



TRAINER TIM BENNETT applies his skill and some tape to the knee of Robert Ridgway, a sophomore at Flathead High School. Bennett has been working for the past five years to try to prevent sports-related injuries in young athletes.

Trainer helps keep athletes in the game

By CHERY SABOL
The Daily Inter Lake

"Sometimes you can do all the prevention in the world, and they're still going to get hurt. That's part of sports. That's the risk you take," said Tim Bennett, sports trainer for Kalispell school athletes.

Bennett's job is to keep sports-related injuries at a minimum, at a time when high school athletic programs are becoming increasingly demanding.

For the past five years, Bennett has been the trainer for boys' and girls' basketball, football, tennis, volleyball, track and wrestling. Off the field, he is also a health teacher at the high school.

As trainer, Bennett possesses specialized qualifications. He underwent 1,800 hours of supervised training and worked on an ambulance as an emergency medical technician in Dillon.

Certification for athletic trainers comes only after passing a five-hour, three-part exam, which must be followed with continuing education.

"It's pretty much never-ending," Bennett said.

That training qualifies him to oversee athletes, from fitting their equipment to observing how they practice.

"I'm more a practice person than anything. Hopefully, my job is done before the game starts," he said.

He's quick with a roll of tape for weak joints or a prescription of weight-lifting for weak muscles.

"I travel mostly in football, because there is so much higher incidence of injury there," Bennett said.

Prevention of injuries may involve intervening in practice, he said: "Sometimes we forget prevention means resting for a while."

Bennett said he likes to work with the coaches, especially those on the varsity level, who have come to trust his judgment.

"They're so advanced, they'll say, 'If you do that, you're going to be killed in a game,'" Bennett said.

Coaches know that an athlete who is pushed too hard may be

recuperating on the sidelines when an important competition comes around. But in spite of all precautions, injuries occur. They are mostly due to poor musculature, Bennett said, adding, "Ankle sprains are by far the most common."

Girls suffer different injuries from boys because of muscular differences, he said. Girls tend to get tendinitis.

Last year, six football starters were sidelined with injuries at play-offs.

"Last year was the worst year for injuries," said Bennett.

One promising athlete ruptured his Achilles' tendon, a rare and debilitating injury among young players. Another player suffered a concussion in play.

When a player suffered a subdural hematoma during a junior varsity football game last year, the trainer said, the youth required surgery to relieve pressure in his skull.

"He gave us all a scare," Bennett said.

Broken fingers, dislocated shoulders

and the like are not unusual.

The Kalispell school district is better protected against injuries than some others, he said. His own job is evidence of the district's commitment to safety. Some districts don't have trainers on staff.

"A school can't go wrong hiring a trainer. It covers so much liability," he noted.

Bennett said, however, that it also would be a good idea to have a trainer at the junior high school, since athletes at that age are vulnerable to injuries.

"I've seen five or six broken bones since I got here. I'll bet they've had twice that many at the junior high school," he said.

Technically, Bennett is athletic trainer for the whole school district, but high school sports are more than enough to occupy his time.

He'd like to see the district obtain a team physician. Currently, the teams get guidance from the Kalispell Orthopedic Clinic, and one doctor sits on the sidelines during football season in exchange for a season pass.

It's Labor Day, but Glacier Park is still in business

By BILL MORGAN
The Daily Inter Lake

Glacier Park may be one of the few places left in the state where outdoor activities are not severely limited by fire restrictions, and this year for the first time, the official park season will extend past Labor Day.

Gov. Ted Schwinden has asked Montanans to voluntarily curtail outdoor activities in tinder-dry forests this Labor Day weekend, suggesting instead they "find some asphalt." In addition, the Department of State Lands and the Flathead National Forest have placed severe fire restrictions on forest lands in Flathead County.

Visitors to Glacier Park, however, will find that fire restrictions are still minimal but well-enforced.

"We do have some restrictions right now," Michelle Rotter, park information officer, said Friday. "Our fire danger is high, while in most other forests it is considered extreme."

for several weeks past Labor Day, but park concessionaires normally closed shop after the holiday and left visitors with few services. This year, many of the concessions, as well as several campgrounds, will remain open for the longer season.

