

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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Sports shorts

Cavs' Kevin Love re-injures shoulder

CLEVELAND (AP) — Cavaliers forward Kevin Love has re-injured his surgically repaired left shoulder.

Love, whose shoulder was dislocated in last year's playoffs, left the floor in the final minute of the first half of Wednesday night's game against the Los Angeles Lakers. Love turned toward Cleveland's bench and said "it's my shoulder" before heading straight to the locker room for treatment. Love's left arm hung limply to his side as he exited.

It's not clear how or when Love got hurt.

At halftime, the Cavs only said Love will not return in the second half. The team is expected to provide more information following the game.

Love came in averaging 15.8 points and 10.5 rebounds per game.

Lillard named finalist for US Olympic team

Portland Trail Blazers guard is one step closer to the Olympics.

USA Basketball announced in a press release on Wednesday that Lillard

had been approved by the USA Basketball Board of Directors as an addition to the list of 30 finalists for the 2016 Summer

Olympic Games to be held from Aug. 5-21 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

"Both Mike (Krzyzewski) and I feel like Damian is playing at a very high level and that he should be added to our list of Olympic finalists," said Jerry Colangelo, managing director of the USA Men's National Team.

Lillard has been part of the USA Men's National Team since 2014. The official 12-member roster will be announced later this year.

"I think that sets a horrible example for kids, honestly. You can't protect guys because they can't shoot free throws. We're getting paid a lot of money to make a damn free throw, dude. I think it sets a bad precedent.

— Kobe Bryant
Los Angeles Lakers guard on the 'Hack-a-Shaq' strategy in the NBA. The rule has seen a lot of criticism recently, as many teams resort to intentionally fouling bad foul shooters to slow down offenses.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1990 — Mike Tyson loses for the first time when Buster Douglas knocks him out in the 10th round and captures the heavyweight championship in one of the biggest upsets in boxing history.

2011 — The Cleveland Cavaliers stopped their NBA-record losing streak at 26 games with a 126-119 win in overtime against the Los Angeles Clippers. Antawn Jamison scores 35 points for the Cavs and makes a 3-pointer with 22 seconds left in the extra period.

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

HERMISTON

Bulldog signs on with MSU-Northern

Simon continues career with four more years of football

By SAM BARBEE
East Oregonian

Ever since he was in the third grade, Hayden Simon wanted to play college football. He dreamed of playing at The Ohio State University, a school with an enrollment nearly the size of Umatilla County.

Now, a decade later, Simon has realized his childhood dream, signing with Montana State University-Northern in Havre, Montana last week, joining a program trying to pull itself out of an 0-11 (0-10 Frontier Conference) season at the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) level.

Simon will play middle line-

backer and perhaps get a few opportunities to run the ball, something he did as a senior at Hermiston.

"I just really liked their academic program," he said. And, while taking his visit in late January, he discovered that he "really liked the people there. That basically what did it for me."

Academically, Northern provided some things the Simon family was excited to see. It has a relatively small enrollment (1,037 undergraduates for the 2015 fiscal year) which means the student-professor ratio is about 14-1.

Simon started playing football in fourth grade and was coached, in part, by his dad Mike, who helped oversee Simon's football teams until he reached middle school. When Simon was about to make the transition into seventh grade football, Mike got an inkling that his son might have the tools to continue playing.



Hayden Simon of Hermiston smiles with his parents Deannie (far left) and Mike after signing a National Letter of Intent Wednesday.

Staff photo by Sam Barbee

"I started noticing when he was sixth grade entering into junior high," Mike said. "He had the ability athletic-wise to go to the next level of football, whether it's high school, onto the varsity, and

then college. Ultimately it was on Hayden and his work ethic to get there."

A three-year starter at Hermiston, Simon was an anchor on the

See SIMON/2B

PENDLETON

Rough Riders skate into offseason



The Rough Riders Pendleton Ice Sports Booster Association offers local youth the opportunity to play a sport unfamiliar to a lot of Americans.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton youth hockey league holds final games of the winter season

By MATT ENTRUP
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — With just three minutes left in the final game of their season, the Pendleton Rough Riders had one thing on their minds.

"Quick, score a goal!" A random voice shouted out from behind the boards.

Moments later that cry was answered as a player lifted the puck over the growing layer of ice shavings covering the rink and past the determined goalkeeper for what would be the game's final point.

The players cheered in unison as smiling faces peered out from behind their face masks.

Just a few seconds later the referee blew three shrill bursts of his whistle to signify the game was over. Players lined up to shake hands and then filed off the ice at Roy Raley Park.

So what was the final score? "7-5," came one response. "8-4," another. "4 to something," a third player replied.

It didn't matter. What did matter was that for another year the Rough Riders had gotten to participate in their favorite sport.

Sure, the conditions weren't ideal — soft ice, thigh-high boards and a rink so small even seven players seemed like a crowd — but

the players didn't seem to mind it much.

The game pitted the Level 4 Rough Riders against their Level 3 compatriots, high school against middle school, with the younger players in a perpetual power play with an extra skater to try to even the playing field.

It didn't work, of course, but winning the game wasn't the most important aspect of Wednesday night's season finale.

Keeping ice hockey alive and well in a region without much opportunity for the sport was the key victory.

Since 2007 the Rough Riders have carried that torch for local

youth. Consisting of four levels of competition ranging from players age 6-18, the organization has experienced recent growth.

"Two years ago we had 29 (players) and this year we had 45 come out for it," said John Bieker, a committee member for Pendleton Ice Sports, the non-profit that oversees the organization. "We have a lot of beginners. When they first come out here they can't even skate and by the end of the season they're doing really good."

Pendleton's tiny rink is the only one in operation in Umatilla County, but the Rough Riders make due.

"We can definitely learn to

See HOCKEY/2B

NBA

Lillard scores 31 as Blazers hold off Rockets

Blazers slide into seventh in West with win



By ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

PORTLAND — Damian Lillard sparked a second-quarter outburst for the Portland Trail Blazers and finished with 31 points and nine assists in a 116-103 win over the Houston Rockets on Wednesday night.

Maurice Harkless set season highs with 19 points and 13 rebounds for the Blazers, who moved past Houston into a tie with Utah for seventh place in the

Western Conference standings. They enter the All-Star break having won three in a row and eight of nine.

James Harden had 34 points, 11 assists and nine rebounds for the Rockets, who have dropped three straight and six of eight to fall out of playoff position. Dwight Howard dominated the paint with 28 points and 13 rebounds.

After trailing by as many as 21 in the second half, Houston closed to 93-88

early in the fourth quarter. But a Blazers timeout led to a scoring burst that restored the lead to 20 with 3:47 to go.

An entertaining, if at times sloppy, game took on a far more spirited air with 5:02 left in the second quarter. Patrick Beverly committed a hard, and needless, foul on Lillard just past halfcourt, sending the Blazers point guard sprawling.

Lillard spiked the ball in anger, officials reviewed the play to determine if it was a flagrant foul, and the crowd roared as Portland reeled off eight consecutive points and closed the half on a 13-4 run to take a 57-46 lead into the locker room.

See BLAZERS/2B



Portland Trail Blazers center Mason Plumlee (24) shoots over Houston Rocket Dwight Howard, right, as Rockets guard James Harden (13) watches during Wednesday's game in Portland.

(AP Photo/Steve Dykes)