

Sports shorts

Bryant sent to minors by Cubs; union threatens litigation

MESA, Ariz. (AP) — Third baseman Kris Bryant was reassigned by the Chicago Cubs to their minor league camp on Monday despite an outstanding spring training at the plate, triggering a threat of litigation from the players’ association.



Bryant hit .425 in the exhibition season with nine homers and 15 RBIs in 40 at-bats. If the 23-year-old spends 12 or more days in the minor leagues, Chicago would delay him from becoming eligible for free agency by one year, until after the 2021 season, according to baseball’s collective bargaining agreement. “Today is a bad day for baseball,” the Major League Baseball Players Association said in a statement. “I think we all know that even if Kris Bryant were a combination of the greatest players to play our game, and perhaps he will be before it’s all said and done, the Cubs still would have made the decision they made today. This decision, and other similar decisions made by clubs will be addressed in litigation, bargaining or both.”

Williams beats Wozniacki to reach Miami Open quarters

KEY BISCAYNE, Fla. (AP) — Basking in her latest victory, a beaming Venus Williams stood near her changeover chair launching autographed balls into the stands, steering her shots with body English and applauding the fans who scrambled for the souvenirs. For Williams, tennis is still fun. She’s 34 but on the rise in the rankings, and she beat former No. 1 Caroline Wozniacki 6-3, 7-6 (1) Monday to reach the Miami Open quarterfinals.

Williams is a three-time Key Biscayne champion, but her most recent title came in 2001. Seeded 16th, she’s into the quarterfinals at the tournament for the first time since 2012. “Tennis has always been a blast,” Williams said. “But, you know, I’m feeling good out there.” She could meet her sister Serena in the final. Serena, who has won the tournament a record seven times, advanced by beating 2006 champion Svetlana Kuznetsova 6-2, 6-3.

American Sloane Stephens made it to the final eight at Key Biscayne for the first time by beating 18-year-old Belinda Bencic 6-4, 7-6 (5).

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1909 — Baseball’s National Commission rules that players who jump contracts will be suspended for five years. Players joining outlaw organizations will be suspended for three years as punishment for going outside organized baseball.

1973 — Ken Norton scores a stunning upset by winning a 12-round split decision over Muhammad Ali to win the NABF heavyweight title. Norton, a 5-1 underdog, breaks Ali’s jaw in the first round.

High school wrestling

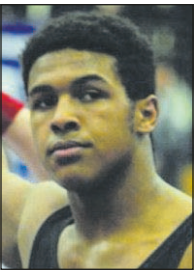
Colbray wins national title

By SAM BARBEE
EO Media Group

Sam Colbray added some new hardware to his trophy shelf Sunday — a national title.

The Hermiston junior won the National High School Coaches Association high school nationals in Virginia Beach, Virginia, the first Bulldog to do so.

Colbray topped Blake Rypel of Indiana 11-4 in the juniors bracket. He had Rypel pinned in the second period, said Hermiston head coach Shaun Williams, but the official stopped the match due to injury concerns for Rypel. Once the match re-



Colbray

sumed, Colbray dominated the rest of the way. “I think he deserves it,” Williams said. “I don’t think he gets the credit he deserves. He’s a really talented wrestler and he’s really smart about it...As long as he keeps improving on the little things, he’ll be OK.”

Colbray wrestled in front of Cornell University coaches Rob Koll and Damian Hahn who told Wil-

liams they were impressed with how Colbray wrestled. They have been actively recruiting the 195-pound national champion.

Colbray was one of four Bulldogs to win matches at the NHS-CA Nationals. Of seven Hermiston wrestlers competing, Colbray, Andy Wagner, at 126 pounds in the junior division, Bob Coleman, wrestling at 170 pounds in the junior division, and AJ Tuia, competing at 132 pounds in the freshman division, won matches. Coleman was two matches from placing eighth, which would have earned him an All-American nod.

Colbray, though, was the story for Hermiston.

As the sixth-ranked wrestler in the tournament, he cruised through his first four matches. He beat Georgia’s Jack Walsh 8-1 to start things off, handled Jalen Martin of Missouri 8-2, pinned New Jersey’s Patrick Daly in 35 seconds, then pounded Tennessee’s Benjamin Stacey 13-3 in the quarterfinals.

