



## Mootz nears the finish line of an unpredictable first season at OSU

Former Lion has seen highs and lows in her first season with the Beavers

BY MATT HOLLANDER  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Cottage Grove school-record holder Ahsha Mootz began her collegiate career almost exactly where she finished as a Lion. Mootz debuted for Oregon State University at the Washington Preview on Jan. 17, blitzing the half-lap distance in 25.50 — just 0.47 off the per-

sonal best she set at the 2014 state track meet.

It was by far her best opening time of a season, and she brimmed with hope and confidence; the small-town kid had what it took to compete at a Division I, Pac 12 school.

But since that first race, the track has been anything but smooth for Mootz.

### Finding her sport

It was some time before Mootz found her home in a set of starting blocks. As a young girl she tried ballet, rode horses and spent a lot of time watching her five siblings play soccer or basketball.

"I wasn't really into recreational sports, so I decided to wait it out before settling into an activity. When I started middle school, someone got me try track. I ended up really enjoying it, and I felt accepted on the

team as well," said Mootz, who attended London but competed at Lincoln.

By the time she finished eighth grade, Mootz was a five-time Sky-Em Youth District champion in the hurdles.

As a freshman at Cottage Grove, Mootz initially kept her focus on the hurdles, but a calf injury pushed her into the sprints. She found that her skill set transferred very well to the dashes, and that was also an area of need on the team. She went on to qualify for state as

part of the 4x100 and 4x400 relays, both of which finished on the podium.

Mootz improved significantly during her sophomore campaign. She won the 100 and 200 at districts and placed top-six in both events at state.

Her junior season unfolded similarly, as she defended her district titles and helped lead the Lions to a third-place finish at state by scoring 12 of their 56 team points. However, she was

Please see MOOTZ, Page 3B



## Cottage Grove High School Hall of Fame Preview — Part II

BY MATT HOLLANDER  
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On Saturday, the Cottage Grove High School Hall of Fame will introduce its eighth class of inductees. Those include athletes Lowry Hoyer, Wes Malcolm, Bob Wiltse, Melanie Woodworth and Kaitlyn Uram (Kronberger); coach Clive MacDonald, community contributor Bob Butler and the 2008 boys' soccer team.

Part one of this preview appeared in the April 29 issue.

The 2008 boys soccer team won the school's first ever state championship by defeating Gladstone 1-0 in the finals. The Lions, who finished the season undefeated at 15-0-3, scored in the 23rd minute on a goal by Mauricio Lopez, assisted by Stephen Beach, to take a lead over the Gladiators that they never relinquished. Senior goalkeeper Garrett Rhodes made several key saves during the second half to ice the victory for Cottage Grove.

En route to the championship, the Lions beat Central 2-1 in the quarterfinals and overcame La Salle 1-0 in overtime of the semifinals.

In addition to Beach, Lopez and Rhodes, the team included Sam Settelmeyer, Tanner Sustaire, Brian Bruyeel, Francisco Garcia, Kyle Helsel, Kyle Woods, Toby Rosenthal, Alex Garcia, Kirby Bullinger, Antwone Mootz, Marco Urenda, Tim Eckstine and Jeri Lead. The Lions were led by head coach Brian Fish and assistant Chris Fish.

Wes Malcolm played football, basketball, baseball and track and field at Cottage Grove from 1948 to 1952. He earned varsity letters in all four sports between 1950 and 1951 to become the first four-sport letterman in school history.

During his senior year, Malcolm was an all-conference selection in basketball and quali-



This year's Cottage Grove High School Hall-of-Fame class includes the 2008 boys soccer team (above), Lowry Hoyer (right) and Wes Malcolm (far right).

fied for the state track and field meet in the pole vault.

Malcolm's favorite memories of Cottage Grove include playing sports with all his teammates, including fellow inductee Lowry Hoyer, and one winter that brought over 48 inches of snow. He said that Wally "Chic" Ciochetti and Maurie Kritez were the two most influential coaches.

