

MCKENZIE VALLEY DELIGHT



RACHEL ROSE RIPPE/For The News

The McKenzie River is lined by lush forest, farm land, public parks and a number of boat landings for easy access.

A river runs through it

The McKenzie River serves as a scenic byway for paddling pleasure

By Paul Wurster
The Springfield News

The McKenzie River is a favorite destination for hardcore, white water thrill seekers, but that doesn't mean it's off limits to the occasional paddler looking for a leisurely float.

The lower McKenzie, from Leaburg to the confluence of the Willamette River is a 40-mile scenic byway ready made for open canoeists and rafters with basic paddling skills.

A popular stretch — especially with drift boat anglers — begins just below Leaburg Dam and flows down to Hendricks Bridge, about 10 miles east of Springfield. This 15-mile run is relatively quiet compared to areas above Leaburg. The scenery is a mix of agricultural countryside, forest and developed private property. Many impressive homes line the banks.

Much of the run features deep, clear stretches that meander around large brush covered islands. But there are sections that run swiftly through sharp turns and require careful atten-

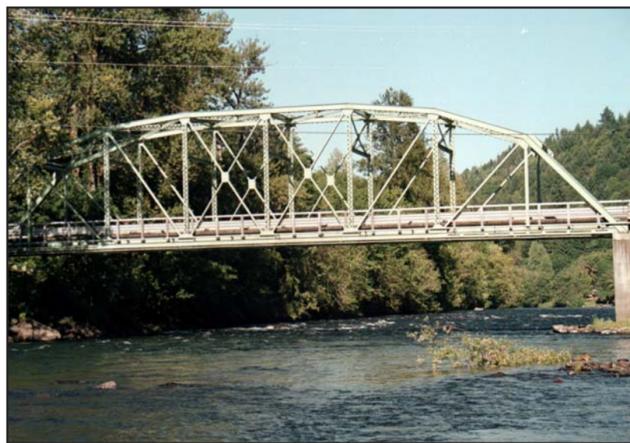
tion. Some areas have tight turns that call for controlled back-paddling to avoid brush, rocks, logs and other hazards.

The McKenzie below Leaburg Dam is categorized as a class 2 by the American Whitewater Affiliation International Scale of River Difficulty. Class 2 is described as having easy rapids with waves up to three feet, and wide clear channels that are obvious without scouting. Some maneuvering is required, however, and as always, personal floatation devices are mandatory.

The McKenzie's rate of flow varies from 900-2,000 cubic feet per second on this particular stretch, but there is adequate water for boating all year long. The gradient — the elevation change over the length of the run — is 14 feet per mile and relatively uniform over its length.

Most channels appear to be open, but close inspection is required to choose the best route — especially in late summer when the water level is lower.

About half way to Hendricks Wayside, the river flows under a bridge at Deerhorn Park. This is



RACHEL ROSE RIPPE/For The News

The McKenzie passes under Deerhorn Bridge, about halfway between Leaburg Dam and Hendricks Wayside Park.

the only bridge along the way, although the trip does take boaters by a massive concrete bridge support that is now sinking slowly into the McKenzie's riverbed.

Approximately 1.5 miles below Deerhorn, the river splits around

Goat Island. Signs are posted at the fork, warning boaters of an Eugene Water Electric Board irrigation ditch just down stream to the right. The smaller south fork to the left continues to Hendricks

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Woolley batters blazing hot

Springfield clocks North Salem with offensive firepower

By Don Smalley
The Springfield News

The Springfield Woolleys' goal right now is to get on a roll right before the Best of the West tournament at Swede Johnson Stadium next week — and they are doing just that.

The offense, defense and pitching are all hitting on the right cylinders and North Salem found that out the hard way Wednesday. Springfield went north and trounced the home team 17-6.

"We're getting everything in order at the right time," coach Scott DeWitt said. "I told the team to focus this week and to bear down because we want to be hot going into the tournament."

DeWitt's pre-game speech worked to perfection, as the Woolleys pounded out 24 hits in the nine-inning affair. Brian Barley had a career game by hitting for the cycle and driving in five runs.

"It's pretty special to see anyone at any level hit for the cycle," DeWitt said, "so good for him."

But Barley had plenty of support up and down the Woolleys' order. Neal Schapper, not particularly known for his hitting, smacked out four hits. Schapper is known for his talents on the mound, but DeWitt said it was good to see him get out of a slump.

"I think using the wood bat in

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Emerald offense cools off in Boise

Hawks follow rainout with two straight victories

By Don Smalley
The Springfield News

Trips to Boise have never been much fun for the Eugene Emeralds and their most recent trip wasn't much different.

Eugene actually led the series 2-1 before rain hit Tuesday night. Showers washed out Game 4 and carried away Emerald offense.