Full services will be available at Rising Sun on the east side of the park until Sept. 26, Rotter said. They include a camp store, lodging, a restaurant and gasoline. The Village Inn in Apgar will also remain open until Sept. 26, while the Apgar Village Lodge will be open until Sept. 30. Restaurants in West Glacier are open year-round, Rotter said.

Rotter said a few park bus tours between Rising Sun and The Village Inn will be offered until Sept. 26.

Glacier Wilderness Guides will offer backpacking tours of the park until snow falls, and Glacier Park Boat Co. will offer boat tours of St. Mary Lake until Sept. 25, weather permitting. Lake McDonald Boat Co., which rents small boats and canoes at Apgar, will have limited services until Sept. 25, Rotter said.

Lake McDonald Lodge will close Sept. 12.

Some interpretive programs will be available and several park campgrounds will remain open as long as weather allows, she said. Campground closing dates include Apgar and Rising Sun campgrounds, Sept. 30, and Bowman Lake, Kintla Lake and Logging Creek campgrounds, Sept. 25.

While the Camas entrance station has already closed, entrance fees will be collected at the West Glacier entrance station until Nov. 30. Many Glacier will collect fees until Sept. 22, and St. Mary entrance station will stay open until Oct. 7, Rotter said.

The Logan Pass visitor center will be open until Sept. 18.

Past years have found the gates open and fees still being collected

Guide tells disabled what valley offers

By JACKIE ADAMS
The Daily Inter Lake

A new guide to the Flathead Valley tells handicapped persons what facilities are available to them at local businesses, churches, recreational sites and tourist attractions.

The publication is the work of a local group called DREAM (Disabled Recreation and Environmental Access Movement) Inc. and writer-coordinator Kathy Harvey.

Harvey spent four months on the project, which had two objectives — to tell local handicapped people about places where they might eat, shop, and enjoy recreation, and to let the disabled elsewhere know that they could comfortably visit the Flathead.

Kalispell travel agent Dottie Maitland, who chairs the DREAM board, had discovered that few handicapped visitors were being booked into the Flathead.

The guide has two sections — a listing, by community, of businesses and the facilities they offer for the disabled, and a summary of recreational opportunities and "interesting extras" that Harvey came across while preparing the guide. A sampling of the "extras": day care for multi-handicapped children, special outings offered by the Flathead Snowmobile Association and charter fishing on Flathead Lake.

Using office facilities of Northwest Montana Human Resources, Harvey began the project by mailing letters to about 700 valley businesses, mostly found in the Yellow Pages. About 12 percent replied that they were interested in being listed.

"We found that some apparently don't want the business of disabled people," said Harvey. "Others go out of their way to provide for the disabled."

The responding businesses were checked by survey teams — seven persons in all — who looked at ramps and restrooms and applied fish-weighting scales to doors to determine how hard they had to be pulled in order to be opened.

The survey had a serendipitous side-effect: some business owners, upon learning their buildings weren't fully accessible, made changes. At Cavanaugh's, for example, several heavy doors were made easier to open, said Harvey. A couple of motels altered their remodeling plans.

"I even wound up trying to help K mart redesign some restrooms," said Harvey.

In assembling the information, Harvey studied handicapped-access guides from other areas. Larry Dominick of Northwest Montana Human Resources

**Glacier Park - Flathead Valley
Accessibility Guide**

to
*Undiscovered
Montana*

DREAM
Disabled Recreation and
Environmental Access Movement

suggested a system of symbols to save long explanations and give quick information.

A typical entry lists the name of the establishment, its address and phone number, a series of boxes bearing symbols related to such things as dining, restrooms and elevators, and usually a paragraph of additional information.

Northwest Publishing Co. printed 5,000 copies of the guide, and more than 1,000 of them have been distributed so far to local chambers of commerce, individuals and organizations, according to Dominick. A bundle will go out through National Travel Industry Association

Open house set on plans for Somers access site

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks will be sponsoring an open house at the Region One temporary headquarters on Sept. 8 to discuss the draft plan for improvements to the Somers fishing access site.

