

Calendar

- Dec. 27**
 - CGHS boys bball @ Sisters Holiday Tournament
 - Elkton bball @ St. Paul (girls @ 4 p.m., boys TBD)
 - Yoncalla girls bball @ Regis @ 6 p.m.
- Dec. 28**
 - CGHS boys bball @ Sisters Holiday Tournament
 - Elkton bball @ Perrydale (girls @ 1p.m., boys TBD)

- Dec. 29**
 - CGHS boys bball @ Sisters Holiday Tournament

- Dec. 30**
 - NDHS bball @ Reedsport (girls @ 6 p.m., boys @ 7:30 p.m.)
 - Yoncalla bball @ Lowell (girls @ 6 p.m., boys @ 7:30 p.m.)

ODFW RECREATION REPORT

www.dfw.state.or.us/RR

UPCOMING SHOTGUN SKILLS, SMALL GAME AND PREDATOR HUNTING WORKSHOPS

- Basic Shotgun Skills, Jan. 12, EE Wilson Wildlife Area, Monmouth
- Small Game Clinic, Jan. 18, EE Wilson Wildlife Area, Monmouth
- Bear and Cougar Workshop, Jan. 28, Denman Wildlife Area, Central Point

WHALE WATCHING WEEK

During the winter, nearly 25,000 gray whales travel along the Oregon coast on their way to the warm lagoons of Baja Mexico (lucky whales). Come and wave hello as they pass by during Whale Watching Week Dec. 27 through Dec. 31. Oregon State Parks lists 24 whale watching spots along the coast – each staffed by friendly and knowledgeable volunteers as part of the Whale Watching Spoken Here program.

The Whale Watching Spoken Here® program places volunteers at great whale watching sites during the two official watch weeks. The official Whale Watch Weeks typically take place between the Christmas Holiday and New Year's day and during the last week in March. For more than 40 years, trained volunteers have helped visitors watch whales at sites in three states along the Pacific Northwest coast.

Learn more about whales at the Whale Watching Center in Depoe Bay year round, or visit any of the locations during the Whale Watch Weeks for an amazing display of ocean life. To learn more about the two Whale Watch Weeks, the Whale Watch Spoken Here® program or to sign up to become a volunteer, go to <https://whale-spoken.wordpress.com/>.

See ODFW 3B

Local girls win big opportunity

By Nick Snyder
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It's no secret that, despite a half-century of progress, sports still tend to be a male-dominated world. Two local eighth-grade girls, along with help from the Nike Game Growers program, are aiming to change that.

Payton Bickford and Summer Lebow, both students at Lincoln Middle School, were selected by the Portland Trailblazers on Sat., Dec. 21 to be their representatives in the Game Growers Training Camp next month in Beaverton, Ore. The girls were announced as winners during halftime of last weekend's Trailblazers game

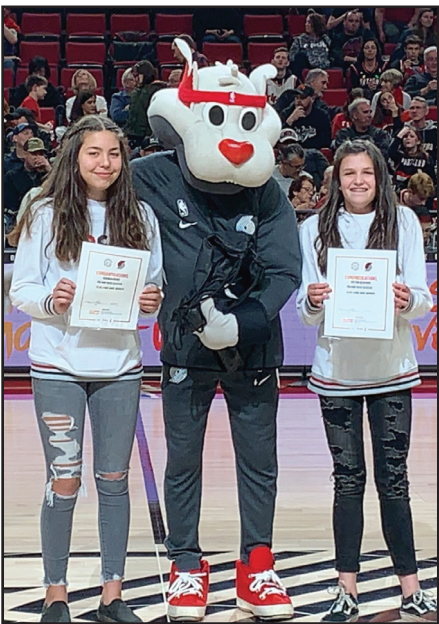
versus the Minnesota Timberwolves.

Through changes in culture and expectations over the last several decades, as well as civil rights legislation like Title IX, the United States has seen young girls' presence in sports steadily rise. The problem, however, is not a lack of participation, but a lack of continued engagement.

"I think a lot of girls don't try sports in middle school or high school because they're embarrassed or shy or something," said Lebow.

