

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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Sports shorts

Smith, Labonte head up NASCAR Hall of Fame class

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Speedway Motorsports Executive Chairman Bruton Smith and two-time Sprint Cup champion Terry Labonte topped the newest group of five headed to the NASCAR Hall of Fame.

NASCAR drivers Curtis Turner and Bobby Isaac and modified series champion Jerry Cook completed the hall's seventh class Wednesday.

Smith's company owns eight tracks that host NASCAR events, including Charlotte Motor Speedway, site of this weekend's Coca-Cola 600.

Labonte, known as "Texas Terry," won 22 races and NASCAR titles in 1984 and 1996.

Pitcher brings sweet celebration to Nationals

WASHINGTON (AP) — Let the chocolate syrup flow.

As the Washington Nationals have set aside a slow start and entered Wednesday in a tie atop the NL East, they developed an unusual way to celebrate their mounting collection

of comeback victories: Starting pitcher Max Scherzer pours chocolate from a bottle on the player responsible for producing the winning run.

Scherzer, who joined the Nationals in the offseason with a \$210 million, seven-year contract, did his latest dousing Tuesday night, turning the goop on Ryan Zimmerman after the first baseman's game-ending two-run homer with two outs in the 10th inning lifted Washington past the New York Yankees 8-6.

"It's just something to top off a good win," Scherzer explained Wednesday. "Chocolate sauce is the perfect topping for ice cream, so might as well top off a game and give that person in the on-the-field camera interview a little something to taste."

"Once she started laughing after the first question when she heard my voice in the microphone, I knew it was going to be downhill from there."

— Stephen Curry
Golden State Warriors guard and NBA MVP after his 2-year-old daughter Riley stole the spotlight when he brought her to his post-game interview following the Warriors' 110-106 win over Houston in Game 1 of the Western Conference finals.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1881 — A small group of tennis club members meet in New York City to form the world's first national governing body for tennis: the United States National Lawn Tennis Association. The organization is created to standardize tennis rules and regulations and to encourage and develop the sport.

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HERMISTON

Faaeteete took long route to Bulldogs

David Faaeteete is the next head football coach of the Hermiston Bulldogs, but he had quite the journey to get there.

Sam Barbee photo



Hermiston football coach's journey began in Western Samoa

By SAM BARBEE
EO Media Group

Before moving to Hermiston, David Faaeteete didn't know where it was.

In 2008, he was coming off his senior season at the University of Oregon, where he started 13 games, recording two sacks and recovering two fumbles. He signed contracts with the Chicago Bears and Oakland Raiders, but his pro football career never took off. He was back home in Eugene, ready to enroll in graduate school and prepare for a career in law when a fateful call came through his cell phone.

It was Mike Kay, Hermiston's athletic director at the time, and Mark Hodges, the newly-hired head football coach. They asked what Faaeteete was doing. He said waiting for a call and staying in shape. They asked if he wanted to coach and teach, and Faaeteete agreed.

The recent graduate had no idea how far east Hermiston was, however. He got to Hood River, called his future bosses and said he was almost there, maybe 20 minutes out. He got to Arlington, thought it was Hermiston, only to punch Hermiston into his GPS and find out he was still another 45 minutes or so from his destination.

"I had never driven that far before," he said.

COMING TO AMERICA: Faaeteete is no stranger to long journeys. As a boy, he and his family moved to San Francisco
See **FAAETEETE/2B**

PENDLETON

For the amore of the game



Pendleton foreign exchange student Matilde Cittadini, of Italy, returns a volley during a match in Pendleton this season. Prior to coming to America the PHS junior was burnt out on tennis, but has rediscovered her love for the game and is representing her adoptive city at the state championships starting today.

EO file photo

Italian exchange student rediscovers tennis in Pendleton

By MATT ENTRUP
East Oregonian

When Matilde Cittadini gave up tennis two years ago she thought it was for good.

