

SPORTS

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SPORTS
IN BRIEF‘It’s a dream’:
Afghan boy meets
his idol Messi

Associated Press

It was an image that touched the hearts of millions: A 5-year-old Afghan boy wearing an improvised Lionel Messi jersey made from a plastic bag.

Now, nearly a year later, Murtaza Ahmadi has finally met his idol.

Murtaza made a special trip from Afghanistan to Qatar, where Messi was with his Barcelona teammates to play a friendly match against Al Ahli on Tuesday.

In a meeting arranged by the organizing committee of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, Messi held hands with Murtaza at the team hotel before picking up the boy and posing for photographs. Murtaza was wearing a Barcelona jersey.

“I’m very happy to have met my hero. It is a dream for me,” said Murtaza, in quotes supplied by the World Cup organizing committee.

Murtaza, who is now aged 6, will walk out onto the field with the five-time world player of the year before Tuesday’s match.

SCOREBOARD

PREP SCHEDULE

TODAY

Girls Basketball — Falls City at Jewell, 5:30 p.m.

Boys Basketball — Falls City at Jewell, 7 p.m.

Swimming — Scappoose at Seaside, 4 p.m.

THURSDAY

Girls Basketball — Warrenton at Clatskanie, 7:45 p.m.; Knappa at Vernonia, 6 p.m.; Ilwaco at Raymond, 7 p.m.

Boys Basketball — Warrenton at Clatskanie, 6 p.m.; Knappa at Vernonia, 8 p.m.

Seaside Holiday Classic

Thursday’s Schedule

Girls

10 am-Astoria vs. Cottage Grove
1:00-South Whidbey vs. Newport
4:00-Elma vs. Crook County
7:00-Sisters vs. Seaside

Boys

11:30-Cottage Grove vs. Astoria
2:30-Newport vs. Montesano
5:30-Elma vs. Madras
8:30-Sisters vs. Seaside

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Rainier 59, Warrenton 31

RAI (59): Desirae Hansen 17, Schimmel 9, Sanchez 8, Harkleroad 6, As.Norman 6, J.Crape 6, Taylor 4, Gray 2, Au.Norman 1.

WAR (31): Tyla Little 9, Dyer 6, Alvarez 6, Bussert 4, Miethe 3, K.Blodgett 2, Schenbeck 1, M.Blodgett, Morrill, DeJesus, Diego, Heyen.

Rainier 14 22 16 7—59

Warrenton 0 11 8 12—31

Field goals: Rainier 23-49; Warrenton 9-44. **3-Point goals:** Rainier 2-6 (Sanchez 2); Warrenton 2-27 (Dyer 2). **Free throws:** Rainier 11-17; Warrenton 11-23. **Fouls:** Rainier 21, Warrenton 16. **Turnovers:** Rainier 25, Warrenton 24. **JV:** Warrenton 29, Rainier 23

Knappa 36, Gaston 30

KNA (36): Kaitlyn Landwehr 11, Vanderburg 10, Weaver 9, Vandergriff 4, Miller 2, Strain, Carlson, Tischer, Inman. **Gaston 8 12 7 3—30**
Knappa 6 8 5 17—36

Tuesday’s Scores

Girls

De La Salle 45, OES 32
Portland Adv 57, Catlin Gabel 36
Portland Chr 70, Riverdale 55
Nestucca 31, Columbia Chr 21
Vernonia 43, City Christian 40

BOYS BASKETBALL

Rainier 56, Warrenton 50

RAI (56): (Leaders) Dawson Carr 18, Caymon Rea 15, Job Karber 9.

WAR (50): Christian Holt 20, Whitaker 15, Knight 8, Fischer 3, Fowler 2, Alcobendas 2, Jackson.