Indeed, according to the Game Growers' website, the crux of the issue lies in the fact that, beyond eighth

See BLAZERS 2B



COURTESY PHOTO

Summer Lebow (left) and Payton Bickford receive certificates for being chosen as the Blazers Game Growers representatives.

Swim season in full swing



PHOTOS BY NICK SNYDER/CG SENTINEL

(Top left) The boys dive in for the 400-free relay. (Top right) MJ Raade competes in the 200 I.M.. (Left middle) Swimmers cheer on their teammates. (Bottom left) Jairus Vanberg swims the butterfly. (Bottom right) Junior Fisher Nash enters the water for the 100 breaststroke.



The Lions wrap up their 2019 meets, begin looking to districts

By Nick Snyder
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It was a busy week for the Cottage Grove swim teams, but with a fine new facility and their biggest team in years, that's just how they like it.

The Lions swam twice last week, first hosting a dual meet with Salem Academy on Tues., Dec. 17 before getting in the pool again on Fri., Dec. 20 for a five-team event including Churchill, Henley, St. Mary's and North Valley.

The depth of the Cottage Grove team overwhelmed Salem Academy in the dual meet, with the Lions winning the overall points battle 371-228 and the

Lions' 189 total points in Friday's meet were second only to Churchill - the lone 5A school — who finished with 292. It's a promising continuation to the 2019-20 season for a team with its eyes set on February.

"It's going great," said head coach Tyson Pilling of the ongoing season. "Still a lot to work on, but as we keep going up in the season, we'll just keep adding work, then we'll have our taper, then we'll be ready for that district and state meet."

A little bit of strategy has already come into play early in the season in preparation for next year's season-ending meets. At Friday's contest, Pilling was particularly aware of how the typi-

cal race schedule lined up with his team's strengths.

"Relays are really, really important," he said. "You have to be aware when you have good individual swimmers, if their event is after the relays or vice versa, you kinda have to play it to what's going to be the best for the team."

Ultimately, though the sport is largely made up of individual events, the Lions preach a team culture that emphasizes the team events and totals.

"When it comes down to those relays, it makes a really big difference points-wise," Pilling said. And it paid off on Friday

See SWIMMING 2B

Holiday slate preps Lions for league

Seven games in a 12-day stretch test the young squad

By Nick Snyder
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After a three-day trip to the coast, the Lions were happy to be back in the South Valley. It's Christmas week, after all, but for boys' head coach Seth Hutchison, he's already excited to get back out there.

"I love getting all these games. I love having back-to-back-to-back games," Hutchison said after a Monday morning practice. "It helps them create a short memory."

A short memory was what the team needed. After an 0-4 start to the season, Cottage Grove climbed to a 3-5 overall record by winning three of their four games last week. First, the Lions took down Sisters 45-30 on Tues., Dec. 17 for their first victory of 2019. Then, on Thurs., Dec. 19 they headed to the coast for the three-day Seaside Holiday Tournament, going 2-1 in their three games with wins over Madras and Centralia (Wash.) and a loss to Montesano (Wash.).

"It was a confidence-building week for us," Hutchison said. "It showed us that we can be successful and the work that we're doing now is leading towards that. To win three out of four, I was proud."

The team has only two seniors on the roster — post player Zach Anlauf and guard Dae-tryl Berry — but as the younger players gain more experience and the overall group begins to gel, contributions are starting to come from all over the roster.

Anlauf performed all weekend in Seaside, averaging 10.3 points and eight rebounds per game while shooting 65 percent from the field.

"[Zach] is just a level kid," Hutchison said. "He just stays level mentally, he's positive, he wants other kids to work hard and you can see that through him actually doing it. He's been a big leader for us. He's just continuing to elevate his play."

Anlauf, nonetheless, was not alone. Sophomore Carter Bascue had 10 points — on a perfect 5/5 shooting — seven rebounds and four assists in the 50-44 win

See LIONS 2B

Athlete of the Week



This week's athlete of the week is CGHS senior Nadia Witt. After running cross country in the fall, Witt is back on the swim team for the first time since her freshman year.



Witt earned her honors by winning her first competitive 100 backstroke event in three years in a time of 1:13.11.

PHOTO BY NICK SNYDER/CG SENTINEL