

NBA

Lillard leads Blazers to win over Grizzlies

By ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Damian Lillard scored 27 points, including 14 in the third quarter, and the Portland Trail Blazers defeated the Memphis Grizzlies 115-96 on Thursday night.

It was the second game of a back-to-back for the Blazers, who have strung together a modest three-game winning streak. C.J. McCollum added 20 points and a career-high five assists.

Courtney Lee led the Grizzlies with 18 points while Zach Randolph, who played for the Blazers for the first six years of his career, had 16 points and 10 rebounds.

Lillard hit seven 3-pointers, including one that put Portland ahead 95-71 early in the fourth quarter.

The Blazers were coming off a 108-92 victory over Utah on Wednesday. Lillard and McCollum combined for 62 points against the Jazz.

The Grizzlies, in the midst of a five-game road trip, were routed by reigning NBA champion Golden State 119-69 on Monday, but rebounded to beat Sacramento 103-89 on Tuesday.

The Grizzlies defeated the Blazers in the first round of the playoffs last season in five games. Lillard is the only starter that remains with Portland from that team, following the offseason departure of LaMarcus Aldridge, Nicolas Batum, Wesley Matthews and Robin Lopez.

Lee and Randolph iced their knees on the Memphis bench to start the second quarter but Lee's 3-pointer gave the Grizzlies a 35-32 lead midway through the period.

Jeff Green hit a half-court shot at the buzzer that was originally called good but review showed that time had run out and the Blazers led 50-46 at halftime.

Lillard hit a 3-pointer and Portland added free throws to pull



Memphis Grizzlies forward Zach Randolph, left, shoots over Portland Trail Blazers forward Ed Davis, right, during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Portland, Ore., Thursday, Nov. 5, 2015.

AP Photo/Craig Mitchell/Day

ahead 67-62 midway through the third quarter. Maurice Harkless dunked to extend it to 71-63 and Portland would lead by as many as 26 points.

TIP-INS
Grizzlies: Seventeen-year veteran Vince Carter needs just three more games to pass Steve Nash for 30th on the NBA's all-time games played list. Carter, who did not play against the

Blazers, is sitting at 1,215.

Trail Blazers: Portland has 19 back-to-backs this season. ... Lillard and Oklahoma City's Russell Westbrook are the only players to be ranked within the league's top six in points and assists. ... McCollum has scored at least 15 points in all six games this season.

RAINING 3S
Lillard's seven 3-pointers were

one shy of a career high. Six came in the second half, which was one off the team record for a half. Lillard has 23 3s this season, second only to Golden State's Stephen Curry, the reigning MVP, who has 28.

UP NEXT
Trail Blazers: Host Detroit on Sunday.
Grizzlies: Visit Utah on Saturday.

TIGERSCOTS: Reedsport reminiscent of recent opponents

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here and practice what we watched on film.

"We'll take notes, and then we write their plays so we can run them in the scout (offense), so then we're prepared for it. Watching that film helps a lot because we're prepared and we know what we're doing."

The TigerScots have six game tapes to watch on the Braves, and feel like they know what to expect when the two teams meet at Ruppe Field at 2 p.m.

"Their whole offense is based off speed," Bailey said. "They've got some very talented skill positions, they like to get them out in space. They run kind of a split-veer offensive with some motion in there."

"What they try to do is get to the corners. They're not afraid to put it in between the tackles, but if they can get their guys to the sidelines then they'll have a lot of success."

If that sounds familiar to TigerScots fans it's because the team has already hosted a pair of teams this season that run very similar schemes.

"Their offense kind of had a Heppner formation, but they like to run it how Irrigon does," said senior linebacker Devon Rhoades. "If we treat it somewhat like that then we should do pretty good."

Heppner and Irrigon are both playing first-round games on Saturday as well and rank second and third, respectively, in 2A

scoring this season. Both teams were held to season-low totals against Weston-McEwen — the TigerScots beat Irrigon 37-12 and lost to Heppner 20-0 in their regular season finale.

Reedsport (8-1) enters the game with the No. 5 offense in 2A averaging 38.8 points a game. However, the Braves' 349 total points would rank fourth in the CBC, and they're the only team from the Sunset Conference that scored more than 230 points this season.

When the Braves have the ball the TigerScots will have to account first for running back Joe Hixenbaugh, who at 5-foot-8, 145 pounds, does most of his damage on the edges of the field and has a penchant for the long touchdown. Running back Joey Herr (5-11, 176), and wide receiver/punt returner Mike Mitchell (6-3, 177) also have proven big-play ability that the TigerScots will need to contain.

