



Disc Golf tees off in Wallowa County

By Ellen Morris Bishop
Wallowa County Chieftain

If you've moseyed up to Wallowa Lake State Park recently and gazed into the stand of big pine trees west of the river, you might have noticed some strange but colorful metal baskets on poles. The "baskets" are made of chains, and the metal poles are red or blue. You might also have noticed people with an assortment of frisbees nearby. Not to worry. Disc Golf has come to Wallowa County.

Disc Golf, AKA Frisbee golf, was first invented in the early 1900's in Saskatchewan, Canada, where it was played by tossing tin discs into targets laid out in sand. In the 1960's, college students revitalized the game by tossing disks and/or balls at targets ranging from trees and light-poles to trash cans and water fountains. In 1973, Ed Hedrick, the inventor of the modern frisbee, designed and installed the first disc golf course in the town of LaCanada Flintridge, California. So Disc Golf, which now is played on 9-hole or 18-hole



Ellen Morris Bishop
Disc golfer David Hayslip tries for par on the 9th hole of the Wallowa Lake State Park Disc Golf Course.

courses, and has its own professional association, has been around for awhile.

When Jason Barber began work as a ranger at Wallowa Lake State Park in 2017, he saw the pine-shaded grassy area west of the river as the perfect place for a disc golf course. He'd started playing when he was

a National Guardsman in Clackamas, Ore, and continued playing on the collegiate team at Mount Hood Community College. "It's a fun game and it keeps you outside," he said. "The park here has a great area for a course—some trees for hazards, but nice flat ground. And I got tired of having

to drive all the way to La Grande to play." Barber and Interpretive Ranger Patricia Bass pitched the idea to Park Manager Mack Freeborn who gave the go-ahead.

Barber and Bass set up the 9-hole disc golf course in June. Its fairways are 200 to 280 feet long, (standard distances for most courses) and

all are par 3 holes. The object of the game is to toss your frisbee into the "basket" in a par number of throws. Hazards at this course include big tree-trunks, low-hanging branches and the Wallowa River if you overthrow the basket on hole 6. There's also the occasional renegade off-leash dog who may catch and abscond with an errant disc. Playing the entire 9-hole course requires about an hour if you and your friends take your time. "If you don't have official disc golf frisbees of your own, the park has some you can borrow," Barber said. "We usually have three or four groups playing through here each day."

The new disc golf course is slated to move from its present location to a more permanent home at the Little Alps section of the park, near the Wallowa River trailheads in August. Construction on the new Wallowa River secondary channel, riparian improvements, and bridge will occupy much of the present disc golf area, Barber said. "We'll have a similar layout at Little Alps," he said.

Disc golf is new to Wallowa County, but it is a well-organized sport that is popular in more urban areas. It is based on golf—but played with frisbees of different weights and designs rather than a ball and clubs. The basic set of discs includes a light-weight frisbee designed for long flight, known as the driver, one for mid-range distances, and a heavier, more bulbous frisbee designed for short ranges and for hitting the chains (or other things), known as the putter. The metal basket is known as the "hole". The Disc Golf Association (DGA) and Professional Disc Golf Associations (PDGA) regulations call for a "tee" area where disc golfers make their initial throw, a fairway, and out-of-bounds area, and an area designated as a "putting green."

Brad Snook at the Sports Corral in Joseph said that the store will soon be stocking disc golf frisbee sets. "We've had several people call and ask for them," he said. "It seems like a new sport that could be taking off."

Junior softball all-stars don state crown after crushing Klamath Falls 15-0

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

For the first time in the county's little-league history, the junior softball girls team, managed by Shane Kirkland, won the state championship after a 15-0 blowout of Klamath Falls on its own home turf on Sunday, July 7.

The Cubs traveled down to Klamath Falls early last week, first playing Klamath falls on July 6, downing their opponents 19-9, with a team batting average of .642 and a .667 on-base percentage.

