

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2015

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Sports shorts

Manziel to start against Bengals

CLEVELAND (AP) — Welcome to The Jungle, Johnny. With starting quarterback Josh McCown unable to play because of a painful rib injury, Johnny Manziel will start Thursday night against the Cincinnati Bengals, who treated him so rudely as a rookie on the road last year and now get him on their home turf.

In his first NFL start last season, Manziel was chased, sacked, intercepted and taunted by the Bengals in a 30-0 embarrassment.

Now, Manziel's facing one of the league's four remaining unbeaten teams on short notice.

McCown was unable to practice Tuesday night because of his ribs — and sore shoulder — and Browns coach Mike Pettine announced the decision to start Manziel on Wednesday before the team left for Cincinnati.

Kaepernick benched by 49ers

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — Quarterback Colin Kaepernick has been told he won't start Sunday for the San Francisco 49ers and is being replaced by backup Blaine Gabbert, a

FACES



Kaepernick

person with knowledge of the decision said Monday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity to The Associated Press because the decision wasn't to be discussed publicly. The team had not made an announcement, though coach Jim Tomsula offered a pretty good hint earlier in the day "we're evaluating everyone," on the heels of a 27-6 loss at St. Louis and a second straight game without a touchdown.

Kaepernick has passed for just 286 yards the last two games for the Niners (2-6), raising questions for weeks now whether a big change was needed.

"I was frustrated with my shot, I couldn't make a bucket, so like I said, I had to take it out on something."

— **LeBron James**
Cleveland Cavaliers
Explaining why he ripped the sleeves of his jersey after missing a three-pointer with 7:08 remaining in the second quarter of a game against the New York Knicks on Wednesday night. James has been critical of the short-sleeved jerseys in the past and finished 9-for-23 from the field in a 96-86 win.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1994 — George Foreman regains part of the heavyweight title he lost to Muhammad Ali in 1974, stopping Michael Moorer in the 10th round. Foreman, 45, captures the IBF and WBA championships to become the oldest champion in any weight class.

1997 — The Milwaukee Brewers becomes the first major league baseball team to switch leagues this century, moving from the AL to the NL when baseball's ruling executive council approved the shift.

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

HERMISTON

Dawgs prepare to defend title

Bulldogs earn way back to playoffs to defend their state title

By **SAM BARBEE**
East Oregonian

Expectations for the 2015 Hermiston Bulldogs football couldn't have been higher.

Fresh off the first state football title in school history, the Bulldogs would be playing with an almost entirely new group after the graduation of most of the state title-winning 2014 squad. Bob Coleman said any expectations short of repeating would be "selling ourselves short."

Two games into Hermiston's season, just having the opportunity to defend its title seemed far off.

The Bulldogs lost those first two games by a combined score of 95-26, and lost starting wide receiver Ethan Snow in the process.

The injuries began to mount. Next to go down was starting running back Jonathan Hinkle, then starting quarterback Dayshawn Neal, then the offensive line was hit hard.

Even with all that adversity, the Hermiston Bulldogs (4-5, 3-0) are Columbia River Conference champions, again, and in the playoffs — again.

"We're pretty excited," Bulldogs head coach David Faeteete said. "We knew we'd be in the this situation if we executed late in



• **Friday, 7 p.m.**
• **at Kennison Field**

the stretch...We're excited, the kids are excited that they'll be hosting the game. Then we saw the draw, not too excited."

The Bulldogs got huge contributions from new varsity players. Vaemu Ena, who sat out the War on 84 with a shoulder injury, stepped into a safety role and had key interceptions against Sandy and Hood River Valley, both wins. Nathan Hunsaker, whom Neal beat for the starting job out of fall camp, broke out against Pendleton with a huge game on the ground. Tre Neal has led a defense that got stronger and tougher as the season wore on.

Now, seeded eighth, the Bulldogs
See **HERMISTON/2B**

PENDLETON

T-Wolves finish strong



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

BMCC's Kirstin Williams (12) and Klaree Hobart go up to block a shot from Columbia Basin's Morgan Wilder in the Timberwolves' win against the Hawks on Wednesday in Pendleton.

Blue Mountain sweeps Columbia Basin in final home match

By **MATT ENTRUP**
East Oregonian



PENDLETON — They didn't always make it look pretty, but when they did it was a beauty to behold as the Blue Mountain Timberwolves polished off an undefeated home schedule with a three-set sweep of Columbia Basin on Tuesday at Mosby Court.

The NWAC East Region champions gave their sophomores a fitting send-off while a pair of freshmen gave the home crowd their last look at what's to come next season in wins of 25-15, 25-14, 27-25.

But in between moments of brilliance, the T-Wolves also made enough mistakes to keep coach Dave Baty from declaring the match a complete success.

