

Cox, James, Braaten, Vitale and Corley nab July 4 wins

By Ben Deatherage
 CG Speedway

Cottage Grove, Oregon- Cottage Grove Speedway would celebrate Independence Day in a big way on Wednesday, July 4th.

Five full divisions were in attendance throughout the night at the historic ¼-mile clay oval: the Todd's Auto Body Sprints, Mohawk Metal IMCA Modifieds, IMCA Sport Mods, Late Models and Quality RV Repair Hornets — all capped by fireworks after a whole night of racing with a wonderful display honoring America.

Kinzer Cox took the initial race lead in the Todd's Auto Body Sprints. The Cottage Grove driver was passed on the third lap by Raquel Ivie, of Eugene. Ivie wasn't be able to develop a huge lead due to several cautions taking place. However, with each and every restart she managed to pull away from the challengers.

On lap 21, Ivie was caught in lapped traffic and passed back by Cox. Cox went on to capture the victory for his second win of the season.

Shane Forte, out of Junction City, beat Ivie to the stripe for second, leaving Ivie in third.

Meanwhile, Cottage Grove's Hedge Carter was fourth and Steven Snawder, of Roseburg, placed fifth.

Cottage Grove teenager Evan Britton got to the front early in the Mohawk Metal IMCA Modified main. Grey Ferrando, of Stayton, made a move around Britton to get to the front, but Ferrando remained there until the seventh circuit — when Albany's Bricen James made it to the first-place position.

James blazed the trail the rest of the distance to win his fourth race of 2018 at CGS. Jake Mayden, of Springfield, was a close second while Grey Ferrando ended his night in third.

Albany native Dustin Cady placed fourth and Jeremy Richey, from Phoenix, completed the top five.

Jorddon Braaten would put forth a dominating effort in the IMCA Sport Mods. The Central Point chauffeur led every single lap and won his third main event of the season at Cottage Grove. Fellow Central Point driver Rich McCoy got second, while Art Hiatt, of Eugene, finished third. Winston's Buddy McHargue was fourth. Crossing the wire in fifth was Travis Pruitt, out of Molalla.

In the Late Models division, Preston Luckman looked to be the driver to beat early on, but the Coos Bay driver would battle hard with Casey Vitale — with Vitale making it past Luckman on lap 12.

Vitale, of Lebanon, cruised around the track

CGS see B2

Lions wrap-up summer season



PHOTOS BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

A Cottage Grove pitcher delivers a pitch - of his own choosing - during the last day of the summer season.

Cottage Grove baseball puts emphasis on being aggressive and learning the game during summer ball

By Zach Silva
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There were missed cut-off throws, thwarted steal attempts and misplaced pitches.

And that was just in first inning.

It was final day of summer league baseball last Saturday for CGHS. It was not the more polished product of the regular season but instead the free-wheeling brand of baseball set aside for the summer.

The focus is on being aggressive in all phases of the game which will help the players better learn the game. This comes with freedom as head coach Dan Geiszler doesn't tell players when to steal or what pitch to throw but lets them make those decisions and then deal with the results.

"We're not giving them much, we're



Cottage Grove's third baseman gets in position to try and tag a Junction City runner that stole third.

letting them succeed or fail and then we talk about it. That's kind of what the summer is about," said Geiszler. "Where in the season, that's not the case. I mean, we don't have the opportunity."

The abridged season played from May to July featured 26 players on two teams, D1 and D2, ranging from soon-to-be seventh graders all the way to seniors come fall. The teams played a combined 35 games against various opponents around the area and state. Their sched-

ule varied with one week featuring as many as nine games while another saw just four. Unlike some years in the past, the Lions opted not to be in a league and operate on their own.

"We've always fallen in between of where being in a league with (bigger) teams is borderline going and just getting killed a lot of the time. It doesn't really help. We've also found, we were in a league with Drain and Oakland and stuff like that and we would kill them. So that didn't help, either," said Geiszler.

"We've found just going independent and just making our own schedule, playing when we want to play, being done when we want to be done as opposed to, they're in a league and they have to play two league games a week and you have

to play everybody twice and they're not done until the middle of July. We just found this easier."

With this current roster, Geiszler has been impressed with the level of dedication from the team as they continue to work on their game.

"These kids are in it and they want to get better and they're excited about it. They're coming on their own and doing stuff and that to me has been the exciting part," he said. "We never once had to worry about are we going to have enough guys to play, what are we doing. It's always been, oh crap, I hope a few guys don't show up because we can't get everyone in the game when there's 20 kids. So it's been great."

All-in-all, Geiszler sees the summer season not about wins but about getting better and setting the tone for the next high school season.

"These guys are what we're going to have next year and what are we going to have for leadership, who's going to step up. Who's going to play where, getting kids different positions and stuff like that. It's been great," said Geiszler.

A journey down the Row River Trail



A tunnel of trees provide shade along a stretch of the Row River Trail.

By Zach Silva
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Mayor Jeff Gowing asked me a pretty simple question: have you biked the whole trail?

The answer was no; I had not biked all of the Row River Trail. Or more accurately, not yet.

This gem of a trail sat completely untouched to me until earlier this month I found the time to go for a ride. A newly-minted and proud bike owner, for the second time in my life I am experiencing the thrill of riding a bike for the first time.

The first time young me hopped on a bike sans training wheels, it was (probably) a rush. I don't really remember it except for a picture of me looking fairly scared and thrilled. But once I could ride a bike, all I wanted to do was ride that bike. That's all that mattered.

The second time I re-fell in love with biking was about three months ago and

it is more of the same emotions just with less fear now that I (not to brag) have mastered balancing on two wheels and because I'm not a literal child. This childlike enthusiasm to keep riding has manifested in trying new trails which led me to the Row River Trail. And instead of going alone, I turned to Row River expert Don Strahan.

It is not an exaggeration to say that Strahan knows every single part of the Row River Trail. After getting in a bike accident on the trail that led to an injured hand and three broken ribs, Strahan became an advocate for bike safety. In his retirement, he began making sure the trail was kept in good shape. This started with buying his own equipment to help take care of overgrown bushes and trees to soon having a working relationship with the city and the Bureau of Land Management in order to keep the trail in good shape.

BIKING see B2

Athlete of the Week



This week's athlete of the week is Cottage Grove's Jim Harrison who is currently biking across Europe. According to his latest blog post (his blog is titled "Alps On the Way" and can be found at crazyguyonabike.com) he has recently biked from France into Switzerland.



A view of Switzerland along Jim's ride.

PHOTO C/O JIM HARRISON