

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2015

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Sports shorts

Deals reached for tagged players

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP) — The Kansas City Chiefs ended up with a big bargain the last time they signed Justin Houston. This time, it's the star line-backer who's cashing in.



Houston became the highest-paid linebacker in NFL history Wednesday when he agreed to a six-year, \$101 million contract, over half of which is guaranteed, hours before the Wednesday deadline for players who had franchise tags to sign long-term deals.

Star receivers Dez Bryant and the Dallas Cowboys and Demaryius Thomas of the Denver Broncos both agreed to a five-year, \$70 million contracts just before the deadline.

The New York Giants, however, did not pursue a long-term deal with Jason Pierre-Paul after the star defensive end injured his right hand in a July 4 fireworks accident.

MLB considers schedule changes

CINCINNATI (AP) — Cutting the length of Major League Baseball's regular-season schedule could be tied to reconfiguring the postseason.

Baseball players are increasingly complaining of the toll of playing 162 games in 183 days. The schedule was 154 games before the AL added eight games when it expanded in 1961, and the National League adopted the new format when it added two teams for the 1962 season.

"A shortened schedule is a major, major economic issue," Commissioner Rob Manfred told the Baseball Writers' Association of America on Tuesday.

"We sell out in a lot of markets in terms of gates. The gates are really valuable to us. We have television commitments. Each local contract varies, but there are game guarantees that could be affected by a shortened season."

"I can't help but really say that I wonder how Floyd (Mayweather) feels being beat by a woman for once."

— **Ronda Rousey**
UFC female bantamweight champion after winning for Best Fighter at the ESPY Awards on Wednesday. Mayweather has been charged with domestic violence six times, resulting in a two-month jail stay in 2012.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1920 — Babe Ruth breaks his own season record of 29 homers with his 30th as the New York Yankees beat the St. Louis Browns, 5-2. Ruth ends the season with 54.

1993 — Nick Faldo ties the best single round in 122 years of the British Open with a course-record 63 to give him a one-stroke lead after the second round.

2006 — J.R. Todd becomes the first black driver to win an NHRA Top Fuel event, beating Tony Schumacher in the Mopar Mile-High Nationals.

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

British Open

Spieth tries to downplay pressure

Masters, U.S. Open champion treating next major as 'just another event'

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP Golf Writer

ST. ANDREWS, Scotland — With a chance to match history at the home of golf, Jordan Spieth is trying to make the British Open feel like just another event.

That might be one of his toughest challenges at St. Andrews.

Ben Hogan in 1953 is the only other player to capture the Masters, U.S. Open and British Open in the same year. Only three players since then — Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods — have ever come to Scotland with hopes of a Grand Slam.

Spieth's news conference attracted a full house Wednesday, creating an atmosphere normally reserved only for Woods and Rory McIlroy. The 21-year-old Texan is the main attrac-

See GOLF/2B



United States' Jordan Spieth reacts after his caddie tossed a ball which rolled into the hole during a practice round at the British Open Golf Championship at the Old Course, St. Andrews, Scotland, Wednesday, July 15, 2015.

HERMISTON

Little League all-stars can handle heat

District 3 champions prepare for state

By **SAM BARBEE**
EO Media Group



Staff photo by Sam Barbee
Akira Pierson of the Hermiston 10/11-year-old softball team fields a ball at third base while shortstop Kayleigh Billsborough backs up Tuesday in Hermiston.

In late June, local temperature records were broken by a heat wave that lashed the entire west coast. But Hermiston's 10/11-year-old softball team couldn't find relief at the pool or in their homes. They had to play some softball.

In the District 3 tournament in Irrigon, Hermiston took two of three games from host Columbia, dropping the first game 19-18 in 110-degree heat. Hermiston would beat Columbia 11-4 the next day to force a winner-take-all championship game, which Hermiston took 17-14. It qualified Hermiston for the 10/11-year-old state tournament in Gresham.

"They showed how they can work as a team, and get themselves where they need to go and what they need to do," manager Lorena Simpson said. "It's amazing (to qualify for state). The kids have worked really hard for it and they deserve it."

