

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2016

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HERMISTON



Staff photo by E.J.Harris

Hermiston quarterback Andrew James scans the defense during a football practice on Wednesday, Aug. 24. James will make his first varsity start against Union (WA) on Friday.

Bulldogs open with big test

After weeks of practice, Hermiston ready to hit other people

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

After months of summer workouts and two-plus weeks of practices, it's officially game week for the Hermiston Bulldogs.

The Bulldogs, recently ranked No. 10 in the Oregonian's Class 5A preseason media poll, are preparing to open up the gates of Kennison Field on Friday night as they host the Union (WA) Titans for the season opener. Hermiston head coach David Faateete said following Wednesday's practice that his team is champing at the bit to face off against someone other than themselves.

See BULLDOGS/2B

College Football

Leidner leads Gophers against Beavers

Oregon State takes on Minnesota

By DAVE CAMPBELL
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The left foot is fully repaired and rehabilitated after playing through the pain last season, and Mitch Leidner has lost 20 pounds. Minnesota's fifth-year senior quarterback is primed for a strong finish.

Bring on the season, and the opener against Oregon State tonight.

"Definitely want to leave a legacy," Leidner said, adding: "I know the rest of the seniors feel the same exact way."

See BEAVERS/2B

In this Nov. 28, 2015 photo, Minnesota quarterback Mitch Leidner (7) plays against the Wisconsin in an NCAA college football game in Minneapolis.



AP Photo/Jim Mone, File

Sports shorts

Cramping Raonic loses to qualifier

NEW YORK (AP) — The cramping became so debilitating, Milos Raonic said, he couldn't grip his racket properly.

The Wimbledon runner-up just last month, and seeded No. 5 at the U.S. Open, Raonic began to feel pain near his left wrist midway through the second set of what would become a stunning 6-7 (4), 7-5, 7-5, 6-1 second-round loss to 120th-ranked American qualifier Ryan Harrison on Wednesday.

Eventually, the problem spread to Raonic's right forearm. Then both thighs. Then his left hip flexor.

Afterward, his back seized up when he tried to sling his equipment bag over a shoulder. No way to try to win a tennis match. Or to serve: That's normally his most effective stroke, yet he double-faulted 15 times.

"It was just catching me all over," Raonic said. "I started getting small (cramps) where I couldn't hold the racket."



Raonic

PENDLETON

Bucks know Tigers well

Pendleton's Jamal Vann, 33, rumbles through the defensive line on Thursday, Aug. 25 during the Buck Bowl & BBQ in Pendleton. Bucks coach Erik Davis said getting the running game going early will be crucial to easing quarterback Nick Bower into his first varsity start when Pendleton opens the season at La Grande on Friday.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris



Pendleton expects tough opener against loaded La Grande

By MATT ENTRUP
East Oregonian

There are always unknowns headed into the first week of the football season, but there should be few surprises when the Pendleton Buckaroos and La Grande Tigers kick off the

season on Friday at Community Stadium in La Grande.

It's a rematch from Week 3 of the 2015 season, a nail-biter Pendleton hung on to win 25-24 when La Grande's last-second Hail Mary went unanswered.

The Tigers return a slew of players that will

be looking to avenge what ended up as their only loss in the regular season, including junior quarterback Andrew Peasley and senior defensive end Connor Brandt, both of whom were named Greater Oregon League Players of the Year at the end of last



Pendleton
Buckaroos
(0-0)



La Grande
Tigers
(0-0)

• Friday, 7 p.m.
• at Community Stadium,
La Grande
• Radio: KTIK 1240 AM

See BUCKS/2B

MLB

Hernandez can't stop Mariners' slide

Seattle loses fifth game in a row

By SCHUYLER DIXON
Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Felix Hernandez surrendered a grand slam in his shortest outing of the season when the fading Seattle Mariners needed their ace to end a losing streak.

Now they'll go home looking to stay in the AL wild-card race after a three-game sweep by Texas essentially ended their hopes of winning the AL West.

"We've just got to go out there and play with everybody and show people who we are," Hernandez said after giving up Carlos Gomez's grand slam in the Rangers' 14-1 romp Wednesday. "We've got some good pitching here to win games. Just got to have fun."

