

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2016

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1B

HERMISTON

'Just a guy from Hermiston'

Former Irrigon boy's basketball coach Mitch Thompson is now a graduate assistant for the Oregon State University men's basketball program in Corvallis.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris



Mitch Thompson living a dream as a grad assistant at Oregon State

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

A graduate assistant for a Division I college sports team is one of the most-coveted positions in the coaching ranks.

Sure, it's not a lucrative position, but it's one that offers people a foot in the door to the coaching ranks

with real experience with some of the best and brightest coaches and players in all of college sports. Some of the best coaches in Division I basketball and football all started their careers as graduate assistants, such as Arizona men's basketball coach Sean Miller (Wisconsin, 1992-93), Ohio State football coach Urban Meyer (Ohio

State, 1986) and Alabama football coach Nick Saban (Kent State, 1973-74).

Hermiston native Mitch Thompson considers himself to be a lucky guy, nowadays, as he currently holds one of those coveted positions as a graduate assistant for the Oregon State University men's basketball

program.

"I shouldn't be in the spot I am ... I'm just a guy from Hermiston," Thompson says. "I've been a Beaver fan and a Pac-12 fan my whole life so it's kind of surreal in a way."

Oregon State associate head coach Kerry Rupp says that

See THOMPSON/2B

MLB

Cano's homer lifts M's

Mariners erase late deficit with five-run 8th

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Robinson Cano hit a three-run homer to cap a five-run eighth inning, Edwin Diaz got his first major league save and the Seattle Mariners overcame a four-run deficit to beat the Boston Red Sox 5-4 on Tuesday night.



Boston
4



Seattle
5

Cano capped the comeback with his 24th homer to right field off newly acquired Red Sox reliever Fernando Abad (1-5).

The Mariners had just three hits off starter

David Price through seven innings and trailed 4-0. Price was struck in the right thigh by Luis Sardinas' line drive in the sixth, though, and struggled after. Mike Zunino opened the eighth with a home run to left off Price, and then Leonys Martin, Sardinas and Guillermo Heredia followed with consecutive singles to chase Price.

Matt Barnes struck out pinch-

See MARINERS/2B

PENDLETON

Christensen leads windy Senior Open

Idaho amateur shoots 69 to open at Wildhorse

By MATT ENTRUP
East Oregonian

MISSION — Amateur Bob Christensen claimed the lead during a blustery first round at the Senior Oregon Open Invitational on Tuesday.

Christensen took advantage of his early tee time and shot a three-under 72 at Wildhorse Resort and Casino. By the time the Idaho golfer was signing his scorecard, a steady wind from west had picked up and helped assure his score would not be bested by any of the players in the afternoon section, which all failed to break par.

Six players are two shots back at 71 in a group that includes past champions Jeff Coston and Todd Erwin.

Afternoon winds rose to 30 mph, and past champion Don Beis handled it the same way as many of the golfers — humor.

"I shot my age," laughed the 78-year-old PGA professional from Seattle. "The wind was very, very hard.



Joe Minniti disappears in a cloud of sand while hitting out of the bunker on the No. 9 hole at Wildhorse Golf Course during the first round of the Senior Oregon Open Invitational on Tuesday in Mission.

Staff photo by Matt Entrup

For some reason I thought the wind really affected the ball. I've played in a lot of hard wind, but there were some shots where the wind really took the ball."

He wasn't the only one struggling as more than half of 217-player field shot above 80.

Washington amateur Ron Mertz was tied for 178th, but like Beis was happy to be in attendance.

"It's not my best round, but at least I'm on a golf course," he said.

Also shooting 71 on Tuesday were professionals

Joe Carranza and Mark Keating, and amateurs Jack Schneider and Joe Vaughn.

Amateurs Kent Brown and Craig Larson were tied for eighth at even par.

Christensen's low score helped his foursome to a three-shot lead in the team portion of the tournament, which wraps up today. Pro Mike DeLong and amateurs Joe Stumph and Mike Kirk combined with Christensen to shoot 18-under.

