

## Setting a new standard

Pendleton native Payton Wright takes top score in bareback riding, posts personal best finish of 2021

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**  
The Observer

UNION — Payton Wright scored an 80 to come away with the best score of the day in the bareback riding competition at the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show. The 24-year-old from Pendleton earned a \$993 purse from the event and tallied his best finish of 2021.

Mat Turner scored the second highest overall score in bareback riding with a 78, earning a \$752 payoff. Turner is originally from New South Wales, Australia, and the second-place finish is his best placement in an event so far in 2021.

Buck Lunak, a 33-year-old from Montana, rounded out the top-three with a score of 77 and a payout of \$541. Lunak is coming off a first-place finish in bareback riding at the Pony Express Rodeo in Eagle Mountain, Utah.

### Saddle bronc

In the saddle bronc riding, two riders scored a 76 and earned a joint first-place finish with a \$1,104 payoff. Alan Gobert of Browning, Montana, and Martin Joyce of Juntura outperformed the field and took home the top prize in saddle bronc at EOLS.

For Gobert, this is his first time placing in saddle bronc in 2021, while Joyce finished second at the PRCA Last Stand Rodeo in Coulee City, Washington.

Clancy Glenn, a 21-year-old from Idaho, scored a 74.5 to take third in the event. Glenn edged out Jesse James Kirby by half a point to secure a top-three finish.

### Bull riding

Bull riding was one of the most tightly contested events at EOLS, with five riders scoring a 76 or higher in the event. Quincy McDonald and Rawley Johnson tied for first place as both finished with a score of 80. Both riders won a \$1,131 purse.

Ruger Pica placed third in the event, coming up just one point short of first place. His 79 in bull riding at EOLS comes on the heels of a first-place finish (84) in the EOLS Ed Miller Xtreme Bull Riding competition. Pica tied for first with Payton Fitzpatrick in the Ed Miller Xtreme, with both riders taking away \$3,388 payoffs.

Riley Barg, an 18-year-old,



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Cowboys Steven Duby and Andy Carlson, not pictured, participate in the team-roping competition at the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show in Union on Saturday, June 12, 2021.



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Bullfighter Sean Peterson dances with a bull during the Ed Miller Xtreme Bulls event at the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show on Thursday, June 10, 2021. A Summerville native, Peterson has spent the past five years as a professional bullfighter for rodeos held throughout the Pacific Northwest.

finished third in the Ed Miller Xtreme Bull Riding with a score of 83.

### Steer wrestling

Two Idaho natives finished in the top three of the steer wrestling competition, but Douglas, Wyoming, native Payden McIntyre came away with the quickest time. McIntyre recorded a time of 4.3 seconds in the event to take home a \$1,295 payoff at EOLS.

McIntyre is fresh off a first place finish in steer wrestling at the Eagle Rodeo in Eagle, Idaho, and now has four first-place finishes in 2021.

Dirk Tavenner took second place with a time of 4.7 seconds

and Justin Kimsey finished in 4.9 seconds to finish in third.

### Team roping

Two Oregon natives, Calgary Smith and Jack Graham, won first overall in the team roping event at EOLS. The duo finished with a time of 5.8 seconds to earn a \$1,688 payoff in the event.

Brodi Jones and Jared Fillmore, both from Utah, finished just shy of first with a time of 6.1 seconds. Jake Minor and Baker City native Garrett Rogers finished in third place with a time of 6.3 seconds.

### Tie-down roping

Josh Frost took the crown in tie-down roping, finishing

in 8.7 seconds. The Randlett, Utah, native secured his second top finish in the event in 2021 and walked away with a \$1,663 purse.

Hermiston native Preston Pederson finished in second, scoring a time of 9.2 seconds. The runner-up finish is Pederson's highest placement so far in 2021.

Bo Pickett, a native of Idaho, rounded out the top three with a time of 9.6 seconds. Pickett edged fourth-place finisher Matt Schiozawa by a tenth of a second.

### Steer roping

In steer roping, two Texas natives and one California resident formed the top three.

Clay Long, from Stephenville, Texas, won the event at EOLS by over a second, finishing in first place with a time of 10.7 seconds. This is the 37-year-old's third victory in steer roping throughout 2021.

George West, Texas, native Trey Wallace finished in second place with a time of 12 seconds, while Creston, California, native Taylor Santos took third place with a time of 15.2 seconds.

### Barrel racing

The barrel racing competition at EOLS came down to four hundredths of a second as Lisa Zachoda won first place with a time of 17.38 seconds. Cheyenne Allan recorded a time of 17.42 seconds and placed as the runner-up in the event.

Amity native Shelly Mull took third place in barrel racing with a time of 17.55 seconds, a mark that is tied for her best time of 2021.

## Shoulder surgery to sideline OSU quarterback

By **NICK DASCHEL**  
The Oregonian

CORVALLIS — It turns out Oregon State had some urgency when it signed Colorado transfer Sam Noyer last week.

