

SPORTS

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LOCAL SPORTS

Youth hoops program canceled

The Bend Park & Recreation District's third- to fifth-grade basketball skills and drills program has been canceled, the park district announced.

Due to the number of COVID-19 cases in Deschutes County the last two weeks, the Oregon Health Authority announced this week that Deschutes County will remain in the extreme risk level until at least Feb. 12. Under the extreme risk level, indoor recreational sport activities of any kind cannot occur.

After a number of postponements, officials were hopeful to start the basketball program by the end of January. But with the suspension of indoor sports continuing until at least mid-February, the Bend park district has decided to turn its focus to providing outdoor sports opportunities for youth this spring.

Most outdoor sports are permitted in the extreme risk level with specific restrictions and modifications in place.

After being canceled last year, the Bend park district's most popular spring team sport leagues, youth lacrosse and girls softball, are back on track for this spring. Registration deadlines are early March and startup dates are scheduled for the first part of April.

For more information or to register, visit www.bendparksandrec.org.

— Bulletin staff report

WOMEN'S COLLEGE HOOPS

COVID-19 halts Ducks' activities

EUGENE — Oregon women's basketball has paused team activities due to COVID-19 protocols and its games at Utah and Colorado this weekend have been postponed.

The program announced the stoppage three hours before tip-off of today's game at Utah with the No. 11 Ducks in Salt Lake City.

The rescheduled dates for those games will be announced when finalized.

It's the first time this season the Ducks have been on pause and the third and fourth games of its season impacted due to the virus.

— The Oregonian

Goodman, Beavers top Buffaloes 72-64

Aleah Goodman netted 21 points, becoming the 24th player in Oregon State women's basketball history to reach 1,000 career points, as the Beavers defeated Colorado 72-64 in Boulder, Colorado.

Goodman added five assists. Her 1,000th point came on a free throw in the closing moments.

"I'm really excited for this win," said Oregon State coach Scott Rueck. "Also really excited for Aleah. That's a big milestone for anybody. It's a great accomplishment and well deserved."

Redshirt senior forward Ellie Mack finished with a season-high 15 points on 6-of-7 shooting, and freshman Talia von Oelhoffen had 13 points off the bench for her second straight double-digit scoring performance for the Beavers (5-5, 3-5 Pac-12).

Oregon State shot 54.7% from the floor, including 52.6% from 3-point range.

Mya Hollingshed led Colorado (6-8, 4-7) with 22 points.

— Bulletin staff report

Outdoors

Meissner Nordic club purchases new snowcat to provide better grooming of trails at popular sno-park near Bend

BY MARK MORICAL
The Bulletin

Virginia Meissner Sno-park has been packed with skiers this winter — and many of those skiers have been quite generous.

Meissner Nordic, the nonprofit club that grooms ski trails at the sno-park west of Bend, raised enough in donations this winter to purchase a new snowcat for grooming the skate and classic ski trails.

"In terms of the number of donation inquiries we get via phone, email or social media, we're seeing roughly double than what we've seen in previous years," said Steve Roti, Meissner Nordic president. "People have been very generous this year, which is what allowed us to purchase the new snowcat."

The old snowcat was eight years old, and the club was able to trade it in for an upgrade with better technology and fuel efficiency, Roti said.

Skiers at Meissner have been raving about the grooming that the new snowcat has provided since it started being used this past week.



Courtesy Tina Pavelic

Meissner Nordic club president Steve Roti, left, and Meissner Nordic operations manager Larry Katz pose with the new snowcat the club recently purchased.

"We're already seeing better quality grooming on our trails just one week with the new cat. The new technology on the new cat, people are loving it. People wonder why we didn't do it sooner. But we couldn't. This was the year when people donated enough to allow us to do it."

— Steve Roti, Meissner Nordic president

"We're already seeing better quality grooming on our trails just one week with the new cat," Roti said. "The new technology on the new cat, people are loving it. People wonder why we didn't do it sooner. But we couldn't. This was the year when people donated enough

to allow us to do it."

The snowcat is by far the biggest expense for the club, which grooms the trails six days a week, every day but Mondays. The list price on the new snowcat was \$250,000, according to Roti. The club received \$85,000

trade-in value on their old cat, so the total out-of-pocket was \$165,000.

In researching snowcats, Roti said that Meissner Nordic talked to members of Methow Trails, the largest cross-country trail system in North America, located in the Methow Valley near Winthrop in north-central Washington.

"Their philosophy is buy new, use it for five to 10 years and then trade it in," Roti said. "So you're never paying the full price. You're always getting a trade-in value. We got a good trade-in value on our old cat."

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TENNIS

Big week of Australian Open tuneup tourneys set to start

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — The last group of quarantined players in Melbourne ahead of the Australian Open and a week of tuneup tournaments was set to leave their hotels at midnight Saturday night, ending a mammoth two-week effort to reduce the chance of any international arrivals bringing the coronavirus Down Under.

