

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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NFL Seattle picks up chip

Seahawks' exit from playoffs mirrored season

By **TIM BOOTH**
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — The ending to the Seattle Seahawks season was a microcosm to the year as a whole.

A horrific, forgettable and unexpected start, followed by a furious finish and ultimately falling short of what the end goal was all along.

"It gives us something to reach for, something to play for," Seattle linebacker Bobby Wagner said on Monday.

"Definitely adds a chip to our shoulder, and you know, we're not a team that needs a chip on our shoulder."

The Seahawks did not get back to the Super Bowl for a third straight season after Sunday's 31-24 loss at Carolina when a second-half rally from a 31-0 deficit fell short.

They were not able to reach that final Sunday and try to erase the bitter feelings of what took place a year ago when the Seahawks ended up 1 yard short of a second consecutive Super Bowl title.

The two-time NFC champs are done with football in January for the first time since the end of the 2012 season when this group of Seahawks were experiencing the postseason for the first time and fell short in the divisional round at Atlanta.

Back then Seattle was on the rise. Now they are a team still with a young and talented core, but facing important free agent decisions and an offensive transition to be based more around quarterback Russell Wilson.

Seattle coach Pete Carroll acknowledged again on Monday the aftereffect Super Bowls create, both when Seattle won two years ago and the crushing nature of last year's loss to New England.

The loss to the Patriots was a legitimate burden that took time for Seattle to shake and by the time the Seahawks found a path to success this season, just getting to the playoffs was the goal.

"We were trying to catch up the whole time," Carroll said. "It was very much like yesterday. We were catching up the whole season."

WILSON'S EVOLUTION: Seattle made a clear shift at midseason to become less run-oriented and based more around Wilson and the pass game. The results were record-setting. Over the final seven games of the regular season, Wilson had 24 touchdown passes, one interception and a 132.8 passer rating. He set franchise records for yards passing in a season at 4,024 and touchdown passes with 34.

Wilson is now the focal point of Seattle's offense and will be even more so with the potential that Marshawn Lynch's time in Seattle is nearing its end.

NEXT IN LINE: Thomas Rawls rolled his way through the Seahawks locker room on Monday as he continues to recover from a broken left ankle suffered in December. Rawls flashed enough as a rookie that if Seattle does move on from Lynch, Rawls will be the one to take over. Rawls, who rushed for 830 yards, said he expects to be ready in plenty of time for next season.

Boys Basketball Roundup

New lineup lifts Viks

Umatilla beats Vale at home

By **SAM BARBEE**
East Oregonian

UMATILLA — Desperate for a win, the Umatilla boys basketball team finally got it, downing the Vale Vikings 47-38 Saturday night at The Pit.

Umatilla coach Derrek Lete used a different starting lineup Saturday, leaving the seniors on the bench. Juan Coria, Aaron Simmons

and Tristen Sanguino came off the bench in favor of freshman Sebastian Garcia, sophomore Seth Cranston and freshman Trent Durfey in an effort to improve the offensive production. Umatilla (8-9, 1-2) was yet to score 40 points in EOL play and hadn't scored 40 since a 40-29 win over Mac-Hi two weeks ago.

"We were just trying to make a chance," Lete said. "We just weren't producing. We hadn't had any offensive production. We scored 30-something points the last couple of

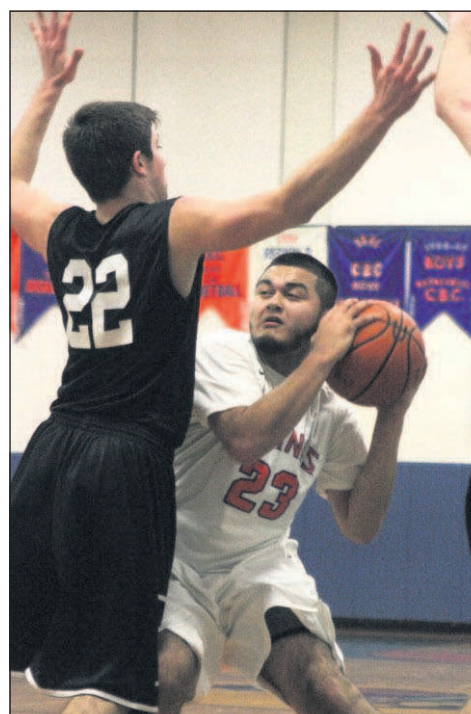
games and just went with some younger kids to kinda send a message to the older kids that, 'Hey, you're job's on the line,' kinda thing.

"I just wanted to see them respond, and I thought they responded well today."

With the Umatilla starters on the bench, Vale (2-12, 0-3) jumped to a quick 6-2 lead, but a 6-0 run to close the first quarter got the home Vikings in front 8-6 heading into the second period.

There, Umatilla built a

See **BOYS HOOPS/2B**



Umatilla senior Juan Coria (23) starts to spin out of a double team of Vale's Jake DeLong (22) and Brock Matos during Umatilla's 47-38 win Saturday at The Pit.