Simpson wouldn't single out any of the 11 players on the roster, saying that they've bonded as a team and "we hold onto each other's teamwork."

That teamwork was on display during a particularly grueling district game a couple weeks ago.

At the district tournament in Irrigon, Hermiston took on host Columbia in the largest heat wave to hit the west coast in decades. Columbia jumped to a quick lead, but Simpson's resilient squad didn't back down. After a 1 p.m. start, the game was delayed due to the heat. It took about an hour for the ballgame to resume, and it finished around 6 p.m.

But the long day seemingly had no effect on Hermiston. They rebounded for the 11-4 win the next day, and held off a charging Columbia squad 17-14 in the winner-take-all rubber match.

Offensively, Hermiston appears to be in a good place. In those last three games, they've scored an average of 15.7 runs. But the real advantage Hermiston has entering the state tourney is its familiarity with the heat. Saturday and Sunday's temperatures in Gresham are predicted to touch 91 degrees, which is approaching standard summer desert temperatures.

"I think we will do very well with the heat," Simpson said. "It's an advantage. We've already played in it."

PENDLETON

Pendleton third at state

Momentary lapses stop stout run

East Oregonian

CLACKAMAS — Two bad innings is all it took to end Pendleton's state tournament.

The 11/12-year-old Little League softball all-stars had to settle for third place on Wednesday following a 19-10 loss to the District 1 squad from north Portland.

It was the fifth game of the week for the girls, which won the District 3 championship to earn their berth, and manager Ron Murphy said going home before the championship round was a hard pill to swallow when considering how well the team played at the tournament.

"This is a tough loss, just because our girls never quit," he said over the phone following the game. "We actually had a really awesome tournament. You take away those bad innings and who knows where we'd be right now."

"But it was a fun ride and all 12 of our girls played hard. Taking third in state is something they should be proud of."

Wednesday's elimination contest saw Pendleton take an early lead and go up 5-3 before one bad inning in the field allowed Beaumont/Parkside/North Portland to build an insurmountable advantage.

Murphy said he felt bad for pitcher Celia Farrow, who had to shoulder the loss despite a strong outing.

"She was kind of the heart and soul of our pitching staff and she fought hard," he said. "We had some errors tonight and that kind of hurt us a lot. But we never quit and we scored a lot of runs at the end there."

Pendleton added four runs in their final at-bat, and were led at the plate by Delaney Duchek (3 for 4) and Jordyn Murphy (2 for 3, walk).

Pendleton's tournament began with a 19-3 win over OR/CAL from the Klamath Falls area, but they were dropped to the loser's bracket after a 13-4 defeat at the hands of tournament host Clackamas, which will face North Portland in the championship.

That game went into the fourth inning tied 1-1, but Clackamas took advantage of Pendleton errors to go up for good.

Pendleton rebounded to beat Crook County 21-9, then beat OR/CAL again, this time 12-4.

Ron Murphy said every player on his roster made big plays throughout their run.

"I could put highlights on everybody," he said. "All 12 girls fought hard and there wasn't any one girl that stuck out for the whole tournament."

The other members of the team are Jordan Jones, Alexia Laib, Brynn Cody, Maria Lilienthal, Katie Kline, Natalie Neveau, Josie Wilson and Kylie Parsons.



Caitlyn Jenner accepts the Arthur Ashe award for courage at the ESPY Awards at the Microsoft Theater on Wednesday, July 15, 2015, in Los Angeles.

Photo by Chris Pizzello/Invision/AP

Emotional Jenner accepts Courage Award at ESPYs

By **BETH HARRIS**
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Caitlyn Jenner accepted the Arthur Ashe Courage Award at the ESPYs on Wednesday night while urging acceptance for others who are transgender.

She received a standing ovation from some of the sporting world's biggest stars after her 10-minute speech during the annual awards

honoring the year's top athletes and moments.

"This transition has been harder on me than anything I can imagine," said Jenner, who revealed she was in the process of becoming a woman in a televised interview with Diane Sawyer in April on ABC.

Noting her powerful celebrity platform, the 1976 Olympic decathlon champion

See JENNER/2B