

# Playing the waiting game

## Spring teams remain hopeful for season

**BY NIQKO MARSHALL**  
STAFF WRITER

Spring sports teams are hoping the postponement of the spring season by the Virginia High School League turns out to be just a postponement, and nothing more.

The spring season of sports was set to get under way this week. However, the Virginia High School League announced that

the start of the season would be postponed for two weeks amid the COVID-19 outbreak.

While many players and coaches understand the reasons for the move, they hope the initial postponement will be just that for now.

“We are all hoping that we’ll be able to have a season,” said Nansemond River High School boys’ soccer coach, Dustin

Tordoff. “We completely agree with everything that Virginia has done making sure everyone is safe and healthy.”

Over the course of the two-week postponement, there will be no practice allowed, which has all coaches around Virginia just waiting and seeing what’s going to happen next. Coaches have been in contact with their players advising them to

stay safe but, if possible, find ways to do cardio or some form of a workout in case the season is not lost.

The seniors are in an especially tough spot, not knowing if they will get a chance to play their final season.

“Everybody is kind of in the same situation, so it’s kind of tough,” said Lakeland High School girls’ soccer coach, Adam

Smith. “You feel bad for the seniors, you know, but high school sports is such a small part to what’s going on right now. So, we hope we can salvage a season, but if not we will all understand it.”

Despite not officially playing a game, most teams were able to get a couple of scrimmages in before the season started. So, with the exception of winter sports players

who were just transitioning to spring sports when the delay happened, most teams and players are set to go.

No school or sport is permitted to practice, which means no team or school will be able to gain an advantage over another. As teams continue to play the waiting game, the hope is that some games can be played rather than none at all.



ALEX PERRY/SUFFOLK NEWS-HERALD

Suffolk park superintendent J.R. Ruggiero prepares dump Christmas trees at Lone Star Lakes Park Thursday.

# Fishin' around the Christmas trees

**BY ALEX PERRY**  
STAFF WRITER

Christmas trees sank into Suffolk waters on Thursday to create better habits for fish.

The smell of evergreen was

thick around the boat ramp at Lone Star Lakes' Butler Tract in the early morning cold, as men from Suffolk Parks and Recreation and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries tied about

100 trees to cinderblocks with braided nylon rope. The trees were then transported by boat and dumped at both shoreline and offshore fishing spots in the Butler Tract lake.

The unsold trees were

donated by Lowe's Home Improvement on North Main Street to VDGIF, and the blocks used to sink the trees were donated by Tidewater

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# Trees: Provide habitat for fish

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Block of Suffolk, according to a city press release.

Suffolk Parks and Recreation is partnering with VDGIF on this project to create fish habitats in Butler Tract, providing shelter for young fish against larger predators.

It will also be a boon for fishing in the 65-acre shell marl lake, which is “the most popular fishing destination at Lone Star Lakes Park,” according to Park Superintendent J.R. Ruggiero.

“It’s real clear water, very scenic, and it’s got the best boat ramp accessibility in the park,” Ruggiero said.

These new fish habitats will help anglers there, including those fishing from the pier, Ruggiero said.

“It’s going to provide habitat accessible by shore, for the anglers

who do not have a boat,” he said. “They fish from the pier. Now they have habitat for the fish to hold in and live in, which makes it easier for them to catch.”

At Lone Star Lakes Park, these trees will take about six months or so to become waterlogged and start to sink, according to Chad Boyce, district fisheries biologist for VDGIF.

“The characteristics of this lake are generally steep-sided, with very little structure,” Boyce said, “so these trees add a needed benefit of habitat for juvenile fish, to have places to hide and avoid predation from larger fish.”

The primary species in the lake that will benefit from this project are largemouth bass, bluegill, white perch and the redear sunfish — also known as

“shellcracker” — “by creating areas for those fish to have refuge, so they’re not all consumed by the predatory fish,” Boyce said.

These fish habitats are one of the two main uses for these Christmas trees in the region after the holidays, according to Boyce. Other trees are used for dune replenishment for beaches in places like Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and False Cape State Park in Virginia Beach.

Lone Star Lakes Park is located at 401 Kings Highway. No permit is required to fish at this park, but a valid Virginia Fishing License is required for persons aged 16 or older.

For more information on Lone Star Lakes, contact J.R. Ruggiero at 255-4032.

# Taking a bite out of Phase II

**BY RACHEL WARTIAN**  
STAFF WRITER

As most of the state moved into its Phase II reopening on Friday, local restaurants started to open their dining rooms. With the escalating June heat, inside seating comes at just the right time.

According to the new Phase II requirements, restaurants can operate at 50 percent capacity, allowing Suffolk eateries to adjust their services to fit the new laws.

At The Plaid Turnip on Friday, Marianne Conrod enjoyed lunch with her children for the first time inside since mid-March.

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RACHEL WARTIAN/SUFFOLK NEWS-HERALD

Marianne Conrod and her children, Jacob and Katherine, enjoy dining indoors at a restaurant for the first time in months.

# Phase II: Started Friday

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“It’s very nice to be able to sit inside out of the heat,” said Conrod. “I am glad Phase II is here, and we can start moving forward as long as the numbers stay safe.”

At The Plaid Turnip, tables have been removed to follow the 50-percent limit. To reduce spreading the virus through contact, condiments are no longer on the tables. Menus are now single-use and are encouraged to be viewed digitally on personal phones. Silverware is wrapped in single-use paper napkins. Any condiments that are needed are brought to the table by request and wiped down thoroughly afterward.

“I do appreciate that the staff is still very cautious and taking the extra measures,” said Conrod.

Servers are taking precautions by wearing masks and gloves. The extra sanitation measures that were in place on Phase I will continue as well. Seating is still available outside for those who still like the fresh air.

The Plaid Turnip is still at the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts Center on West Finney Avenue.

Ryan’s Steak and Cakes is also ready for customers to dine-in. During

Phase I, Ryan’s only provided takeout. Now, more options are available. With already-limited seating, the restaurant is making adjustments to fit its needs.

“We are just trying to take our time and doing the best we can to adjust to these new regulations,” said Ryan Byrd, owner of

Ryan’s Steaks and Cakes.

Ryan’s is keeping up its sanitation practices that were already in place in the previous phase as well. With a new phase comes a new learning curve for everyone.

“We just want to do what is best for our customers,” Byrd said.



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