

Stacona playing for Team Concept

By Duran Bobb
Spilyay Tymoo

Mariah Stacona, already known in Central Oregon as a top basketball player, has recently been chosen to play for Team Concept's Sun team.

Team Concept provides deserving players the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities in front of college recruiting scouts.

A great majority of Team Concept's players have gone on to receive athletic scholarship assistance to continue their playing careers at the collegiate level, making the college dream a reality.

In comparison, Shoni Schimmel played for Team Concept's Fire team in 2007, with many of the games being attended by college recruiting scouts. Abby Scott, MHS grad and now a New Mexico State Aggie, also played for Team Concept.

Rare opportunity

"My goal is to get better in the sport, get exposure, get my name out," Mariah said recently.

Team coach Michael Abraham said, "Mariah is truly one of the gifted ladies in our program."

Last week, the Johnson O'Mally Committee partially approved a request to assist in Mariah's ambitious goal.

Mariah is the daughter of Andy Stacona and Blanca Plazola. She is the stepdaughter of Leticia Becerra.

"Team Concept has helped young athletes get college scholarships," Mariah told the



Mariah Stacona

as she was able to walk.

"She's following in her sister's footsteps," Andy said. "Brianna Stacona was big into basketball, too. She went on to get a scholarship and now plays for the Chemeketa team."

For the most part, Mariah is self-disciplined. She goes to school, works hard, maintains a 3.50 GPA, goes to her games and practices, does her chores and homework without being told.

"It's not that tough to find time for basketball and get good grades," Mariah said. "Sometimes I would miss school, but that was because I had already gotten my grades up. I'm a firm believer that grades come first."

"I believe a lot of that is in the child herself," Andy said. "They have their own ambition and intentions on what they want to become. I talk to her a lot about how I used to be, and I really think she listens."

Family and friends have shown much support to Mariah.

"Leticia attends a lot of the games with her own siblings," Andy said, "and they all do most of the cheering! So I'm very thankful for all of the support the family has received."

Much of the support began with Tony Holliday.

"She started out playing on his team," Andy said. "He has been a huge part of her life, like her second dad during the tournaments, her family on the road."

JOM will provide \$2,000,

requiring Mariah's family to raise the remaining \$500.

"We are planning some fundraisers," Andy said. If people would like to donate, they can drop off their contributions at the KWSO-Spilyay office.

"The JOM Committee is also working with other students," committee member Roberta Kirk said. "We're helping one student go to the canoe journey. Another student will receive assistance going on an ambassador trip. We also help with tutors, placement for kids, contribute to the snack program. We're going to help with the back-to-school barbeque, school supplies, and helping the little league with the state tournament. So JOM is really in place for the student."

"We invite everybody to attend JOM meetings," Deanie said. "Anything that has to do with students and education, that's first and foremost on our agenda. They must be 509-J or Wasco County, enrolled with proof of enrollment, or having established themselves with services for Native Americans. Requests must be made well in advance."

The JOM Committee meets every other week. The next meeting will be held on July 19 at the Tribal Administration.

"Just be yourself," Mariah says. "Get good grades, be respectful, stay humble and keep your love for the sport."

For more information on Team Concept, go to tchoops.net.



Dave McMechan/Spilyay

Abby Scott, her dad James and family stopped in Warm Springs on the way to Portland Airport. Abby, 2012 MHS grad, was on her way to New Mexico State, where she plays for the Aggies. New Mexico State, in Las Cruces, is in the Western Athletic Conference.

Salmon Camp in August

The Tribal Salmon Camp this summer will be August 6-10 near Pendleton. The camp is a chance for youth to:

Learn about the science and lifecycle of salmon;

Work on salmon restoration projects, and explore traditional ecological knowledge;

Meet tribal professionals working in the field, and gain unique and valuable hands-on experience.

For more information contact Katherine Walker, tribal

workforce development coordinator, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission.

She can be reached at 503-238-0667.

Or email: walk@critfc.org
Go to www.critfc.org for application materials.

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Courtesy of Butch David.

The Madras High School girls basketball team attended the basketball camp recently at Oregon State University.

Running for lives: The Squiemphen Pack

Vernon Squiemphen led the Wolf Pack in a touching gesture for life, and in the memory of those who have moved on.

"This is really something that can inspire others," LaDonna Squiemphen said of her husband.

Vernon ran 63.5 miles in 12 hours in the Relay for Life 2012, getting the Top Male Runner and Most Miles Ran in the Relay for Life.

His grandson, Lennox Lewis Picard, ran 30 miles along with Caleb Herrera and Anthony Metamoros.

Their run was dedicated to Atwais Madeline Queahpama-Spino, Mary Tsumpti and survivors Carolyn PaiuteGirl Johnson, and uncle Alvin Picard.

The relay for life began in May 1985, when Dr. Gordon



Courtesy photo.

Lennox Lewis-Picard, Vernon Squiemphen, Caleb Herrera, Anthony matamoros (from left), Team Wolf Pack.

Klatt of Tacoma wanted to help his local American Cancer Society office.

He spent 24 hours circling the track at Baker Stadium, running more than 83 miles

and raising \$27,000.

In the relay, members of each team take turns walking or running the track for the duration of the event.

The Relay for Life will

come to Jefferson County on July 14.

For more information on how you can become involved, see relayforlife.org.

— by Duran Bobb

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