In a doubleheader Wednesday night, the Ems managed just two runs total in two seven-inning games. Boise claimed a 3-1 win in the opener and a 4-1 victory in the night-cap.

The two losses dropped the struggling Emeralds to 4-9 — last place in the West Division. Boise jumped up to a second-place tie with Spokane at 7-6 and moved the Hawks within one game of Tri-City.

Gary Gallegos was the hard-luck loser in Game 1 for the Ems. He pitched 5 1/3 innings, allowed four hits and struck out five.

One of those four hits was a blast from Anthony Granato in the third inning that proved to be the game winner. The homer put the Hawks up just 2-1, but Eugene couldn't rally.

The Ems' lone run came in the second when Orlando Diaz hit a fielder's choice, scoring Colt Morton who opened the inning with a double.

Game 2 was almost a repeat of the first contest. Granato went deep

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Bees buzzing in league of their own

Killer Bee softball laying groundwork for city's prep teams

By Don Smalley
The Springfield News

The high school softball season may be over, but Springfield and Thurston's future stars are taking shape right now.

The Springfield Killer Bees, a group of 14-and-under summer softball players, are busy polishing their skills in hopes of one day playing for the Colts or the Millers.

In the past, the Killer Bees have taken a win-the-games approach, but that has changed, according to head coach Chester Brown.

"I wanted this summer to be more about development," Brown said. "I want all the players to get about the same number of at-bats."

About half of the players plan to attend Springfield High in the coming years; the rest are headed for Thurston. Although the Killer Bees can have players as old as age 14, most are 12 or 13.



SAM KARP/The Springfield News

Holly Hanayan of the Killer Bees slides into base as Ricci Estes of the McKenzie Rapids attempts a double play during softball action last week.

"We are a young 14U team," Brown said. "We have an array of talent on this squad. Some are more skillful than others, but with our developmental approach, I wanted

some kids who were not all that skilled."

For a young team, it does help to have experience on the mound and that's what Springfield has in Chloe

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SPORTS

Sports Briefs

Local ball player shines at Safeco Field

Tymothy Pearson, 13, of Springfield placed second at the Pepsi Major League Baseball Pitch, Hit and Run team championship at the Seattle Mariners' Safeco Field Sunday.

Pearson qualified to compete at the team championship by placing first in his age division at a local competition. He was named All-Around Champion at the Eugene Sectional June 5.

Pitch, Hit and Run is the official skills competition of Major League Baseball. This grassroots program is in its eighth year of existence and is designed to provide youth across North America with an integrated competition that recognizes individual excellence in core baseball skills. Children compete in four age groups and have the chance to advance through four levels of competition, including the local, sectional, team championship and national finals.

The final level of competition concludes at the 2004 All-Star Game in Houston. The top-four competitors nationwide from each of the four age groups advance to the national finals to compete for the championship during all-star week.

River rescue clinic set

A clinic about rope systems for river rescue will be offered by the University of Oregon Outdoors Program July 8.

Useful knots, rope systems, hardware, techniques and strategies will be covered in this hands-on, land-based clinic. Pre-registration is required.

Participants meet at the Outdoor Program barn on the UO campus. The free clinic begins at 5:30 p.m.

Salmon, steelhead season extended for Three Rivers

The season for hatchery salmon and steelhead in Three Rivers will last an additional two weeks, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife announced.

This extension will allow continued angling through July 15 in Three Rivers for adipose-fin-clipped spring chinook and adipose-fin-clipped summer steelhead from the mouth of the river upstream to the hatchery weir at Cedar Creek. The area will be closed to angling July 16 through Oct. 1. The system above the weir remains open all summer.

Three Rivers is a tributary of the Nestucca River in north-west Oregon. The original closure date was Wednesday.

Spring chinook and summer steelhead returns to Three Rivers were late this year, but have been showing up in large numbers during the last 10 days. This has created a significant excess of returning adult broodstock for Cedar Creek Hatchery. Extending the fishery through July 15 will allow anglers more time to fish for these adults.

Baseball tryouts slated

Coast to Coast Amateur Athletics is planning a tryout at Swede Johnson baseball field at North Eugene High July 31.

Tryouts are set for 10 a.m. for boys ages 11-18 and 2 p.m. for girls ages 16-18. Coast to Coast teams compete in Puerto Rico, Australia, the Netherlands and Hawaii.

For more information call (740) 373-4455 or visit www.coasttocoastathletics.com on the Internet.

Abracadabra



COURTESY PHOTO

Oregon Magic captured the U12 AAU state championship title, earning an invitation to the National Division II tournament in Nashville.

Area hoopsters have magic touch

Oregon Magic, a U12 AAU girls basketball team leaves this week for Nashville to compete in the National Division II tournament.

