

## Golf blogger boasts about local course

By Zach Silva  
 zsilva@cgsentinel.com

There aren't many – if any – who are more familiar with nine-hole golf courses across the United States than Scott Springfield. Upon retiring in 2013, Springfield, who resides in Colorado, decided to spend his time touring the country's nine-holes of golf at a time. In that time, he has played over 140 nine-hole courses across 34 states.

Last month he was able to check off Cottage Grove's Hidden Valley Golf Course from his list giving the course that has been around since 1929 an "Ace" rating accompanied by a rave review for his blog Always Time for 9.

"This course is exactly why I visit and write reviews about 9-hole golf courses," Springfield wrote in his post. "Good Courses – Good People!"

In addition to the pleasant people he met, Springfield was impressed with the layout of the course, how the holes are designed and the overall atmosphere of the round of golf.

"Certain courses, like this particular course, I talk about the ambiance. What's the atmosphere around the course? I had a fun time. And I just happened to run into the men's club out there and like I said in the article, they were a bunch of characters," said Springfield in a phone interview.

For 16-year Hidden Valley owner Dan Nord, it was a pleasant surprise to see what was written about his course.

"When I saw the write-up, I was thrilled," he said. He continued, "people like Scott really help us because we may not have many players on a day like today but to see that review makes it all the more worthwhile to do what we do and bring a good experience for the people who do have time to play our course."

Springfield began this pursuit of nine-hole golf courses around the country with an insistent push from his former boss. The now 68-year-old was often asked what he wanted to be when he grew up and so he looked to follow his passion of travel and golf which turned into a blog rating golf courses from "Double Bogey" to "Ace."

"I got tired reading in *Golf Magazine* or *Golf Digest* about all these courses that most people really couldn't play. Now either they didn't have the time or the money to fly or to play places like Pebble Beach. So, I started looking at nine hole courses," he said. "I'm, you know, a senior citizen basically and as we get older the guys I play with and help me out, we don't really want to play 18 anymore so we end up playing nine."

This pursuit has taken him from Maine to Florida to Washington and seemingly everywhere in between sans a stretch of southern states. Along the way he has experienced a range of memorable courses including a stop in Wyoming that had sand instead of greens and was on an oil-field that included a working pumpjack, a machine that extracts oil from the ground, stationed on the sixth hole.

But for Springfield it's not about the cream of the crop courses but it is looking up a new course online, being able to play a two-hour round of golf and getting to explore the surrounding area.

"It's a community effort in towns like Cottage Grove to keep something like that going and having people have fun with it," said Springfield.

# Fall sports back in action



Incoming senior Rodas Rodas Martin of Cottage Grove sends a shot to the back of the net on Monday morning during the first official practice of the soccer season. Monday marked the first day of practice for all OSAA fall sports. For more pictures, see B12.

## Finley leaves Lions, back to Alaska

Cottage Grove basketball coach departs after one year

By Zach Silva  
 zsilva@cgsentinel.com

After one year of leading the Cottage Grove boys' basketball team, Nick Finley has stepped down from his position as head coach. The Lions finished 16-8

last year and ended the season with a loss to Baker in a play-in game. Finley took over the job from Donn Pollard who coached the team for more than 30 years.

"I think (Finley) did a really good job. He came to us in a pretty tough situation taking over for Donn who had been doing it for quite a while. It's been quite a while since we've

had a coach of our basketball program that didn't have ties directly to the Cottage Grove basketball program. I think he did a good job," said CGHS Athletic Director Gary Roberts.

According to Roberts, Finley, who played basketball for Creswell High School, has plans to take over a youth sports program in Alaska.

"We're obviously disappointed

that he's leaving but we understand...you have to take care of your family first and this is just an opportunity that you can't pass up. It's not like he's leaving us to go coach another school, he's leaving us to provide more for his family which now has a third kid since he just had a son over the summer," said Roberts. "We totally get it, you know, just sad. We thought he did a good

job and we thought he was setting a pretty good foundation."

Following girls' basketball coach Kevin Yoss and track and field coach Ricky Knutson, Finley is the third CGHS head coach to leave in the past year.

Despite multiple requests from *The Sentinel*, Finley has declined to comment on the situation by the time of this publication.

## A solo cycling journey through Europe



Pictures from Harrison's blog from his time biking through Europe. From top: the first campground he stayed at, a bike path winding through Austria and a path he rode in Switzerland.

Local cyclist Jim Harrison completes five weeks abroad

By Zach Silva  
 zsilva@cgsentinel.com

After landing in Lyon, France at the end of June, the only agenda item that was set in stone for Jim Harrison, a 64-year-old from Cottage Grove, was his return flight that would be leaving from Budapest – some 700 miles away as the crow flies – in five weeks. With a sense of excitement and freedom, he had all he needed to enjoy his trip around Europe: an open schedule and his bike.

"Having done traveling there two years ago...I knew the miles and the straight through way were doable, all I had to do was (decide) how to spend the time in between," he said. "What was the most appealing way to do that? That worked out and then it was delightfully selfish. So where do I feel like going? Do I want to go farther today or not farther? Do I want to go down this way or up that way?"

Weaving and wandering through France, Switzerland, Germany, Czech Republic, Slo-

vakia and then Lichtenstein "for about 20 minutes" he put in about 2,000 miles of cycling on his journey. But for Harrison, who has done trips that were both farther and faster, it was certainly not about the distance or the speed that he traveled.

"None of this is competitive. The competition is to have the most fun, not who goes the farthest or carries the heaviest bag. The mistake is to try and prioritize some of that," he said. He added, "My other trips have been longer. I'm kind of proud of this one being shorter because, as my wife has said, 'I'm too stupid to stop' otherwise (I just keep going). But this time I made more of a point of stopping and looking and enjoying. Spending more time in cities, more rest days' kind of stuff."

That means when he was in Prague he veered off the established bike path to check out a small city that caught his eye. And after going through the mundane familiarity of rows upon rows of trees in Hungary, it was turning a different direction than planned to find something exciting.

More than anything else, what allows Harrison to pick

each path he wants to travel is the fact that he decided to go alone on this trip. This freedom gave him the choice to decide to stop for a rare hot meal or pick something up from the store. To stay at this campground or maybe a hostel (that made him keenly aware of his age compared to the other guests) just up the road. For each choice he made, he got to choose and had only himself to consider.

"However one travels involves some kind of compromise... So it's sort of what kind of compromises do you want to make. So when you travel with somebody, the compromise is that you're making collective decisions. You have two people to take care of," he said.

Being alone, he was in charge of everything, even tasks that he would have maybe shrugged off to someone else on a different trip. He had to rely on his language skills to speak with those he met and he had to make sure he saw each relevant street sign.

"Traveling the way I do with tent, usually I carry 12-24 hours' worth of some kind of food. There's really not much that can

**CYCLING** see B2

## Athlete of the Week



This week's athlete of the week is Collen Winebarger who walked away with a pair of victories at the Cottage Grove Speedway last weekend. For more about his races, see B2.



Collen Winebarger and friends pose with his winnings.

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