



INSPIRATION & EMPOWERMENT. Members of a jujitsu club run during a training session in Kabul, Afghanistan, in this February 15, 2020 file photo. In war-torn Afghanistan, jujitsu seems an ideal sport for women, as it teaches a person self-defense when faced with a stronger and heavier opponent by using specific techniques, holds, and principles of leverage. (AP Photo/Tamana Sarwary, File)

Afghan women assert themselves with martial arts

By Tamana Sarwary
The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A year and a half ago, Liqa Esazada for the first time stepped into a martial arts club for women in Kabul, something of a rarity in the still deeply conservative Muslim society.

At the time, she had just accompanied her older sister but was immediately intrigued. The 22-year-old is now one of two dozen Afghan women who find inspiration and empowerment in Japanese jujitsu, a martial arts form that dates back centuries.

They love the sport and dare to dream big, hoping someday to compete on the international level.

In war-torn Afghanistan, where gender discrimination has deep cultural and historical roots and where many women suffer from domestic violence, jujitsu seems an ideal sport for women. It teaches self-defense against a stronger and heavier opponent by using certain holds and principles of leverage.

Esazada said she wants to show a more positive side of Afghanistan — and “become famous and win the world jujitsu championship medal.”

Sayed Jawad Hussiani, a jujitsu instructor at the Nero club where Esazada trains, said this martial arts form with roots in feudal Japan was first brought to Afghanistan in 2005 but has since become popular among boys and girls alike.

The women in Hussiani’s group find strength in their team spirit. They braid each other’s hair before training sessions, spar against one another, take turns on the even bars. In winter, they practice their wrestle holds on snow-covered hilltops above Kabul.

Today, about two-thirds of Afghanistan’s population is 25 or younger and

Esazada said she has no memory of the Taliban regime, which hosted al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden and ruled Afghanistan before the 2001 U.S. invasion.

But since the United States and the Taliban earlier this year signed a deal on ending America’s longest war — an accord that also envisages peace talks between the Taliban and the Kabul government — women in Afghanistan have become increasingly worried about losing some of the rights and freedoms they have gained over the past two decades.

Under the Taliban, women were not allowed to go to school, work outside the home, or leave their house without a male escort. And though they still face many challenges, Afghan women are increasingly stepping into their own power in the male-dominated society, finding a voice even in sports.

Esazada said she is not afraid of the Taliban, and if they come back, she would simply “continue my training to reach my dreams.”

She looks to Afghan women athletes who have made their mark on the world stage. Female athletes from Afghanistan have won more than 100 medals at regional and international tournaments.

Tahmina Kohistani, Afghanistan’s first female Olympic athlete, competed in the 100-meter run at the 2012 London Olympics. In 2010, the Afghan female soccer team defeated Pakistan 4-0 at the South Asian Football Championship. In 2011, Afghan female power lifters won three gold and two bronze medals at the pan-Asian games held in Kazakhstan.

Esazada’s fellow jujitsu student at the Nero club, Rana Rasuli, 21, said she worries about her future if the Taliban manage to retake all of Afghanistan.

For now, Rasuli said she is happiest when she can come out of her home and exercise with the other girls at the club.

OSU TRACE-COVID-19 results suggest 17% of Hermiston community infected with SARS-CoV-2

Continued from page 13

At each home visited by TRACE field workers, members of the household are invited to participate in the study. Those who choose to take part are asked to provide information such as their name and date of birth; to fill out a simple consent form; and to answer a few confidential, health-related questions.

Participants are given a nasal-swab test kit that they administer to themselves inside their home and their minor children if they want them to take part. The field staff wait outside, and the participants leave the completed test kits outside their front door. Field staff maintain a safe distance at all times and do not enter anyone’s home.

The tests used in TRACE-COVID-19 collect material from the entrance of the nose and are more comfortable and less invasive than the tests that collect secretions from the throat and the back of the nose.

The field workers leave participants with information about the project and how they will receive their results as well as health guidance from county health officials and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Participants in the study are sent their results and those of their minor children by secure e-mail with receipt by standard mail delivery as a backup. Everyone’s personal information is safeguarded.

The diagnostic testing component of TRACE operates through a partnership between the Oregon Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, which is located at OSU, and Willamette Valley Toxicology.

COVID-19, first reported to the World Health Organization on December 31,

2019, has been confirmed in more than 17 million people worldwide and has killed more than 680,000 people. In the United States, there have been more than 4.3 million reported cases — including more than 18,000 in Oregon — and more than 150,000 deaths nationwide. Umatilla County has had 1,943 confirmed cases and 23 deaths.

“TRACE’s work is only possible because community members and health officials have worked with the TRACE team to obtain meaningful results that present a representative picture of the whole community in a very short period of time,” Bethel said. “We’re grateful for their help in providing information that is useful both to individual residents and to health officials.”

To learn more about the TRACE project, or to read frequently asked questions, visit <<https://trace.oregonstate.edu>>.

Baseball fans in South Korea back in stands amid COVID-19

Continued from page 10

sional golf tournaments would continue without galleries until at least late August.

South Korean officials plan to allow more fans into baseball and soccer stadiums if they report progress in anti-virus campaigning.

South Korea has seen an uptick in new virus cases since it eased its rigid social-distancing rules in early May. But the country’s caseload hasn’t exploded like its earlier outbreak in late February and early March, when it recorded hundreds of new cases every day.

Associated Press video journalist Kim Yong Ho contributed to this report.

A LEGACY TO HONOR, roots to remember.



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Donated bikes help ease difficulties

Continued from page 3

that will help more while also inspiring others to pay it forward.

“We live in a world where it still takes courage to be kind,” said Dr. Glenda Canlas. “Our goal would be from ‘courage to be kind,’ wouldn’t it be great when kindness is just the norm, kindness is just the baseline for everybody?”

While nonstop news about the effects of the coronavirus has become commonplace, so, too, have stories about the kindness of strangers and individuals who have sacrificed for others. “One Good Thing” is an AP series reflecting these acts of kindness.

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Notice of Nominating Convention

Come help the Oregon Working Families Party select candidates who will stand for progressive values in November! Join the online nominating convention:

Monday, August 17 - Wednesday, August 19

Voting will be open from 12:00am on Aug 17 to 11:59pm on Aug 19.

Entirely online at: www.OWFP.org/2020

Nominations will be made for:

U.S. Senator, Members of Congress (all districts), Secretary of State, Attorney General, State Treasurer, State Senator/Representative (all districts)

You must be a registered member of the Oregon Working Families Party to vote.

To register, go to www.OWFP.org/register
(Same day registration is available.)

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