

**Sports** from 1B

than likely that the district will be required to send any student with COVID-like symptoms home for a period of time.

What impact this will have on the sports program as a whole is still unknown. While the district is currently operating under the assumption that fall sports will continue, the reality of increasing COVID-19 cases in Oregon may put certain fall sports in jeopardy.

"Honestly, I don't want to be the bearer of bad news — and I don't want to be a pessimist — but unless things get better real quick, I would say that this fall has a slim chance of playing football," Siuslaw High School football coach Sam Johnson said.

Beginning last week, the football team began voluntary practices following guidelines provided by the Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA), which didn't include any specific requirements, however.

"The OSAA never officially had jurisdiction over the summer, so their thinking is that it's not really up to them what communities [decide to] do," Chris Johnson said. "They have pretty much said that what schools are doing with their off season is going to be a school-by-school, county-by-county decision based on what their numbers are from infections."

At the time, with the confirmed case numbers in Florence low, an interest in getting sports going again was high.

"Everybody's rooting for everything to get back to normal," Chris Johnson said. "It's difficult for coaches and athletes because, if we are going to have sports, there is obviously a lot of desire to prepare ourselves to be as successful as we can be. Off-season work is the hallmark of a program."

Football, cross country and cheer have been practicing, and basketball was set to begin practices in a matter of days. The practices were completely voluntary, with students required to sign waivers.

"People were going through the waiver process with an understanding that there was a certain amount of risk inherent in being out and around people in public," Grzeskowiak said.

OSAA still has not released recommendations and guidelines for the fall, as it is still waiting on the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to release its final recommendations at the end of July.

"I don't think people understand what school administrators are going through right now," Chris Johnson said. "They're working on the fly, trying to create a brand new system."

However, both ODE and OSAA did release sample guidelines for schools to at least get a sense of what the school year could look like. This includes maintaining physical distance between students, limiting the amount of students in a classroom, completing health screenings before stepping onto school grounds, and breaking students up into "cohorts" or "pods" — small groups — to help prevent infection.

Siuslaw took the recommendations to heart when establishing its summer voluntary program.

"We've done our due diligence, we have waivers and plans, cleaning priorities and cohorts. We're trying to keep people safe and hoping for the best, and that things can get back to normal in the fall."

For football, students were broken up into cohorts of 10, with each group overseen by a coach. One cohort would work in the weight room flipping tires and throwing medicine balls, while other groups would learn offensive and defensive plays.

"For me, it was almost more helpful. It required us to be in small groups," Sam Johnson said. "And having so many coaches that can do their job in small groups is really nice for us. We split the team in the middle, trying to keep all the varsity guys together, the JV guys together, and then each of those groups we split in half again."

When outside, larger groups were allowed as the virus spreads more slowly in outdoor settings.

"We tried to keep our defensive guys together in a weight room, so that when they were on the field — if they were in the same proximity — they were still in the small group," Sam said. "Technically, they were all one pod outside."

That helped with running plays. "We had Elijah [Blankenship] at quarterback throw a ball and, if it touched someone else, that per-

son would sanitize their hands. We would sanitize every ball that was thrown," Sam Johnson said.

But they also had to limit contact.

"In summer, there's a contact with the ball because they don't have pads on. It's seven-on-seven," Sam said. "That was just something we completely eliminated. We said, 'We understand that you could break up this pass right now, but we don't need you to because of the social distancing.' It's tough for them because their natural instinct is, 'I need to go break this play up.' But we were whistling early to stop the play."

The regulations were difficult to get around, but also necessary.

"You just want to let loose and do what we do normally in the summer but understanding that the kids' safety is much more important than getting through offensive plays and defensive stuff," Sam Johnson said.

Before a student comes to practice, they are required to report any possible symptoms of COVID to coaches. Throughout the first week, none of the football players had symptoms. But then on Sunday, the school got a call.

"An athlete reported flu-like symptoms to their coach," Grzeskowiak said. "They said they were going to get tested Monday, so I directed the coaches to inform anyone in that cohort that one of their teammates was reporting flu-like symptoms, and we wouldn't know anything until testing results came in."

The results can take up to 48 hours to come in. In the interim, all summer practices — from football to cheer — were put on hold until the test results came back.

The reason for telling students that a teammate had symptoms was to allow them to keep safe.

