

Could minor league teams get a boost?

By KRISTIAN FODEN-VENCIL
Oregon Public Broadcasting

SALEM — While Major League Baseball has canceled opening day and the first two regular-season series over contract negotiations, the minor leagues are moving full-steam ahead.

The Eugene Emeralds won the High-A West Coast championship last year. Assistant general manager Matt Dompe said their 30 players are not in the MLB union, so they'll be starting the season as usual in April.

He's hoping the lockout could give them a boost.

"We're the only game in town and without the option to watch their big-league games, there might be fans from different cities all over the country," he said. "We might be the only thing going on in April, it looks like right now."

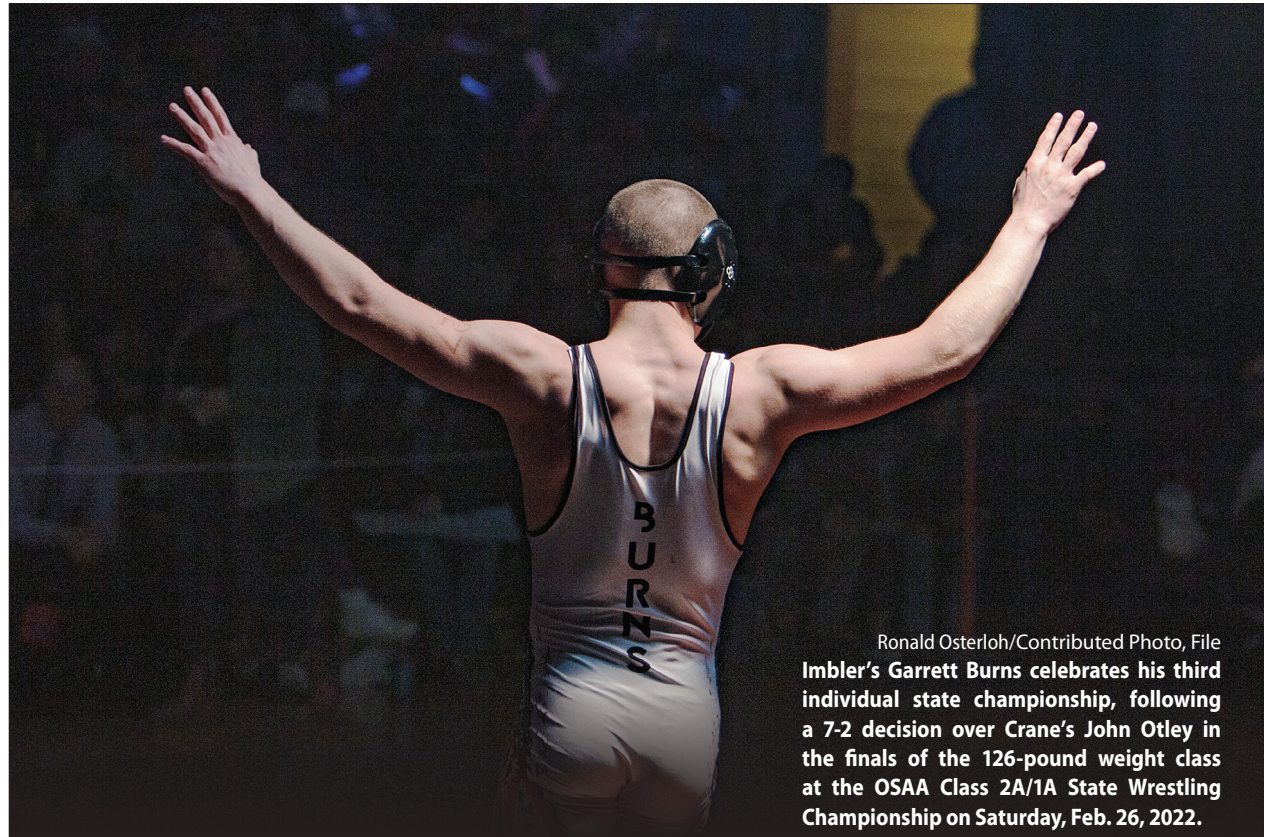
The Emeralds are affiliated with the San Francisco Giants, who just opened a multi-million-dollar training facility in Arizona. Dompe said he's not happy about the lockout, but his players are now training in luxury.

The Hillsboro Hops, who are affiliated with the Arizona Diamondbacks, are also hoping the lockout might help.

Hops general manager K.L. Wombacher said after two years wrestling with COVID-19, he's especially excited the mask mandate will drop just before the season starts.

