



TriCities

Washington Interscholastic Activities Association is continuing to make adjustments to high school sports in response to the coronavirus pandemic. The WIAA now has slated football practice to start Feb. 17. It earlier moved the sport to another season.

LOCAL ROUNDUP

WIAA continues to tweak high school sports for 20-21 term

BY JEFF MORROW
Special to the Herald

One week after announcing that almost all high school sports will be moved and played after the first of the year, the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association continued to make changes going forward. And it likely will continue.

But here are the latest changes the WIAA's Executive Board made on Tuesday:

- Boys and girls cross country and slowpitch softball are now considered alternate season options for WIAA Season 1. What that means is that schools can opt to hold those sports in the fall, just like tennis and golf.

That's what many western Washington schools do because of the wet

spring weather. But the post-season for the above sports will actually be held in WIAA Season 3.

What that means is the state cross country championships, if held, could be around May 1, 2021 at Sun Willows Golf Course in Pasco.

- After listening to state health officials, the board elected to move girls swimming and diving from WIAA Season 1 to WIAA Season 3.

- The board elected to move football up a week, with practice to begin on Feb. 17. Football, which was moved to WIAA Season 3, must have two weeks of practice completed before games can be played. By moving everything up a week, football can begin with competitions at the same time as other WIAA Season 3 sports (cheer, volleyball, girls soccer, girls swim-

ming and diving, cross country and slowpitch softball) do.

- The board is allowing WIAA Season 2 sports to begin practices a week earlier, starting Dec. 28, so that athletes who want to play a Season 2 sport (boys and girls basketball, girls bowling, gymnastics, boys swimming and diving, and boys and girls wrestling) won't lose any time in a Season 3 sport involving overlap of dates.

- The board elected to allow an out-of-season period from Aug. 17 to Sept. 27, and an out-of-season coaching period from Sept. 28 to Nov. 30. These moves are for any sport that do not take place in WIAA Season 1 — pretty much all of them. The window mimics the traditional summer coaching window that the WIAA sanctions.

Football is allowed 20

days of contact practice during the fall during the allowable coaching period. But no coaching is allowed in the Aug. 17 to Sept. 27 period.

- Because each sports season will be shortened by 30 percent, the board will allow a sports team to have 70 percent of its normal schedule. For instance, in the case of 20 regular-season games usually allowed for basketball, baseball or softball, those teams would be allowed 14 in this new, tightened season.

- Finally, the board listened to the competitive administrators of competitive cheer, who asked that the sport be moved from Season 2 to Season 3. It did so.