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Brittany Israel/For The Daily Astorian
Left to right: Alivia Rickenbach (on Scatty), Olivia Rilatos (on Logan), Haylee Skipper (on Bluzee), Angelina Linares (on Shay is Good), Tony Sanchez, Allison Keeling (with That’s Your Story).

Clatsop riders head for state fair

The Daily Astorian

The Clatsop County state equestrian team hits the road Thursday, to take part in the state fair this weekend in Salem. Six students and their animals will take part — Allison Keeling, Angelina Linares, Alivia Rickenbach, Olivia Rilatos, Tony Sanchez and Haylee Skipper. The state fair’s equestrian competition features an exhibition of riding skills and equine instincts. Top competitors from 4-H, FFA and open class vie for ribbons. Keeling and her horse, “That’s Your

Story,” have been in 4-H three years, but this will be her first trip to state. Her favorite memory: “Competing in the hunt seat over fences class and winning high point.” Linares and “Shay is Good” have been involved in 4-H for four years. This is her second visit to state. Her favorite memory: she “enjoyed the award ceremony, even though there were a lot of tears.” Rickenbach and her horse “Scatty” have spent five years in 4-H, but this will be her first time at the state fair. Her favorite memory involves “having fun with everyone and playing games on the horses, especially musi-

cal freestyle.” Rilatos and “Logan” are five-year veterans of the 4-H. She is making her second trip to state. Her favorite memory: “Winning the Jamie Nelson Award, which is the outstanding 4-H horse member award.” Sanchez has been in 4-H three years with his horse “Shay is Good.” It’s his first time to state. His favorite memory was “when Haylee Skipper helped me with my western pattern.” Skipper, with her horse “Bluzee,” is an eight-year veteran of 4-H, and is going to state for the third time. Her favorite memory: “Getting grand champion in showmanship.”

Ex-Vikings Johnson, Stephen finding fit with Seahawks

By **CURTIS CRABTREE**
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — As the Seahawks try to keep their defense playing at its traditionally high level despite the absence of five former Pro Bowl selections, a pair of veteran additions from Minnesota along the defensive line could help steady the ship. Seattle added former Vikings defensive tackles Tom Johnson and Shamar Stephen as veteran pieces along the defensive front on consecutive days in March. While Johnson and Stephen don’t directly replace Cliff Avril, Michael Bennett, Richard Sherman or Kam Chancellor, they are experienced veterans that played on a Vikings defense that was among the league’s best last season. Johnson and Stephen get a chance to return to Minnesota to face their former team in Seattle’s third preseason game Friday night. “This was the place that kind of wanted both of us,” Johnson said. “I ended up telling him I was going to come here and shortly after he made the decision to come out. It was a great deal.” Johnson — one of the few players still in the NFL to have played in NFL Europe — brings the ability to rush the passer from the interior. He posted a career-high 6.5 sacks with Minnesota in 2014 before netting just two in each of the last two seasons. “I wish we found him six or seven years ago,” coach Pete Carroll said



AP Photo/Ted S. Warren
From left, defensive tackles Jarran Reed and Tom Johnson take part in an agility drill.

of Johnson. “He’s one of our guys. He’s got the chip on his shoulder and he shows it day in and day out by the way he approaches his work. ... He’s fantastic and we love the fact that he’s in that room (and) got a lot of young guys with him. He’s got a fantastic influence on those guys.” Stephen is more of a space-eating force that the Seahawks hope can help get the team’s run defense back on track after it had some uncharacteristic struggles last season. After three straight seasons in the top five

against the run, the Seahawks fell to 19th last year, allowing an average of 114 yards per game on the ground. “Shamar is big, thick, studly, big strong hands getting off blocks and filling up the line of scrimmage, and he’s a really good pursuit guy,” Carroll said. Defensive tackle Jarran Reed was perturbed early in camp by all the focus on the players who weren’t with the team: Avril, Bennett, Sherman, Chancellor and Earl Thomas, whose holdout continues nearly a

UP NEXT: SEAHAWKS

- Seattle Seahawks at Minnesota Vikings
- Friday, 5 p.m.

month into camp. “Too many people are worried about them being gone,” Reed said. “We got the team here right now that’s going to go out there and battle with us on Sundays. I’m honestly tired of hearing it. We got guys right here and they can do the same thing and I just want everybody to believe in us.” Added Johnson: “We got a mix of guys that’s athletic enough and strong enough and smart enough to be the top defensive linemen in the league so that’s one of our goals to strive for right now.” Reed and Johnson have been Seattle’s starting defensive tackles throughout the preseason with Stephen and second-year tackle Nazair Jones rotating in situationally. Though Johnson and Stephen have more experience in the NFL than Reed or top pass-rusher Frank Clark, they’ve assimilated into Seattle’s defensive line group seamlessly since joining the team this spring. “They’ve been very respectful in understanding the fact this is Frank and Jarran’s room,” assistant head coach Clint Hurtt said. “We’re just going to mesh and continue to build the cohesiveness of the unit and it’s been outstanding. They’re a pleasure to have.”