But that was before Italian exchange student discovered how fun the sport could be.

After a season with the Pendleton Buckaroos, Cittadini said she's rediscovered her love of the game, and today she will be the only player representing them at the state championships in Portland.

The Pendleton junior's path to the state bracket may be a bit unconventional, but her exit from the game as a promising amateur was all too common.

Fed up with the ultra-competitive scene in Italy, Cittadini burned out.

"Tennis is a sport where you have to like the sport and have fun, and if you don't have fun ... it's not

really playing sports anymore," she explained during a break in her final practice at West Hills School on Wednesday.

Her coach at Pendleton, Rocky Dillenburg, had coached several foreign exchange students during more than two decades on Pendleton sidelines, and said he wasn't surprised when Cittadini rejected her teammates' initial attempts to recruit her this spring.

"There was so much pressure on her when she was playing that she didn't like that pressure and she kind of gave up the game. She was identified as a pretty good player when she was young, and then they start to separate them out so the ones that have some talent, they really start to push them and it's all tennis, all the time," he said. "She thought that's what it's going to be like here."

But after a little reassurance from

her host mother Malene Hathaway, Cittadini decided to give it a try.

"I don't have regrets," she said. "Maybe I would have regrets if I didn't come play."

Cittadini said what she's enjoyed most about this season wasn't rediscovering a sport that was dead to her, or beating Summit's Sierra Ginsburg for third place at the Special District 1 tournament this past weekend — she said each win still makes her feel a little like a bandit in the night, stealing off victories to take back to Italy.

No, what she's enjoyed most is having a team supporting her the whole way, and it's the first thing she wants to talk about.

"I played with players what were better than me (at districts), but I won just because my team gave me the right support," she said. "They watched my matches, they cheered me like, 'OK, you can do it.' And

the other team had support for their players but not as well as us. I just thank my team that I won."

"It's real interesting because all of the foreign exchange students that I've had play for me, whether it's soccer or tennis or whatever — this team concept that we have in the United States with high school sports, they don't have that in Europe," Dillenburg said. "And so the team camaraderie, the team support, is a new experience for them and they really like it."

Cittadini said it makes common sense too.

"I think that the mental support is the thing that you need to win," she said. "Tennis is a game where not the best players win, but the player that has the mind to win. I think that's why I won, because I played good but the other players I think

See **TENNIS/2B**

College Baseball

Lane, Kopacz named to first team in region

East Oregonian

Former Pendleton slugger Tommy Lane and former Hermiston standout Austin Kopacz continue to excel at the next level.

Both were named to their respective first teams when the NWAC released its all-conference all-star lists.

Lane, the all-time home run record holder at Pendleton, was first team in the South.

A sophomore first baseman at

Mount Hood Community College, Lane led the Saints in RBIs (31), home runs (7) and walks (14) in league play. He finished with 11 home runs and 45 RBIs in 132 at-bats for the season as a whole.

Kopacz, a Walla Walla Community College sophomore outfielder, was named to the first team in the East Region.

He finished league play with a .313 average in 99 at-bats. He had 31 hits, 15 RBIs and five doubles,

See **BASEBALL/2B**

College Softball

BMCC pair makes second team in East

East Oregonian

Blue Mountain Community College sophomores Rayne Spencer and Savanna Zarate were two of the players honored when the NWAC released its softball regional all-star lists.

The Timberwolves were each voted to the second team by the East Region coaches, Zarate at infield and Spencer at catcher.

Both players had the ability to change a game with a single

swing of the bat, and their power hitting helped keep the T-Wolves in the playoff hunt up to the last day of the regular season.

Spencer, from Pendleton, led the team with a .398 batting average in 28 league games, and also led the T-Wolves with 33 hits, 30 RBIs, 25 runs, 10 home runs, eight doubles and one triple.

Zarate, from Salem, was second in average (.283), hits (31), RBIs (25), home runs (7)

See **SOFTBALL/2B**