

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

WEEKEND, MARCH 19-20, 2016

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1B

Sports shorts

Austin Dillon takes the pole at Fontana

FONTANA, Calif. (AP) — Austin Dillon has won the pole for the NASCAR Sprint Cup race in Fontana, California, claiming the spot for the first time this season at a top speed of 188.482 mph.



Dillon turned a lap in 38.2 seconds flat Friday in his Richard Childress Racing Chevrolet, edging Kevin Harvick by .031 seconds for his second career pole.

Dillon was also fastest in practice, putting Childress' grandson in prime position to chase his first career victory Sunday.

Harvick, the California native and 2011 champion, will start on the front row for the first time all season.

Denny Hamlin set the track record on the way to third place, with Ryan Newman fourth and Carl Edwards in fifth.

Colts to retire Manning's No. 18, build statue

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Colts owner Jim Irsay announced Friday that the team will retire Peyton Manning's No. 18 and build a statue of the record-setting quarterback outside Lucas Oil Stadium.

Less than two weeks after announcing his retirement in Denver, Manning returned to

his first NFL home one more time to thank his supporters. Irsay made the announcement as a slide show of Manning's moments in Indy played on the podium in front of him and on two screens behind him.

"When I got here, it was basketball, basketball, basketball and it was car racing, car racing. Football was probably in the third place and that's no longer the case. It's a football town," Manning said. "It was fun to be a part of that transformation."

"I'll be honest with you, in my wildest dreams I didn't think they'd hit some of the shots they hit. We didn't guard them good, but man, they made some shots."

— Tom Izzo

Michigan State basketball coach after the No. 2 seed Spartans lost 90-81 to No. 15 seed Middle Tennessee State in the first round of the NCAA men's basketball tournament on Friday.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1950 — Babe Didrikson Zaharias shoots a record 298 and beats Clair Doran by eight strokes to capture the U.S. Women's Open.

1995 — Chicago's Michael Jordan returns from his 17-month retirement. Wearing No. 45, he shoots 7-of-28 from the field and scores 19 points in the Bulls' 103-96 loss at Indiana.

2006 — Tennessee's Candace Parker is the first woman to dunk in an NCAA Tournament game, jamming one-handed on a breakaway 6:12 into the second-seeded Lady Vols' 102-54 victory against an Army team that was making its tournament debut.

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

HERMISTON

Hermiston sweeps aside Liberty

Bulldogs get strong performances from Kopacz, Naylor

By SAM BARBEE
East Oregonian

The Hermiston Bulldogs used a seven-run second inning in the opener of a doubleheader to down the Liberty Falcons 9-2, then got a three-run go-ahead double from Breyanna Naylor in the bottom of the third to give them a 6-4 win in five innings and a sweep of the Falcons on Friday at Rocky Heights Elementary in Hermiston.

"I couldn't be more excited," Hermiston coach Kate Greenough said. "The girls carried over their

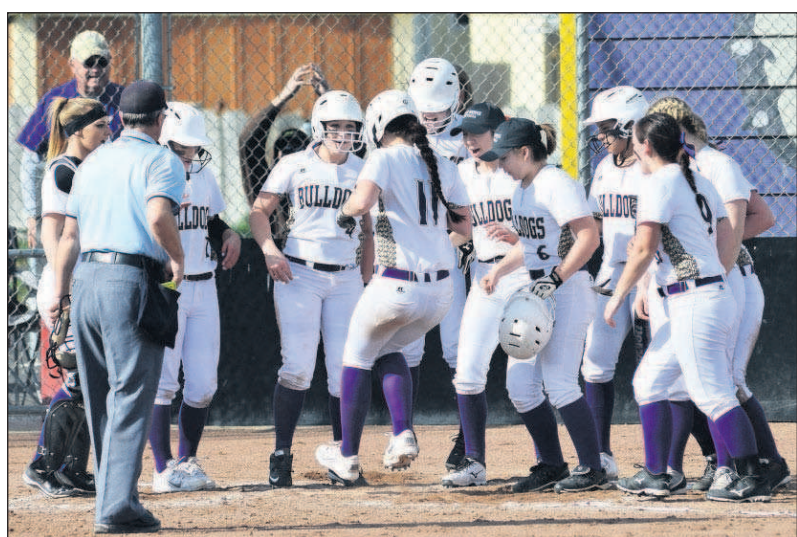
Softball	
Liberty	Hermiston
2-4	9-6

enthusiasm from Game 1 to Game 2, and they didn't stop. There was not one point where I thought they would cool down. So I couldn't be more proud of them, and it's every exciting for them to win two games for them to know that they can."

