

AOTY from 1B

group to select from," said KCST news director George

Henry. "There were so many outstanding student athletes, with each of them making big contributions to their teams' overall successes."

At the close of the awards ceremony, which included entertainment provided by Siuslaw's cheerleading squad and specialty desserts prepared

by Siuslaw High School's culinary students and served by PRIDE members.

Siuslaw sophomore Hannah Rannow and senior Kyle King

were named as KCST's Athletes of the Year based on their individual achievements this past year both athletically and academically.

Below is a re-cap of those achievements both in and out of the classroom as student athletes.



Hannah Rannow

and in the classroom, culminating in some of the truest measures of success for a student athlete. That has included being a part of last fall's district championship girls cross country team and second place individually at the OSAA 4A state cross country meet; 3,000-meter and 800-meter district champion; 800-meter state champion and fifth at state in the 3,000-meter race — all of this while carrying a perfect 4.0 grade-point average.

Rannow's focus has also included being the Lieutenant Governor of the Key Club's Division 76, as well as being a member of the National Honor Society and school yearbook staff.

With two more years of her high school career still ahead of her, Rannow says her goals are simply to get good grades, keep running, "keep pushing myself in each race" and — perhaps most importantly — stay focused on those moments that matter.

"I want to do my best when presented with opportunity," says Rannow.

Hannah Rannow has set the pace for what is likely to be one of the most accomplished athletic careers in many years at Siuslaw. As a sophomore this season, she has already claimed the school's fastest-ever mile race time — then bested her own record by 10 seconds a short time later for a new record of 5 minutes, 25.55 seconds.

Her performance this season, more than anything, has been a testimony to her sheer will and commitment to improve at something she loves.

"When I was in middle school, I was slow and used excuses to justify not running well," says Rannow. "When I started high school, I decided to push past excuses. I discovered a strength in myself I didn't know I had."

Rannow says that strength has taught her to never give up and stay focused on the important moments that matter.

This year, there have been many moments that matter for Rannow, both on the course

Kyle King is relentless. In basketball, he was the one you didn't want guarding you — and the one you didn't want to guard. The senior's tremendous focus and unflappable presence as a defender was predator-like as he locked eyes with his opponents and stalked them on the court.

When the team's 6-foot-7 post Trent Reavis went down with a season-ending knee injury, King quietly stepped up to help fill the void.

"I knew I needed to play a bigger role. That spurred dramatic personal improvement for me," says King.

His efforts on the hardwood were recognized by Far West League coaches, who named him First team All League.

In track and field, King spoke very little, saving his energy and focus for the long jump and triple jump runways, and for his leg of the 4x400-meter relay.

Ironically, when he wasn't suited up for athletic competition, King was wearing a different kind of suit while delivering the winning speech in the Rotary Club's 4-way Speech Contest, eventually representing the club at district competition — something King said "was an invaluable experience."

Academically, King carries a 3.73 grade-point average (GPA) and is a member of the Interact Club, National Honor Society, Kindness Club, and is a host on KCST Radio's weekly student-based Viking Hour radio show. He has also been a Future First Citizen nominee and a member of the Academic Honor Roll.

"[Athletics] instilled within me the importance of dedication, commitment and accountability in ways that no other form of teaching could," says King, who will be attending the University of Wyoming in the fall to earn a degree in psychology. "Ten years from now, I want to be pursuing a psychology career, living by my convictions with fervor and loving every day that comes my way."



Kyle King

Little from 1B

They may have also done it to keep their customers sober enough to order more drinks. Either way, it would increase their profits.

I played sports in the 1960s, when only the league champions advanced to the state play-offs.

The recognition of being a part of the play-offs may have pressured the OSAA (Oregon School Activities Association) to add more teams to the mix.

Taking only the first-place team for play-offs definitely allowed most schools to finish each sport season before the start of the next season. Certainly, it left out some deserving and talented teams. My alma mater finished the 1972 football season undefeated at 7-0-2.

It played Portland Christian in the final game of that year and ended in a tie. Portland Christian was 8-0-1 and went to the state play-offs. I am sure there were other quality second-place teams around the state that had been left out of play-offs; the only way to state in those years was to win your league.

In 1985, my Siuslaw Viking baseball team was one out from the state play-offs. Our opponent had runners on second and third base when the batter struck out — but our catcher missed the ball. He then overthrew first base and both runners scored. We lost the game and the second-place standing that would have sent us on to state.

Some of you may not remember the Oregon school classifications. When I played there were three. They were A-1, A-2, and B. In 1970, several small school districts objected to the "B"

designation in their classification identification, so the OSAA changed to the 3A, 2A, and 1A identification. As Oregon's population grew, so did the number and size of schools.

However, the play-off qualifications remained the same; the first-place teams were still the only ones in the play-offs. Then in the mid-1980s, the second-place teams were added to the play-offs. As school districts grew, the OSAA added another classification and, in 1991, the classifications expanded to 4A, 3A, 2A and 1A.

As we entered 2000, even more teams were added to the play-offs. In 2007, the OSAA met and reclassified schools into 6A, 5A, 4A, 3A, 2A and 1A. These are in place today, with the play-offs now allowing for 24 teams to compete in the state brackets. Most leagues qualify three teams each year. However, one league was made up of only

three teams, with all three teams play-off bound — including the 2-8 record of that league's third-place team.

The OSAA decided even more criteria would be needed to make sure only the top 24 teams qualified. As a result, it adopted the Colley Rating System, which allows teams to improve their rating by playing a tougher schedule. Just looking at the headings of the criteria I see: Overall record, RPI rank, RPI rating, Colley rank and Colley rating.

Somehow, the OSAA throws all these numbers into the mix and the top 24 teams in the state for each classification are revealed. The top two teams in each league are safe, but all other teams are placed into the play-offs according to their overall state ranking. Therefore, it is now possible for some leagues to have just two teams in the play-offs while other leagues can have

as many as five teams — as in the case of my daughter's St. Helens championship sea-son in 2015.

The professional leagues learned early on that more teams invited to the play-offs means more fans at play-offs — and more money teams can make. And since fans would fall off in great numbers as their teams became too far behind in the standings to make the play-offs, more leagues fragmented to have more "league" champions.

Then "wild cards" were added to some play-off brackets.

With the exception of football, the play-offs for the NBA, NHL and MLB have asked their teams to win a best-of-seven in their elimination rounds.

Unless you are rabid fans of a particular sport, I want winter sports to end before summer and summer sports to end before snow falls.



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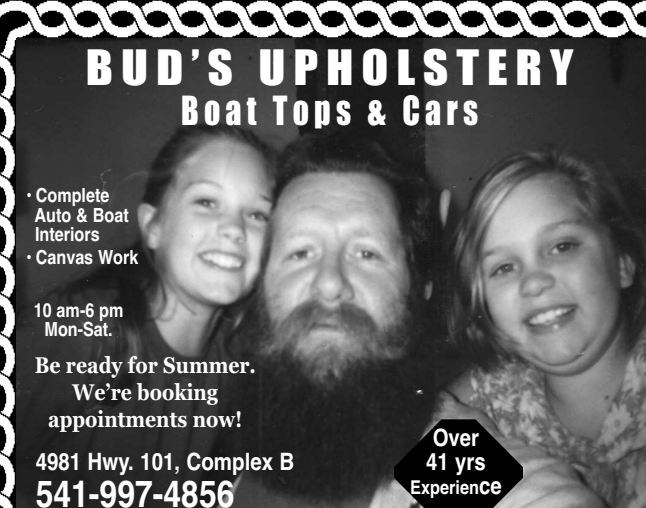
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