

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

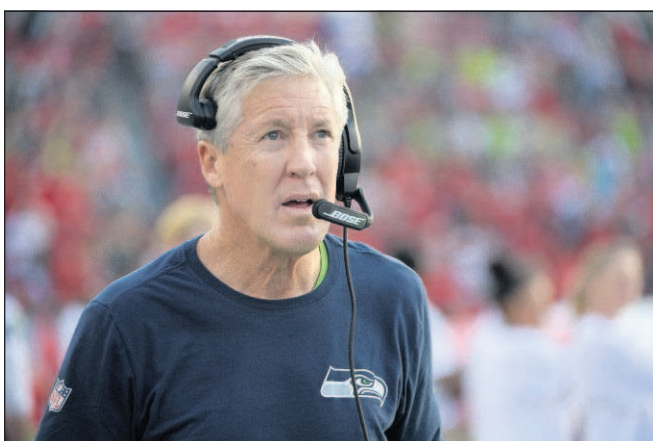
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2016

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1B

NFL

## Simple for Seahawks: Beat Rams and clinch NFC West



This Nov. 27, 2016 photo shows Seattle Seahawks head coach Pete Carroll walking the sideline prior to the start of an NFL football game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in Tampa, Fla.

Seattle hoping to hand Los Angeles its fifth straight defeat

By TIM BOOTH  
Associated Press

SEATTLE — For all of their wild inconsistency this season, the path is straightforward for the Seattle Seahawks.

Seattle can wrap up its third NFC West title in the past four seasons with a win over the listless Los Angeles Rams on Thursday night.

At this point, the Seahawks clinching the division title is a formality, holding a

### Thursday Night Football



- Today, 5:25 p.m.
- at Century Link Field
- TV: NBC

three-game lead over Arizona with three games remaining.

The Rams can only dream of that kind of success after another lost season that culminated with this week's decision to fire coach Jeff Fisher.

"We realize that there's a lot at stake with every one of these games, as it has always been," Seattle coach Pete

Carroll said. "But now you know you have a chance to make some noise in your division."

The more important task for Seattle is trying to regain control of the No. 2 seed in the NFC and a coveted first-round bye in the playoffs.

The Seahawks (8-4-1) are a half-game behind Detroit in the NFC standings, but face a far easier schedule than the Lions over the final three weeks.

While Seattle closes with Los Angeles, Arizona and San Francisco, the Lions finish off the season at the New York Giants, at Dallas and home for Green Bay.

While the immediate focus is taking care of the division, there is a decent chance if Seattle can finish 3-0 it will See SEAHAWKS/2B

### HERMISTON

## Neal, Line grab all-state honors



Hermiston senior John-Henry Line, center left, and junior Dayshawn Neal, right, garnered Class 5A all-state honors this week. Line, a defensive lineman, was voted first team and Neal, a wide receiver, was voted to the second team.

## Hermiston duo bookends standout seasons with top Class 5A recognition

By ERIC SINGER  
East Oregonian

If you watched any one of the 10 Hermiston football games this season, there were at a minimum two players that always caught your eye — Dayshawn Neal on offense and John-Henry Line on defense.

It seems that other Class 5A coaches felt the same way, as both players

were selected to the all-state team this week with Line a first team selection at defensive line and Neal a second team selection at wide receiver.

"I'm pretty happy," Line said on Wednesday night. "To see all of the hard work pay off and to get noticed by other coaches is a great feeling."

"It means a lot," Neal added. "Gotta give a shout out to my coaches, teammates, everyone who supported me

really."

Line's selection follows us his first team all-league and Co-Defensive Player of the Year honor for Special District 1 this season. His road to success is owed to a meeting between Line and the Hermiston coaches, as he was moved from his middle linebacker spot to defensive end following Hermiston's Week 1 game against Union (WA). See ALL-STATE/2B

### John-Henry Line, sr., Defensive Line

• Season statistics: 99 total tackles, 22.5 tackles-for-loss, 15.5 sacks, 5A Special District 1 Co-Defensive Player of the Year.

### Dayshawn Neal, jr., Wide Receiver

• Season statistics: 51 catches, 911 yards, 12 touchdowns, 5A Special District 1 first team.

### Women's College Basketball

## Ducks falter on the road

Hebard's 22 points not enough as Rebels roll

Associated Press



OXFORD, Miss. — Taylor Manuel scored 22 points and Mississippi beat No. 25 Oregon 83-67 on Wednesday night.

Madinah Muhammad added a pair of 3-pointers and 18 points for the Rebels (8-2), who made only 4 of 20 from the arc and were outrebounded 41-37 but used 17 Oregon turnovers, eight off steals, to score 23 points.

