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POLE PEDAL PADDLE RETURNS

Bend's Zoe Roy looks to set record by winning 5th straight



Zoe Roy makes her way along the 5-mile run course while competing in the elite women's division of the Pole Pedal Paddle in 2019.

Ryan Brennecke/Bulletin file

BY MARK MORICAL • The Bulletin

Zoe Roy will try to make history Saturday by becoming the first woman to win five consecutive individual Pole Pedal Paddle titles.

The Bend resident won the race each year from 2016 to 2019 before it was canceled the past two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Roy will try to break the record held by Bend's Suzanne King, a former Olympic cross-country skier who won the multisport race each year from 2004 to 2007.

"Oh man, I didn't even know that," Roy said when asked about breaking the record. "That's exciting. That would be quite cool, actually, and Suzanne's a good one to be up there with. I'm in good company, I feel good about that."

Roy, 34, spent most of the past winter as a chef at a backcountry ski lodge in Canada. She said she is excited for the race to be back, but admitted that it was nice to have a break from the PPP for a couple of years. The training and logistics that go into a race of alpine skiing, nordic skiing, cycling, running and paddling are immense.

"To be honest, it was nice to not think about it for a little bit, and just focus on other stuff," Roy said. "But it's also great that it's back. It's not just me that it pulls in and

“*To be honest, it was nice to not think about it for a little bit, and just focus on other stuff. But it's also great that it's back. It's not just me that it pulls in and becomes time-consuming, it's also my support crew. I think I have the same people I had in 2019, so that will be fun. It's a great group.*”

— **Zoe Roy, The Bend resident won the PPP each year from 2016 to 2019 before it was canceled the past two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic**

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The support crew helps Roy at the transitions so she can move from one stage to the

next as quickly as possible.

Roy's strengths in the PPP are the 6.2-kilometer nordic ski and the 5-mile run, because she has a background in elite nordic ski racing and distance running.

See **Roy** / B10



Bulletin file photo

Jesse Thomas runs across Bill Healy bridge while competing in the men's elite division of the 42nd annual Pole Pedal Paddle in Bend in 2018.

Return to the PPP

Bend's Jesse Thomas gunning for third title in men's race

BY MARK MORICAL
The Bulletin

Jesse Thomas is a few years removed from his professional triathlete days, but it seems he still has the potential to win Central Oregon's signature multisport race.

Thomas, 42 and of Bend, will vie for this third victory in the men's individual race of the Pole Pedal Paddle on Saturday.

He said he recently unpacked his triathlon bike after having not used it since his last triathlon in 2018.

"The only bike I've ridden the last four years is a mountain bike," Thomas said. "I got on my triathlon bike and I felt like I was going to fall straight over the front wheel. It was crazy. I couldn't believe that was the position I used to hold for 100-plus miles. It shows how much things have changed."

Still, Thomas figures to be the favorite in the PPP, which he has not raced since 2018. He was injured in 2019 and the race was canceled the last two years due to the pandemic.

A healthy Thomas, then 38, won the 2018 by nearly four minutes over seven-time PPP winner and fellow Bend resident Marshall Greene.

See **Thomas** / B10

Big fun is coming to Alpenglow Park in Bend

BY TED TAYLOR
For The Bulletin

Some truly big things are happening in southeast Bend that are sure to widen the eyes of kids and adults alike (but, probably for different reasons) — specifically, three climbing and bouldering structures rising 10-plus-feet into the sky and weighing 19,000 pounds

The huge new climbing structures are just part of the fun that awaits visitors at Bend Park & Recreation District's soon-to-be-completed Alpenglow Community Park.

Located on SE 15th Street just north of the new Caldera High School, Alpenglow covers

nearly 40 acres. That's about the size of Farewell Bend and Riverbend parks combined, and three times the size of Drake Park.

Unique among Bend parks, Alpenglow includes three bouldering areas — East, Central and West. The East area has smaller pre-cast boulders with the largest being 10-feet tall. The Central and West areas have large, custom-built boulders with a climbing height of 12 feet.

Local climbing wall experts Entrepren-Prises designed and constructed the boulders — which can feature more than 1,500 holds that can be occasionally reset to keep the space dynamic for climbers of all abilities.

See **Alpenglow** / B9



Submitted photo

Three climbing and bouldering structures rising 10-plus-feet into the sky and weighing 19,000 pounds will be on hand at the new Alpenglow Park in Bend.