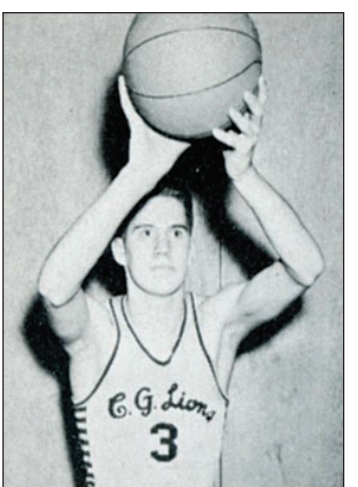
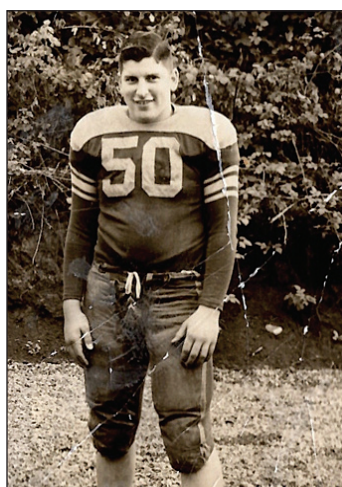
Malcolm went on to Willamette University, where he earned a degree in economics. Upon graduation he entered the Navy Flight Training Program and later earned his wings as a single and twin-engine fighter pilot. He retired as a Captain after 22 years in the Navy, including 10 years on active duty and over 12 years in the reserves. He also worked at SAFECO Insur-

ance for 27 years before retiring in 1995.

Malcolm lives in Greensboro, Ga. with his wife of 51 years, Nancy. He has two children and four grandchildren, all of whom live close by.

Lowry Hoyer graduated from Cottage Grove High School in

Please see HALL OF FAME, Page 3B



## Tharpe wins again, and again



Boys and girls track and field teams finish seventh at Stayton Twilight

BY MATT HOLLANDER  
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One week after leading the Lions to victory in a Sky-Em League triangular meet with wins in two individual events, Michael Tharpe was once again a double-winner, but this time at the Stayton Twilight — one of the premier invitationals of this past weekend.

Tharpe swept the 110 and 300 hurdles in lifetime bests of 15.32 and 42.33, respectively. He also lowered his PR in the 100 meters to 11.33, which placed him fifth overall. Tharpe's marks in the 110 hurdles and 100 sit just outside of Cottage Grove's all-time top-10 list at 11th and 12th,

Please see TRACK AND FIELD, Page 2B

Cottage Grove's Michael Tharpe swept the hurdle events at the Stayton Twilight Friday. Tharpe also finished fifth in the 100 meters.

## Cottage Grove completes series sweep of Sisters

Lions take doubleheader against the Outlaws

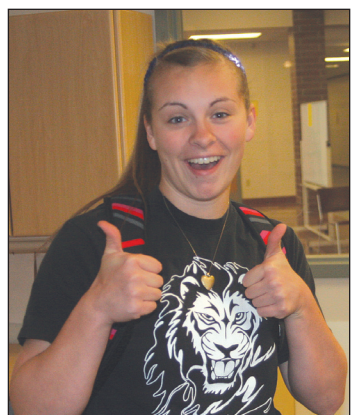
BY MATT HOLLANDER  
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Lizzy Wiltse went 6-for-8 with two triples and six RBIs to lead Cottage Grove to a pair of victories over Sisters on April 28. The Lions never trailed in the first game, winning by a final margin of 5-1, and they fought back a furious rally by the Outlaws to win the second game 17-9.

Cottage Grove came out firing on all cylinders in the second game. Lindsey Clarke retired nine of the first 11 batters, allowing just two singles. And the Lions took advantage of eight walks to build an 8-0 lead through three innings.

But just when it seemed that Cottage Grove was on its way to an easy,

Please see SOFTBALL, Page 2B



Lizzy Wiltse

### Athlete of the Week



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