

The Pro Rally returns to Vernonia and will start from high school

The Oregon Trail Rally is once again on the Portland Rose Festival Association calendar, after taking last year off due to the storm and flood damage in this corner of the state. The level 3 divisional SCCA PRO rally will take place Saturday, June 7, on Tillamook State Forest roads near Hwy. 26, west of Timber.

Oregon Rally Group, organizers of the rally, is quite proud of the show that they plan to offer to the fans who venture out to witness race prepared, yet street legal, cars roaring down narrow, twisting gravel roads. Drivers set up to take corners they have never seen before; preparing just from mileages and descriptions that the co-driver reads from the route book!

Vernonia NAPA Auto Parts and citizens of Vernonia are sponsoring the start of the

Oregon Trail Rally with activities starting at 9:00 a.m. along Bridge Street in Vernonia, across from the NAPA store. After final registration and tech inspection, all cars will line up for a Parc Expose display for the public. The Vernonia Chamber of Commerce encourages the public to step up and mingle with the teams and inspect the cars.

Rally cars will be flagged off one at a time, starting at 11:00 a.m., as they head south out of town toward Timber and the race stages. Stage 1 is sponsored by Engine Rebuilders Supply of Troutdale. Stage 2 is sponsored by Hillsboro's Royal Moore Subaru, homebase of National Production GT points leader Lee Shadbolt's Subaru Impreza.

Spectating is free at rally events, and fans may pick up a spectator guide at the start

location in Vernonia, at Vernonia Auto Parts or at the rally service area at milepost 34 along Hwy 26. The rally cars will use the ODOT maintenance yard located on the south side of the highway all afternoon to service their cars. Access to the main spectator viewing area is from the east at Timber, or from the west at Hwy 26 milepost 32,

via Salmonberry Rd. From this locale, fans can view two rally stages. Since the stages are run twice during the day, that's four times that the competitors will pass the viewing area. Get a spectator guide, viewing is in the great outdoors, it's fun and it's free!

Want to help out? It always takes dozens of day-of-the-event volunteers to help an

event come off smoothly. The public is invited to the \$10 post-rally dinner banquet at Pacific University, but volunteers get their meals free! EMTs, ham radio operators, time keepers, or just crowd and side-road control marshals are all needed and appreciated. Call Mike Nagle at 503-244-8570 or Ben Bradley at 503-231-1328.

Great 1/4-mile action at Rivercity Speedway opener

By Mike Weber
Special to The INDEPENDENT

After ending the 1996 stock car season with two straight wins, Dan Fox of Portland extended his streak to three as he won the sportsman main event May 10 at Rivercity Speedway's 1997 season opener.

Longview's Troy Schreiner started on the pole of the street stock feature and led from start to finish on the quarter-mile clay oval.

The three divisions of stock car racing at the Columbia County Fairgrounds included the women's division with Jackie Fratton of Portland capturing the 15-lap main. Over 70 drivers entered this opening event of the Columbia County Racing Association, which was originally scheduled a week earlier but was rained out on May 3.

Driving the Northwest Competition Motorsports Chevrolet Lumina, Fox passed Longview's Tim Gosch with just three laps remaining in the 35-lap feature. Gosch won the 1996 street stock title and was competing in the sportsman division for the first time.

Gosch started sixth in the 16-car field and took the lead after passing frontrunner Al

Cardwell of St. Helens on lap 12. He quickly zoomed ahead in the Little Caesar's Pizza/E.C. Exhaust sponsored Pontiac Grand Prix and led by a straightaway length over Fox and Cardwell by lap 20.

He lost the advantage on lap 24 when a caution flag came out for debris on the track. Gosch maintained a slim lead until he was caught in lapped traffic, when Fox made a slick move. The leaders came out of turn two side-by-side onto the back straight with the lapped car driven by Bruce Liner just ahead in the middle of the track. Fox ducked underneath Liner and Gosch went to the outside, losing the lead. Fox easily led the last three laps and won by four car-lengths over Gosch. Cardwell, who led the first 11 circuits, took third and defending sportsman champion Paul Liner of St. Helens finished fourth.

"This was a great race and it was one of the toughest wins I've had in my 14-year career," said Fox, who was seventh in the division last year. "Gosch could've won because I wouldn't have been able to catch him if he didn't get caught in lapped traffic. He went high and I went low

and that was really the turning point in the race that enabled me to get the victory."

Schreiner, 29, started on the front row of the street stock main event since the top-eight from qualifying were inverted at the front of the 14-car lineup. He stayed up front throughout the 35-lap race, while receiving the first main event win of his career in the Rainier Texaco sponsored Oldsmobile Cutlass.

Vernonia's Gary Meyer took second followed by Portland drivers Greg Jeffries and May Sayre, Longview's Jackie Olson was sixth and Michelle Mears of Rainier finished tenth. It was the street stock debut for Olson and Mears, the only women competitors in the division.

Ernie Connall of St. Helens started on the pole and led all the way in the 25-lap caution-free street stock B Main. Doug Lockwood won the sportsman B Main, but perhaps the most impressive performance was by Lee Thomas of Longview, who started 11th in the field and finished third.