More than 1,000 players and officials went into a two-week quarantine from Jan. 14 when the first of 17 flights chartered by Tennis Australia landed in Melbourne and Adelaide.

Three of those charters contained players or entourages with COVID-19, meaning that 72 players had to go into hard quarantine with no opportunity to practice. Other players not in hard quarantine were allowed out of their rooms for up to five hours a day to train.

Melbourne Park, site of the

"There have been a lot of questions about a fair playing field — some players have had to quarantine, some have not. It's not going to be perfectly ideal, but it's enough time to be as ready as you possibly can be."

— Craig Tiley, Australian Open chief executive

Australian Open, was busy Saturday with all but 22 players out of hotel quarantine and preparing for the tuneup tournaments, which begin on Sunday. Japan's Kei Nishikori and Benoit Paire of France were among those who could exit their hotels at 11:59 p.m. on Saturday.

Two WTA tournaments kick off official proceedings on Sunday, and Australia's world No. 1 Ash Barty has a first-round bye in one of them. Ajla Tomljanovic, ranked No. 69, takes on Alize Cornet of France in the first round to determine who will play 2019 Australian Open champion Naomi Osaka in the second.

There is one other WTA tournament scheduled only for those players who were in hard lockdown.

As well, the ATP Cup team event begins Tuesday and there are two other ATP men's tournaments scheduled in Melbourne ahead of the Feb. 8-21 Australian Open. The first Grand Slam tournament of the year was delayed by three weeks to allow for the 14-day quarantine and a week of warmup tournaments.

Some of the big stars got their season started unofficially on Friday in an exhibition tournament at Adelaide's Memorial Drive, where Serena Williams

beat Osaka, Rafael Nadal defeated U.S. Open champion Dominic Thiem and second-ranked Simona Halep beat No. 1 Ash Barty.

Australian Open chief executive Craig Tiley said Saturday the Australian Open will be fair for all players despite differing preparations.

Tiley said the players who were in hard lockdown had been given priority with their schedules and access to training facilities. He said with all players having at least nine days between quarantine and the start of the Open, the tournament would be as fair as it could be.

"There have been a lot of questions about a fair playing field — some players have had to quarantine, some have not," Tiley said. "We've given nine days when coming out of quarantine to when they'll really need to be playing. It's not going to be perfectly ideal, but

it's enough time to be as ready as you possibly can be. No different to inclement weather or someone being a bit sick and having to take a few days off."

As contractors put the finishing touches on the stadiums and surrounding areas at Melbourne Park, Victorian state sports minister Martin Pakula said crowds would be at about 50% of previous years, with 390,000 people expected over the two weeks.

There will be 30,000 allowed through the gates each day for the first eight days, which will be reduced in the finals to crowds of 12,500 during the day session and 12,500 during the night sessions.

"Rod Laver Arena will have incredible atmosphere, not that different to the atmosphere we've seen at all the Opens in the years past," Pakula said of the tournament's main 15,000-seat arena.



Andrew Mascharka/Indiana Athletics via AP file

Indiana's Ben Veatch (579) competes at the NCAA cross-country championships in November 2019, in Terre Haute, Indiana. The impact of moving traditional fall sports to later in the calendar due to COVID-19 includes some consequences unrelated to the pandemic itself. That has been evident this week as Big Ten runners have prepared for Saturday's cross-country championships at Shelbyville, Indiana, while snow has blanketed much of the Midwest.

COLLEGE TRACK AND FIELD

A crowded sprint to get seasons in for runners

BY STEVE MEGARGEE
Associated Press

Moving traditional fall sports to later in the calendar due to COVID-19 includes some consequences unrelated to the pandemic itself.

That has been evident this week as Big Ten runners have prepared for Saturday's cross-country championships at Shelbyville, Indiana, with snow blanketing much of the Midwest.

"In terms of training for it, obviously we can't get on grass," Wisconsin coach Mick Byrne said. "The Zimmer cross-country course (on cam-

pus) is covered in snow as are most of our regular training sites. Obviously we've had some snow around here. Most of what we do is outside on the roads or bike paths."

The Division I board of directors announced in late September that NCAA championships for cross-country, field hockey, men's and women's soccer, women's volleyball and men's water polo would take place in the spring of 2021 rather than the fall of 2020.

Some leagues such as the Southeastern Conference, Atlantic Coast Conference and Big 12 went ahead and played

traditional fall sports in the fall anyway. The Big Ten was among the conferences that chose to wait until 2021.

The Big Ten cross-country championship typically would take place in late October or early November rather than at the end of January.

Saturday's forecast in Shelbyville calls for temperatures in the 30s with an 80% chance of precipitation.

"We pride ourselves in running through pretty much everything," Indiana senior Ben Veatch said. "It's going to hurt, regardless."

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