"When Lane County does their contact tracing, they don't notify people until after they have a positive test result," Grzeskowiak said. "We advise people to self-isolate until the tests are known. That way they have 24-48 hours to modify their behavior prior to knowing the test results."

If the result does come back positive, the next step would be for Lane County to test all students in the voluntary cohort for COVID. If it comes back negative, then the

practices can resume.

While the district is still waiting for final ODE guidelines to solidify reopening plans, if Siuslaw decides to reopen its doors in any capacity, there will most likely be frequent disruptions whenever any student — athlete or not — presents COVID like symptoms.

"If we don't then it's not responsible," Grzeskowiak said. "Part of our school protocols next fall is how to deal with what may or may not be a COVID infection. Our plan has been to have a short-term distance learning component for kids that are not on campus. If there is a localized outbreak, we would shut down for at least a week, if not two. And then looking at how that might cycle within a group, that could easily translate to three to four weeks where we have to have this short-term plan for bouncing back from onsite to offsite."

And these incidences will most likely start off early.

"Any time kids get together at the start of a school year, we see a huge uptick in the flu and colds," Sam Johnson said. "There's going to be flu-like symptoms. We do have to shut down."

It's an issue that schools across the state will be dealing with.

"There's a lot of places, like Washington County, where they can't get together at all because they're under restrictions," Chris Johnson said. "One of the things I try and tell coaches is, number one, the better we can do as a school and as a community at staying safe with their kids social distancing when they can and staying home when they can, the better chance we can hold off any major outbreaks."

To do that, students will have to ensure they take precautions outside school grounds.

"I can't tell someone how to live their lives," Chris Johnson said. "But what I tell my cross country kids is, 'Listen, if some of you get sick, we're going to have to go home for a while. You have to do what you have to do and live your life and do what your mom and dad tell you to do. But the safer you can stay — and if we all stay healthy — the better chance we have that this will work.'"

But cross country has certain advantages when it comes to COVID restrictions — a limited non-contact sport played in meets, where

the exclusion of one or two schools won't affect the entire outcome. Football is a different story.

"I think it's unrealistic to say we'll have a football season if every time there are symptoms to something, we have to shut down," Sam Johnson said. "You can't really take two weeks off in the middle of a football season and expect to come back normal."

And if one school is required to take two weeks off, it will affect the entire schedule.

"The reality of it is, somebody's going to get sick at some school in the state and the program is going to have to shut down for a couple of weeks," Sam Johnson said. "That then affects another team. It's a domino effect."

For the summer, getting students into practice and keeping hopes alive for a fall season is difficult for Sam Johnson.

"My opinion on this has changed so much," he said. "I'm not trying to string it along, and it's tough for me to say that. I'm more worried about getting over coronavirus and see if we could possibly play in the spring — or push all sports back. As a community, a state and as a country, I think we just need to get over coronavirus before we worry about all the extra stuff. I'm just ready to be done with this."

That's not a sentiment that he takes lightly. Sam Johnson bleeds blue and gold. His family has a long history of coaching and playing Siuslaw football, and Sam himself has credited the sport with instilling values he still lives by today. To him, high school football isn't an extracurricular activity — it's a vital stepping stone to becoming an adult. But his outlook on COVID restrictions shifted after speaking with a coach in Eugene.

"In our football minds of getting everything to work we thought, 'Let's just have every kid sign a waiver,'" he recalled. "You already had to do that for the workouts. So, then you have them sign a football waiver that says, 'If I get sick, I understand the risk.' That's a risky position to put parents and kids in. I wouldn't ask anybody to put their kids in that position. Our number one job is to keep the kids safe. Right now, if we're compromising our number one belief as a coaching staff, that doesn't work for us."

**Quest** from 1B

tsunami-focused quest education as well. There are currently five tsunami quests along the Oregon coast, including in Hammond, Astoria, Newport, Charleston and Bandon. These quests lead participant along a tsunami evacuation route while educating them about best practices if such an event does occur in that area.

"These are great because every tsunami quest on the

coast is going to look a little different depending on where you are,"

Goodwin said.

There are plans to create a tsunami quest in Florence, according to Goodwin, but she is not sure if it will be ready for the next edition of the book — which will have updates to old quests and even some new ones.

"I'm actually soliciting new quest now for the next quest book, which should come out in early 2021," Goodwin said. "What I'd

love to have is more areas of the coast represented in the book because it's very heavy in certain areas and lighter in other areas.

