

HOCKEY: League looking to expand

Continued from 1B

play hockey here, we just can't play (regulation) games here," said Level 3 coach Keith Houchin of Milton-Freewater, who joined the group along with his two daughters when their home rink in Walla Walla closed down a year ago.

So what is it about hockey, a sport with almost no television presence and no teams competing at the highest level in the Pacific Northwest, that appeals to the youth of Umatilla County?

"Just to interact with your friends ... it seemed fun," said Pendleton sixth-grader Davin Russell, admitting he didn't know much about the game before giving it a try. "I knew that you skated with a stick and pads and tried to score in a goal."

"It's something new that a lot of them haven't done before, and then they hear about it and since it's not common it just seems like such a cool sport to a lot of people," said Pendleton senior Elijah Bieker, who has been playing with the Rough Riders since he was 8 years old. "It's just a lot of fun, there's a lot of things that go into it. Other sports, I'd be able to play



Players from the level 4, high school, in yellow, and level 3, middle school, orange, battle for the puck during a scrimmage Wednesday at Roy Raley Park in Pendleton.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

more actual games but it's a lot of fun. It's pretty much just for fun, but it's worth it."

Other players are drawn to the chance for physical contact.

"It's just an adrenaline rush, you don't get to take your stress out on people that often — legally," said Maggie Houchin, 15.

"I like pushing people and I like the feeling when you score and everyone is cheering," added her sister Katherine, 12. "It's fun."

Pendleton 10th-grader Stanton Schmitz also enjoys the physicality of hockey — "definitely ramming into

everybody when you check them" — and said he wishes more people would give it a try.

"The biggest disappointment for me is I know a bunch of people who are really interested in skating but they just don't come down because they don't hear about this program."

Keith Houchin said the organization is looking for ways to expand and pick up games against squads in the Tri-Cities or Lewiston, Idaho, in the future, but a lot of that will depend on how far parents are willing to drive.

As for their local rink,

which doesn't have room for expansion, hopes are for higher boards to provide more safety for spectators and players — "There have been times when I've nearly flipped over them, so bigger boards would be nice," Schmitz said.

But the Rough Riders aren't complaining, their just grateful to have a place to play.

"It's just a fun program," John Bieker said. "It's nice Pendleton has something like this."

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Fantasy sports companies defend embattled industry

By PHILIP MARCELO
Associated Press

BOSTON — Daily fantasy sports companies say their industry remains viable despite a rocky start to 2016.

The industry's top companies, DraftKings and FanDuel, are on the defensive after taking hits to their businesses in recent weeks as scrutiny by state policy-makers across the country continues to intensify.

This week, it was disclosed that ESPN and DraftKings ended an exclusive advertising deal and FanDuel confirmed Wednesday it had laid off 55 workers in its Orlando, Florida office.

ESPN and DraftKings declined to comment on the end of their partnership, which was announced last June and made DraftKings the network's official daily fantasy sports offering. But DraftKings spokeswoman Sabrina Macias says the company isn't retrenching.

"Our business position is strong and we have no inten-

tion to scale back any operations," she said, pointing to the company's official launch in the United Kingdom last week. "We're continuing to innovate and learn."

FanDuel, meanwhile, said the layoffs are concentrated in the Florida office's research and development division, which is being shuttered. The job cuts do not impact the rest of the office, which includes an expanding customer service operation, the company said.

FanDuel CEO Nigel Eccles, in a brief call with *The Associated Press*, said the company, which has over 400 employees, is focused on making progress on the legislative front.

Nineteen states currently are considering bills to regulate the industry, in which players compete online for cash prizes by picking teams of real life athletes and racking up "fantasy" points based on how they perform. Another 14 states are expected to weigh legislation before the year is over, Macias said.

BLAZERS: Leonard, McCollum each score 14 points for Portland

Continued from 1B

What had all the look and feel of that mail-it-in last day of work before vacation — both teams are off until Feb. 19 thanks to the All-Star break — suddenly played out like the battle for the eighth and final playoff seed in the West that it was.

Beverly and Lillard have had run-ins before, and the fans expressed their feelings toward Beverly

with a cacophony of boos throughout the game. Lillard sparked the half-ending run with a 3-pointer, and Harkless added another 3 and a driving layup to bring the fans to their feet and prompt a Houston timeout.

Until Beverly's foul, the game was fairly even as neither team placed a premium on tough defense or ball security. Through the first quarter both teams shot at least 50 percent from the

field and they combined for 20 turnovers in the first half, 13 by Houston.