"Not over-pursuing, just doing your job and not over-pursuing anything," Rhoades said of the key on defense.

The Braves have also put a few trick plays on film this season, but senior running back/linebacker Vince Roff said he's more worried about how the TigerScots expect to score their own points this week.

"I'm not worried about our defense, we've kind of taken care of business all year and just played defense solid," he said of a unit that enters ranked No. 4 giving up 13.8 points a game. "But our

offense just needs to make sure we execute and make sure we're doing everything how it's supposed to be done."

While last week's 20-0 score against Heppner may have been encouraging for the defense, it was a little troubling for an offense that will face the No. 1 Braves D that has allowed just seven points in its last five games with four shutouts.

The TigerScots had just 13 net rushing yards against Heppner, but Bailey said their spread wing-T scheme wasn't the problem.

"We just didn't block," Bailey said. "We had the kids in the right spots, and I don't know if it was because we were playing the University of Heppner or what, but the kids just shied away offensively. Defensively our boys played fabulous, they didn't shy away from contact, but offensively when we needed a key block we just weren't there and if we do that against Reedsport we'll suffer."

"I think what we needed to do as an offensive line was to communicate better and sustain our blocks a little better," Flores said. "If we would have done that we would have put some points on the board."

Outside of the Heppner loss, Weston-McEwen averages 36.5 points a game.

The offensive line's play is expected to be magnified by a sloppy field this week. Bailey has had the team practicing mostly on the muddy portions of their field in

anticipation of rain.

"We know that the weather is going to be a little bit crazy a little bit wet, but the only adjustment we're going to make is running a little bit more downhill," said Bailey, who will make his playoff debut as a head coach. "As long as we can keep our offensive line low and getting off the (snap quickly) we should have some success moving (the ball)."

Weston-McEwen has only reached the second round four times in 12 postseason appearances since 1980, the last coming in 2011's semifinal season.

"Past years I think it's just been a mind game," said Rhoades, who was on the 2013-14 one-and-done squads. "We get out there and think, 'Well we've held them this long,' then our mind kind of gets out of it and they score the last point. Looking at stats and how people played other teams, we're right up there with (the state's best). We've just got to go out there and show it."

"We're a better team I feel like, so hopefully we can bring it to them," said Flores, who was on last season's team that lost 6-0 in the first round at Central Linn. "I felt confident in my team last year but this year it feels like we have that brotherhood. We work as a team and I think we can get the job done."

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KNIGHTS: Kennedy 'hyper-aggressive' in 3-5 defensive front

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football team but they don't look like world beaters."

The Trojans line up on offense in an I-formation with 5-foot-9, 178 pound speed back Bishop Mitchell behind fullback Jacob Lopez (5-11, 210) and quarterback Brett Traeger (6-1, 175).

Mitchell is the offense's focal point and his speed combines with enough tackle-breaking force to make him an effective runner between the tackles and on the edges. Lopez is an effective bruiser that sticks mostly between the hash marks but can also catch the ball coming out of the backfield.

Mitchell will sometimes split out wide, but Traeger's favorite target in the passing game is possession receiver Owen Seiler

(6-1, 175).

Containing Mitchell is the key to slowing the Kennedy offense, and the Trojans average just 26.1 points a game.

But that's been plenty for a defense that is ranked No. 3 in the state and allows just 11 points a game.

Sheller said the Trojans employ a "hyper-aggressive" 3-5 front that mirrors what they saw in a 37-12 loss to Weston-McEwen.

"They just come at you from all angles," he said. "We had our troubles with Weston but I think we were on our way to scoring (more), but we lost (quarterback) Nate (Verley) at that point."

"I think (that game) helps us but it just comes down to execution and who makes the plays. Kennedy is a well-coached football team with a bunch of good athletes so we'll

have to play our best football game on Saturday to win."

Also out against Weston-McEwen was center/linebacker Cougar Kroske, who Sheller called the "heart and soul" of their defense. Both are healthy and back in the lineup this week and team enters the game at full strength.

Sheller said the field in Kennedy looks good based on the photos he's seen this week, but with rain in the forecast they're expecting mud.

"We're preparing for a sloppy game," he said before adding it wouldn't affect the game plan much. "It's been my long-held belief that you've got to run off tackle to win in 2A football."