Staff photo by Sam Barbee

Girls Basketball Roundup

Umatilla takes lead in EOL

Defensive battle leads to low-scoring win over Vale

By **SAM BARBEE**
East Oregonian

UMATILLA — Though the Umatilla Vikings girls basketball scored only six points in the first quarter Saturday against Vale and just 10 in the first half, don't tell them it was a slow start.

"It was just two great teams going at it," senior Sidney Webb said.

In all, the blue and orange-clad Vikings used an exceedingly rare six-point play in the third quarter to down the black and silver-clad Vikings 36-25 at The Pit despite having no scorers in double figures.

Vale's Alisa Burkhardt led all scorers with 10 points, and Aleesha Watson led Umatilla with eight. With the win, Umatilla (13-4, 3-0) takes a one-game lead over Vale (10-6, 2-1) in the Eastern Oregon League and has won four straight games.

Neither team could find any footholds early on. They combined to shoot 5-18 in the first quarter and neither team made a field goal in the second quarter. Umatilla shot 15 percent in that half and Vale shot just 14 percent. Both teams were heavily pressuring the ball and not allowing either offense to be comfortable or get good looks.

Then Umatilla's offense finally got into a groove in the third quarter.

"We're usually a second half team," Webb said.

Aleesha Watson hit a 3-pointer — the first of the game — with 5:52 on the clock, and two

See **GIRLS HOOPS/2B**



Umatilla junior guard looks for a team to pass to as Vale's Dailie Johnson defends during Umatilla's 36-25 win Saturday at The Pit.

Staff photo by Sam Barbee

NBA

Blazers bounce back, beat Wizards

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Damian Lillard joked with coach Terry Stotts that the Portland Trail Blazers should flush the film of an embarrassing loss to the Philadelphia 76ers. Then he sat down and watched it.

What he saw wasn't pretty, and other teammates made sure they didn't forget. When they got onto the court Monday against the Washington Wizards, the Trail Blazers showed it with a 108-98 bounce-back victory to close out their road trip.

"We just really thought about it more, not from a basketball side just how you approach the game and you've got to respect each team," said Meyers Leonard, who scored 18 points. "Winning three (in a row) and then getting beat by a team that only had four wins — the ability to come back and lock in and not dwell on what had happened is big for us."

Not every problem that surfaced Saturday night in Philadelphia was solved, and Mason Plumlee said a 25-point loss to any team leaves a bad taste. But losing by that much to the NBA's worst team served as something of a wake-up call for the Trail-Blazers.

Against the Wizards, the shots were falling, especially from 3-point range, and there was more attention to detail and less hesitation. The result was a dominant performance from the backcourt of Lillard (16 points) and C.J.



Washington Wizards forward Jared Dudley (1) has his shot blocked by Portland Trail Blazers forward Al-Farouq Aminu (8) in the first half of an NBA basketball game, Monday, Jan. 18, 2016, in Washington.

AP Photo/Alex Brandon

McCollum (25) and Portland's fourth win in five games.

"We played with energy from the jump and we competed," said Plumlee, who recorded his 12th double-double of the season and added a career-best seven assists. "Energy, just a mindset defensively, getting stops. I think if you take the second quarter out of it, this was one of our better defensive games on this road trip."

The Blazers' defense took a toll on Eastern Conference player of the week John Wall, who lit up the Boston Celtics for 36 points Saturday. Wall scored just nine points on 4-of-17 shooting.

"I was frustrated," Wall said. "I had some good looks that I had from the last games, and I wasn't making them.

It was frustrating to me because I feel like I was letting my team down."

Garrett Temple, who addressed the crowd before the game to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. Day, led Washington with 18 points. Marcin Gortat had 16 points and 10 rebounds.

The Wizards fell victim to two big runs by the Blazers and had one of their own. Portland took a 17-point lead in the second quarter before the Wizards chipped away and took the lead early in the second half.

Then Lillard hit back-to-back 3-pointers and the Blazers went on a 23-1 run to take a stranglehold of the game. It slipped away quickly for the Wizards.

"In the third quarter we reverted back to the first quarter," Wall said.

Prep Wrestling

Bulldogs win Oregon Classic

Five Hermiston wrestlers go undefeated for the weekend

East Oregonian

REDMOND — The Hermiston Bulldogs dominated the weekend competition at the Oregon Classic in Redmond, taking first place in Class 5A.

Hermiston came into Saturday's competition as the top seed in 5A and defeated Central 71-6 and then Crater 51-18 to get to the first place match, where the team defeated Hillsboro 45-12 for the title.

"Our guys wrestled hard, exactly how we want to," first-year coach Kyle Larson said. "We want to dominate and we want to put pressure on guys and break 'em, and that's what they did this weekend."

Of the eight wrestlers who took the mat six times, five went undefeated and two did it without forfeits. Valen Wyse (four pins), Andy Wagner (four pins, technical fall) and CJ Hendon (five pins) each went 6-0 to lead Hermiston.

Sam Colbray (6-0, five pins)
See **WRESTLING/2B**