Ruthy Hebard was 10 of 13 from the floor and scored 22 points for the Ducks (8-2), who had a four-game winning streak snapped. Justine Hall scored 10

points while Mallory McGwire recorded her first double-double with 11 points and 12 rebounds. Freshman guard Sabrina Ionescu, who had put up two triple-doubles in the previous three games, was held to two points, two rebounds and one assist.

The Rebels took a 4-0 lead on a pair of Manuel baskets, were up 14 at halftime and stayed in front by double figures in the second half.

The Ducks were ranked this week for the first time since December 2003.

### College Football

## Oregon finds new defensive coordinator

Colorado's Jim Leavitt reportedly tapped to lead the Ducks defense

Associated Press

EUGENE — Colorado defensive coordinator Jim Leavitt is joining new head coach Willie Taggart's staff at Oregon, according to reports.

FoxSports.com first reported Wednesday that Leavitt, a former head coach at South Florida like Taggart, would be the Ducks' defensive coordinator. Oregon would not confirm the report, which cited anonymous sources.

But Leavitt posted to Twitter Wednesday evening: "I love CU, players, Boulder and all alum! Been

great to me! Couldn't pass up opportunity for family! South Champs! Been a great ride!!"

Leavitt has spent the past two seasons with the Buffaloes. This season Colorado is ranked 17th nationally for total defense, allowing an average of 328.3 yards per game, and 18th for scoring defense, allowing 20.5 yards per game.

The No. 11 Buffaloes (10-3) will play Oklahoma State in the Alamo Bowl on Dec. 29. It is Colorado's first bowl game since 2007.

Leavitt also spent four seasons with the San Francisco 49ers under coach Jim Harbaugh. Leavitt was the first head coach at South Florida, from 1997-2009.



Leavitt

Taggart and Leavitt share a connection to Harbaugh. As a player Taggart was recruited to Western Kentucky by Harbaugh, whose father Jack was coach of the Hilltoppers. Later Taggart was an assistant under Harbaugh at Stanford.

Leavitt will have his work cut out for him at Oregon. Former Michigan coach Brady Hoke attempted to install a new 4-3 defensive scheme and the Ducks finished the season ranked 126th out of the 128 FBS-level teams for total defense, allowing opponents an average of 528.4 yards per game. Oregon allowed an average of 41.4 points per game, ranked 125th nationally.

### Sports shorts

#### Adrian Peterson back at practice

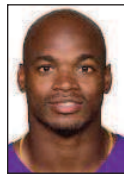
EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. (AP) — Adrian Peterson is returning to practice this week for the Minnesota Vikings for the first time since tearing the meniscus in his right knee in September.

Coach Mike Zimmer says he expects Peterson to practice all week. He is not sure if his star running back will be available to play the Indianapolis Colts this weekend.

Peterson told a local website earlier this week that he is still targeting the game against Green Bay on Dec. 24 to make his return to the field. He tore his meniscus

on Sept. 18 against Green Bay and has missed the last 11 games.

The Vikings (7-6) are operating under the assumption that they have to win their final three games to make the playoffs.



Peterson

"I'd rather just get the All-Pro status and don't go Pro Bowl. Because I just really wanted to go to Hawaii ... As long as my teammates really see me as a Pro Bowl player, I ain't really worried because it's a polieic thing anyway."

#### — Darius Slay

Detroit Lions cornerback calls the Pro Bowl 'pointless' now that it has been moved to Orlando, Florida from Hawaii this season. Slay was snubbed from last year's Pro Bowl team.

#### Seattle chosen to host 2017 WNBA All-Star Game

NEW YORK (AP) — Seattle will host the WNBA All-Star Game next year.

Body: The league announced Wednesday that the game will take place July 22 in the city for the first time.

The league didn't have an All-Star Game last season because of the Olympics. The midseason showcase has been held out west only twice, both times in Phoenix, most recently in 2014.

The 2015 All-Star Game was held in Connecticut. The West beat the East 117-112 as Maya Moore of the Minnesota Lynx scored a game-record 30 points.

The WNBA will begin its 21st season on May 13 with three games.



#### THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1973 — Tennessee beats Temple 11-6 in the lowest scoring NCAA basketball game since 1938. With 11:44 left in the first half and Tennessee leading 7-5, Temple holds onto the ball without a shot. Tennessee doesn't take a shot in the second half, but manages four free throws by John Snow.

2012 — Matt Scott throws two touchdown passes in the final 46 seconds and college bowl season starts with a wild one when Arizona rallies to beat Nevada 49-48 in the New Mexico Bowl. Arizona outscored Nevada 21-3 in the final quarter.

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