The Beavers lost a quarterback for most of the 2021 season as second-year freshman Ben Gulbranson is preparing to undergo right shoulder surgery, according to The Oregonian/OregonLive.

Gulbranson, a right-hander, sustained the injury during spring practice. After further examination several weeks after practices ended, it was determined Gulbranson needed surgery.

Gulbranson could be back throwing in October, leaving his availability for the 2021 season limited at best.

Gulbranson was among the quarterbacks in the mix for the Beavers starting job this fall.

The 6-foot-3, 216-pound Gulbranson played one series last season. Gulbranson didn't participate in the final spring scrimmage as he was among those out due to COVID-19 contact tracing protocol.

Noyer, a Beaverton High graduate who started six games at Colorado last season, steps into the void. He'll compete with fourth-year junior Tristan Gebbia, third-year sophomore Chance Nolan and freshman Sam

Vidlak for OSU's starting quarterback job when preseason camp opens Aug. 6.

Last season, Gebbia started the first four games before he was sidelined with a hamstring injury. Nolan started the final three games.

The 6-foot-4 Noyer led Colorado earned second-team all-conference honors in 2020 after throwing for 1,101 yards and six touchdowns. Noyer spent five years in the Buffaloes' program.

### SPORTS SHORT

#### Trail Blazers guard Lillard commits to Team USA for the Tokyo Olympics

By **AARON FENTRESS**  
The Oregonian

PORTLAND — Portland Trail Blazers guard Damian Lillard has committed to play for Team USA during the 2021 Tokyo Olympics this summer, according to a report from The Athletic.

Also committing, according to the report, is Golden State forward Draymond Green.

For Lillard, who turns 31 in July, this could be his final

chance to win an Olympic gold medal, although he could conceivably make the 2024 team at age 34.

Lillard withdrew from consideration to play for Team USA at the 2016 Rio Olympics in order to rest after playing most of the 2015-16 season while dealing with plantar fasciitis in his left foot.

Lillard just missed making the 2014 USA Team prior to the FIBA World Cup in Spain. He had been among the 16 finalists.

Lillard dealt with several injuries during a condensed 72-game schedule this season and even though the Blazers were eliminated in the first round of the playoffs he ultimately won't have much time to rest up.

Team USA's training camp will run July 6-18 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The first exhibition game is set for July 10 against Nigeria.

The first Olympic game is on July 25 against France.

## Pac-12 changes schedule

Women's basketball to play 20-game conference schedule

By **JAMES CREPEA**  
The Oregonian

SAN FRANCISCO — The Pac-12 will play a 20-game conference schedule in women's basketball starting in 2022-23.

The conference announced the change to its scheduling format in women's basketball, which was approved by the Pac-12 Council on Monday, June 14, based on recommendations from the Senior Woman Administrators committee. The council also approved the permanent change to the Pac-12 women's basketball tournament schedule to include an open date between the semifinals and finals.

The conference played a 22-game schedule in 2020-21 due to the pandemic but will revert to its 18-game league schedule in 2021-22 to complete its 10-year schedule rotation of matchups. Each team will play 10 home and 10 road games in 2022-23.

"We are constantly evaluating ways to elevate Pac-12 women's basketball and strengthen the league's stature," Pac-12 senior associate commissioner Teresa Gould said in a statement. "With the depth of talent in the conference, adding two quality games to the league schedule will help Pac-12 programs prepare for the rigors of postseason play and support the sustained success of the conference in the NCAA Tournament. A 20-game conference schedule will also provide fans of Pac-12 women's basketball additional opportunities to enjoy meaningful matchups both in person and on television."

The conference's women's basketball tournament will be played on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday, making permanent a change that was implemented as a contingency this past season. The conference cited athlete welfare in making the change and also acknowledged it "also provides ESPN additional flexibility when determining a start time for the championship on Sunday."

The final weekend of conference play will move to Thursday-Saturday.

The 2022 Pac-12 women's basketball tournament is scheduled for March 2-6 in Las Vegas.

### ON THE SLATE

Schedule subject to change

**THURSDAY, JUNE 17**

**Prep boys basketball**  
Powder Valley at Joseph, 3:30 p.m.  
Union at La Grande, 6 p.m.

**Prep girls basketball**  
Powder Valley at Joseph, 2 p.m.  
Union at La Grande, 4:30 p.m.

**Prep wrestling**  
La Grande at SD4 District Meet, Gladstone High School, TBD

**FRIDAY, JUNE 18**

**Prep girls basketball**  
Baker City at La Grande, 5 p.m.  
Damascus Christian at Powder Valley, 5 p.m.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 19**

**Prep boys basketball**  
Joseph at Grant Union, 3 p.m.  
**Prep girls basketball**  
Powder Valley at Grant Union, 1:30 p.m.



Steve Dykes/Associated Press, File

Portland guard Damian Lillard, center, passes the ball as Denver forwards Paul Millsap, left, and JaMychal Green, right, defend on Saturday, May 29, 2021.