

Young barrel racer heads to Vegas

Pendleton teen, aunt, grandma rack up miles in circuit

By Kathy Aney
East Oregonian

Barrel racer Lilly Picard is a pretty low-key individual, not given to being chatty or effusive.

The 14-year-old freshman at Nixyaawii Community High School doesn't need to talk much, though, to make a bold statement. She just gets on her horse and rides.

Lilly and her aunt Ashley Picard headed to the Indian National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas on Saturday. The pair spent the summer traveling the Pacific Northwest and Canada, spending almost every weekend competing at Indian and jackpot rodeos. Lilly entered both junior and ladies barrel racing events and performed well.

The pair, along with Lilly's grandmother Sarah Picard,

racked up the miles. When they headed out from their Pendleton home in May for the first rodeo of the season, their Dodge 3500 pickup truck still had that new truck smell.

"The truck had eight miles when we started," Ashley said. "It has 17,000 on it now."

When they headed to Vegas, only Lilly's two horses were loaded into the trailer. Ashley and Sarah would share driving duties and support their girl.

Lilly and her chestnut quarter horse, Claire, proved a formidable duo this season as they topped standings in junior barrel racing for two regions — the King Mountain Indian Rodeo Association and the Western State Indian Rodeo Association — and climbed to second nationally

among junior barrel racers.

Lilly doesn't recall a time horses weren't a part of her life.

"I really loved horses," she said. "I just wanted to ride."

"From when she was a baby who could barely walk, I put her on the horse with me," Ashley said. "She's always been drawn to them."

Lilly started participating locally at the Mustang Arena using a lead line and progressed from there. Ashley, 30, has a similar story. A barrel racer since she was small, she qualified for the INFR at about Lilly's age (though she didn't go) and competed at the Pendleton Round-Up.

Lilly credits her aunt with shaping her as a barrel racer. The two train together and spend hours on the road.

"She always been there for me," Lilly said.

"She is like the daughter I never had," Ashley said, shooting a warm look at her niece.

Lilly, whose first run is around 1 p.m. on Tuesday, admitted she is nervous, but is confident that her pre-competition ritual will calm and focus her.

"Me and Ashley — we pray before every run," she said.

Claire, who is a granddaughter of the storied thoroughbred Secretariat, is ready for prime time after a busy season and regular workouts to maintain her muscles and



E.J. Harris/East Oregonian

Fourteen-year-old Lilly Picard and her quarter horse, Claire, are competing in the Indian National Finals Rodeo this week in Las Vegas.

Hammer, a speedy male chestnut that will share the trailer with Claire and provide backup.

Ashley expressed confidence in her niece.

"Lilly's got as good a shot

as anybody if she can keep the barrels standing," she said. "It'll be tough, but she didn't get to the national finals by accident."

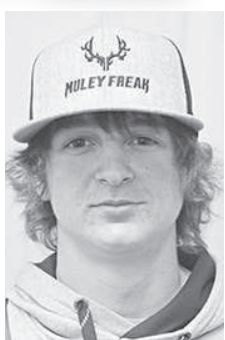
Lilly thanked her financial supporters and God.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

This week's athlete of the week is Tate Olsen, a senior at Enterprise High School. Olsen, 18, and the team's quarterback, chalked up an excellent performance in the team's final game, a 36-24 loss Oct. 28 at Imbler.

Despite the loss, Olsen chalked up enviable stats, completing 19 of 25 passes for 189 yards while racking up a 119.5 quarterback rating with his performance. Coach Mike Rowley called it the finest game of Olsen's career.

Olsen is also a star player on the school's baseball team, participates in FFA and appears regularly on the honor roll.



Tate Olsen



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STATE

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Freshman Ellyse Tingelstad, Isabelle's sister, was next to finish for the Outlaws — with a time of 19:56 at 11th overall.

"They ran a great race," said coach Dan Moody. "In fact, they put two great races together between districts and state. Even from districts, six of the seven girls had better times."

Ella Coughlan bested her personal mark by more than a minute.

"They ran a spectacular race," Moody said. "It was a great team effort they just

got beat by a better team." Although losing both Isabelle Tingelstad and Reagan Bedard to graduation this spring, Moody is optimistic

35. Reagan Bedard, 21:51 (PR)

Top 5 Girls Teams

1. Catlin Gabel, 54
2. Enterprise, 66
3. Union, 89
4. Kennedy, 150
5. St Mary's, 157



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DISEASE

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ODFW has confirmed 16 cases of hoof disease in Oregon elk since the first case was confirmed in early 2014.

Hunters are asked to report

any sightings to the ODFW's elk hoof disease at <http://tinyurl.com/oh7sqwl> or contact ODFW's Wildlife Health Lab at 1-866-968-2600.

Hoof disease does not affect the meat of elk harvested by hunters and poses no risk to human health. However,

lame elk may be in poorer body condition and appear thin. ODFW's veterinary staff requests that hunters who harvest an elk with infected or overgrown hooves save all hooves and contact ODFW to arrange for collection.

FAIR

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"There is plenty of work in the off season, too," Nave said. "From ordering and organizing merchandise to fund-

raising and banquet planning, there's a wide variety of tasking going on year-round."

The volunteer fair will feature tables with information about the race and the many volunteer opportunities available. Local mushers will bring a few of their sled dogs, and a mock checkpoint will be set up inside the Joseph Center. Fundraising team members will be there for businesses and individuals interested in

sponsoring the race. Snacks and refreshments also will be provided.

"This is a great chance for people in our community who are interested in the sled dog race to come learn more about the race and to see how they can help," said ECX president Randy Greenshields.

For more information, visit www.eaglecapextreme.com and follow the ECX on Facebook.



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