The open house will run from noon until 6 p.m. and will be hosted

by Jim Vashro, fisheries manager. The temporary quarters are at 3445 U.S. 93 South.

At 8 p.m., also on Sept. 8, Vashro will speak about the access site plan at the meeting of the Kalispell Sportsmen's Club of Flathead Wildlife Inc. The meeting will be in the community room of the Pacific

Smoky air is problematic

Air quality dropped into the "unhealthy" range Friday afternoon as smoke from area fires hung over the Flathead Valley.

Public health nurse Dan Dickman said conditions were poor enough that elderly people or those with respiratory problems should avoid going outside at peak times.

"They should keep their windows and doors closed," added public health nurse Elaine Sedlack.

Dickman also urged people to avoid strenuous outdoor exercise until the smoke clears.

"What they're doing is just exposing themselves to carbon dioxide, smoke, you name it," he said.

Common sense is the best weapon against smoke danger, Sedlack said. Anyone who begins to wheeze or notices a burning in the nose or throat should get out of the smoky air, she said.

Joe Russell, a sanitarian with the health department, said tests showed about 121 milligrams of particulate per cubic meter Friday. Visibility was about five miles, he said.

"It does not exceed standards, but it still isn't very good," he said.

The tests are based on a continuous reading of particulate counts for 24 hours. Readings peaked Friday afternoon, Russell said.

"It doesn't seem to follow any weather patterns," he said. Poor conditions seem to peak at about 8 a.m. and then drop off by 10 a.m.

Russell said Friday afternoon that officials from Whitefish High School inquired whether the football team could safely play that night. They were given the go-ahead.

A good rule of thumb on air quality is based on visibility, Russell said.

"If you can see 10 miles, if you can see the mountains, it's all right," he said. If visibility is less than four miles, air quality is probably in the unhealthy range. Less than one mile is considered hazardous, he said.

Historic Kalispell Hotel is getting a facelift

By JOANN SPEELMAN
The Daily Inter Lake

A \$250,000 remodeling project on the exterior and ground level of the historic Kalispell Hotel building at First and Main streets should be completed by mid-October.

Stephen Cooney and Donald and Janis Singer, owners of the circa-1909 building, have worked with Ed Gallagher and his staff at the Community Development office on financing and plans.

Cooney, a fifth generation Montanan whose grandfather Frank was governor in the 1930s, and the Singers, who moved to the area from Oregon 15 years ago, want to retain the historic features of the hotel.

Cooney said renovation of the structure, which is a national historic register site, will restore the original brick with painted trim. The building will sport awnings and the original leaded glass, being redone by Columbine Glass. Some of the glass, broken or covered for years by exterior siding, has been uncovered already.

The plans call for remodeling the back portion of the ground floor to provide a new home for The Alley Connection. Restaurant owners Singh and The Lam are creating their own atmosphere for the dining

area and will offer an expanded menu in the new quarters, which are some four times larger than the present ones in the back of the Log Cabin Bar.

The Cooney/Singer property includes the Kalispell and Log Cabin bars. The owners opened the common wall between the two bars, and the remodeling will provide access from them into the Kalispell Hotel.

The Board Room, a sandwich and burger kitchen, is being designed to bring back the Log Cabin's original western atmosphere, Cooney said.

In the second phase, which will begin next summer, the Emerald Lounge will be created next to The Alley Connection. Cooney described it as a "quiet executive lounge."

Cooney said Books West and J-J Barber Shop will continue to occupy the front of the main floor, with Books West also planning some upgrading. The Western Union office will still be with the lobby for the upstairs hotel rooms, which were renovated several years ago. The 30 rooms are rented by the week or month, mostly to college students and senior citizens, Cooney said.

The renovation project, begun in July, is being financed with tax increment money through NorWest Bank.



FRAMED BY A BRICK ARCH, carpenter Richard Roe works on the renovation of the Kalispell Hotel.