The team compiled a record of 45 wins and seven losses during the past year against teams from Oregon, Washington and Northern California. The Magic won their second AAU state championship in April.

The team is comprised of girls from the local area, including Kenzie Smith from Briggs Middle School, Brandi Dunn from Hamlin Middle and Brittney Pierce of Agnes Stewart.

Other members of the Magic are Chloe Martin of Junction City, Kaitlyn Kronberger of Cottage Grove and Eugene residents Katie Collins, Ashley Smith, Alyxe

Bruns, Hannah Long and Rachel Wolfe-Goldsmith.

The team is coached by Chuck Wenger, a teacher at Hamlin, and his wife, Diane, a former teacher at Agnes Stewart.

The Magic open pool play Monday against the Excel Angels from Northern Virginia and the Carolina Express. Pool play concludes Tuesday against Martinsville Indiana.

River

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Bridge.

Approximately 1.5 miles farther, boaters drift by McNutt's Island, which lies just above the most significant rapid before the take-out at Hendricks Park. The river drops to the right and then forms some high waves before running swiftly by some large boulders.

Hendricks Bridge Wayside is on the right, just before the bridge.

There are few sandy beaches along this trip. Most of the banks are covered with thick vegetation and outcroppings are surrounded by river rocks. That shouldn't discourage paddlers from pulling over for lunch at one of numerous shallow areas. The trip

takes about four hours without stopping.

Hendricks Bridge Wayside is a county park located at mile 11.5 on Highway 126. Parking costs \$3.

To reach the put-in, take Highway 126 to Leaburg Dam Road. Cross the dam and turn right. A drift-boat slide is located between the dam and Leaburg fish hatchery.

Batters

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batting practice has helped Neal," he said. "It causes you to have more bat control. Then when you pick up the aluminum, it's like swinging a toothpick."

Also swinging a hot bat was Chris Immonen, who had four hits, including two triples and four RBI. Joaquin Lopez also smacked out four hits.

The beneficiary of the offensive explosion was Matt Phelps, who captured the win by whiffing eight batters in 6 2/3 innings pitched.

"We hit a lull in the middle of the game, but from the fifth inning on, we really hit the ball hard," DeWitt said.

Springfield will head up to Dallas today for a tune-up before the big tournament next week. It's a tournament all of the players are looking

forward to, DeWitt said.

"Our goal is to win the thing," he said. "We want to win six in a row."

The Woolleys better be awake when they kick the tournament off at 8 a.m. July 7 against the Vancouver Trojans from Washington.

The Best of the West tournament is a 10-team tournament that is split up in two divisions of five. After the round robin in each division is completed, the two divisional winners will play for the championship July 11.

The Red Division will include the Eugene Challengers, North Salem, Camas, Wash., Central Point and Wilkinson Academy. The Blue Division will

Scott DeWitt
Springfield Woolleys

Our goal is to win the thing. We want to win six in a row.

include Springfield, Vancouver, the Triple Play Swarm from Tacoma, Lafayette from California and North Medford.

1x1

2x2

4x5

1x4

Emeralds

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again, this time leading off the game for the Hawks.

Eugene scored one run off of back-to-back doubles from Sean Kazmar and Jose Lobaton.

William Ponce was the second hard-luck loser for Eugene. He allowed three runs — two earned — seven hits and struck out two in five innings.

At 4-9 and five games out, now is a good time for Eugene to get back in the race. The Ems opened a six-game series with Salem-Keizer last night.

The Ems host the Volcanoes in a three-game set and then travel to Keizer to finish up the series.

Eugene will have a fireworks display at Civic Stadium Saturday. Game time as been pushed back to 6:35 p.m.

Bees

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Chester Brown
Killer Bees

short," Brown said. "She's done a good job."

In order to fill in the catcher's spot, Brown didn't have to look far. He went to another daughter, Tamara, to put behind the plate.

"Tamara is a very good defensive catcher," Brown said. "She can really block those balls in the dirt."

This is Brown's first opportunity to coach softball after playing the game for 20 years. He coached his three sons in baseball, and according to Brown, there is one obvious difference.

"There is crying in softball," he said, referring to the movie "A League of Their Own." "Emotions run high with the girls."

We are taking the state tourney seriously. We'll play our best and see what happens.

Crying or not, the U14 team has won more than it has lost.

And the Bees are hoping to make other teams across the state tear up when they enter the State Tournament this weekend in Tualatin. The season may have been for development, but the Bees are now out to win.

"We're taking the State tourney seriously," Brown said. "We'll play our best and see what happens."



SAM KARP/The Springfield News

Killer Bees hurler Chloe Alberson unleashes a pitch during summer league softball action at Thurston High.