The next event for CCRA is Saturday, May 24, with qualifying at 3:30 p.m. followed by racing at 6:00 p.m.

RIVERCITY Street Stock
SPEEDWAY Sportsman
Women
Modified

May 24
Regular
Race

Dirt Flingin', Ground Poundin',
1/4 Mile Oval Action!

DASHES - HEATS - MAINS

Columbia County Fairgrounds, St. Helens
Time Trials 3:30 p.m. • Racing 6:00 p.m.
Info: 503-397-2393 Race Day Only: 503-397-6506
Sponsored by CCRA

Community Calendar

MAY	JUNE	JULY
4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5
11 12 13 14 15 16 17	8 9 10 11 12 13 14	6 7 8 9 10 11 12
18 19 20 21 22 23 24	15 16 17 18 19 20 21	13 14 15 16 17 18 19
25 26 27 28 29 30 31	22 23 24 25 26 27 28	20 21 22 23 24 25 26
	29 30	27 28 29 30 31

VERNONIA

Boosters	2nd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., VHS Library
Boy Scouts	Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., LDS Church
Cemetery Beautification Comm.	2nd Thursday	7:00 p.m., Crazy Charlie's
Chamber of Commerce	2nd Wed.	7:30 a.m., Gran-Ma's Eatery
Community Center Board	2nd Wednesday	7:00 VHS Library
Cub Scouts	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., WGS Gym
Doll Club	3rd Wednesday	1:00 p.m., Senior Center
Girl Scouts	Thursdays	6:30-8 p.m., Christian Church
Izaak Walton League	3rd Thursday	429-7193, Call for location
Jamboree Committee	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., VHS Library
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Tuesdays	6:30 p.m., Lew's Place For Info Call 429-4074
Nehalem Valley Car Club		
Parent-Teacher Assoc. (PTA)	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., WGS Library
Preschool Story Hour	Wednesdays	10:30 a.m., City Library
Senior Center Directors	1st Friday	1 p.m., Senior Center
Society of Arts & Crafts	2nd Thursday	1:30 p.m., New China Rest.
Vernonia Airport Committee	3rd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Vernonia Cares Directors	Quarterly	627 Adams, 429-1414 for info.
Vernonia City Council	1st & 3rd Mondays	6:30 p.m., City Library
Vernonia Grange	2nd Friday	7:00 p.m., Grange Hall
Vernonia Health Center	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., 854 Grant Ave.
Vernonia Preschool Directors	1st Tuesday	7 p.m., 627 Adams
Vernonia Planning Comm.	1st & 3rd Thursdays	7:00 p.m., City Library
Vernonia Pride	4th Thursday	7 p.m., VHS Library
Vernonia Ridge Riders	Last Thursday	7:00 p.m., WGS Library
Vernonia RFPD Board	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia School Board	2nd Thursday	8 p.m., District Office
Vernonia Volunteer Firefighters	2nd Monday	7 p.m., Fire Station
WOEC Directors	3rd Tuesday	7 p.m., WOEC
Women's Aglow	4th Monday	7 p.m., Senior Center

MIST-BIRKENFELD

M-BRFPD Board	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Firefighters Assoc.	1st, 2nd & 3rd Wednesdays	7 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Ambulance Assoc.	1st, 2nd & 3rd Thursdays	7 p.m., Main Fire Station
Natal Grange	2nd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Grange Hall

BANKS

Alcoholics Anonymous	Fridays	8:00 p.m., Methodist Church
Banks Area Merchants Assoc.	1st Thursday	7:00 a.m., Brown Derby
Banks City Council	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m., City Hall
Banks Planning Commission	Last Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Banks School Board	2nd Monday	7:30 p.m., Jr. High Library
Banks Youth Group	Sundays, Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., UMC Youth Bldg.
Citizen Participation Org.	3rd Monday, odd months	7:15 p.m., City Hall
Friends of the Library	1st Saturday	10:00 a.m., City Library
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., Methodist Church
Sunset Park Assoc.	3rd Wednesday	8:00 p.m., Gun Club
TOPS	Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., Jr. High Library
Tri-City RFPD Board	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Station 13

COLUMBIA COUNTY (All meet in St. Helens unless otherwise noted.)

Board of Commissioners	Wednesdays	10 a.m., Courthouse
Citizens for Senior Justice	2nd Tuesday	7 p.m., Sunset Park Church
COLCO Transportation	2nd Friday	10:30 a.m., Courthouse
County Council of Seniors	2nd Friday	1:00 p.m., Courthouse
Columbia ESD	3rd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., 800 Port Ave.
County Fair Board	2nd & 4th Tuesdays	7 p.m., 4-H Bldg., Fairgrounds
County Parks Commission	3rd Thursday	6 p.m., 1054 Oregon St.
Emergency Comm. Dist. (9-1-1)	3rd Tuesday	7 p.m., Courthouse
Historical Society	4th Wednesday	Noon, location call 429-3713
Traffic Safety Commission	1st Wednesday	7 a.m., Village Inn

Organizations and meeting dates not listed may be included by calling 429-9410, or by mail to The INDEPENDENT, 1206 State Avenue, Vernonia, OR 97064.