

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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## Sports shorts

### Manning returning for 18th NFL season

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP) — A person with knowledge of the situation tells The Associated Press that Peyton Manning will return for a fourth season in Denver and 18th in the NFL.

Manning will reduce his salary from \$19 million to \$15 million in 2015, according to the person who spoke on condition of anonymity because there was no official announcement.

However, he can make up all of the \$4 million pay cut by reaching certain performance benchmarks.

Manning will take his physical and sign his revised contract Thursday, then return April 13 for team conditioning.

The five-time MVP mulled retirement after the Broncos' playoff loss to the Indianapolis Colts. But he determined he still had the health and hunger to keep playing at age 39.

### A-Rod singles in first at-bat back

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Alex Rodriguez returned to the New York Yankees after an absence of more than 17 months, lining a single into short left field in his first at-bat and going 1 for 2 with a walk in a 3-1 spring-training loss to the Philadelphia Phillies on Wednesday.

Greeted by a 10-second mix of boos and cheers from the crowd of 9,673 as he stepped into the batter's box for his first game following a one-year drug suspension, Rodriguez was wearing the Yankees' white uniform with pinstripes for the team's exhibition season home opener rather than the usual dark blue jersey used in exhibition games.

Rodriguez swung at the first four of 10 pitches he saw in three plate appearances. Batting second as New York's designated hitter, he swung past a pair of 91 mph pitches from Philadelphia's Kevin Slowey in the first inning.

He lined a soft single to left on an 89 mph 0-2 offering that was over the plate.

“I consider it a performance-inspiring drug.”

— Nate Jackson

Former Denver Broncos TE at a marijuana business conference. Jackson said he believes the NFL will soon have to remove marijuana from its list of banned substances. Jackson said he smoked marijuana to avoid opiate painkillers that are readily available to injured players.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1931 — WGL radio broadcasts the first game of the American Basketball League championship series. The Brooklyn Visitation beat the Fort Wayne Hoosiers 14-10 in the first professional basketball game to be broadcast live on radio.

1973 — New York Yankee pitchers Fritz Peterson and Mike Kekich announce that they've swapped wives and children.

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

## IRRIGON



Staff photo by E.J. Harris  
Irrigon head coach Mitch Thompson, 23, is only five years older than the oldest player on the Knights' boys basketball team. He has led the team back into the 2A state basketball tournament this week in Pendleton.

# Young coach could make history

## 23-year-old leads defending champion Irrigon back into state bracket

By ERIK SKOPIEL  
East Oregonian

In 1930, Astoria High triumphed over Salem High 32-17 to claim the school's first state boys basketball championship. On the sideline for the Fishermen was second-year coach John Warren. A 26-year-old, Warren became the youngest coach

in Oregon state history to win a state basketball title.

More than eight decades have passed, some 300 championship coaches have clipped down nets, but basketball historians believe Warren's mark in state athletic lore remains.

That could very well change Saturday at the Pendleton Convention

Center.

The top-seed Irrigon Knights have their sights set on a second consecutive state title. And leading the Knight's is 23-year-old, first-year coach Mitch Thompson.

Led by the last two Class 2A Players of the Year, Anthony Landeros and Adrian Romero, the Knights (24-1) have not missed a

beat with Thompson stepping in for coach Jake McElligott, who departed after last season's state title to take the Hermiston coaching job.

This weekend's tournament could be more of the same.

Irrigon already beat No. 2 seed Toledo in January, and No. 3 Hepner and Morrow County rival  
See YOUNG COACH/2B

## Buckaroos kick Wildcats

### PHS earns another game with win

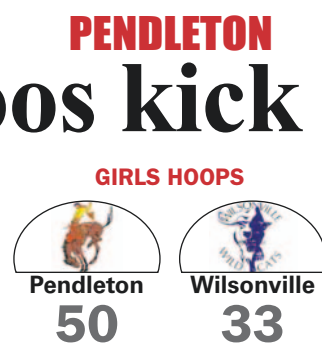
By ERIK SKOPIEL  
East Oregonian

Pendleton center Kristin Williams shrugged off a rough first half to lead the Buckaroos past visiting Wilsonville and into Saturday's opening round of the Class 5A girls state basketball playoffs.

Williams scored 10 of her game-high 16 points in the second half and the Buckaroos pulled away for a 50-33 play-in game victory over the Wildcats on Warberg Court on Wednesday.

Williams is one of four senior Buckaroo (16-9) starters who recognize the significance of each game from this point on.

“We're not ready to be done quite yet,” she said.



The Buckaroos made the initial move to ensure they wouldn't be the in the first half. Leading by just two points late in the first quarter, the Buckaroos scored five unanswered buckets to snag a 20-8 lead. Four different Buckaroos contributed points to the scoring surge.

The advantage dwindled under double figures just twice again during the game's remainder.

Senior Marlene Bodmer keyed the offense early. She scored nine of the team's opening 21 points and helped the Bucks to a 26-16 halftime edge over the Wilsonville (12-13).

Williams picked up the scoring slack in the second 16 minutes. After missing five first half shots — include a couple of gimmes — she scored PHS' first eight points in the second to take a 34-20 lead with 2:48 remaining in the period.

Pendleton kept the pressure on the Wildcats, using a full-court press to create 12 second half giveaways and keep the WHS ball-handlers uncomfortable. Senior guard Darian Lindsay had steals on three consecutive third quarter possessions as part of a 10-2 run.

“I think what won that game was our 100-percent effort because all of us gave 100-percent and we gave out our all,” Bodmer said.

A Wilsonville comeback attempt never materialized. Pendleton pushed its edge to as much as 20 points.

See BUCKAROOS/2B



Staff photo by E.J. Harris  
Pendleton's Haley Greb drives on Wilsonville's Betsy Morris in the Bucks' 50-33 win against the Wildcats on Wednesday in Pendleton.

## College Basketball

### Oregon survives hotly contested Civil War

Associated Press

CORVALLIS — Elgin Cook scored 17 points to lead Oregon past Oregon State 65-62 on Wednesday night in a hotly contested rivalry game.

Joseph Young added 15 points, six rebounds and six assists for the Ducks (23-8, 13-5 Pac-12), who have won five in a row. Malcolm Duvivier scored

See CIVIL WAR/2B



AP Photo/Don Ryan

## MISSION

### Eagles advance to semifinals

#### Nixyaawii beats Hosanna Christian in tournament opener

East Oregonian

BAKER CITY — Elijah Bevis got the Golden Eagles off to a fast start and Hunter Melton came up big at the end as No. 5 Nixyaawii held off No. 4 Hosanna Christian 51-46 on Wednesday.

Bevis scored 11 of his team-high 17 points in the first half of the Class 1A boys basketball state quarterfinal match-up at Baker High School, but found open looks hard to come by as his team clung to a narrow lead in the fourth quarter.

See EAGLES/2B

