

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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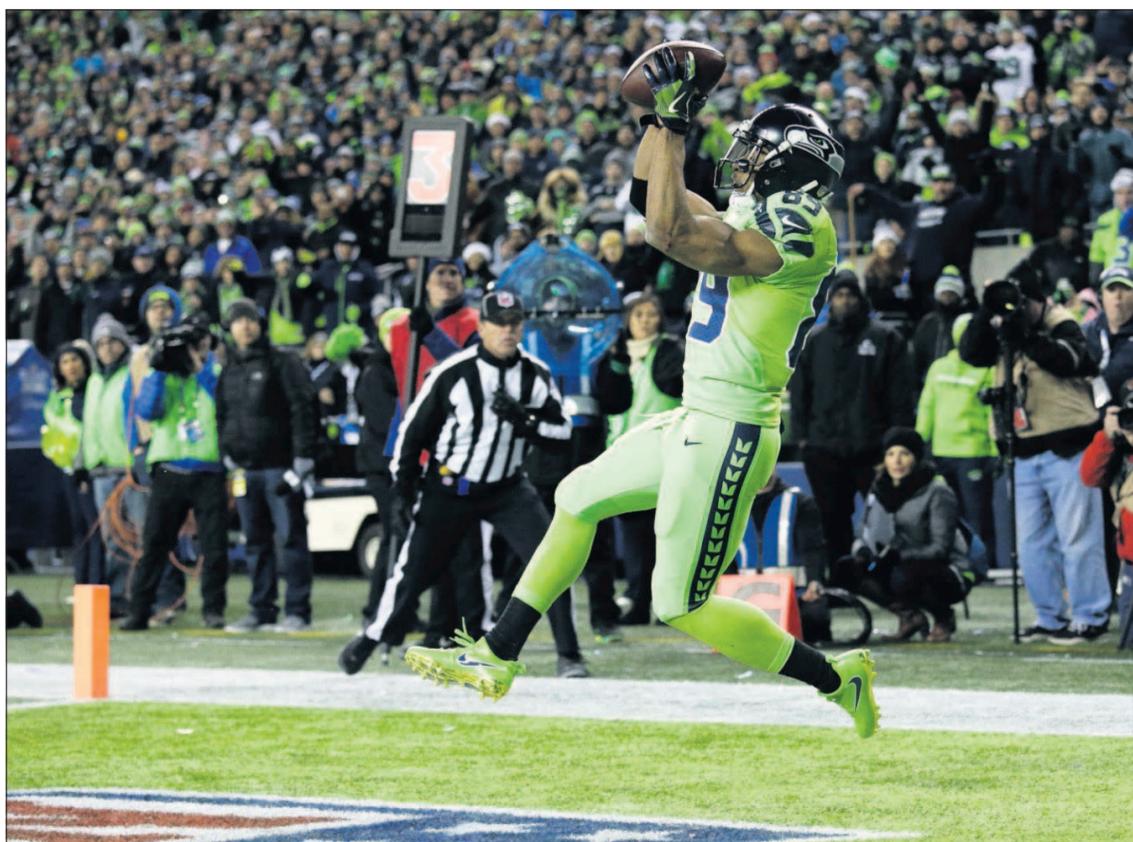
1B

NFL

Seahawks clinch NFC West

Seattle Seahawks wide receiver Doug Baldwin catches a pass in the end zone for a touchdown against the Los Angeles Rams in the second half of an NFL football game, Thursday, Dec. 15, 2016, in Seattle.

AP Photo/Elaine Thompson



Seattle claims division crown for third time in four seasons

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

SEATTLE — Russell Wilson threw three touchdown passes, Tyler Lockett had 130 yards receiving and a score, and the Seattle Seahawks won the NFC West title with a 24-3 victory over the Los Angeles Rams on Thursday night.

Seattle claimed its third NFC West title in four seasons, assuring itself of at least one home game in the playoffs and keeping the pressure on Detroit in the competition for the No. 2 seed in the NFC and a first-round bye. Seattle also snapped a three-game losing streak to the Rams.



It wasn't an impressive display by Seattle (9-4-1), but was far better than Sunday when the Seahawks were blown out by Green Bay with Wilson throwing five interceptions.

Wilson was good enough against the listless Rams. After slogging through the first half, Wilson threw a 1-yard touchdown pass to Doug Baldwin late in the third quarter for a

See SEAHAWKS/2B



Rams quarterback Jared Goff (16) is sacked by a quartet of Seahawks defenders during Thursday's game.

AP Photo/Scott Eklund

Prep Sports

Weather affecting more than class time

Snowstorms putting local teams in a bind with game and practice cancellations

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

Last week, students at many local schools enjoyed a three day weekend as the seasons' first winter storm dropped several inches of snow and subsequently canceling schools.

This week, a mightier winter storm spit out another thick blanket of snow across the state, which once again canceled school for most districts in the area. And while students may be enjoying the time away from doing math problems and learning about photosynthesis, athletic coaches aren't as happy for the time off as the school cancellations have led to numerous game cancellations and missed practice opportunities.