Temper and intensity subsided to start the second half, until Houston's Jason Terry picked up a technical foul for throwing an elbow into the ribs of Meyers Leonard as they ran down the court following Terry's jumper.

Leonard and C.J. McCollum chipped in 14 points each for Portland. Gerald

Henderson scored 13 off the bench.

Clint Capela had 10 rebounds for the Rockets.

TIP-INS

Rockets: F Terrence Jones, who went to nearby Jefferson High School in Portland, missed his fourth consecutive game and remains in the NBA's concussion protocol. He was injured in a car accident on Feb. 3. Interim coach J.B. Bickerstaff, who attended Oregon State, said

the team hopes to get positive news regarding Jones' return after the All-Star break.

Trail Blazers: Lillard was added to the U.S. national team pool. He fell just short of a place on the 2014 World Cup of Basketball roster and wasn't among the original 30 candidates for Rio de Janeiro announced last month. F Noah Vonleh was in uniform for the first time after missing three games with a sprained left ankle. He did not play.

. Before the game, the Blazers held a moment of silence in memory of Ingrid Williams, the wife of former Portland assistant coach Monty Williams. She died Wednesday from injuries sustained in a car accident Tuesday in Oklahoma City, where Monty Williams is now an assistant with the Thunder.

UP NEXT
Trail Blazers: Host Golden State on Feb. 19.

BRIEFLY Prep baseball and softball officials needed

Interested in being a softball or baseball official?

The Blue Mountain Officials Association will be holding its first meeting of the year on Feb. 17 at Pendleton High School and anyone that has interest in becoming a high school baseball or softball official is required to attend.

The meeting will take place at 7 p.m. in the Leadership Room at the high school, and will break down new rules and will start the training or re-training process for the upcoming season.

Any questions or if further information is needed, contact the association commissioner Rick Jaggars at 541-969-6330.

— East Oregonian

SIMON: Decision for MSU-N came after campus visit

Continued from 1B

Bulldogs' defense, which was one of the best units in the state as the Bulldogs won the state championship in his junior season. In total, Simon recorded 180 total tackles, 79 solos, 86 assists, 3.0 sacks, 13.0 tackles for loss, two fumbles recovered, three fumbles forced, six passes defended, three hurries and two blocked punts. As a running back his senior year, Simon carried 60 times in Hermiston's zone scheme and accumulated 299 yards and a touchdown, good for a 5.0 yards per carry average.

Simon's best season in terms of tackles was his first at the varsity level, making 71 total stops, 37 of which were solo jobs. His best statistical season, though, was his junior campaign that resulted in a state title. His 63 total tackles was sixth on the team and his 11.0 tackles for loss tied Jesse Rodelo for fifth. His two blocked punts came that year, as well as his five pass deflections.

In fact, his most memorable play from that season was knocking



Hayden Simon poses with head football coach David Faaeteete Wednesday after announcing his intent to play football at Montana State University - Northern in Havre, Montana.

Staff photo by Sam Barbee

down what would have been a sure touchdown pass in a 31-27 loss at Coeur d'Alene, a loss that likely propelled the Bulldogs to its only title. He made an impact right away, recording eight tackles in his first varsity game against Rex Putnam.

Simon said his decision to attend Northern came rather quickly. He visited the campus in Havre a few weeks back and essentially knew then he would later sign. His position coach at MSU-Northern, linebackers coach Arthur Smith, made an impact

on Simon right away.

"He's just a cool dude," Simon said of Smith. "If you meet him, he's just super cool."

There were a couple other schools in the mix. He exchanged emails with Eastern Washington several times, but Simon never seriously considered the Eagles, he said. Pittsburg State in Pittsburg, Kansas was also in the running. He had also been in contact with several local schools, including Eastern Oregon, but really wanted to leave the area and "have the full experience away from my parents." Havre is about a 10-hour drive from Hermiston.

For his parents, Mike and Deannie, there wasn't any interference from them regarding their son's choice. They like the campus, like the town of Havre, which is similarly sized, and don't mind he's going about 650 miles away from home.

"We'll be at every game," Mike said matter-of-factly. "I enjoy watching Hayden. It makes me proud to watch him play."

SCOREBOARD

Local slate

7:30 p.m.
Sunday
Eastern Oregon at Oregon Tech, 3 p.m.