"It just seemed like when some of those key moments came up that it was 'OK let's put this one down.' We just weren't doing something smart in the other moments, they were doing something unnecessary," he said.

Columbia Basin (10-27, 7-6 East) exploited soft spots in the BMCC defense to stick around to the midway point of the first two matches, then capitalized on a few early hitting errors to build its largest lead of the night at 10-5 in the third set.

Baty has an alternate scoring system he prefers his players to use to gauge their success in matches.

It's called the effort game and points are awarded for "hustle plays" like diving to save a live ball, despite the outcome of the play. Baty thought the T-Wolves (36-9, 13-0) got away from that at times on Wednesday, which accounted for many of their issues.

"That's intrinsic of this team, instead of running hard to the finish line they've got to look over they're shoulder and see how far ahead they are. That's why I told them, 'Stop looking at the scoreboard and play the effort game,'" he said. "Our intention was to have (sophomores) dominate the first two sets then try to have the (freshmen) walk out there and then finish it off in the third
See **T-WOLVES/3B**

Prep Football

Stanfield ready to prove itself in postseason

Tigers get tough first round task with Vernonia

By **ERIC SINGER**
East Oregonian

In each of its last seven state playoff appearances, the Stanfield Tigers have not been able to escape the first round.

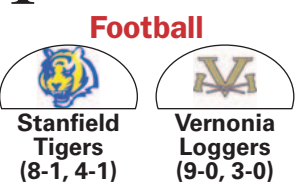
The most recent attempt was a 61-0 drubbing in 2013 to eventual Class 2A runner-up, Regis.

So in the Tigers first trip to back to the postseason since that game, first-year

head coach Davy Salas says his team is motivated to break that trend.

"We're not happy with just making it now," he said. "We're more hungry to get it done, and there is a real sense of the guys believing in themselves that they can do this."

The Tigers rebounded from a down season in 2014 to a breakout year this season, finishing with an 8-1 record — their only loss to CBC champion Heppner — and a second place finish in the Columbia Basin Conference. The Tigers also finished the year in the No. 4 slot in the OSAA's



• **Friday, 7 p.m.**
• **St. Helens High School**

Class 2A rankings, which they thought would help in getting a home playoff game in the first round.

Instead, the Tigers saw their name listed as a No. 9 seed scheduled to play on the road against the No. 8 seed Vernonia Loggers on Friday at St. Helens High School. Salas said that the seeding left his team feeling

a little slighted.

"To be honest, yeah, we were (disappointed)," said Salas. "You can pick apart things, but ultimately we felt we proved ourselves enough to get a home game."

But after having some time for he and the team to digest the match-up, Salas believes that the game could be a great chance for his team to make their mark in the postseason.

"It's just one of those things that's out of our control, so now we have a chance to go out and show the (OSAA) just who we are and prove ourselves," he

Pro Sports

Pro teams paid to honor troops

U.S. Senate reveals deals with Pentagon

By **MARY CLARE JALONICK**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Patriotic ceremonies at halftime of sporting events may not just be about honoring the troops.

Arizona's two Republican senators said Wednesday that the Defense Department spent more than \$10 million in marketing and advertising contracts with professional sports teams between 2012 and 2015.

A new report by Sens. John McCain and Jeff Flake, titled "Tackling Paid Patriotism," calls for an end to the taxpayer-funded practice of sponsoring such military celebrations at games, an effort that is often used for recruiting efforts and community outreach.

The report found 72 contracts in which the Pentagon paid for patriotic tributes at professional sports games.

Earlier this year, the senators added a provision to a defense bill barring the Defense Department from entering into paid contracts for honoring members of the Armed Forces at sporting events.

Soon after, the Pentagon said it would stop funding and approving contracts in which teams pay to honor members of the Armed Forces.

The report praised that move, but the senators said they wanted to highlight the practice so it stops once and for all.

Some of the examples mentioned by the report include the Army National Guard paying the Minnesota Vikings football team to sponsor its military appreciation night; the Air Force paying the Cincinnati Bengals football team \$4,960 for 60 club level tickets; and the Air Force paying the LA Galaxy soccer team for "recognition of five high ranking officers of the Air Force" in a 2012 game and four sideline season tickets.

The senators noted that much of this money was paid out as the military asked Congress for additional dollars. The report said the ceremonies should be genuine displays of national pride, not taxpayer-funded marketing gimmicks.

said.

The Tigers will have their hands full with Vernonia (9-0) on Friday, as the Loggers boast one of the best offenses in the entire state with 474 total points scored on the season — fifth-most in the OSAA.

The Loggers have been one of the biggest surprises in Class 2A, improving from a dreadful team that compiled just a 2-16 record over the last two seasons combined is back in the playoffs for the first time since 2008.

Vernonia's offense thrives on home run plays
See **STANFIELD/2B**