

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2015

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Sports shorts

High school rodeo in the chutes

EUGENE — The Oregon High School Rodeo Association (OHSRA) begins its spring season with a doubleheader rodeo in Eugene starting on Friday and running through Sunday.



Thirty members of the Intermountain team, which comprises of schools in Umatilla and Morrow Counties, will be in attendance as they look to earn points toward the season finals.

Five doubleheader rodeos make up the spring season, and the Intermountain team will take its turn as host on April 24-26 at Farm-City Arena in Hermiston.

The state finals will be held June 10-13 in Prineville, where contestants can earn berths at the National High School Finals Rodeo to be held July 12-18 in Rock Springs, Wyoming.

Former Trail Blazers dies at 52

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Jerome Kersey, the small forward who played his first 11 NBA seasons with the Portland Trail Blazers and helped the San Antonio Spurs win the 1999 title, has died. He was 52.

FACES

The Trail Blazers confirmed Wednesday night that Kersey had died, but didn't provide details.

A team ambassador, Kersey appeared Tuesday with fellow former Blazers Terry Porter and Brian Grant at a Portland school in celebration of African American History Month. Kersey averaged 10.3 points and 5.5 rebounds in 17 seasons in the NBA with Portland, Golden State, the Los Angeles Lakers, Seattle, San Antonio and Milwaukee. He helped the Blazers reach the NBA Finals in 1990 and 1992.

"Instead of being sad about it, I think about all the awesome times we had and good things we did and stuff that I think he'd be proud of today."

— Dale Earnhardt Jr. NASCAR driver acknowledging the 14th anniversary of the passing of his racing-legend father, which was Wednesday. Earnhardt Jr. is the defending champion at the Daytona 500, which kicks off the NASCAR season on Sunday.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1928 — Canada wins the gold medal in hockey at the Winter Olympics in St. Moritz, Switzerland. Canada, represented by the 1926 Toronto University team receives a bye to the final round. In the final round, the Canadians beat Sweden 11-0, Britain 14-0 and Switzerland 13-0.

1984 — Phil and Steve Mahre of the United States become the first brothers to finish 1-2 in an Olympic event, the men's slalom, at the Winter Games in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia.

Contact us at 541-966-0838 or sports@eastoregonian.com



Oregon's Joseph Young goes for a shot during first half in Eugene Wednesday during Oregon's 73-60 win.

College Basketball

Ducks rise above Buffs

Oregon moves into sole possession of 3rd place

Associated Press

EUGENE, Ore. (AP) — Joseph Young scored 23 points and Oregon held off several Colorado rallies in the second half for a 73-60 victory on Wednesday night.

Dillon Brooks added 14 points for the Ducks (19-8, 9-5), who took over sole possession of third place in the Pac-12 Conference with UCLA's loss to Arizona State. Elgin Cook had 13 points and Dwayne Benjamin added 11 points and 13 rebounds.

The Buffaloes (12-13, 5-8), who whittled a 17-point deficit down to five late in the second half, were led by Askia Booker with 20 points. Wesley Gordon added 14 and Josh Scott 10 for Colorado.

The Ducks were out-rebounded 45-37 by the Buffaloes, 20-12 on the offensive glass, but took advantage of 16 turnovers to hold off Colorado.

Oregon led 49-32 in the second half when Booker, who had 14 points after the break, fueled an 8-0 run that started the comeback for the Buffaloes.

Xavier Johnson's 3-pointer with 4:10 to play pulled Colorado as close as it would get at 63-58, but Brooks answered with his own 3 as the Ducks finished the game on a 10-2 run.

Colorado took control early by hitting five of its first nine shots for an 11-4 lead. It quickly evaporated after seven straight points from Young, who sparked a 24-4 run.

Oregon
73

Colorado
60

STANFIELD

Stanfield claims district bid

Watson's free throw ensure Tigers will play Friday

By SAM BARBEE
EO Media Group

For the first time in six years, the Stanfield girls basketball team won a postseason game.

The Tigers took a ten-point lead into half-time, but had to hold on for dear life as the Culver Bulldogs late run made things interesting, before holding on for 26-22 squeaker Tuesday at Armand Larive Middle School. Stanfield clinches the four-seed headed into to Friday's district tournament.

