

Harkless' buzzer-beater leads Blazers to win over rival Lakers

The Associated Press

After Magic Johnson shockingly quit his job as the Lakers' president of basketball operations right before the game, the Lakers certainly didn't play like a franchise in turmoil.

Maurice Harkless and the Portland Trail Blazers snared a huge win anyway.

Harkless hit a corner 3-point-er at the buzzer, and the Trail Blazers secured home-court advantage in the first round of the

playoffs with a 104-101 victory Tuesday night after Johnson's abrupt resignation.

Johnson stunned the Lakers with his announcement about 90 minutes before tipoff of the last game in the team's sixth consec-

utive losing season. The Hall of Fame guard had been in charge of the Lakers for just 26 months, and his departure throws the 16-time NBA champion franchise's offseason into upheaval even before it began.

Yet the Lakers nursed a fourth-quarter lead against the Blazers, who needed this victory much more. After Harkless tied it on a layup with 33 seconds left and Seth Curry stole the ball from

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Mariners continue surprising start, top Royals

The Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Dee Gordon helped Seattle with his bat and his glove.

The Mariners are rolling along quite nicely at the moment.

Gordon got three hits and drove in two runs as high-scoring Seattle extended baseball's best record with a 6-3 victory over the Kansas City Royals on Tuesday night.

Jay Bruce hit his AL-leading seventh homer in the first inning, extending the Mariners' string to 13 games at the start of the season with at least one home run, matching the Detroit Tigers in 2017. The 2002 Cleveland Indians (14 games) are the only team since 1908 to open the season with more games with home runs.

Seattle also matched the 2000 St. Louis Cardinals with the most home runs (33) through their first 13 games.

"Our lineup, top to bottom, has been really good," manager Scott Servais said. "We had the one home run early, and I say 'just one home run' because we're used to more. We were able to tack on some runs late which was really helpful."

The Mariners improved to 11-2 and have scored at least five runs in 12 of those games. The Royals lost their eighth in a row.

Gordon singled and scored on Bruce's grounder in the third. He hit a tiebreaking two-run single in the fourth and singled again in the sixth.

Gordon also made a couple of nice plays in the field. He said he is happy to be spending more time at second base after playing four different positions last season.

"I like playing second base," he said. "That's my job. We're not always going to score a bunch of runs. We're going to have some real close contests and you've got to play defense."

Kansas City manager

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Lori Greenway photo via Emma Hite

Joseph senior Emma Hite, shown serving during a match last fall, will play volleyball for Treasure Valley Community College, and will sign her letter of intent Thursday.

New role at next level won't faze Joseph senior standout

By **Ronald Bond**
The Observer

Joseph High School senior Emma Hite has played almost every position on the volleyball court during her prep career.

One position she hasn't played, though, is the one that will be her focus when she takes the next step to the collegiate level.

Hite has verbally committed to play volleyball at Treasure Valley Community College as a defensive specialist/libero and will sign her letter of intent to make it official on Thursday.

"Treasure Valley is the place that I best felt I fit," she said. "I liked the coach, liked the girls, it's relatively close to home (and) I wanted to be on a campus I felt I belonged on."

Hite was primarily an attacker and setter during arguably the best two-year run in the history of Joseph volleyball. The Eagles placed third at state during the 2017 season — their best placing ever — and followed with a return trip to the state tournament last fall, win-

ning 47 matches during the two-year span.

But she'll be in uncharted waters when she joins the Chukars, as she shifts from setting, spiking and blocking to digging and passing as an exclusively back-line player.

"It's going to be different," she said of playing defensive specialist/libero. "That's one of the only positions I have not played in high school, but I think (it) will be a good experience. I'm willing to try something new, even at the collegiate level."

Hite said the TVCC coach, Erin Mellinger, asked her what she played in high school, then approached her with making a position change.

"(Mellinger) said, 'How do you feel about being a libero?'" Hite said. "I think the experience will be good for me, and I think I will fit very well."

Jill Hite, Emma's mother and head coach at Joseph, said her daughter isn't unfamiliar with playing defense. But it hasn't been her main role. She was an attacker and played in the defensive

back row as a junior, and was a setter and attacker as a senior.

"She did an amazing job in the back row in the middle," Jill Hite said.

The coach said the decision for TVCC came together like a puzzle, noting she and the Chukars' coach share a similar mindset.