Rainier 13 17 16 10—56

Warrenton 10 12 14 14—50

Field goals: Rainier 21-56; Warrenton 16-40. **3-Point goals:** Rainier 5-16 (Carr 4); Warrenton 4-16 (Knight 2, Whitaker, Holt). **Free throws:** Rainier 9-27; Warrenton 14-20. **Fouls:** Rainier 21, Warrenton 21. **Turnovers:** Rainier 11, Warrenton 16. **JV:** Rainier 63, Warrenton 55 OT

Knappa 68, Gaston 47

GST (47): Luke Anderson 15, Marshall 13, Patzlaff 7, Lund 5, Phillips 3, Spidal 2, Gottschalk 2.

KNA (68): Dale Takalo 24, Weirup 18, Ramvick 6, E.Takalo 6, Vanderburg 5, Engblom 3, Goodman 2, Rubus 2, Geisler 2.

Gaston 10 13 15 9—47

Knappa 13 25 15 15—68

Tuesday’s Scores

Boys

Catlin Gabel 54, Portland Adv 50
De La Salle 49, OES 44
Portland Chr 75, Riverdale 53
Columbia Chr 68, Nestucca 37
Life Christian 61, Faith Bible 26
Vernonia 80, City Christian 49

Defense helps snap losing skid



AP Photo/Craig MitchellDyer

Portland Trail Blazers guard Shabazz Napier, right, passes around Oklahoma City Thunder forward Nick Collison during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Portland on Tuesday. The Trail Blazers won 114-95.

Blazers more than OK,
beat Thunder 114-95

By ANNE M. PETERSON

Associated Press

PORTLAND — Damian Lillard called it a breakthrough. Coming off a one-point loss to the Clippers the night before, the Portland Trail Blazers snapped a four-game losing streak with a 114-95 victory over the Oklahoma City Thunder on Tuesday night.

Lillard had 17 points and nine assists before sitting in the fourth quarter. Mason Plumlee added 18 points for the Blazers, who led by 26

points in Portland’s first game back after a 1-4 road trip.

Russell Westbrook was off his league-leading average of 31.1 points a game with 20 for the Thunder, who have lost two of their last three after a six-game winning streak. Westbrook also sat for the final quarter.

Portland was coming off a 121-120 loss at Los Angeles on Monday night to extend the season’s longest losing streak.

UP NEXT: TRAIL BLAZERS

- Portland Trail Blazers (13-14) at Denver Nuggets (9-16)
- Thursday, 6 p.m. TV: CSNw

“We had a chance to win that game, but we came up short,” Lillard said about the game against the Clippers. “I think all of those things we went through, and then staying with it, and the build up, tonight felt like kind of a breakthrough from all those experiences.”

The Thunder were without Victor Oladipo because of a right wrist sprain, forcing Oklahoma City’s first starting lineup change of the season. Jerami Grant, acquired by the Thunder in a trade with Philadelphia at the start of the season, got his first start for Oklahoma City and finished with 11 points.

The Blazers didn’t have Al-Farouq Aminu, who has a sore back, instead starting Noah Vonleh. But Vonleh got into foul trouble, collecting three in the first quarter.

A quick turnaround could be good

Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — If there was ever a perfect week for a Thursday night game to land on the Seattle Seahawks schedule, this would be that week.

Head coach Pete Carroll wanted to forget about Sunday’s thumping at the hands of Green Bay as quickly as possible.

Carroll and his staff were already beyond the 38-10 loss to Green Bay and immediately turning the focus to Thursday’s game against Los Angeles. There was no other option, especially with what’s at stake for the Seahawks.

A win over the Rams will give Seattle its third NFC West title in the last four years and assure at least one home game during the playoffs. But the loss to Green Bay took away the Seahawks’ control of the No. 2 seed in the NFC and a potential first-round bye.



AP Photo/Jeffrey Phelps

Seattle Seahawks’ DeShawn Shead breaks up a pass intended for Packers’ Jared Cook during the first half Sunday in Green Bay, Wis.

Seattle now needs to win out and have Detroit lose at least once to earn a week off in the postseason.

Sunday was the first time since midway through the 2011 season that Seattle lost by more than 10 points.

UP NEXT: SEAHAWKS

- Los Angeles Rams (4-9) at Seattle Seahawks (8-4-1)
- Thursday, 5:25 p.m. TV: NBC

Columbians hold off Warrior boys

The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — The Warrenton boys basketball team came within seconds of beating Rainier for the first time in over five years ... but the Columbians slipped past the Warriors in four intense quarters Tuesday night at Warrenton.