No player recorded double-figure scoring. Culver's Hannah Lewis led all scorers with nine points, and Bailey Watson and Cynthia Curriel led Stanfield with five points apiece.

"We're all hyped," sophomore guard Watson said, whose free throw gave Stanfield a much-needed five-point lead down the stretch. "At the beginning of the season, we didn't expect this. It's crazy. It hasn't happen for six years, since 2009. We're pretty excited. This hasn't happened for a

long time." The win was a culmination of a series of hurdles, as head coach Daniel Sharp put it, for a team and a program that has been a doormat in the 2A Columbia Basin Conference — and before that the Blue Mountain Conference — for years. That 2009 team was the five seed in the district tournament, so the 2014-15 Tigers have already made headway.

"We've talked about overcoming hurdles," Sharp said. "You win that first game of the season, okay. (We) win the second game, we got two. Now we need a league game. We got that hurdle. Now we're in the heat of a battle and make it to kinda districts and we play on Monday night. It was always little hurdles the whole time. They haven't dominated at all, but they've just overcome those little hurdles and all those little things help build a program and help kids get excited about basketball."

The game itself was a tale of two halves. See TIGERS/2B

GIRLS HOOPS



Stanfield
26



Culver
22



Stanfield's lone senior Ashlee O'Neill (12) drives as Culver's Jessica Johnson closely defends during the second half of Stanfield's 26-22 squeaker over the Bulldogs on Wednesday night in Hermiston.

Prep Boys Basketball

Rockets lift off, soar past TigerScots

Pilot Rock upsets Weston-McEwen to grab CBC berth

By MATT ENTRUP
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — In two previous meetings this season, no fewer than 20 points separated the Weston-McEwen TigerScots and Pilot Rock Rockets boys basketball teams at game's end.

In their Columbia Basin Conference district tournament game on Wednesday night, no more than 10 points came between the two at any point.

And when the dust settled on a wild back-and-forth fourth quarter, it was the Rockets celebrating a 59-58 win that more than made up for a

pair of earlier lopsided defeats.

"We just had to believe that we were the better team," said Rockets senior Dillon Fritz, who along with senior Justin Willingham paced the team with 17 points apiece. "It was all about believing."

"We were just pumped," said Willingham, who also was a big part of Pilot Rock's 45-23 rebounding advantage. "Our underclassmen really wanted to win it for our seniors and we just played great as a team."

Weston-McEwen had beaten Pilot Rock 77-40 and 49-29 already this season, and with 44 seconds to play, Shyler Mikesell appeared to right the balance for the TigerScots (10-14). His three-pointer put them ahead 58-57, but with 18 seconds

BOYS HOOPS
Pilot Rock
59
Weston-McEwen
58

showing, Willingham lofted a jumper from just inside the free-throw line that bounced around the circumference of the rim before dropping with :15 left.

In a hectic series of events, each team turned the ball over in the next 11 seconds, leaving the TigerScots inbound the ball near their own baseline with :04 on the clock. The pass came in to Mikesell, who drove to the rim but couldn't finish with Willingham and the rest of the Rocket defense closing in.

"Let's face it, the Achilles heel for our team (this season) is when another team goes on a run we bowed down," said Pilot Rock coach Cory Anderson. "Tonight we answered their runs, and I couldn't be more proud."

The Rockets (7-13) didn't launch right away, and Weston-McEwen (10-14) pushed an early lead to nine points in the second quarter before the Rockets finished the last three minutes of the half on a 6-2 run to pull within 26-21 at intermission.

Pilot Rock continued its momentum in the third quarter, and went on a 16-2 run that featured two three-pointers by Bryson Pierce and another from Chris Weinke, and was capped by a three-point play from Fritz at the 4:12 mark.

Pilot Rock led 38-28 at that point, but the TigerScots finished the frame on a 9-2 run of their own to make it a one-basket game headed into the fourth at 40-37.

The Rockets struck first in the fourth, but the TigerScots were able chip away and knot the score at 44-all with 6:48 to play.

See ROCKETS/2B