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## CYCLIST ORGANIZES RIDES FOR WOMEN

Ariel Gummer hopes to bring more women to the sport of cycling with Wednesday rides

By ALEXIS MANSANAREZ  
STAFF WRITER

HERMISTON — Like many, Hermiston native Ariel Gummer learned to ride a bike at a young age and enjoyed family rides through the rural back roads and farmland. Also like many childhood cyclists, Gummer stepped away from her bike, letting it collect dust as she made her way through high school and on to adulthood.

Now, Gummer is more invested in the sport that can be both leisurely and competitive as she works to put more women on bikes.

"I've been riding a bike since I was a little kid, grew up around here, so this is the area I learned how to ride a bike and I've been bicycle touring for the last seven years," Gummer said.

Bicycle touring is when a rider or riders go on self-contained cycling trips with touring ranging from single to multi-day trips or even years. Two years ago, Gummer completed a 2,700-plus mile trip from Astoria to New Orleans, Louisiana and upon her return, was inspired to do something, Gummer recalls.

"It was an amazing experience and when I got back from that I was like, 'I've got to be doing something,' and organizing a ride seemed to be the thing to do," she added.

After organizing a ride on Mother's Day that had just over a dozen riders taking the streets, Gummer now leads Wednesday's rides that are catered specifically toward women.

"I'm particularly passionate about getting women on bikes because I started riding as a kid and you get women on bikes, you get families on bikes," Gummer said. "There are lots of rides around for really experienced riders, just not a whole lot out there that's like, 'Oh hey, come try this thing,' and that's what we're trying to do is get people out on bikes — get people who haven't necessarily done it before, haven't done it in a long time."

With the help of her mother, a long-time rider as well, Gummer makes sure the rides are designed to fit everyone's level of experience. Whether that means shorter rides around nine miles or longer rides that can reach up to 18 miles, the goal for Gummer is to create an inclusive community that supports riders at every level.



Hermiston native Ariel Gummer is wanting to get more women to get into cycling and is leading a female focused weekly riding group on Wednesday.

STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

"You don't have to feel like you have to ride as fast as you can or anything like that, we're just trying to do something that's fun," she said. "We like to go around and see places, and the other thing is trying to help women get more comfortable on the roads. I've been doing it a long time, ridden everywhere and I'm really comfortable but I recognize it wasn't always like that when I started out. So, having that group there to show people you can do this and it's okay."

Gummer's sense of confidence and comfort on the road came after clocking some miles on a hand-me-down road bike her father bought for her from Scott's Cycle and Sports, and it was a family ride along the Oregon coast years ago that sparked the fire that pushes her to ride almost every day of the week.

"It was just a really empowering experience," Gummer said. "I wasn't in shape and I realized if I can do it in the shape I was in, it is something anyone can do. Bicycles really are for everyone."

"It's sort of snowballed since then," she added. "I kept getting more and more into it. It's definitely changed my life completely. The confidence (aspect) is a really big thing, realizing you can accomplish something or do something and you don't have to go on a bicycle tour to have that feeling. You can ride your bike to the grocery store and get your groceries and have that feeling of 'I went out today and I did that.'"

That feeling is what Gummer hopes to share with other women in the community. Every Wednesday from 5:30-6 p.m., riders are welcome to meet at Scott's Cycle and Sport for a rally before

the one-and-a-half hour long ride begins. Gummer encourages anyone who may be interested to stop by and even test out a bike.

It's not the only group ride Scott's offers. There are Tuesday and Thursday evening rides as well as a Sunday morning breakfast ride, but Wednesday offers a unique experience for women who are either just getting interested, trying out a new road bike or have riding experience but are looking for a community to bike with.

Visit <https://www.facebook.com/ScottsCycleWomensWednesdays> for information on this Wednesday's ride and stay tuned to Facebook for information on future rides.

Scott's Cycle and Sports is located on 110 E Highland Avenue and can be reached at (541) 567-1848.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JENNIFER BROWN

The Columbia Juniors All-Star Softball head coach Travis Reeser tries his best to dodge a Gatorade shower after his team's come-from-behind victory.

## Columbia Juniors win district tournament after late rally

By ALEXIS MANSANAREZ  
STAFF WRITER

PILOT ROCK — The Columbia Juniors All-Stars softball team earned the nickname 'Comeback Queens' from their parents and fans after rallying back in nearly every game of the 2018 District All-State Tournament on June 13 in Pilot Rock.

The team, made up of nine players from Stanfield and one from both Echo and Boardman, defeated Union in the finale, 12-11. The walk-off victory came from a bunt off the bat of Katelyn Griffin and some timely base running by Alexis Shelby, who scored on an error. But the efforts go beyond these two all-stars, head coach Travis Reeser noted.

"It was certainly the effort of all 11 girls," he said. "It's really a neat group and one that works together and gets along. They are just fun and competitive."

That competitiveness showed as each game of the tournament, Columbia had to dig itself out of a hole. From Game 1, which was won with a late rally in the sixth, up until the first of two games against Union, where the talented Union roster strung together a victory.

"It's not so much the comeback stuff," Reeser said while admitting those wins are still, of course, something to celebrate. "It's that they know how to compete and their willingness to play."

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