

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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Sports shorts

Timbers get two games on national television

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Soccer released its schedule for the 2016 season on Thursday with the Portland Timbers earning two televised games on a major network.

Fox will televise MLS games on its main network for the first time, broadcasting Seattle at Portland at Seattle on July 17 and Portland at Kansas City on July 31.

Fox will also televise the rivalry clashes between New York City FC and New York City FC on May 21 and July 24.



Griffey makes it official, going in 'Hall' as Mariner

NEW YORK (AP) — Ken Griffey Jr. will go into the Hall of Fame with a Seattle Mariners' cap and Mike Piazza will have a New York Mets' hat.

The pair made their announcements at a news conference Thursday, a day after they were elected by the Baseball Writers' Association of America.

Griffey spent a lengthy period of his career with Cincinnati, and Piazza reached the major leagues with the Los Angeles Dodgers. Griffey is the first Mariners' player in the Hall.

Induction ceremonies will be held in Cooperstown on July 24.

Known for wearing his cap backwards, Griffey joked about that with Piazza, the top offensive catcher in baseball history.

"He wore it backwards more than I did," Griffey said.

"We're optimistic he's going to help us win a lot of games over a lot of years. ... Most if not all pitchers have injury risk. We just know more about it on the front end."

— Andrew Friedman

Los Angeles Dodgers president of baseball operations on the incentive laden eight year contract the team signed with Japanese pitcher Kenta Maeda, 27, who had some unspecified irregularities in his elbow revealed during a physical. The deal is worth \$25 million up front but could pay Maeda \$106 million if he reaches his incentives, which require him to start 32 games and pitch 200 innings a season.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1972 — The NCAA announces freshmen will be eligible to play on varsity football and basketball teams starting in the fall.

2011 — The Seattle Seahawks stun the defending Super Bowl champion New Orleans Saints 41-36 to open the NFL playoffs. Seattle, the first division winner with a losing record at 7-9, advances behind four touchdown passes by Matt Hasselbeck and a brilliant 67-yard run by Marshawn Lynch.

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

HERMISTON

Road tested: Dawgs rack up miles in December



Hermiston's Sara Ramirez warms up in front of a home crowd for the first time three weeks on Tuesday before the Bulldogs took on La Grande at The Dawghouse on Tuesday in Hermiston. The team spent most of the holiday season away from home, playing games in Arizona and Lake Oswego.

Staff photo by Sam Barbee

Hermiston girls glad to be home after extensive preseason travel

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

When any basketball coach or athletic director puts together a season schedule, they typically like to keep things balanced. Plenty of home games, but still enough road games to test the team.

However, Hermiston girls basketball coach Steve Hoffert wanted to give this year's team a challenge — a tougher, unbalanced schedule that he believes will help the Bulldogs in the long run.

Hermiston has completed 14 games in the 2015-16 season so far, and only four of those games have been played in Hermiston. In 10 away games played in the month of December the Bulldogs have traveled more than 2,800 combined miles by bus and plane, traveling to destinations such as Lake Oswego and Phoenix, Arizona for a pair of intense preseason tournaments.

"We didn't appreciate (playing at home) as much before, it was just a game, and now we do. It brought a calming effect."

— Jansen Edmiston,
Hermiston girls basketball senior guard

The tournaments came almost back-to-back to each other, with the Bulldogs playing in Arizona from Dec. 18 until Dec. 22 and then in the Portland suburbs from Dec. 27 through Dec. 30 — with just enough time in between to spend a few days at home for the holidays.

"We're road tested now," Hoffert said last month, "which I think can only help us come playoff time."

So when the Bulldogs finally took the court again at The Dawghouse on Jan. 2 — a long 21 days after their previous home game — the players were relieved and even had a new perspective on the feeling

of playing home games.

"It's definitely more rewarding now," said Hermiston senior Jansen Edmiston. "We didn't appreciate (playing at home) as much before, it was just a game, and now we do. It brought a calming effect."

In that first game back at home, the Bulldogs gave their fans plenty of satisfaction on the court, defeating Kennewick (WA) 71-38. Just three days later, Hermiston took the floor again at home and again took the win, defeating La Grande 56-42 to improve their overall record to 11-3.