"The timing is perfect for us, starting in April," he said. "The news gets better by the day, so we're excited for our first normal season in a while."

Their full 132-game season starts April 8 with a home game against the Tri-City Dust Devils. It'll be the first time the minor leagues in Oregon have played that early in over a decade. The league used to have a short season that started in June.



Ronald Osterloh/Contributed Photo, File Imbler's Garrett Burns celebrates his third individual state championship, following a 7-2 decision over Crane's John Otley in the finals of the 126-pound weight class at the OSAA Class 2A/1A State Wrestling Championship on Saturday, Feb. 26, 2022.

HISTORY ON THE MATS

Imbler wrestler Garrett Burns makes history with third consecutive state championship

By DAVIS CARBAUGH
The Observer

IMBLER — Achieving an individual state title is an accomplishment that lives forever in the history of high school athletics.

In the case of Imbler wrestler Garrett Burns, three straight individual championships secured the local athlete's place near the top ranks of those to ever wrestle in Oregon.

"I was just so glad and happy when I got that three," Burns said. "It was just a rush of adrenaline. The whole time I was just hoping and working. It was all I wanted."

Burns defeated Crane's John Otley in the 126-pound weight class at the OSAA 2A/1A State Championships last month, marking his third consecutive individual title. Burns joined La Grande's Braden Carson as the only two wrestlers to ever win three individual state championships in Union County.

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Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group, File

Imbler's Garrett Burns, bottom, wrestles Hermiston's Jaysen Rodriguez at the Muilenburg tournament hosted at La Grande High School on Saturday, Dec. 10, 2021. Burns won that match and in February achieved his third consecutive individual state championship.

Beavers climb in multiple polls

Oregon State moves to No. 4 in Collegiate Baseball Top 30 poll

By JOE FREEMAN
The Oregonian

CORVALLIS — The Oregon State Beavers suffered their first loss of the season over the weekend, but they didn't lose any momentum in the college baseball national rankings.

The Beavers on Monday, March 7, continued to surge up college baseball ballots, moving as high as No. 4 in one poll while cementing their status as one of the best teams in the country in all six major national rankings.

Oregon State (9-1) moved up to No. 6 in the USA Today Coaches Poll and the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association Top 30, No. 7 in the D1Baseball.com Top 25, No. 8 in the Baseball America Top 25 and No. 9 in the Perfect Game Top 25.

But the highest ranking came from the Collegiate Baseball Top 30 — college baseball's oldest poll that dates to 1959 — which slotted the Beavers at No. 4. That was one spot higher than Pac-12 Conference rival Stanford, which is ranked ahead of the Beavers in every other poll, including as high as No. 2 in Baseball America.

The Beavers continued their national rise by earning a series victory over UC Irvine, winning two of three games from the Anteaters at Goss Stadium. After opening the season with a nine-game winning streak, the Beavers suffered their first loss on March 6, falling 3-2 in 10 innings when Jacob Melton's potential walk-off blast was

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SPORTS SHORT

Baker City steer wrestler Jesse Brown wins \$100,000 at rodeo

Baker City Herald

ARLINGTON, Texas — Baker City steer wrestler Jesse Brown had the biggest payday of his professional career on Sunday, March 6.

Brown won the steer wrestling event at The American, a rodeo in Arlington, Texas, earning a \$100,000 check.

The American is a unique competition with a total payout of \$3 million, including \$100,000 for the winners in several events.

Brown, a 2011 Baker High School graduate, has competed in the past two National Finals Rodeo events. He entered that biggest rodeo event as the world's second-ranked steer wrestler in December 2021, and finished sixth for the season with winnings of \$165,061.

Brown, who competes for Resistol, a maker of cowboy hats, brought down his steer in 3.76 seconds at The American.

"It's the most money I've won at one time," Brown said in a press release from Resistol. "It's The American, in front of all those people in this stadium ... it's awesome. It's Dallas Cowboys stadium, it's Jerry's World. It's pretty electric, especially that four-man (round). That four-man was different than maybe any steer I've ever ran."

The competition began with 10 contestants in each event, and the top four times and scores advanced to the championship round. In the sudden-death format, the top time and score earned the \$100,000 payday.



Rod Connor/PRCA/Contributed Photo, File

Jesse Brown of Baker City takes down his steer in 3.9 seconds in Round 9 of the National Finals Rodeo on Friday, Dec. 10, 2021, in Las Vegas. Brown tied for first in the round with three other steer wrestlers.

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