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SPORTS

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Athletes of the Week

FOR THE WEEK OF JAN. 2-7



DALE TAKALO
Knappa



ALEXIS WALLACE
Astoria

Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

As the Knappa Loggers continue their climb toward another league title and a No. 1 ranking, Dale Takalo is on a tear.

In a three-games-in-four-days stretch, the 6-foot-3 junior scored 80 points (26.7 per game), highlighted by a 29-point performance (15 in the first quarter) in a 61-53 win at defending state champion Vernonia Jan. 4.

He began the week with 27 points (24 in the first half) in a 69-36 victory over Neah-Kah-Nie Jan. 3, and capped the week with 24 points, nine rebounds and three steals in a 75-30 thrashing over Faith Bible Jan. 6.

Given their recent lopsided wins, Takalo rarely even plays in the fourth quarter. He began this week with 24 points, six rebounds and three assists in a 72-24 win over City Christian.

Astoria's Alexis Wallace was a bright spot in a rough week for the Lady Fishermen, as the senior scored a combined 42 points in losses to Union (Wash.) and Corbett.

She led all scorers with 19 points in the overtime loss to Union, in which Wallace sparked a rally that sent the game to overtime; and she followed with 23 points in a 68-58 setback at Corbett Jan. 6.

The 5-foot-8 post player is one of four seniors on the Astoria roster.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Want to be a soccer referee?

The Daily Astorian

The Oregon Youth Soccer Association is hosting a referee class 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday at Clatsop Community College and Columbia Memorial Field.

The course is presented by the Oregon Referee Committee, in cooperation with the Lower Columbia Youth Soccer Association. The Grade 8 Referee Class is an introductory course for aspiring referees, ages 13 and older.

Grade 8 referees are eligible to officiate a variety of recreational and competitive matches.

There is three to four hours of work required for attendees before the class starts, while the LCYSA and North Coast United will partner to cover the \$40 class fee for the first 15 attendees, so the actual cost to the attendees will be a \$45 U.S. Soccer Federation registration fee.

The class will be in Towler Hall on the college campus, 1651 Lexington Ave.

Field training (included with the class) will be at CMH Field. In addition to bringing a sack lunch, participants should dress appropriately for physical activity outdoors and bring a whistle, flags (if you have them), and anything else the instructor requires. Students must arrange their own transportation from the field to the classroom location.

Class size will be limited to 25 students, so early registration is recommended. For more information, contact the Oregon Referee Committee officer manager at: coordinator@oregonreferee.com.

Son of Long Beach resident signs contract with New Orleans Saints

Bighill: Former Central Washington LB, played in Canada

By **NICK NIKKILA**
 For EO Media Group

LONG BEACH, Wash. — Adam Bighill, son of Long Beach resident Andy Bighill, has just signed a three-year futures contract to play football for the New Orleans Saints. For the past six seasons, Bighill has played in the Canadian Football League for the BC Lions.

At age 28, it was getting close to “now or never” time for Bighill if he was to realize his dream of playing in the National Football League. Through contract negotiations, Bighill was allowed a window to sign with an NFL team. Bighill signed with the Saints on Jan. 4. His futures contract is basically identical to a standard NFL active-roster contract, with the same salary structure and signing bonus. It takes effect in March.

The late John Didion, a Naselle resident and Pacific County sheriff, played for the Saints and the Washington Redskins from 1969 to 1974.

Local connections

Bighill and his wife, Kristina, have a 1 1/2-year-old son, AJ, and a daughter due to be born in May. Kristina Bighill is a former collegiate golfer at Eastern Washington University and Oregon State University. The Bighill family currently lives in Surrey, British Columbia.

Adam's mother, the late Janine (Peterson) Bighill always encouraged her son to strive for success. Her death in 2004 had a significant impact on how Bighill lives life.

In 2009, Bighill noted, “She always wanted me to achieve my best, I wouldn't be doing right by her without trying to be the best I can be. I always have that in the back of my mind. I try not to ever waste a day.”

Bighill's maternal grandparents, Fred and Marilyn Peterson, owned and operated Dave's Shell Bait & Tackle and the Fort Canby Store in Ilwaco for over 20 years.

Longtime Naselle residents may recall Adam's father Andy Bighill, a 1969 graduate from Naselle-Gray River Valley High School, was a starting tackle when the 1968 Comets team went undefeated for the season and won the state championship.

“At 5 feet 10 inches, Adam has always played with a chip on his shoulder because he was told early on he could get this scholarship or that scholarship if only he was two inches taller,” the senior Bighill said of his 230-pound son. “That chip has helped him succeed at both the college and professional level. He has a fantastic work ethic and lives in the weight room. No one

outworks Adam when it comes to studying the game and improving his skills. I'm proud of the man he's become.”

From Bulldog to Saint

Bighill, a 2007 graduate from Montesano High School, was a standout as a member of the Montesano Bulldogs football team. Playing fullback on offense and outside linebacker on defense he had 719 carries for 5,942 yards and 91 touchdowns in career rushing and 13 catches for 303 yards and five touchdowns in career receiving.