"One of the things I'm big on is coaching a whole kid, and that's what (Mellinger's) philosophy is too," Jill Hite said. "They're not just athletes, but (also) students."

Jill Hite said versatility on Emma's part also played into the move to a purely defensive role.

"I think it's pretty cool that Emma wants to be versatile," the coach said. "She's not tall, so we knew if she wanted to play college ball she probably wasn't going to be an attacker."

Emma Hite, who was also considering going to Linn Benton Community College for basketball before deciding on TVCC, has been playing volleyball since the first grade

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Eagles take third at Carnival of Speed

Observer staff

The Joseph Eagles boys track and field team posted a 1-2 finish in the pole vault and added two more runner-up finishes to take third overall at the Carnival of Speed Friday in Milton-Freewater.

The Eagles were paced by Kade Kilgore and T.J. Grote taking the top two spots in pole vault, both after clearing a mark of 11-feet-6. Tyler Homan also had two individual second-place finishes in the 400 (54.20 seconds) and the 300 hurdles (44.19).

Henry Coughlan was third in both the 1,500 (4:26.77) and the 3,000 (9:37.64) for the Eagles, who scored 61 points for their third-place finish. In fourth were Juston Rodgers in the 800 (2:11.45) and Trey Wandschneider in the long jump (19-feet-

1-1/2).

The Cove Leopards and Powder Valley Badgers tied for eighth with 29 points. Cove was led by Tim Stevens, who took first in the 3,000 (9:00.35) and second in the 1,500 (4:05.54). The Leopards' 4x400 relay of Quinn Dobbs, Jack Silveira, Stevens and Blake Witten placed third (3:51.20) and Silveira was fourth in the 3,000 (9:47.82).

The Badgers, meanwhile, had second-place finishes from both Reece Dixon in the triple jump (39-feet-8) and Dominick Grende in the high jump (5-feet-10).

The Enterprise Outlaws followed in 10th with 25 points, with Colby Harris leading the way taking third in the triple jump (38-feet-9) and Joe Robb placing fourth in the triple jump (37-feet-5). Also in third was the 4x100 relay team of Shane Lund, Foster Hobbs, Jericho Peters and Garrett Thorne (46.06).

The Elgin Huskies, in 12th with 22 points, earned a second-place finish from their 4x400 relay team of Wyatt Hallgarth, Clay Wilhelm, Jordan Palmer and Tristan Simpson (3:49.69). The Union Bobcats and La Grande Tigers, meanwhile, tied for 13th with

14 points. Hunter Youngblood led La Grande by taking second in the long jump (19-feet-10-1/2) and Union was led by three sixth-place finishers: Jaxon Blackburn in the pole vault (10-feet-0), Israel O'Reilly in the 800 (2:14.72) and the 4x400 relay team of Blackburn, Andrew Lackey, Matthew Sheehy and Monte Kirby (3:59.68).

On the girls side, Enterprise posted a team score of 36 points to place sixth. The Outlaws posted second-place efforts from Karli Bedard in the high jump (5-feet-1), Kyla Hook in the 1,500 (5:17.03) and the 4x100 relay team of Hero Peters, Savannah Vaughn, Ashlyn Gray and Shelby Moncrief (53.17). Moncrief also took third in the 200 at 28.44.

Joseph, which was seventh with 34 points, had victories from Ellyse Tingelstad in the 1,500 (5:09.89) and in the 3,000 (11:23.52) and teammate Ella Coughlan followed by taking second in the 3,000 (11:26.55).

Elgin and Union tied for eighth with 29 points each. Aaliyah Burton led the Huskies with a win in the 100 (13.16), a second-place finish in the 300 hurdles (51.99) and a third-place effort in the 100 hurdles (17.19), while Kaelin Evans was fourth in the 100 hurdles (17.67).

For Union, Audrey Wells, Kaitlin Martens, Abriel O'Reilly and Jaimee Baxter took second in the 4x400 relay (4:34.79). Baxter was also third in the 400 (1:04.16) and the 3,000 (12:00.37) and O'Reilly came in fourth in the 1,500 (5:18.95).

Cove placed 10th with 25 points, with Allie Best leading the way by taking third in both the javelin (105-feet-1) and the high jump (4-feet-10).

Powder Valley, in 15th place with 19 points, earned a third-place finish from Keanna Bingham in the long jump (16-feet-1) and a fourth-place effort from Belle Blair in the triple jump (30-feet-9-1/4).

La Grande, which didn't get on the score-

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