

Cottage Grove Retrospective

A look back at Sentinel stories from 30 and 60 years ago

Speedway begins 1988 season

By Bud Snoch
Sentinel Staff of 1988

Jeff Thompson makes leap from pedals to horses

The writing on Jeff Thompson's spring car says it all: "from pedal power to horsepower."

Thompson, 16, will join numerous other racers for the opening of the 1988 season at Cottage Grove's Riverside Speedway.

"We're looking forward to a good year," says Mike McCann, beginning his fourth year as the track's owner and promoter. "We want to keep improving our show to keep the interest of the spectators and competitors."

The season gets underway this Saturday with open spring car competition beginning at 7:30 p.m., weather permitting. The weekly racing of economy stocks, sportsman's stocks and sprint cars will begin April 16.

There are several changes at the quarter mile dirt oval this season. The super stock class was dropped and the former street stock class was renamed the sportsman's

class. A low-cost economy stock class was introduced this season.

"We're bringing back stock car racing like the type that was here 10 years ago," explains McCann. "The wedge-shaped super stocks got too expensive for many of the drivers."

Most fans will notice little difference between the old street stocks and the new sportsman's stock. The cars in the new class will look much cleaner and the driving will be a little better, according to McCann.

McCann also expects the new economy class to be a big hit.

"The economy class might start out a little slow, but I think the class will be the strongest by the end of the season," claims McCann. "It's a great way to get new drivers interest in the sport."

Drivers like Thompson, a junior at Cottage Grove High School. Only he won't begin his driving career in the economy class. Instead, Thompson, a former BMX cycling champion, will drive a sprint car this summer.

"My grandpa used to race cars when he was young," says Thompson. "I got tired

of bike racing and had accomplished all I could. So I decided to try sprint cars."

Thompson admits his mother wanted him to start in the economy class.

"It might have been better for me to start with the economy class, but you have to put money into a car, so we decided why not put the money into a spring car," notes Thompson.

Thompson just turned 16 a few months ago, but is already looking forward to his first season in a racing machine. He has been around the sport for several years serving as a member of Robert Hand's pit crew since he was 12.

Hand won the super stock class last year.

The Thompson family purchased a 1984 sprint car from a friend, Jeff Comer, who was a seven-time sprint car champion in the Midwest while racing in Rapids City, S.D.

"We've spent a lot of time getting the car ready for racing, Thompson says. "We worked on the car after school and on weekends.

"I'm interested to see how it runs."

POLICE BLOTTER

Cottage Grove Police Department 24-Hour Anonymous Tip Line: 767-0504

March 23

An individual observed a car drive through a puddle that splashed a group of middle school kids. After getting wet, one of the kids then flipped the driver off. The driver of the car then stopped to attempt to turn the car around but then backed into another vehicle.

A baggie filled with 3.6 grams of meth was found at Walmart.

A man brought a shotgun he owned to the police station because he wanted the gun destroyed.

March 24

Agency assistance was requested by a Eugene woman after her cell-phone was stolen and she tracked it down to a house on Madison St.

A theft was reported at a store on Main St. after a man took multiple items from the business and walked out. A woman then followed him out across the parking lot and confronted the man. The man who reportedly stole the items then threw two flashlights at the woman and took off.

March 25

A hit and run was reported after a woman at a crosswalk on Whiteaker reported that a vehicle ran over her foot and then continued driving.

A woman on 8th St. reported that there is an ongoing issue with unknown subjects leaving notes containing racial slurs on her front porch.

March 26

Possibly intoxicated subjects were seen in the street yelling at passing vehicles.

A highly intoxicated man was reportedly getting into a car to drive. The man attempted to make a purchase in a store on Gateway Blvd. and was visibly intoxicated. The man was with a female passenger who was also under the influence.

March 27

A woman reported at 3:08 a.m. that she passed by Main St. and noticed two individuals under a truck with a flashlight. When the individuals saw her, they turned off the light and appeared to duck out of sight to avoid being seen.

A 17-year old came into the police station to report that he had left his shotgun in a friend's vehicle and then his friend sold the shotgun to someone else. He contacted the person who he sold it to and they reported that they had also sold it.

A man called the police to report that he lost his wallet 10 days prior.

March 28

In the process of opening a business on Main St., an individual reported protestors outside and at two different times the individuals had trespassed onto her property.


A man on 6th St. got home and found an uninjured cat tied to his sister's vehicle.

March 29

A machete and a CD/DVD were found stashed under a mattress on Row River Rd.

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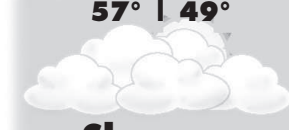



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6-day
weather forecast

<p>THURSDAY April 5</p> <p>57° 49°</p>  <p>Showers</p>	<p>FRIDAY April 6</p> <p>60° 51°</p>  <p>Showers</p>
<p>SATURDAY April 7</p> <p>53° 42°</p>  <p>Showers</p>	<p>SUNDAY April 8</p> <p>53° 40°</p>  <p>Showers</p>
<p>MONDAY April 9</p> <p>63° 44°</p>  <p>Showers</p>	<p>TUESDAY April 10</p> <p>52° 42°</p>  <p>Showers</p>

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News from the state and around the nation

From around the state

- The petitioners hoping to place an assault weapons ban on the ballot have cleared the first hurdle. Last week, the group turned in its first round of signatures to the secretary of state's office which will then be verified. If 1,000 of the signatures are deemed real, the state will begin the process of placing the initiative on the ballot. To qualify for the November ballot, the group must still produce nearly 90,000 signatures.
- The University of Oregon's women's basketball team collected a pair of eights last week by making it to the Elite 8 for the second year in a row. However, the team fell 10 points short in its defeat at the hands of Notre Dame. The Irish went on to win the championship.
- A Springfield teenager was awarded more than \$12 million after suing her father and lawn mower manufacturer John Deere after losing her leg as a toddler when her father allegedly backed over her in 2006.

- The Oregonian* has placed a lien against former governor John Kitzhaber's house. The lien is a reported attempt to collect the \$124,837 judgement against the former governor after the newspaper requested emails from the governor during a scandal that saw him eventually resign from his position. Kitzhaber initially sued to block the release of the emails and a judge ruled on behalf of the newspaper noting that Haber was responsible for the paper's attorney fees.

- A dog-boarding facility in Salem was burglarized last week that saw dozens of dogs released. Reports indicated that 26 of the dogs housed at the facility escaped. As of Wednesday, March 28, three of the dogs were still missing.

From around the nation

- Tennessee state representative David Byrd will not resign after reports he allegedly sexually abused teenagers when he was 28 and working as a high school basketball coach. He will seek re-election.
- Maryland and D.C. may continue with a lawsuit that alleges President Trump's businesses violate a constitutional clause that prohibits the president from receiving improper payments from foreign governments. A federal judge ruled last week that the lawsuit may proceed, marking the first time a case of this nature has gone forward.
- A school district in Oklahoma is facing a federal lawsuit after administration allegedly not only failed to properly address the reported rape of a middle-school boy but "ignored and dismissed" the incident. The boy, whose identity was withheld due to his age, was allegedly assaulted by other students at least three times over the course of 18 months including "forcible digital penetration."
- David J. Shulkin was dismissed from his post as head of Department of Veterans Affairs last week. President Trump announced that his replacement would be White House physician Dr. Ronny L. Jackson.

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