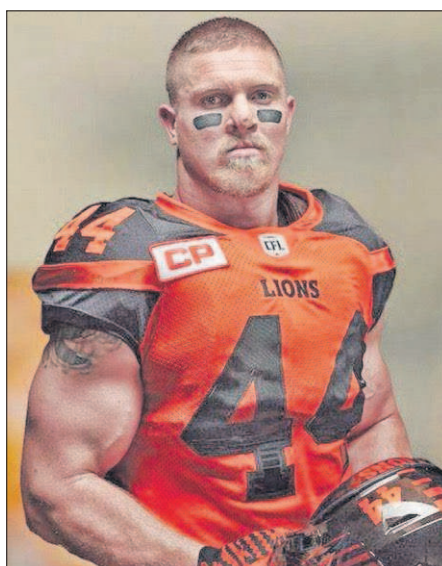
Bighill's talents on the gridiron made him a four-year starter as a linebacker at Central Washington University and a 2010 American Football Coaches Association Division II first-team All-American.

In May 2011, Bighill was selected to join the BC Lions after a successful free-agent tryout in Portland, Oregon. Being selected and actually making the team are not necessarily the same thing. Displaying the work ethic and athletic ability that has characterized his career, Bighill survived both training camp cuts and went on to have an impressive rookie season. He played in 12 games, including the final seven regular season games, and the West Final and Grey Cup (Canadian version of the Superbowl) games. He led the club, and was ranked fourth overall in the CFL, with 22 special team tackles. The Lions won the 2011 Grey Cup.

Amazing stats

In 2012, Bighill assumed the starting position as middle linebacker for the Lions and has never looked back since. In 2013, he and teammate Solomon Elimimian bonded both on and off the field and, together, formed one of the best defensive backfields in the CFL. With Elimimian's jersey number being 56 and Bighill's being 44, they were known to fans as “Team 100.” They made history by becoming the first teammates to record 100-plus defensive tackles each in the same CFL season.

During his six years with the BC Lions, Bighill, or “Biggie” as he is called by his coaches and teammates, played in 99 games, amassing an impressive record of 509 defensive tackles, 67 special team tackles, 33 sacks, eight interceptions, eight forced fumbles and a defensive touchdown. His total of 576 tackles makes him the third most prolific tackler in the club's history. In 2015 he was selected as the Most Outstanding Defensive Player. In 2016, Bighill made the CFL all-star team for the fourth time and the West Division all-star side for the fifth straight campaign.



Facebook

Adam Bighill, son of Long Beach, Wash., resident Andy Bighill, has played in the Canadian Football League for the last six years. This month he was offered a contract from the New Orleans Saints.

McCollum, Blazers plow past Cavs

Associated Press

PORTLAND — That 24-hour travel odyssey hardly took a toll on the Portland Trail Blazers.

C.J. McCollum scored 27 points and the Trail Blazers shook off any fatigue caused by weather-related delays to beat the defending NBA champion Cleveland Cavaliers 102-86 on Wednesday.

Allen Crabbe added 24 points off the bench for the Blazers, who have won four straight home games against the Cavs.

Portland, playing the second of back-to-back games, led by as many as 24. A major snowstorm in the city Tuesday night sent the team from Los Angeles to Seattle and then finally to Portland.

“When we got up this morning and we were leaving Seattle, and we got on the plane and then the bus, there was just good energy around the team,” star guard Damian Lillard said. “We were laughing and we were joking and I think we were just tired so we were goofy and whatever. But before the game we huddled up and I said, ‘We're not tired. It's just mental, and this is a game that we've got to go out and get.’”

LeBron James had 20 points and 11 rebounds, while Oregon native Kevin Love had 17 points and 8 rebounds for Cleveland (28-10).

McCollum, who scored 21 in the second half, hit a 3-pointer that put Portland up 85-69 with just under nine minutes left, then gestured for the crowd to stand as the Cavaliers called a timeout. McCollum has had seven straight games with 25 points or more.

A snowstorm that dumped as much as 14 inches on parts of Portland caused travel problems for both teams late Tuesday.

The Trail Blazers beat the Lakers in Los Angeles 108-87 Tuesday night. The team's flight was sent to Seattle, they spent the night there, and then flew into Portland by midday Wednesday. Players stayed in a downtown hotel to rest until game time.

The Cavaliers, who lost to the Utah Jazz on Tuesday, eventually arrived about 3 a.m. Wednesday.

UP NEXT: BLAZERS

• Orlando Magic (16-24) at Portland Trail Blazers (18-23)
 • Friday, 7 p.m. TV: KGW, FSFL

SCOREBOARD

PREP SCHEDULE

TODAY

Swimming — Seaside at Astoria, 4 p.m.

Wrestling — Knappa at Oregon Classic, Redmond, TBA

GIRLS BASKETBALL

(from Tuesday)

Astoria 66, Estacada 45

EST (45): Karlye Nakashimada 13, Hunter 12, Blankenship 8, Hagel 8, Peterson 2, New 2, Canifax 2.

AST (66): Sam Hemsley 15, Wallace 14, O'Brien 13, Cummings 7, DeMander 5, Rogers 4, Hankwitz 4, Norris 4, Burnett, Dalton, Gimre, Nash.

Estacada 17 14 6 10
Astoria 5 24 16 21