The Mariners, losers of five straight and now 11 1/2 behind the Rangers in the AL West, will be at least four games back in the wild card when they face the Los Angeles Angels on Friday to start a homestand that includes four more games with Texas.

The Mariners went 1-6 on a trip that started at the Chicago White Sox after finishing a homestand with two straight losses to the



AP Photo/Tony Gutierrez

Seattle Mariners starting pitcher Felix Hernandez punches his glove after giving up a grand slam to Texas Rangers' Carlos Gomez in the fourth inning of a baseball game, Wednesday, Aug. 31, 2016, in Arlington, Texas.

Yankees.

"We have bounced back all year," manager Scott Servais said. "We need to pick it up, no doubt. It's been a rough trip. Guys are down a little bit and rightfully so. Off day tomorrow, we'll come back and bring the energy that we need to have to get out and play."

Rougned Odor followed his game-ending shot Tuesday night with two more homers Wednesday, giving him a team-leading 27 for the season.

Odor tied a career high with five RBIs and Adrian Beltre and Ryan Rua also

homered as the Rangers tied their season high with five homers.

Texas (80-54) moved a season-high 26 games over .500 with a fifth straight win going into a three-game home series against second-place Houston.

The Rangers matched the 1999 and 2012 Texas teams as the fastest to reach 80 wins.

"So far the body of work speaks for itself," Texas manager Jeff Banister said. "We still have some work to do."

Martin Perez (9-10) pitched six shutout innings

despite giving up seven hits and three walks. Kyle Seager hit his 25th homer for Seattle in the eighth against Tony Barnette.

Hernandez (9-5) matched a season high by allowing six runs, coming out after four innings in his first loss since May 27. He was trying to finish 5-0 in August.

Gomez hit a soaring fly ball about a dozen rows above the 14-foot wall in left field for his second grand slam this season and a 6-0 lead in the fourth. The other slam also was against Seattle on July 17 when he was still with Astros.

Odor had a two-run shot for a 10-0 lead in the seventh and a three-run homer in the eighth. On Tuesday, his two-run homer in the ninth gave Texas an 8-7 win.

Beltre's 25th homer of the season was a two-run shot in the fifth.

CAMINERO EJECTION
Seattle reliever Arquimedes Caminero was ejected after hitting Texas' Elvis Andrus with a pitch in the seventh. Caminero hit Andrus in the ribs with a high 98 mph fastball two batters after allowing Odor's two-run homer. In the second inning, Andrus ran into Mariners first baseman Dae-Ho Lee while running out a groundball. Andrus tried to apologize, but Lee, who had three hits, didn't look pleased.

"You've got to love preseason football to be out there on a night like tonight."

— Dirk Koetter

Tampa Bay Buccaneers head coach after his team lost to Washington 20-13 in front of about 5,000 fans in both team's preseason finale on Wednesday. The game had been moved up 24 hours due to Tropical Storm Hermine and a heavy rain fell throughout the game.

PED Three cleared by NFL

NEW YORK (AP) — NFL stars James Harrison, Clay Matthews and Julius Peppers can start the regular season without having the specter of a league investigation over whether they used performance-enhancing drugs hanging over their heads.

The NFL cleared all three players on Wednesday, saying there was "no credible evidence" the players were guilty of any of the claims made in a documentary by Al-Jazeera America in January.

An NFL statement said "the investigation involved witness interviews, a review of relevant records and other materials, electronic research, and laboratory analysis and review."

The league threatened Harrison, Matthews, Peppers and free agent Mike Neal with indefinite suspensions if they did not meet with investigators.



THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1975 — Tom Seaver strikes out Manny Sanguillen in the seventh inning to become the first pitcher to strike out 200 or more batters in eight consecutive seasons. Seaver records 10 strikeouts in the Mets' 3-0 triumph over Pittsburgh.

1984 — Willie Totten of Mississippi Valley State passes for a Division I-AA record 536 yards and nine touchdowns in a 86-0 rout of Kentucky State. Jerry catches 17 passes for 294 yards and five touchdowns and breaks his own Division I-AA record for receiving yards.

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