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL

Friday
Culver at Irrigon, 4:30 p.m.
Pilot Rock at Heppner, 6 p.m.
Stanfield at Weston-McEwen, 6 p.m.
Umatilla at Vale, 6 p.m.
Riverside at Nyssa, 6:30 p.m.
Hermiston at Pendleton, 7:30 p.m.
Arlington at Sherman, 7:30 p.m.
Condon/Wheeler at Dufur, 7:30 p.m.
South Wasco at lone, 7:30 p.m.
Echo at Wallowa, 7:30 p.m.
Nixyaawii at Pine Eagle, 7:30 p.m.
Joseph at Helix, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday
Dufur at Arlington, 4 p.m.
Joseph at Nixyaawii, 4 p.m.
Helix at Pine Eagle, 5:30 p.m.
Sherman at Condon/Wheeler, 5:30 p.m.
lone at Horizon Christian, 5:30 p.m.

PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL

Friday
Umatilla at Vale, 5 p.m.
Hermiston at Pendleton, 5:45 p.m.
Arlington at Sherman, 6 p.m.
Condon/Wheeler at Dufur, 6 p.m.
South Wasco at lone, 6 p.m.
Nixyaawii at Pine Eagle, 6 p.m.
Echo at Wallowa, 6 p.m.
Joseph at Helix, 6 p.m.
Saturday
Dufur at Arlington, 2:30 p.m.
Joseph at Nixyaawii 2:30 p.m.
Helix at Pine Eagle, 4 p.m.
lone at Horizon Christian, 4 p.m.
Sherman at Condon/Wheeler, 4 p.m.

PREP WRESTLING

Today
Hermiston at Pendleton, 7 p.m.
Friday
Echo, Riverside at 3A Special District 1 meet (Hermiston), 5 p.m.
Saturday
Echo, Riverside at 3A Special District 1 meet (Hermiston), 10 a.m.
Heppner, Irigon at 2A/1A Special District 4 meet (Grant Union), 10 a.m.

PREP SWIMMING

Saturday
Pendleton, Hermiston at district meet (Hood River), 10 a.m.

COLLEGE MEN'S BASKETBALL

Friday
Blue Mountain at Spokane, 8 p.m.
Saturday
Blue Mountain at Big Bend, 4 p.m.
Eastern Oregon at Southern Oregon,

7:30 p.m.
Sunday
Eastern Oregon at Oregon Tech, 3 p.m.

COLLEGE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Friday
Blue Mountain at Spokane, 6 p.m.
Saturday
Blue Mountain at Big Bend, 2 p.m.
Eastern Oregon at Southern Oregon, 5:30 p.m.
Sunday
Eastern Oregon at Oregon Tech, 3 p.m.

Prep standings

BOYS BASKETBALL

Columbia River Conference (5A)
Conf. Ovr. PS PA Rnk
Pendleton 5-0 12-3 1167 973 10
Hermiston 3-2 9-11 1242 1233 24
The Dalles 2-3 5-14 1018 1456 28
Hood River 1-4 2-15 984 1196 33

Greater Oregon League (4A)
Ovr. Conf. PS PA Rnk
Baker 5-0 12-10 1206 1198 20
La Grande 4-2 8-8 820 750 26
Mac-Hi 2-4 7-16 937 1077 33
Ontario 0-5 1-14 988 1157 39

Eastern Oregon League (3A)
Conf. Ovr. PS PA Rnk
Nyssa 6-0 14-10 1238 1142 11
Riverside 6-2 10-11 930 915 24
Stanfield at Weston-McEwen, 7:30 p.m.
Umatilla 2-6 10-13 1124 1183 26
Vale 0-8 3-19 905 1211 36

Columbia Basin Conference (2A)
Conf. Ovr. PS PA Rnk
Heppner 7-2 17-3 1113 876 4
Stanfield 7-2 15-5 1258 991 12
Irrigon 6-3 15-6 1167 871 7
Weston-Mc 5-4 10-10 1040 1067 22
Pilot Rock 2-7 8-15 973 1140 31
Culver 0-9 5-17 844 1258 40

Big Sky League (1A)
Conf. Ovr. PS PA Rnk
Sherman 12-0 18-4 1497 1097 3
S. Wasco 9-3 18-4 1213 832 5
Dufur 8-4 11-10 1108 1006 25
Con./Whe. 6-6 10-11 991 935 19
Horizon Chr. 6-6 9-12 1000 1084 19
lone 3-9 4-16 612 1097 47
Arlington 2-10 8-15 1025 1065 50
Mitchell 2-10 7-14 811 1084 45