The theme of Friday's games was capitalizing on mistakes. Liberty committed five errors in Hermiston's 6-4 win, and booted four balls in the Bulldogs' 9-2 victory.

It was a reversal of fortune from

See HERMISTON/2B



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Hermiston Mikayla Kopacz is greeted at home plate after hitting a three-run homer in the Bulldogs 9-2 win against Liberty in the first game of a doubleheader Friday in Hermiston.

PENDLETON

Buckaroos finish strong



Madison Parker (5), of Pendleton, makes it to third base before Kamiakin third baseman Dani Masteler can make the tag in Friday's first game at Steve Cary Field.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney

PENDLETON

Bucks split

Pendleton carried by strong pitching efforts on Friday

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

RICHLAND, Wash. — The Pendleton Buckaroos hit the road for the first time in the 2016 season, taking a one hour drive for a doubleheader with the Hanford Falcons.

The Buckaroos ended up splitting the two games, winning the first game 9-5 before losing the second game 4-2.

In game one, the Buckaroos (1-2) showed improvements at the plate that helped lead to their downfall in the season opener. The team tallied nine runs and eight hits, including a trio of extra-base hits.

"They looked a lot better out there, their swings were a lot more aggressive," Buckaroos coach T.J. Haguewood said. "The guys are getting settled into baseball mode now."

Devon Roe racked up three hits and two RBIs in the game, while Quinn Cockburn and Wyatt Morris each added two hits and two runs scored.

On the mound, senior James Bradt got the starting nod and threw three solid innings allowing just one hit and one run with four

See BUCKS/2B

Pendleton overcomes early mistakes, wins two

By MATT ENTRUP
East Oregonian

The Pendleton softball team faced its first bit of adversity of the 2016 season and came through it in style on Friday to knock off Kamiakin 15-4 in five innings in the first half of a non-league doubleheader at Steve Cary Field. They carried that momentum into the second game for an 11-0 win, also in five innings.

The situation wasn't looking good for the Bucks (3-0) after giving

up three unearned runs in the top of the first inning in the opener, but they outscored the Braves 15-0 over the next three frames before allowing another run in the top of the fifth.

"We struggled in the beginning, it happens, but we came back together as a team and got it done," said pitcher Kiersten Murphy, who picked up her second win and drove

Softball	
Kamiakin	Pendleton
4-0	15-11

in four runs to help the cause.

Teammate Alexis Morrison, who hit her second home run in as many games, said it was a great situation for the team to see early in the

season.

"I think it's good to have beginnings like that so you deal with adversity instead of always kind of

See BUCKAROOS/2B

Men's College Basketball

No. 1 seed Oregon romps past Holy Cross

Upsets motivate Ducks in first round

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — Dillon Brooks and his Oregon teammates were glued to their televisions, watching and keeping up on the craziness happening elsewhere in the NCAA Tournament.

As other higher seeds faltered, the Ducks wanted no part of joining that group and being remembered for the wrong reasons.

"I was kind of scared to be honest," Brooks said. "We have been making a lot of history (at) Oregon, but I didn't want to make that kind of history."

NCAA	
Holy Cross	Oregon
52	91

Carrying the marquee for the under-achieving Pac-12, No. 1 seed Oregon showed no nerves playing as a top seed and rolled past No. 16 seed Holy Cross 91-52 on Friday night in a West Regional first-round game.

Chris Boucher led Oregon (29-6) with 20 points, while Brooks and Elgin Cook both added 11 points as the Ducks won their ninth straight and advanced to the round of 32 for the fourth straight season.

With nearly all of the Pac-12 making a quick exit out of the NCAA Tournament

See OREGON/2B



Oregon guard Casey Benson (2) is fouled by Holy Cross guard Robert Champion (22) as he shoots during the first half of a first-round men's college basketball game in the NCAA Tournament in Spokane, Wash., Friday, March 18, 2016.

AP Photo/Young Kwak