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Maldonado, White homer as Astros beat Mariners 10-7

SEATTLE — Martin Maldonado and Tyler White helped the Astros build an eight-run lead, and Houston’s bullpen made it hold after a little scare in the sixth inning. Maldonado and White each homered and had three hits, Roberto Osuna got his first save with Houston and the Astros beat the Seattle Mariners 10-7 on Wednesday. The Astros led 9-1 before the Mariners got one back in the fifth and added five more in the sixth, all off starter Charlie Morton (13-3).

No changes coming to NFL’s helmet rule

NEW YORK — The NFL Competition Committee has recommended not making any changes to the helmet rule approved by owners in the offseason, which means instant replay use for officials will not be instituted for such calls. After members of the powerful committee held a conference call Wednesday, football operations chief Troy Vincent noted there would be no alterations. Vincent said the feedback after two weeks of preseason games was reviewed and “the committee resolved that there will be no changes ...” “The committee also determined that inadvertent or incidental contact with the helmet and/or facemask is not a foul,” Vincent said. Vincent added that as players, coaches and officials adjust to the rule, the league will provide more feedback and examples of incorrect calls.

Ex-Brazil soccer boss gets 4 years in prison in probe

NEW YORK — A former South American soccer official convicted on corruption charges in the sprawling FIFA bribery scandal was sentenced in federal court to four years in prison on Wednesday. Jose Maria Marin, a former president of Brazil’s soccer federation, also was ordered to forfeit \$3.3 million and pay a \$1.2 million fine in connection with his participation in a scheme to accept bribes in exchange for the media and marketing rights to various soccer tournaments, according to the office of the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York. — Associated Press

SCOREBOARD

PREP SPORTS SCHEDULE	
TODAY	
Volleyball	— Knappa at Warrenton, 6 p.m.; Jewell at Columbia Christian, 6:30 p.m.

Ohio State suspends Meyer for three games

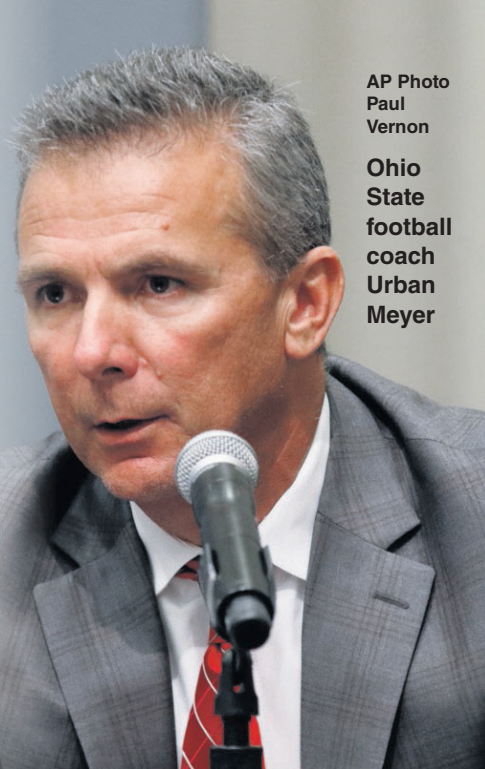
Coach will miss Oregon State game

By **MITCH STACY**
Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio State suspended coach Urban Meyer for three games on Wednesday night for mishandling repeated professional and behavioral problems of an assistant coach, with investigators finding Meyer protected his protege for years through domestic violence allegations, a drug problem and poor job performance. The superstar coach’s treatment of his now-fired assistant was also clouded by his abiding devotion to the legacy of former Ohio State coach Earle Bruce, the grandfather of

former wide receivers coach Zach Smith and an early coaching mentor for Meyer. “I gave Zach Smith the benefit of the doubt,” Meyer said. The investigation turned up “a pattern of troubling behavior by Zach Smith: promiscuous and embarrassing sexual behavior, drug abuse, truancy, dishonesty, financial irresponsibility, a possible NCAA violation, and a lengthy police investigation into allegations of criminal domestic violence and cybercrimes,” according to summary investigative findings released by the university on Wednesday night. Meyer knew about at least some of the issues. The report and punishment culminated a two-week investigation of how Meyer reacted to allegations that Smith abused his

ex-wife, Courtney Smith. Zach Smith was fired last month after she asked a judge for a protective order. Courtney Smith alleged her husband shoved her against a wall and put his hands around her neck in 2015. Zach Smith has never been criminally charged with domestic violence. The university put Meyer on paid leave and began investigating after Courtney Smith spoke out publicly, sharing text messages and photos she traded in 2015 with Meyer’s wife, Shelley Meyer. Shelley Meyer is a registered nurse and instructor at Ohio State. Meyer, 54, will miss Ohio State’s first three games against Oregon State, Rutgers and No. 16 TCU, though he will be allowed to coach practices leading into the Rutgers and TCU games.



AP Photo Paul Vernon

Ohio State football coach Urban Meyer