Rainier outscored the Warriors 5-0 in the final 24 seconds, as the Columbians held on for a 56-50 win, in a Lewis & Clark League boys basketball season opener.

The Warriors had rallied from a

46-32 deficit late in the third quarter to within 49-48 with 3:03 left. Warrenton was still within 51-50 at the 54-second mark, but couldn’t find the shot that would have given the Warriors their first win over Rainier since Feb. 10, 2011, when Warrenton topped the Columbians 54-50.

Instead, Rainier made 5-of-6 free throws in the final 24 seconds for its 11th straight victory over the Warriors.

Christian Holt scored 20 points and teammate Tyler Whitaker added 15 for Warrenton, while Dawson

Carr had 18 and Caymon Rea tossed in 15 for the Columbians, who improve to 1-2 overall.

Rainier had to play most of the fourth quarter without point guard Joey Tripp, who fouled out with 6:48 left.

Holt scored eight of his points in the third quarter, when the Warriors made their big run.

Whitaker scored nine points in the final period, which included a 3-pointer and 6-of-7 makes at the free throw line. The Columbians were just 9-of-27 at the line.

Warrenton girls rain threes, fall to Rainier

The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — The Warrenton Lady Warriors were launching 3-pointers left and right Tuesday night on their home floor — they just weren’t going in.

Meanwhile, the Rainier Columbians had all the points they would need by halftime in the Lewis & Clark League girls basketball opener.

Rainier held a 36-11 lead at the

break, and finished with a 59-31 win over the Warriors, who fall to 3-2, while the Columbians improve to 4-0.

Warrenton put up 27 3-pointers, and only made two, both in the first half. The Columbians made the most of their triples, finishing 2-of-6 from 3-point territory.

Junior post Desirae Hansen led Rainier with a game-high 17 points, 13 in the first half. Teammate Haley Schimmel added nine points, and

Emily Sanchez scored eight off the bench for the Columbians, who struggled with fouls (21) and turnovers (25), but still managed the 28-point victory.

Tyla Little led Warrenton with nine points, but the Warriors also had 24 turnovers and finished 11-for-23 at the free throw line.

The Columbians have now won nine straight over Warrenton, going back to the 2012-13 season.

Knappa girls rally past
Gaston, 36-30

The Daily Astorian

KNAPPA — Knappa maintained its hold on first place in the Northwest League girls basketball standings, as the Lady Loggers scored a solid 36-30 win over Gaston Tuesday night.

Knappa had to rally from a 27-19 deficit going into the final quarter, and did so by outscoring the Greyhounds 17-3 in the fourth.

“It was a fun and exciting game, to say the least,” said Knappa coach Marie Green. “To outscore them 17-3 in the final quarter was pretty fantastic.”

“Madeline (Weaver) drained a 3-pointer, and that just got the momentum going for us,” she said.

After tying the game 30-30, the Loggers had several steals in the final minute to grab the lead and hold on for the win.

Kaitlyn Landwehr was held to just 11 points, but she also had 18 rebounds.

Paris Vanderburg scored 10 points with four rebounds and two steals, and Weaver finished with nine points, five boards and four steals.

Knappa is scheduled to play at Vernonia Thursday.

Logger boys top
Greyhounds, 68-47

The Daily Astorian

KNAPPA — Missing one of their top starters from the lineup, the Knappa Loggers still cruised past Gaston in a Northwest League boys basketball game Tuesday, 68-47.

Jason Miller sat out with an illness, but Dale Takalo and Colton Weirup picked up the slack, combining for 42 points.

Takalo led all scorers with 24 points, to go with nine rebounds, four assists and two steals.

Weirup had 18 points and four assists, and the Loggers had contributions from several others, including Ty Vanderburg, who hit a 3-pointer off the bench in the third quarter. Knappa was 9-of-23 from the 3-point line (Weirup was 5-for-12).