In second at 15-under is the team of pro Roger Wallace and amateurs Dave Cottingham, John Kelley and

Steve Lucas.

Play continues today at 7:30 a.m.

Senior Oregon Open Invitational		
Wildhorse Resort and Casino		
6,640 yards, Par 72		
a-amateur		
Round 1		
a-Bob Christensen	69	-3
Joe Carranza	71	-1
Jeff Coston	71	-1
Todd Erwin	71	-1
Mark Keating	71	-1
a-Jack Schneider	71	-1
a-Joe Vaughn	71	-1
a-Kent Brown	72	E
a-Craig Larson	72	E
a-Brad Carey	73	+1
Tom Carey	73	+1
Ray Comella	73	+1
a-Michael Jackson	73	+1
a-Brad Karns	73	+1
a-John Kelley	73	+1
a-John Latousek	73	+1
Gordon Tolbert	73	+1
a-George White	73	+1

NFL

Seattle's biggest question remains offensive line



Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson (3) gives directions inside a huddle during the team's NFL football training camp on Saturday in Renton, Wash.

AP Photo/Elaine Thompson

Team remains confident in group, hopeful minor changes help

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — The way general manager John Schneider and coach Pete Carroll have structured the Seattle Seahawks roster and how salaries are spread around created one position group in particular that stands as the biggest question surrounding one of the favor-

ites in the NFC.

Seattle's offensive line is the biggest unknown on a team with most of its questions answered less than a week into training camp.

There remain a few injury questions and some possible changes to the depth chart, but no position appears to be more of a pressing concern than the unproven nature

See SEAHAWKS/2B

Sports shorts

Straily tosses quality start as Reds defeat Cardinals 7-5

CINCINNATI — Dan Straily set a new career mark on Tuesday evening, as he tossed his 13th quality start of the season as the Cincinnati Reds took down the St. Louis Cardinals 7-5.

Straily topped his previous career high of 12 quality starts after allowing two runs, five hits, one walk while striking out four batters over six innings. He earned a no-decision in the effort.

The Reds (43-62) have now won in five of Straily's last six starts as he has re-discovered his groove over the last month of play. Since July 1, Straily is 2-1 with a 2.52 ERA with 27 strikeouts to just 11 walks.

He has lowered his season ERA from 4.38 to 3.80 in that same span.

FACES



Straily

"Right now we're more concerned with Tre Mason's well-being than we are his football career. We're going to continue to try to reach him to see where he's at."

— Jeff Fisher

St. Louis Rams head coach speaking his concern with third-year running back Tre Mason as Mason has yet to show up to the team's training camp. Team officials have contacted Mason's family and his agent, but have no answers on his whereabouts.

Cishek out as Seattle's closer

SEATTLE (AP) Edwin Diaz will take over as the Seattle Mariners closer just two months removed from Double-A, replacing struggling Steve Cishek.

FACES



Cishek

Manager Scott Servais announced the decision Tuesday. Cishek blew a three-run lead Sunday in a loss to the Cubs then allowed a tiebreaking homer to Mookie Betts in the ninth inning of a loss against Boston on Monday night.

Diaz was promoted from Jackson on June 4 and has a 1.80 ERA in 24 appearances. The 22-year-old struck out 49 and walked seven over 25 innings and held opponents scoreless in 20 of his appearances.

Diaz says he likes "to pitch under pressure" and promised to "do the same job I do in the seventh or eighth, get three outs."

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1949 — The National Basketball Association is formed by the merger of the National Basketball League and the Basketball Association of America.

1996 — Andre Agassi, the Dream Team and the U.S. women's 400-meter relay team win Olympic gold medals, while the American men's 400 relay settles for silver. With Carl Lewis idled by a coach's decision and Leroy Burrell injured, the men's 400 team is shocked by Canada — the first time the U.S. lost the event at the Olympics.

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