And although the team was happy to get back home, the road

trip is an experience the Bulldogs' players will remember for a while, and it started all the way back in the spring of 2014.

Hoffert, the eighth-year Bulldogs coach, had been trying for several years to challenge and reward his team with a trip to an out-of-state preseason tournament. But for the last three years his team had sat on a waiting list, one that is judged partially off previous year successes.

Twice Hoffert anticipated an invitation, and twice he was left disappointed.

However after the Bulldogs made their run to the state championship game last spring, Hoffert finally received the coveted invitation — a trip to the Nike Tournament of Champions in Phoenix — which was an offer he quickly accepted.

"I didn't want to travel with a team that I knew wouldn't compete,

See TRAVEL/2B

STANFIELD

Riverside dominates at Echo duals

Pirates win two, Echo tops Irrigon on tiebreaker

By SAM BARBEE
East Oregonian

Dual wrestling meets are rare for small school programs, as size differences and travel make them more difficult to pull off.

"We're more of a tournament team," Irrigon coach Jason Dunten said.

Even so, Irrigon, Riverside and Echo/Stanford got together for a three-way dual Thursday night that saw the Pirates go 2-0, and the Cougars finish 1-1.

Riverside used its experience to beat Irrigon 36-21 and Echo 33-12, and Echo later defeated Irrigon on a tiebreaker after the dual ended in a 30-30 draw.

"I didn't think we would have a chance to win the duals, simply because we didn't have enough weights covered," Riverside coach Richard Rockwell said. "We kinda shuffled our lineup around and talked to our guys and said, 'Hey this is what we need to do to win. Play your part. We can win these.' They responded, did what they needed to do to win."

In the first dual of the day — Riverside vs. Irrigon — the first match wrestled was Irrigon's Damon Sawyer against River-



Echo's Kyle Ranger (front) looks to reverse around Riverside's Gabriel Romero's control during a 3-way dual Thursday in Stanfield. Romero won the bout 7-5.

Staff photo by Sam Barbee

side's Ulises Calvillo at 145 pounds with the Pirates up 18-6 on forfeits. Already up 11-2, Calvillo pinned Sawyer with a minute left in the final period, setting the tone for the rest of the dual.

At 152 pounds, Riverside's Ivan Escobedo followed Calvillo's pin with one of his own, this one coming in the first period over Irrigon's Alex Walls. Irrigon came back with a win, though, when Jeff Patton slipped past Jason Navarro 5-4 to move the count to 30-12. Irrigon then won a forfeit, coming within 12 at 30-18.

To close out the dual, Riverside needed to not lose by a fall to clinch the victory, and that's exactly how it worked out.

Christian Michaels of Irrigon

topped Zach Ferguson of Riverside to move the team scores to 30-21, then, after a double forfeit, Riverside's Anthony Kernal stuck Tucker McAllister to end the day at 36-21.

"(The) two guys that lost did exactly what I wanted them to," Rockwell said. "If you're gonna lose, don't get pinned. And they didn't."

Riverside then faced the upstart Echo club, which is vastly improved from last season. Kyle Ranger lost a close match 7-5 to Pirate Gabriel Romero with several hand-locking penalties going against the Echo sophomore. Down 5-0 after one round,

See WRESTLING/2B

BOARDMAN

Pirates open EOL with comeback win

Riverside boys use big 4th to down Umatilla

East Oregonian

Riverside boys basketball coach Clair Costello was hoping the start of league play could provide a spark for his struggling squad that entered the Eastern Oregon League having lost four of its last five.

The veteran coach may have gotten his wish after a big fourth quarter propelled the Pirates past the Umatilla Vikings 44-39 in both teams' EOL opener on Thursday.

The teams were knotted at 35-35 for about a minute and a half in the decisive frame before a Noe Madrigal lay-in gave Riverside (5-8, 1-0 EOL) the lead for good with five minutes left.

Madrigal finished with 10 points while Eon Castillo scored nine of his team-high 12 points in the fourth quarter to help close out Umatilla (7-8, 0-1), which was led by Jesus Ramirez

See EOL HOOPS/2B

Boys Basketball

Umatilla
39

Riverside
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