Old Oregon League (1A)
Conf. Ovr. PS PA Rnk
Nixyaawii 10-0 20-1 1531 983 4
Joseph 8-2 12-7 865 808 23
Powder Val. 8-3 15-5 1149 789 15
Echo 5-6 7-15 977 1059 39
Wallowa 4-6 5-13 605 853 43
Pine Eagle 1-9 2-16 609 1004 55
Helix 0-10 2-19 643 1097 63

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Columbia River Conference (5A)
Conf. Ovr. PS PA Rnk
Hermiston 5-0 12-3 1169 875 6
Pendleton 3-2 8-12 871 988 21
The Dalles 2-3 10-9 885 823 20
Hood River 0-5 3-15 636 942 31

Greater Oregon League (4A)
Conf. Ovr. PS PA Rnk
La Grande 6-0 12-14 1244 905 5
Baker 3-2 10-11 904 984 15
Mac-Hi 2-4 12-10 839 905 23
Ontario 0-5 2-14 449 764 32

Eastern Oregon League (3A)
Conf. Ovr. PS PA Rnk
Umatilla 7-1 15-5 1065 766 10
Nyssa 5-3 15-8 962 819 13
Vale 4-4 13-10 981 880 20
Riverside 0-8 3-17 561 879 33

Columbia Basin Conference (2A)
Conf. Ovr. PS PA Rnk
Weston-Mc 9-0 13-8 926 787 10
Pilot Rock 6-3 15-8 1038 876 11
Culver 4-5 12-9 789 681 26
Stanfield 4-5 9-11 748 733 30
Irrigon 4-5 8-12 766 771 25
Heppner 0-9 2-18 519 845 38

Big Sky League (1A)
Conf. Ovr. PS PA Rnk
Con./Whe. 11-1 20-2 1023 703 6
lone 10-2 13-7 859 835 21
Arlington 7-5 14-9 964 786 26
Horizon Chr. 6-6 9-12 678 835 31
S. Wasco 5-7 10-11 728 814 32
Dufur 5-7 11-5 729 928 44
Sherman 3-9 3-17 671 958 54
Mitchell 1-11 4-17 663 869 58

Old Oregon League (1A)
Conf. Ovr. PS PA Rnk
Nixyaawii 9-1 19-2 1111 675 7
Powder Val. 9-2 14-7 977 754 17
Helix 7-3 14-7 882 748 14
Joseph 5-5 9-10 940 787 36
Echo 4-7 11-12 909 814 27
Pine Eagle 2-8 2-18 361 886 48
Wallowa 0-10 1-18 324 957 57

Basketball

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division
Toronto 35 17 673 -
Boston 32 23 582 4-
New York 23 32 418 13%-
Brooklyn 14 40 259 22
Philadelphia 8 45 151 27%-

Southwest Division
Atlanta W 31 L 24 Pct GB

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division
Florida GP W L OT Pts GF GA
Detroit 54 32 19 6 70 155 123
Tampa Bay 53 26 20 4 62 142 130
Boston 53 28 19 4 62 157 147
Montreal 55 27 24 4 58 151 146
Ottawa 55 25 24 6 56 158 173
Buffalo 54 21 27 6 48 125 150
Toronto 52 19 24 9 47 125 149

Metropolitan Division
GP W L OT Pts GF GA
Washington 52 39 9 4 82 174 118
N.Y. Rangers 54 31 18 5 67 156 137
N.Y. Islanders 52 28 18 6 62 149 132
Pittsburgh 53 27 19 7 61 139 138
New Jersey 55 27 21 7 61 124 129
Carolina 54 24 21 9 57 130 144
Philadelphia 52 23 20 9 55 124 142
Columbus 55 21 28 6 48 140 173

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division
Chicago GP W L OT Pts GF GA
Dallas 54 34 15 5 73 176 147
St. Louis 56 30 17 9 69 136 134
Nashville 54 25 21 8 58 141 145
Colorado 56 25 25 4 58 150 155
Minnesota 53 23 20 10 56 130 132
Winnipeg 53 24 26 3 51 138 153

Pacific Division
GP W L OT Pts GF GA
Los Angeles 52 32 17 3 67 146 121
San Jose 52 28 20 4 60 151 139
Anaheim 52 26 19 7 59 119 124
Vancouver 54 22 20 12 56 129 147
Arizona 53 24 23 6 54 140 164
Calgary 52 24 25 3 51 139 153
Edmonton 55 21 29 5 47 137 167

Wednesday's Games
Detroit 3, Ottawa 1
N.Y. Rangers 3, Pittsburgh 0
Vancouver 2, Arizona 1
Today's Games
Los Angeles at N.Y. Islanders, 4 p.m.
Buffalo at Philadelphia, 4 p.m.
Anaheim at Columbus, 4 p.m.
Colorado at Ottawa, 4:30 p.m.
Washington at Minnesota, 5 p.m.

