

**Bricen James Wins 2019 Mark Howard Memorial Modified Nationals**

By BEN DEATHERAGE  
 COTTAGE GROVE SPEEDWAY

Saturday, August 24 was the second and final night of the 2019 Mark Howard Memorial Modified Nationals. Over 44 drivers from Oregon and Washington competed in the Mohawk Metal IMCA Modifieds during the weekend and produced some excellent results. Stellar action also came from the two other divisions on the card, the IMCA Sport Mods and 360 Sprints.

Bricen James managed to take full advantage of his inside front-row starting position and put his mount in front of the rest of the field to lead the first lap. Despite the Albany ace pacing the field, he had some fast company try and overtake him. It would be cautions galore in the first half of the race with six stoppages in the first 26 circuits. The frequent stops took lapped traffic out of the picture.

That was until the second half of the main event when it was an all-out battle for the top spot. James briefly lost the lead with a handful of laps remaining until he quickly reclaimed the position on the next corner. Bricen held all challengers at bay to win his first career Mark Howard Memorial Modified Nationals. He is the seventh different driver to have had the honor of accomplishing such a rare feat. It is also his fourth win of the season at CGS which now ties him for the most wins in the class this year.

Collen Winebarger, of Corbett, was a respectable second despite running down and challenging the leader for the vast majority of the main event. Klamath Falls' Nick Trenchard finished second, and Nikki Biehn owned entry on the podium with a third-place result. The top five was rounded out by Bend native Chad Groves, in fourth and fifth finishing B.J. Wild, of Redmond.

It was non-stop action in the IMCA Sport Mod feature. Vancouver, Washington's Tanner Krohling set the tone early and was the trailblazer for the first seven laps. Isaac Sanders, of Brookings, managed to make it around Krohling on lap eight and pulled away for the rest of the field.

Sanders showed a lot of speed but had his hands full in the last couple of laps. Jorddon Braaten managed to make a final lap gamble to beat Isaac to the line and pick up the victory. It is the fourth win for Braaten at "The Grove" this, year which ties him for the most wins at the famed quarter-mile clay oval. Braaten also swept the weekend by winning both nights.

Isaac Sander finished in second while Tanner Krohling ended his night in third. Roseburg's Jordan Henry got fourth

See **SPEEDWAY 2A**

**Grovers come out to meet their lions**



PHOTO BY NICK SNYDER/CG SENTINEL

**Student athletes from all the fall sports (football, volleyball, boys soccer and girls soccer, boys and girls cross-country, water polo and cheer) line up to introduce themselves to local fans.**

*Fall sports kick off at CG High School exhibition event*

By NICK SNYDER  
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There are always a few telltale signs that fall is coming. The temperature has yet to drop, the leaves have yet to change, but fall sports are undoubtedly on their way.

On the evening of Friday, Aug. 23 it was the local community's annual opportunity to preview Cottage Grove High School fall athletics at the Meet the Lions event put on by the school's athletic department. All in all, seven teams - football, volleyball, girls and boys soccer, girls and boys cross-country and cheer - took to the high school's athletic facilities for team photos and exhibition scrimmages, giving attendees eager for the sports season to begin their first look.

There was a palpable theme of new beginnings and opportunities for both coaches and players alike.

While most other Cottage Grove coaches are returning for the 2019 season, for new head football coach Chad Smith, this was his first experience at a Meet the Lions event.

"It's been crazy just because this is my first time and, for a lot of the coaches, this is their first time because we only had two guys coming back coaching-wise ... so it's just new and it's hectic but, you know, we're making it through and I know it's a special event for the players and the community so we want to make sure that we continue that," said Smith when asked about taking on this exhibition event for the first time.

"We did a little bit of a dress rehearsal this morning. We split up the teams as evenly as possible and we're just going to play as much like a game as possible. So that'll be good to see. We got a little bit of a practice in this morning so hopefully it'll be smooth under the big lights," added Smith just a few hours before the football team took center-stage under the evening sta-

dium lights for the first time this year.

Smith may be new to the Cottage Grove sidelines, but the other fall coaches return and, in the makeup of their rosters, they almost uniformly see reason for excitement heading into the first September games.

"A whole bunch of incoming freshmen are doing [cross-country] with their choice this fall, more ninth graders than I've ever had so the help from them makes this a team right now of 42, which is the biggest team I've had by seven at the beginning of the season ... and maybe before the start of the year more will join us," said cross-country coach Jim Settlemeyer when asked about his roster.

A number of Cottage Grove teams have seen recent success - a football championship in 2017 and a 2018 second place state finish in volleyball, amongst others - often born on the shoulders of experienced upperclassmen, but such is the game in high school sports

where graduating seniors remains a constant inevitability. An influx of youth athletes and the growth of former underclassmen, however, means these teams remain in good hands.

"[Last year's freshmen] returned with some real dedication. It was mostly freshman I saw, or this year's sophomores that I saw over the summer that would come to the events that we would do for conditioning and stuff. There's great leadership emerging from that group but we've got a couple wonderful leaders on both the boys and the girls team of seniors," Settlemeyer continued.

The head cross-country coach was certainly not alone in this observation and his sentiments were echoed by both third-year girls soccer coach, Reed Levings, and her boys team counterpart, Vern Stewart.

"Last year, I think I only had two freshmen come in, but this year I

See **LIONS 2A**

**From the South Valley to South Africa**



PHOTO C/O CHRISTINA AND ADELLE KENT

**Adelle Kent snaps a photo with a statue of Mahatma Gandhi during her trip to South Africa.**

*Local wrestler Adelle Kent represents Oregon on trip to Africa*

By NICK SNYDER  
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Sports have an ability to bring humanity together on a global stage, from the Olympics to the World Cup, and one local athlete just returned from her first taste of international travel and competition.

Cottage Grove High School wrestler Adelle Kent arrived home in Cottage Grove on August 15 from a three-and-a-half-week trip to South Africa. Kent, along with 23 other boys and girls wrestlers, won the right to represent the state of Oregon in the Oregon Wrestling Association's (OWA) annual Cultural Exchange program.

The OWA's program has now been running for over 50 years and has sent Oregon youth wres-

tlers all over the globe to places like Russia, Switzerland, New Zealand, Japan and now South Africa. This year's participants qualified for their place in the program at a March 8 tournament in Sweet Home, Ore.

"Instead of getting a medal for winning, you got to go on this three-and-a-half-week trip to Africa. So we just kind of wrestled all over the country. A lot of it was sightseeing too, but it was mostly wrestling," said Kent.

For a wrestler already as accomplished as Kent as an incoming high school junior - and for someone yet to have their first travel experience outside the U.S. - the trade-off of a trip for a medal was a unique opportunity and her company on the trip represented much of Oregon's best. All participants either placed in state championship tournaments or were the eventual champions and their

See **AFRICA 3A**

**Athlete of the Week**



*This week's athletes of the week are the members of the CGHS water polo team who are patiently awaiting the debut of the new Warren H. Daugherty Aquatic Center.*



Water polo players look on at the Meet the Lions event. PHOTO BY SOPHIA EDELBLUTE/CG SENTINEL