"So, that mostly means inspiring quest builders in those areas of the coast that don't have them already."

There is only one Spanish language quest currently, but Goodwin also hopes that more quests can be cre-

ated in Spanish or translated to serve the Latinx community.

If questers are not up for creating a completely new quest, but want to contribute to the program, they can become a box monitor.

"Box monitors are typically people who live near quests and want an excuse to get out every month and walk the trails to check on

the clues and box," Goodwin said. "Anybody can adopt a quest, which means just checking in on it periodically and reporting any problems."

Regardless of whether you are a participant, quest builder or box monitor, the opportunity to participate in a program providing a safe, educational and enjoyable outdoor experience is

there for everyone.

"I'm just excited about questing," Goodwin said. "It's just a small part of my job, but it's one of my favorite parts because it explores the outdoors and gets me connected to my community."

"So, it's hopefully contagious. In a good way, not the pandemic way!"

**Fishing** from 1B

and/or early summer: Alder Lake, Buck Lake, Carter Lake, Cleawox Lake, Mercer Lake, Munsel Lake, Siltcoos Lagoon, Siltcoos Lake, Sutton Lake and Woahink Lake.

SIUSLAW RIVER: Cutthroat trout:

Trout fishing opened in the Siuslaw basin (including Lake Creek) on May 22 and has great opportunities to catch a trout throughout the summer months.

ALSEA RIVER: Cutthroat trout:

Cutthroat trout fishing opened May 22 on the Alsea River and trout fishing has been good throughout the basin. The higher water and cooler temperatures have created great spring/early summer conditions for trout fishing and will provide good opportunities through the summer months.

SALMON RIVER:

Cutthroat trout:

Cutthroat trout fishing opened on the Salmon River on May 22. Good cutthroat fishing can be found throughout the Salmon River estuary and river through the summer months.

SILETZ RIVER: Summer steelhead, Spring Chinook, cutthroat trout:

Summer steelhead fishing continues to be slow on the Siletz River but it has picked up as the river drops and warms up. The high and cooler water has slowed the migration this year but now we are in a more typical summer pattern and the fish seem to be responding, moving up into the gorge where there is better summer holding water.

Fish numbers should keep increasing through the month of July and into early August Cutthroat trout fishing is open in the Siletz basin and good trout fishing opportunities will remain through the summer months.

**SCORES & STANDINGS**

**GOLF**

**OCEAN DUNES MEN'S CLUB**

**INDIVIDUAL GROSS/NET 7-9-20**

**A FLIGHT**

**1ST LOW GROSS:** KYLE NELSON — 71

**1ST LOW NET:** JACK NAPOLIS — 68

**2ND LOW NET:** LUKE MARSHALL — 71

**B FLIGHT**

**1ST LOW GROSS:** ED PFANNMULLER — 82

**1ST LOW NET:** BILL GILLETTE — 66

**2ND LOW NET:** TOM MALONE — 72

**C FLIGHT**

**1ST LOW GROSS:** RICK HARDWICK — 93

**1ST LOW NET:** LES WATSON — 69


**2ND LOW NET:** ROD MCCULLOCH — 73

**KPS FLIGHT (1):** #4 JACK NAPLOES; #8 JEFF NOONAN;

#12 LUKE MARSHALL; #16 JACK NAPOLIS

**MILLER LEAGUE SOFTBALL**

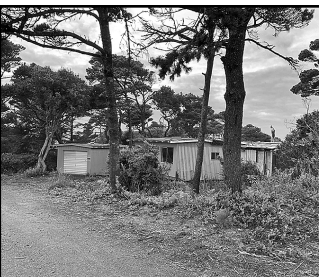
**RESULTS WEEK 2 (JULY 8)** VRHI (4) — BUDS4U (30)  
VRHI (4) — ACC (40) ACC (12) — WELTON (9)  
BUDS4U (20) — WELTON (5)

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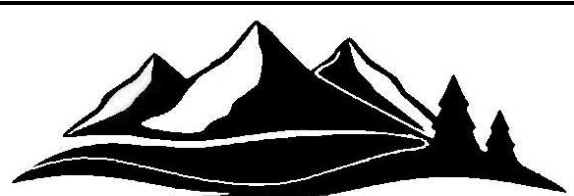


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