Wallowa Valley was down one run going into the fourth, but exploded for eight runs to take a commanding lead and added two more runs in the sixth and three in the seventh for insurance and the victory.

Pitchers Aimee Meyers and Alex Rowley combined for seven strikeouts on the day.

Later in the day saw WV taking on Redmond and squeaking by with an 11-10 victory. Coach Shane Kirkland said the team had an off hitting day, but they still batted .441 and had a .529 on-base percentage.

The game proved a see-saw battle with Redmond eventually scoring 5 runs in the top of the seventh, providing a bleak outlook for the Cubs ... for a while. Maci Marr had a key base hit followed by Rowley with another.

Two walks forced a run and the top of the order came up. After an out, Meyers came to the plate with the bases loaded and hit a screaming rocket to left center that scored three and won the game for the Cubs.

Kirkland noted that both pitchers struggled at times, but when the chips were down, the Cubs infield



Courtesy Photos/Laina Fisher

WINNERS AND FIRST-TIME STATE CHAMPIONS — The Wallowa Valley Junior League All-Stars team, the Cubs won not only the District 3 championship but also brought home the state championship. The local ladies defeated host Klamath Falls 15-0 in the championship game. They start their way toward a regional championship in Tucson, Ariz. on July 17. First row: L to R kneeling: Alex Rowley, Iris Delury, Maci Marr. L to R standing: Sydney Hopkins, Sophie Moeller, Cooper Nave, Libby Fisher, Aimee Meyers, Karly Baremore, Liz Rowley, Abby Straight, Brianna Rouse. Back Row: Coach Mark Moeller, Manager Shane Kirkland, Coach Jim Nave



Wallowa Valley Cubs shortstop, Sophie Moeller, takes a cut during her team's state championship for the junior all-stars run in Klamath Falls over the July 6-7 weekend. The Cubs won the championship and begin regional play in Tucson, Ariz., on July 17.

turned their second 6-4-3 double play of the tournament to rally the ladies. Umpires told Kirkland they'd only seen one double play at that level all

year. Kirkland also noted that Sydney Hopkins came off the bench and smacked two key base hits.

The championship game saw the Cubs again facing



DEADLY BATTERY — Catcher Cooper Nave and pitcher Aimee Meyers kept opponent bats quiet during the Cubs' three-game quest for the state championship in Klamath Falls on July 6-7. In the championship victory versus Klamath Falls, both players knocked hits in each at-bat and Meyers won the player of the game award for her performance on the mound.

Klamath Falls and they proceeded to pound them mercilessly, 15-0 for the title. Hitting proved the decisive factor with the Cubs garnering a .685 slugging per-

centage and a .710 on base percentage.

Meyers and Cooper Nave each batted 1.000 for the game while three other hitters batted .750.

The District 5 president awarded Meyers the player of the game trophy for her hitting and pitching performance in which she fanned six and walked only one.

It was the first trip to Klamath Falls for shortstop Sophie Moeller, who said this was the farthest any team had gotten that she'd played for. She added she wasn't even thinking state championship when the season started.

"I didn't think we'd make it past District," she said.

Moeller said she enjoyed her time in Klamath particularly playing on turf, although the weather was very hot. She also said she enjoyed playing on a good team with good coaches. Her favorite memory was the two double-plays she turned.

Nervousness was one of the most challenging parts of state play for her and her teammates, according to the shortstop. Her favorite part for herself was playing her position.

"Making a diving stop at short was a good thing for me because having everyone cheer loud for me is a good feeling," she said.

Coach Kirkland said that he and the other coaches set out at the beginning of the year to accomplish only one thing: To coach discipline and fundamentals that would deliver young ladies ready to play ball at the high school level.

"I would say we are accomplishing that!" he said.

The Cubs next travel to the Western Regional Junior Softball Tourney hosted in Tucson, Ariz. on July 17-25th.

"The competition will be fierce", he said. "We plan to work all the next week and have ourselves physically and mentally ready to play."

CONGRATULATIONS
to the Girls Junior League
Oregon State Champions!

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