Women's Top 25

Wednesday
4. Baylor (24-1) beat TCU 81-75. Next: at Texas Tech, Saturday.
6. Texas (22-1) beat No. 20 Oklahoma State 70-55. Next: at No. 21 Oklahoma, Sunday.
20. Oklahoma State (18-5) lost to No. 6 Texas 70-55. Next: vs. No. 24 West Virginia, Saturday.
24. West Virginia (19-6) beat Iowa State 57-47. Next: at No. 22 Oklahoma State, Saturday.

Men's Top 25

Monday
Miami 29 24 547 1
Charlotte 27 26 509 3
Washington 23 27 460 55
Orlando 23 29 442 6%-
Central Division
W L Pct GB
Cleveland 38 14 731
Indiana 28 25 528 10%-
Chicago 27 25 519 11
Detroit 27 27 500 12
Milwaukee 21 32 396 17%-
WESTERN CONFERENCE
Southwest Division
W L Pct GB
San Antonio 45 8 849 -
Memphis 31 22 585 14
Dallas 29 26 527 17
Houston 27 28 490 19
New Orleans 20 32 385 24%-
Northwest Division
W L Pct GB
Oklahoma City 39 14 736 -
Portland 27 27 500 12%-
Utah 26 26 500 12%-
Denver 22 32 407 17%-
Minnesota 17 37 315 22%-
Pacific Division
W L Pct GB -
Golden State 48 4 923
L.A. Clippers 35 18 660 13%-
Sacramento 22 31 415 26%-
Phoenix 14 40 259 35
L.A. Lakers 11 44 200 38%-
Wednesday's Games
Charlotte 117, Indiana 95
Sacramento 114, Philadelphia 110
San Antonio 98, Orlando 96
Memphis 109, Brooklyn 96
Boston 139, L.A. Clippers 134, OT
Denver 103, Detroit 92
Atlanta 113, Chicago 90
Minnesota 117, Toronto 112
New Orleans 100, Utah 96
Cleveland 120, L.A. Lakers 111
Golden State 112, Phoenix 104
Portland 116, Houston 103
Today's Games
Washington at Milwaukee, 5 p.m.
New Orleans at Oklahoma City, 5 p.m.

Transactions

BASEBALL

American League
DETROIT TIGERS — Agreed to terms with OF J.D. Martinez on a two-year contract.
TEXAS RANGERS — Agreed to terms with 1B Mitch Moreland on a one-year contract.
TORONTO BLUE JAYS — Agreed to terms with 3B Josh Donaldson on a two-year contract.
National League
SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS — Agreed to terms with 1B Brandon Belt on a one-year contract.

BASETBALL

WNBA — Named Lisa Borders president.

FOOTBALL

National Football League
NEW YORK GIANTS — Announced the retirement of LB Jon Beason. Released OL Will Beatty and Geoff Schwartz.
Canadian Football League
EDMONTON Eskimos — Signed LB J.C. Sherritt.
WINNIPEG BLUE BOMBERS — Signed DT Euclid Cummings.

HOCKEY

National Hockey League
BUFFALO Sabres — Placed F Zemgus Girgensons on injured reserve. Called up F Justin Bailey from Rochester (AHL).
EDMONTON OILERS — Assigned G Anders Nilsson to Bakersfield (AHL). Recalled G Laurent Brossit from Bakersfield.
ST. LOUIS BLUES — Activated F Jaden Schwartz from injured reserve.

SOCCER

Major League Soccer
PHILADELPHIA UNION — Signed F C.J. Sapong to a three-year contract.

COLLEGE

INDIANA — Named Mark Hagen defensive line coach.
IOWA STATE — Dismissed WR D'Vario Montgomery. Announced RB Joshua Thomas as well transfer to another school.
SYRACUSE — Named Anthony Di Fino associate athletics director for business development.
UTAH STATE — Named Julius Brown cornerbacks coach.
VANDERBILT — Named Brandon Barak baseball video coordinator, Brian Hiler baseball's director of player development and John Mardisroian baseball equipment manager.