

# SPORTS

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## SPORTS IN BRIEF

### Seahawks RB breaks finger, out 3-4 weeks

*The Oregonian*

Seattle Seahawks running back Rashaad Penny suffered a broken finger and could miss the team's regular season opener, according to multiple reports.

One report said Penny is in Philadelphia to have surgery on the injury this morning and he will miss 3-4 weeks, placing his availability for the team's regular season opener Sept. 9 at Denver in question.

It is unknown when Penny suffered the injury. He was selected by the Seahawks with the No. 27 pick of the 2018 NFL draft. He gained 16 yards on eight carries and caught two passes for seven yards during his preseason debut against the Indianapolis Colts Aug. 9.

Penny left practice early on Monday and the Seahawks did not practice on Tuesday. Coach Pete Carroll did not speak with reporters after the team's practice on Monday.

If Penny can't play, Chris Carson would likely be the starter. Penny and Carson had been competing for the starting job.

### Ducks RB Griffin seeks larger role in the offense

*The Register-Guard*

EUGENE — For the fourth and final time, a question of what role Taj Griffin will fill at Oregon hovers around fall camp.

The former four-star recruit's most productive season remains his freshman year when Griffin had 732 all-purpose yards, including 570 on the ground to rank second on the Ducks behind Royce Freeman. His past two seasons were shortened by a torn anterior cruciate ligament and complicated by a position change.

For his senior year, Griffin is back in the competition at running back to replace Freeman. Yet he also spends time at receiver and may finally find a role in the return game.

"Taj can do everything and it is impressive watching him go back and forth, that guy makes every single play," Oregon quarterback Justin Herbert said following practice on Tuesday. "We will try to get him the ball as much as we can."

That has often been the refrain around the Ducks this time of year, but Griffin has never averaged more than eight touches per game with that number decreasing each season.

### Maryland takes responsibility for player death

*Associated Press*

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — The University of Maryland acknowledged Tuesday that the football player who collapsed during practice and subsequently died did not receive proper medical care and the school must accept "legal and moral responsibility for the mistakes."

Maryland also parted ways with strength and conditioning coach Rick Court, who resigned in the wake of the death of offensive lineman Jordan McNair.

Athletic director Damon Evans acknowledged "mistakes were made" by the training staff in the treatment of McNair, who was hospitalized on May 29 after a team workout and died June 13. Head trainer Wes Robinson and Steve Nordwall, an assistant athletic director for training, were placed on administrative leave by Maryland last week.

The attorney for the McNair family said a preliminary death certificate indicates the cause of death was heatstroke.

## MEMORIES OF HAYWARD FIELD | PART 2



AP Photo/Jae C. Hong

Oregon graduate Ashton Eaton would go on to win Olympic decathlon gold in 2012 and 2016.

By NEIL BRANSON  
 For The Daily Astorian

In the summer of 1972, Bob Larsen, my coach at Grossmont Junior College, offered me a ride to Eugene to attend the Olympic Trials.

Getting tickets was easy. With a fill-up at Texaco they could be had for \$2.

Early in the meet I watched one of my University of Arizona teammates run the first heat of the 110-meter hurdles. Afterwards, he invited me to join him for a meal in the athletes' dining hall.

During lunch he said I could have his athlete's pass when he was eliminated from competition. Two days later he was packing his bags and I was in and out of Hayward Field at will.

Thankfully, the pass was a simple card on a lanyard that read "athlete," as my friend was a strapping muscular African American hurdler and I a scrawny Caucasian distance runner.

The highlight of those trials was watching Bob Seagren set the world record in the pole vault at 18 feet, 5½ inches.

At the 1976 trials, a teammate of mine from Grossmont College, Ed Mendoza, competed in the 10,000 meters. He did not have a coach with him so I filled in. I remember Mendoza taking me up to see the Pony shoe rep, Wilma Rudolph, a 1956 Olympian at age 16. She returned to the Games in 1960.

Mendoza, though he finished fifth in the race, still made the Olympic team because the first two finishers, Frank Shorter and Bill Rodgers, opted out of the 10,000 to concentrate on the marathon.

#### Most memorable race

Of all the Olympic Trials at Hayward the most memorable race was the 800-meter finals in 2008. In that race, Nick Symonds, a graduate of Division III Willamette University, Andrew Wheating, a neophyte from the University of Oregon and Christian Smith, running for the Oregon Track Club, placed first, second and third, respectively, with Smith diving at the finish line to make the team.

That same year, Jordan Hasay, a junior in



AP Photo/Bob Levey

Oregon fans successfully convinced Jordan Hasay to attend the university.

high school, with blond hair that went well below her waist, toed the line for the 1,500 meters.