For instance, the Pendleton boys and girls basketball teams have had their last two scheduled games canceled due to weather, and have not played in a game since both team's won against Southridge on Dec. 6.

"We've been just practicing since the 7th and the guys are getting real tired of just practicing," Pendleton boys coach Kyle Tedder said on Thursday night. "They really want to play again."

The Buckaroo boys are scheduled to play at Wilsonville's Holiday Inn tournament this weekend, but that is in question. Tedder said the tour-

See WEATHER/3B

College Football

Minnesota players considering bowl game boycott

Golden Gophers protesting 10 player suspensions

By JON KRAWCZYNSKI
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The entire Minnesota football team said Thursday that it is boycotting all football activities, which could include its bowl game, until it gets satisfactory answers from the university about the suspension of 10 players.

The school suspended the players Tuesday after an internal investigation into a sexual assault case. Police declined to arrest or charge any of the players, but the school suspended them

based on its own standards for conduct.

The team's players said they haven't ruled out skipping the Holiday Bowl on Dec. 27 against Washington State in San Diego. They asked the bowl's committee to be patient while they work through the situation.

"The boycott will remain in effect until due process is followed and the suspensions for all 10 players are lifted," senior receiver Drew Wolitarsky said, reading from a prepared statement

while flanked by all of his teammates. "We further request that (President Eric) Kaler and (athletic director Mark) Coyle (apologize) and demand that these leaders

See MINNESOTA/2B

NBA

Gallinari's 27 sends Nuggets past Trail Blazers

Portland's slide continues with poor showing on the road

Associated Press

DENVER — Danilo Gallinari scored 20 of his 27 points in the first half and the Denver Nuggets led big early before holding on late to beat the Portland Trail Blazers 132-120 Thursday night.

Gary Harris scored 18 in his return to the Nuggets' lineup. It was Denver's second win in the last 15 games against the Trail Blazers, who got 40 points and 10 assists from Damian Lillard.

CJ McCollum scored 23 for Portland, which has lost five of six.

The Nuggets snapped a three-game skid at Pepsi Center, where they are 4-7 this season. One of those defeats came in their home opener against Portland when they blew a late lead and lost

in overtime.

Denver never trailed in this one, but the Trail Blazers tried to make it a game in the fourth behind Lillard. He scored 14 points in the last 12 minutes as Portland rallied. After trailing by as many as 25 in the first half and 21 in the third quarter, the margin was just 10 in the fourth.

See BLAZERS/2B



Denver Nuggets forward Kenneth Faried, left, blocks a shot by Portland Trail Blazers center Mason Plumlee as he drives the lane to the net in the first half of an NBA basketball game Thursday, Dec. 15, 2016, in Denver.

AP Photo/David Zalubowski

Sports shorts

Craig Sager passes away at age 65

(AP) — Longtime NBA sideline reporter Craig Sager has died at the age of 65 after a battle with cancer.

Turner President David Levy says in a statement Thursday that Sager had died.

Famous for his flashy suits and probing questions, Sager worked basketball games for TNT for nearly a quarter-century.

Sager first announced in April 2014 that he had been diagnosed with leukemia, and he missed the playoffs and much of the following season as he underwent two bone marrow transplants.

Sager revealed in March that his leukemia was no longer in remission. He said doctors told him the typical prognosis was three to six months to live, but "I am receiving the best treatment in the world and I remain fully confident I will win this battle."



Sager

"We completely support Dak as our starting quarterback unequivocally so that's that. And there's no issue at all. We're very fortunate — and I've said that — that we have depth there."

— Jerry Jones

Dallas Cowboys owner and general manager voicing his support for rookie quarterback Dak Prescott on Thursday. Prescott has not been as sharp over the past two games for Dallas, prompting discussion of whether he should be benched for Tony Romo.

NFL investigating Giants for using walkie-talkie during game

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) The New York Giants might have violated an NFL rule by using a radio briefly during Sunday night's win over the Dallas Cowboys.

Giants coach Ben McAdoo was shown on television using a walkie-talkie on the sideline during the fourth quarter of New York's 10-7 victory.

McAdoo used the walkie-talkie for about five plays after his communications system appeared to go down. He was given the radio after someone on the sideline realized the radio signal was reaching quarterback Eli Manning.

The league has a policy that prohibits coaches from using a radio during a game because he would not be cut off from talking when the helmet communication system is supposed to cut off communication.



THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1940 — Joe Louis knocks out Al McCoy in the sixth round at the Boston Garden to retain the world heavyweight title.

2003 — New Orleans Saints receiver Joe Horn is fined \$30,000 by the NFL for making a choreographed cell-phone call in the end zone to celebrate a touchdown during the Saints' 45-7 rout of the New York Giants.

2007 — Brett Favre passes for 227 yards in Green Bay's 33-14 win over St. Louis, eclipsing Dan Marino to become the NFL career leader in yards passing.

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