tues and Thursday Weekly ~ Cost \$5 each way. Free access for veterans medical appointments in La Grande.
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- Tuesday & Thursday Shopping Bus** provides transportation for shopping and errands throughout Wallowa County ~ Cost \$3 from Wallowa/Joseph, \$2 Enterprise only.

COMMUNITY CONNECTION OF WALLOWA COUNTY

LEGION

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Following the end of the 2016 high school season, all three started playing for the La Grande Legacy Legends 16U team and are enjoying the experience.

Excellent play from the three resulted in a call-up to the 19U Legends team that just won the district championship and is headed to the Class A American Legion state tournament in Central

Point.

"Instead of having nine months without playing baseball, it's more like six now," Bathke said.

Hayward, 16, switches between shortstop and occasional pitching duties while Bathke, 15, plays center field and also pitches. Both proclaimed baseball as their favorite sport and cited their team's winning of the Baker Wood Bat tournament in June as their favorite memory of the season so far.

All three players attend each Legends practice one to three times per week, depending on how many games the team plays.

"Our coach enforces rest days so we don't get burned out," Hayward said.

Ramsden drives to practice alone, while Hayward and Bathke generally ride with parents. The boys don't practice together on off days.

Ramsden, 16, plays outfield and some infield for the Legends. He's in his fourth

season playing summer ball in La Grande and said he plays simply out of love for the sport.

"I love baseball," he said. "It's my favorite sport. ... I love the community around baseball in La Grande. It's super fun and the parents and coaches aren't into it for themselves, they're in it for the kids."

As his favorite memory of this season, Ramsden said being asked to play for the 19U team is his favorite memory of the season. He also said hitting is the biggest challenge of American Legion ball.

"In high school, every team had good and mediocre pitchers," Ramsden said. "In Legion, the pitching is all good and much harder to hit, but I'm battling my way through," he said.

Each said one of the major differences between American Legion and high school ball is that most Legion teams are composed of the best players available in the area and

the all-around level of talent is high, which forces them to up their own performance levels.

Legends coach Parker McKinley said he appreciates having Wallowa County players on his team.

"These kids have been committed since Day One," he said. "The way these kids conduct themselves is of the highest priority to me, and I want them to be quality young men. These kids just dove in head first and were positive contributors. They're very good players and are great teammates — very coachable, and it's been a pleasure having them."

All three boys encouraged local ball players to try out for the Legends team.

"They didn't cut anybody this year, and they've embraced us as players," Hayward said.

"I think summer baseball is the best baseball there is — and it's never cold," Bathke added.

In the Legends' July 22 district playoff victories in Pendleton, the team swept both ends of a doubleheader from the Pepsi Diamondjazz to secure a spot at the state tournament. Hayward contributed spectacular play at shortstop and a two-run double, while Bathke contributed stellar defense in right field and also contributed a two-run double to the victories.

The Legends start the double-elimination American Legion state tournament play on July 27 in Central Point. Eagles player Christopher Nobles also played for the 16U Legends team but was unavailable for an interview.

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Sunday, Sept. 11
FMI: 541-263-0104
hells canyonmuledays.com for cookoff info and entry form

BULL AND BUCK TAGS

To be donated to local charities by the Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy is currently seeking applications from Wallowa County charitable organizations interested in receiving a Landowner Preference Tag (LOP) for Bull Elk or Buck Deer on the Zumwalt Prairie Preserve property for the 2017 season.

Applications will be reviewed by a committee of community members and ranked based on the following considerations: the benefit to the community; the marketing plan for raising funds with the LOP tags; and the ability to use the tags to leverage additional funds or support.

Interested organizations should request an application from Justin Jones at 850-982-9224 or e-mail jjones@tnc.org. The application deadline is August 14th, 2016.

Each year The Nature Conservancy donates LOP tags to qualified local organizations. The LOP tags for the 2016 season were donated to Community Connections, Friends of the Wallowa School Foundation, Rotary Club of Wallowa County, and Wallowa County Search and Rescue. Since 2002, this program has raised over \$375,000 to support charitable organizations in Wallowa County.

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.

WALLOWA COUNTY FAIR

Country Pride Shared County Wide

Live Music By K.C. KUNKLE Fri. Aug. 12 at 5pm

Live Music By Briana Renea Sat. Aug. 6 at 6pm

Schedule of Selected Events

SAT. AUGUST 6
▶ 9am 4-H Dog Show

SUN-TUES AUGUST 7-9
▶ 8am Sun-Tues 4-H Horse Show

MON. AUGUST 8
▶ 4-H Exhibits to Cloverleaf
▶ Open Class Non-Perishable to Cloverleaf

TUES. AUGUST 9
▶ Open Class Perishable to Cloverleaf

WED.-SAT. AUGUST 10-13
▶ 10 am Cloverleaf Hall Opens

WED. AUGUST 10
▶ 2-6 pm 4-H/FFA Livestock Entries

THURS.-FRI. AUGUST 11-12
▶ 8:30 am 4-H/FFA Livestock Show
▶ 7 pm Grand Champion Classes

SAT. AUGUST 13
▶ 8 am Small Animal Show

Special Events

WED. AUGUST 10
▶ 9am Planter Contest Entries

THURS. AUG 9
▶ 1 pm Grange Pie, Ice Cream

FRI. AUG 12
▶ 5-7 pm K.C. Kunkle LIVE
▶ 8-10 pm Teen Dance

SAT. AUG 13
▶ Benny Beaver Day at the fair
▶ 10 am Pee Wee Showmanship
▶ 11 am Games on the grass

4-H/FFA LIVESTOCK SALE 6PM

For a full schedule call 541-426-4097 or go to extension.oregonstate.edu/wallowa