When she was introduced, the crowd — well, at least the Oregon fans — started chanting "come to Oregon, come to Oregon."

That kind of reception would be hard to overcome. After graduating, Hasay came to Oregon, providing big points for her team. Hasay was a two-time NCAA champion.

At the 2012 Olympic Trials, Bend native and Oregon graduate Ashton Eaton sent the fans into a frenzy while powering over the final lap of the 1,500, the last event of the decathlon.

Hayward fans, knowing exactly what they were witnessing, went nuts and the announcer, not being able to contain himself, added to the bedlam. Magnificent events are thrilling to share.

The previous night I had a trans-America bicyclist staying at my cabin up the McKenzie River. She had never been to a track meet, so I invited her to attend.

I was able to secure an excellent seat in the east grandstands for her. Every now and then I would come to see how she was doing, and did so at the start of Eaton's 1,500.

With the race over and with a noise level that would drown out a punk rock band in a large stadium, I did not attempt to give perspective to what she had just witnessed, a world record by a local hero.

When we could finally communicate, I asked her what she thought.

"Pretty cool" was her response. After she read the next day's Register-Guard, "pretty cool" became "I had no idea but I am a track fan for life now."

Eaton went on to win gold in the decathlon at both the 2012 London and 2016 Rio Olympic Games.

#### World record that 'wasn't'

There was the world record that "wasn't."

It wasn't at the trials, and I don't remember the year, but the setting was a meet with the fabled Henry Rono competing.

Rono was powering through a steeplechase and the crowd, knowing their track and field, sensed a world record was in the making. Excitement grew until Washington State coach John Chaplin gave Rono the "slow down" sign.

Whether he really said it or not, the buzz was coach Chaplin did not want to give the Duck fans the pleasure of yet another record set on their home turf.

For the 2016 Trials, I was once again able to bring a track neophyte to the last day of the trials.

That day a featured event was the 5,000 meters, and with a furious kick over the last 400, Bernard Lagat, at age 41, ran 52.82 for the win and a trip to his fifth Olympic games.

In his previous two 5,000 races at Hayward, Lagat had dropped out part way through the races as he could not handle the fast pace of the leaders. He could when it most counted.

The 2020 trials were awarded to Mt. San Antonio College in Southern California, but with construction delays the bids have been reopened. If Hayward is ready and the trials return, I will be there to witness more truly superb athletic competition.

Neil Branson is a longtime cross-country and track coach at Seaside High School.

## A's edge Mariners, pull 1 game back of 1st

*Associated Press*

OAKLAND, Calif. — Another solid outing from Mike Fiers and Jed Lowrie's 100th career home run helped the surging Oakland Athletics move a step closer to first place in the AL West.

The Seattle Mariners, who were eight games ahead of Oakland six weeks ago, are just trying to stick around in the wild-card race, a task that got a little tougher following an injury to ace James Paxton's pitching arm.

Jed Lowrie hit a two-run homer after his line drive knocked Paxton out of the game in the first inning, and Oakland beat Seattle 3-2 on Tuesday night to move within one game of the slumping Houston Astros.

Fiers (8-6) gave up two runs on six hits in six innings with five strikeouts in his second start since being acquired in a trade from Detroit.

Oakland won its fourth straight and improved to 17-6 since the All-Star break. The Astros have been in



AP Photo/Ben Margot

Oakland Athletics' Jed Lowrie, right, celebrates with Matt Chapman after hitting a two-run home run off Seattle Mariners' Felix Hernandez.

first since June 14 and led by as many as six games in late July, while the A's haven't had a share of first place this late in a season since Aug. 25, 2014.

"We feel good," Oakland manager

Bob Melvin said. "We've got some confidence, obviously, because of the stretch. But I don't think anybody's thinking about that right now. We're just trying to win."

## Cano returns from drug suspension, now playing 1B

*Associated Press*

OAKLAND, Calif. — Robinson Cano is back in the major leagues with the Seattle Mariners after serving an 80-game drug suspension. The eight-time All-Star has a new position — first base, for the first time — and a new spot in the batting order, too.

"It feels great to be back, especially the way the team is playing," Cano said before the game. "I'm excited. I was waiting for this moment."

Cano's first game was fairly nondescript. He went 1 for 4 with a single in the Mariners' 3-2 loss to the Oakland Athletics and played error-free in his new position.

Cano arrived in Oakland late Monday, woke up early Tuesday and was at the Coliseum taking batting practice underneath the outfield stands three hours before the scheduled first pitch.