

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 2016

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER @EOSPORTS

1B

Sports shorts

Warriors top Spurs for 70th victory

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Stephen Curry scored 27 points and the Golden State Warriors became the second team to win 70 games in a season by beating the San Antonio Spurs 112-101 on Thursday night, wrapping up home-court advantage throughout the playoffs.

The Warriors (70-9) bounced back from their second loss in three home games two nights earlier against Minnesota and joined the 1995-96 Chicago Bulls as the only teams to win 70 games. Golden State can break Chicago's single-season record of 72 wins by sweeping the final three games, including a rematch in San Antonio on Sunday.

Summitt resigns over relationship with player

RUSTON, La. (AP) — Tyler Summitt resigned from his job as Louisiana Tech women's basketball coach on Thursday and acknowledged having an inappropriate relationship.

FACES "I am profoundly disappointed in myself for engaging in a relationship that has negatively affected the people I love, respect and care about the most," Summitt said in a statement issued through Louisiana Tech.

Summitt is the son of Hall of Fame coach Pat Summitt, and Louisiana Tech hired Summitt in April 2014 after two seasons as assistant coach at Marquette. Now 25, Summitt went 16-15 in his first year and 14-16 this year.

Louisiana Tech said Summitt's resignation was accepted and effective immediately.

"I don't know what it is. I can go to that putting green now and make 20 straight 3-footers. And then you get on the course, and you feel a little different, and you can't do what you normally do. So it's pretty difficult."

— **Ernie Els**
The 46-year-old golfer made headlines on Thursday by six-putting the first green at The Masters — all within three feet of the cup — to score a tournament-worst nine on the par-4 first hole. Els finished the round with an eight-over-par 80.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1974 — In the home opener in Atlanta, Hank Aaron breaks Babe Ruth's career record by hitting his 715th home run, connecting off Al Downing of Los Angeles in the fourth inning.

2001 — Tiger Woods claims the greatest feat in modern golf by winning the Masters, giving him a clean sweep of the four professional majors in a span of 294 days. Woods, with his winning score of 16-under 272, sweeps the majors with a combined score of 65-under.

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

HERMISTON

Hoffert retires after eight seasons

Hermiston girls head basketball coach Steve Hoffert, shown here coaching at the OSAA state tournament in March 2015, announced that he is retiring from coaching basketball and plans to focus on his business and his family.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris



Bulldogs coach steps aside after seven state tournament appearances

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

After eight years at Hermiston and more than 30 years total in coaching, girls basketball coach Steve Hoffert has decided to retire. "I just felt that it was time," Hoffert said. "I've been thinking about it for a little while now, and I always said that I wanted to get out when I still had the passion for the game, not when I was tired of it, and I still love it so everything just sort of fell into place."

Hoffert had been trying to figure out the right time to announce the decision and decided that the banquet on Tuesday evening was the best form since the players and families tied to the program would all be in attendance. The announcement came as quite a shock to numerous players and parents at the banquet, but the reaction quickly turned to loud cheers and a standing ovation.

"It made me feel good to see the support from the community and to know that my time here was appreciated," he said.

Hoffert compiled a 159-57 overall record in those eight seasons in Hermiston, including seven trips to the OSAA state tournament in which the team earned six trophies — most recently a fourth-place finish in 2016. He says that those accomplishments with those teams will be one of the things that stick with him moving forward.

"It means that what we were doing was successful. If I'm on the outside looking in it would be hard to question this program because we've been able to sustain that success," he said. "And what we've built makes you only feel better about the future."

Aside from success on the state level, the Hermiston Bulldogs were downright dominant in conference play under Hoffert's leadership, compiling a 59-1 record during that time — with the last league loss coming

See HOFFERT/2B

Spieth stays in step at the Masters

Defending champion leads after first round

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Jordan Spieth is off to another great start in the Masters because of the way he finished.

His two biggest rivals were left behind because they couldn't.

Spieth capped off the only bogey-free round in the wicked wind at Augusta National by making a 15-foot par putt on the 16th hole and hitting an 8-iron into 6 feet for birdie on the final hole for a 6-under 66 and a two-shot lead, the first step in his bid to win another green jacket.

Jason Day couldn't keep pace. On the verge of tying for the lead late in the round Thursday, Day dropped five shots in three holes and had to settle for a 72. Rory McIlroy pulled to within two shots of the lead until he made two bogeys over the last three holes.



AP Photo/Charlie Riedel

Jordan Spieth tees off on the 12th hole during the first round of the Masters golf tournament Thursday, April 7, 2016, in Augusta, Ga.

When a day of big wind, big numbers and far too many putts for Ernie Els was finally over, it felt as though nothing had changed from last year.

Spieth is the man to beat at the Masters.

He was atop the leaderboard for the fifth straight round, and he has

had at least a share of the lead in six of the last seven rounds at the Masters. One more and he matches the longest streak since Arnold Palmer in 1960 and the opening two rounds of 1961.

And just like last year, now it's time for the rest of the field to try to catch him.

"We're through one round," Spieth said. "There's going to be a lot of different changes. There are going to be a lot of different birdies, bogeys and everything in between. We know how to win this golf tournament, and we believe in our process. And if the putts are dropping, then hopefully it goes our way."

He had a two-shot lead over Danny Lee and Shane Lowry. Three shots behind was a group that included Sergio Garcia, Justin Rose and Paul Casey.

Still in the mix were Day and McIlroy, though both gave up a lot of ground in a short amount of time.

Day's troubles began when he three-putted for bogey on the par-5 15th, pulled his tee shot into the water on the par-3 16th for a triple bogey and then sailed the green on the 17th and dropped another shot. When he finished, he was six behind the defending champion.

"I've just got to slowly try to inch my way back into this tourna-

See MASTERS/2B

Women's College Basketball

Beavers finish No. 2 in coaches poll

Ranking is highest in program history

Albany Democrat-Herald

CORVALLIS — Fresh off its first ever trip to the Final Four, the Oregon State women's basketball team has earned the highest ranking in program history, coming in at No. 2 in the year-end USA Today/WBCA Coaches Poll.

The ranking marks an improvement of four spots on the team's previous best rankings, No. 6, at the start of the 2015-16 NCAA Tournament.

The Beavers have been ranked in the poll every week since the 2013-14 year-end poll and are one of five Pac-12 teams ranked in this year's final Top 25.

Connecticut, which won its fourth straight national title Tuesday night, finished with



AP Photo/Brandon Wade

The Oregon State bench erupts on a buzzer beater shot to end the first half of a basketball game against Baylor in the Elite Eight Monday, March 28, 2016, in Dallas.

the top ranking. Washington (No. 8), Stanford (11), UCLA (13) and Arizona State (16) were also ranked.

The 2015-16 OSU squad finished the campaign with 32

See BEAVERS/2B

Prep Roundup

Buckaroos blank Tigers

Murphy, Lyon throw combined shutout for Pendleton softball

East Oregonian

LA GRANDE — The last time Pendleton softball played La Grande they needed a huge day at the plate to come out on top of a 29-run shootout in Pendleton. On Thursday in La Grande, the Buckaroos got a different kind of big day from their hitters, but didn't need it as Kiersten Murphy and Gracie Lyon combined for an 11-0 shutout in six innings.

Just eight days prior Pendleton had to come from behind with a pair of home runs to beat La Grande 17-12.

"Anytime you can go throw a shutout against a team that scored 12 runs against

See PREPS/2B