Sheller said he expects the Knights put a strong foot forward when they officially enter the state

postseason for the first time on Saturday. (The only other team to ever compete in the football postseason under the Irrigon banner was the Irrigon Comets in a 36-22 loss to Sisters in the 1957 Class B-6 semifinals.)

"It's all new to the boys, they've never done any of this stuff before, having to practice under the lights and stuff like that, having to play on Saturday afternoon. It's all new," he said. "We addressed the fact that they've never played in a meaningful game this late in the season, and we don't have to be perfect, but we know we have to be better each game than we were in the last one."

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Prep playoff action abundant this weekend

East Oregonian

The playoffs are heating up here in Oregon, as several area teams take center stage this weekend.

In volleyball, Weston-McEwen will attempt to advance in the 2A bracket, chasing its first championship since 2010, while Ione is after its first 1A title since 2011.

And in boys soccer action, Hermiston hopes to use its home-field advantage to lock up a trip into semifinal action next week, and Riverside looks to keep its post-season run alive against a red-hot opponent in St. Mary's.

Volleyball

(Class 2A) No. 2 Culver Bulldogs vs. No. 10 Weston-McEwen TigerScots — At Redmond, Columbia Basin Conference foes Weston-McEwen and Culver will meet for the fourth time this season — this time in the quarterfinals of the OSAA state playoffs.

The Bulldogs (28-3, 10-0 CBC) has won all three matches this season, sweeping the first two and then defeating the TigerScots (22-9, 8-2) 3-2 in the district final last weekend.

Weston-McEwen has made the postseason every year since 2004, winning two Class 2A titles during that span. Last season the TigerScots were ousted in the first round. On the other side, Culver has made the postseason in each of the last five seasons, winning the 2A title in 2012.

The match starts today at 10 a.m. at Ridgeview High School in Redmond, and will be broadcast on the web at NFHSnetwork.com.

The winner will continue Friday night to play in the semifinal match at 6:30 p.m., while the loser will move to the consolation bracket and play at 10 a.m. on Saturday.

(Class 1A) No. 2 North Douglas Warriors vs. No. 7 Ione Cardinals — At Redmond, the Ione Cardinals will try and knock off the North Douglas Warriors in an OSAA quarter-final match.

Ione (21-6, 13-1) comes into the match off of a 3-0 sweep of Elkton in the play-in round, while North Douglas (22-6, 13-0) beat Lowell handily with a 3-0 sweep of its own.

Ione's last trip to the postseason came in 2013, when they lost to Lowell in the second round. Before missing the playoffs in 2014, Ione had qualified for postseason action every year from 2009-2013, winning one 1A title in 2011.

The match is set to begin at 3:15 p.m. at Ridgeview High School in Redmond and will be broadcast online at NFHSnetwork.com.

The winner of the match will play again at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday in the semifinals, while the loser will move to the consolation bracket and play again at 8 a.m. on Saturday.

Boys Soccer

(Class 5A) No. 4 Hermiston Bulldogs vs. No. 5 Woodburn Bulldogs — At Hermiston, the "Battle of the Bulldogs" will decide who advances and who goes home.

Woodburn (10-2-3) has won five straight games in which they have outscored the opponents 22-1. Woodburn defeated Marist Catholic 4-1 in the first round on Saturday.

Hermiston (12-2-2) has been strong of late, as well, going six-straight games without a loss — most recently a 3-1 win over Crescent Valley in the first round on Saturday.

The game starts at 2:30 p.m. at Kennison Field in Hermiston. The winner of the game will advance into the semifinals which will be played on Tuesday.

(Class 3A) No. 6 Riverside Pirates at No. 3 St. Mary's Crusaders — At Medford, the Riverside Pirates will look to send St. Mary's home with a rare loss to advance in the OSAA playoffs on Saturday.

St. Mary's (14-2) dropped its first two games of the season by a combined score of 8-3, and then won the final 14 games on its schedule — allowing all of nine goals along the way. Most recently, St. Mary's defeated Umatilla 5-0 in the first round of the playoffs on Saturday.

Riverside (11-2-2) has won five of its last six games, outscoring opponents 36-3 over that span. The Pirates defeated Taft 4-0 in the first round on Saturday to advance into the quarterfinal.

Saturday's game is set to start at 5 p.m. and will be broadcast on the radio on 580 ESPN in Medford or online at 580ESPN.com.

The winner will advance to the semifinals on Tuesday.