In the semi-finals, however, Colbray ran into Christian Araneo from New York, the 11th-ranked wrestler in the tournament. The New Yorker had a style that Colbray had never seen before, and Williams said it created a bad matchup for him. That

See COLBRAY/2B

Prep softball

Pioneers continue to thrive



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Mac-Hi’s Micha Fortune sprints for first base after bunting Saturday during the Pioneers 5-1 victory over Scappoose in Milton-Freewater.

Mac-Hi extends winning streak to 6 games

By ERIK SKOPIL
East Oregonian

Scappoose shortstop Hannah Galey did something on Saturday that no one had been able to against the Mac-Hi softball team in 30 previous innings of action this season: cross home plate.

While Galey’s fourth inning run didn’t factor into the final result — Mac-Hi would go on to win 5-1 — it did impede the Pioneers’ pursuit of perfection. “I’m a little disappointed, honestly,” Mac-Hi pitching ace Colette Robert said of allowing the season’s first run.

That’s the level of play Robert and the Pioneers (6-0) expect to perform at this season after bringing the school its first state softball title last season.

The Pioneers are still without loss this season, improving to 6-0 with two wins at Saturday’s home tournament at Yantis Park and

extending the school’s win streak to 26 games dating back to last year’s magical run.

Robert, last year’s Class 4A Pitcher of the Year, appears even stronger in her senior year. In the morning’s 13-0 victory over Stayton, she faced two more than the minimum in a five-inning run-rule win. Both batters reached via walks. Thirteen of her 15 outs came by punch-out.

Scappoose — which reached last year’s state quarterfinal round — provided a bigger test for Robert and the Pioneers in the afternoon. Leadoff hitter Jessie Dykes set the tone on the first at-bat of the game, sending Robert’s third offering through the gap for a single. Dykes doubled her next time up.

“We need these games,” Pioneer coach Nicole Christian said. “They had some hard contact, and put some pressure on the defense



See SOFTBALL/2B



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Mac-Hi pitcher Colette Robert winds up Saturday during a game against Scappoose on Saturday in Milton-Freewater.

NBA

Blazers clinch playoff spot with win

By ANNE M. PETERSON
AP Sports Writer



AP Photo/Craig Mitchell/Idyer

Portland Trail Blazers forward LaMarcus Aldridge, left, posts up against Phoenix Suns center Alex Len, right, during the third quarter of an NBA basketball game in Portland, Monday.

PORTLAND — Damian Lillard scored 19 points before sitting the final quarter and the Portland Trail Blazers secured a playoff berth with a 109-86 victory Monday night over the Phoenix Suns.

The Blazers have won four straight as they edge closer to their first Northwest Division title since 2008-09.

LaMarcus Aldridge added 17 points and seven rebounds, and

See BLAZERS/2B

NCAA tournament

Zags’ season ends in Elite 8

Debate continues over whether team is best ever

By NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS
Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — The question all season was whether this was the greatest team in the history of Gonzaga basketball.

The answer after the Bulldogs finally broke through to the Elite Eight again but fell short of the Final Four again has to remain: Maybe.

This season’s edition (35-3) won more games than any team in school history and finally broke the streak of five straight years of losing in the NCAA Tournament’s round of 32. The Bulldogs advanced to the second weekend of the tournament for the first time since 2009.

“We made it to the Elite Eight and that is something you dream of, to play on this stage,” said Gary Bell Jr.

Now the question is what does next year hold? For now, at least, Gonzaga seems to be in good shape.

Forward Kyle Wiltjer, who led the team in scoring and was named to the AP All-America third team on Monday, has indicated he intends to come back for his senior season.

“I’ve got another year of eligibility so that’s my plan right now,” Wiltjer said.

Center Przemek Karnowski and freshman forward Dantas Sabonis are also eligible to return, which would give the Zags one of the most potent front courts in college basketball.

But the Zags will lose guards Kevin Pangos and Bell, who posted a 122-20 record during their four years as the starting back court.

“You’re not going to get higher character guys, you’re not going to get better Zags, you’re not going to get better teammates,” coach Mark Few said. “They’re right there with the greatest that have ever played. No question they’re probably the greatest back court.”

Though Pangos and Bell combined for just nine points in Gonzaga’s 66-52 loss to top-seeded Duke on Sunday.

Gonzaga will also lose another unique contributor in Byron Wesley, who played for three years at Southern California and then joined the Zags this season as a graduate transfer student because he wanted to play in the NCAA tournament.

Wesley emerged as one of the team’s better inside scorers this season. He scored 10 points and grabbed five rebounds

See NCAA/2B