

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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1B

NFL



AP Photo/John Froschauer

Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson (3) is tackled by Arizona Cardinals' Sio Moore as he releases the ball in the second half of an NFL football game, Saturday in Seattle.

Seattle limping into playoffs

Seahawks' latest loss to Arizona could prove costly

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — The end of December is when the Seattle Seahawks are supposed to be on a surge, not limping toward the conclusion of the regular season with questions clouding whether the Seahawks are true contenders when the NFC playoffs arrive.

But that is how Seattle (9-5-1) sits after squandering control of the No. 2 seed in the NFC and continuing a streak of a win, followed by a loss that has lingered for the past six games.

"I don't think it's alarming. I just think it's what we're working with," Seattle coach Pete Carroll said on Monday.

"Obviously it's going to be really difficult to expect us to play a great game until we do. You want to see that. I know that's what you're waiting for.

See SEAHAWKS/2B

Men's College Basketball



AP Photo/James Crisp, File

In this Dec 3, 2016, file photo, UCLA head coach Steve Alford directs his team during the second half of an NCAA college basketball game against Kentucky.

Alford's Bruins roll into Pac-12 season undefeated

League play begins Wednesday

By JOHN MARSHALL
Associated Press

PHOENIX — Coach Steve Alford's best recruiting class for this season was expected to get UCLA back on track following the Bruins' fourth losing season since 1948.

Few could have expected they would be this good this quick.

Led by freshmen Lonzo Ball and TJ Leaf, UCLA is up to No. 2 in the AP Top 25 and one of six remaining undefeated teams as the Bruins head into the Pac-12 season.

See PAC-12/2B

Sports shorts

Mariota will need surgery for leg

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Tennessee Titans quarterback Marcus Mariota will have surgery Wednesday for his broken right leg, and coach Mike Mularkey says the recovery process will take four to five months.



Mariota

Mularkey said Monday that Mariota will have a plate inserted over the break by Dr. Bob Anderson in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The Titans coach didn't share any other details, but Mularkey has had Anderson repair his feet and says there's no other doctor he trusts for this surgery.

Mariota was hurt Saturday when sacked during a 38-17 loss to Jacksonville. Trainers placed an air cast on his leg before he was carted off the field. This is the second straight season Mariota has missed the season finale because of an injury.

NBA

Trail Blazers continue skid



Toronto Raptors center Jonas Valanciunas, right, and Portland Trail Blazers guard Evan Turner dive for the ball during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Portland, Ore., Monday, Dec. 26, 2016.

AP Photo/Craig Mitchelldyer

Lowry, Raptors hand Portland sixth loss in a row

By NICK DASCHEL
Associated Press

PORTLAND — Kyle Lowry scored 27 points and the Toronto Raptors won their franchise-best seventh consecutive road game Monday night with a 95-91 victory over the skidding Portland Trail Blazers.

Lowry, coming off a season-high 36 points last Friday at Utah, had 20 in the second half as the Raptors (22-8) handed Portland its sixth consecutive loss.

Toronto's DeMar DeRozan nearly had his first triple-double of the season, with 20 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists. Patrick Patterson scored 15, and Jonas Valanciunas had 12 points and 12 rebounds.

C.J. McCollum scored 27 points to lead the Blazers (13-20), who have lost 10 of 11.

Portland guard Damian Lillard sat out with a sprained



Portland Trail Blazers forward Maurice Harkless, left, shoots over Toronto Raptors forward Pascal Siakam during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Portland, Ore., Monday, Dec. 26, 2016.

AP Photo/Craig Mitchelldyer

ankle. Lillard, averaging 27 points per game, was injured last Friday against San Antonio.

Mason Plumlee had his fifth double-double of the season with 13 points and 15 rebounds.

Valanciunas gave Toronto the lead for good at 82-81

on two free throws with 5:50 remaining, but the Raptors were unable to shake the Blazers. Toronto finally put the game away at the free throw line, where Cory Joseph and DeRozan made four foul shots in the final 16 seconds.

Neither team could find an offensive rhythm in the first

half. Toronto grabbed a 43-42 halftime lead on a free throw by DeRozan with two seconds left in the second quarter. The 43 first-half points given up by Portland tied a season low.

Toronto got it going in the third quarter, hitting seven 3-pointers, but Portland nearly matched the Raptors point for point, trailing 73-68 heading into the fourth.

Neither team led by more than six points in the game.

TIP-INS

Raptors: DeRozan moved within 14 points of tying the franchise record. Chris Bosh holds the mark with 10,275 points.

Trail Blazers: Lillard missed his first game since Jan. 3 last season, when he was out for two weeks with a foot injury. During that stretch, the Blazers went 4-3, including a 105-76 win over eventual NBA champion Cleveland.

Former Blazers star Brandon Roy, the sixth pick of the 2006 NBA draft and a three-time All-Star, returns to Portland this week as a first-year high school coach. Roy's team, Nathan Hale of Seattle, plays in the Les Schwab Invitational, one of the country's top holiday high school basketball tournaments.

College Football

Gophers go back to work against Cougars



AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill, File

In this Saturday, Nov. 14, 2015 file photo, Washington State quarterback Luke Falk passes during the first half of an NCAA college football game against UCLA in Pasadena, Calif.

After short boycott, Minnesota to play WSU in Holiday Bowl

By BERNIE WILSON
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The Minnesota Golden Gophers are as ready as they can be to play a bowl game they considered skipping just 10 days ago.

As 10-point underdogs, the Gophers will have their hands full against Luke Falk and Washington State (8-4) in the Holiday Bowl tonight.

The Golden Gophers (8-4)

are trying to regroup after backing down from their threat to skip this game if 10 teammates suspended after a sexual assault investigation weren't reinstated. Their boycott lasted less than 36 hours, with university leadership never blinking.

The players backed down amid pressure from many who read details of the allegations.

Once they arrived in San Diego, the Golden Gophers tried to put that behind them and focus on playing in a bowl that has a tradition of wild finishes.

"We have practiced well, so that hasn't been an issue,"

See COUGARS/2B

NBA: Two calls were missed in final moments of Cavs-Warriors

NEW YORK (AP) — The NBA says two calls were missed in the final moments of Cleveland's win over Golden State on Sunday, and both aided the Cavaliers in what became their one-point victory.

The league said Cleveland star LeBron James should have been assessed a technical foul for deliberately hanging on the rim after his dunk with 1:43 remaining, and that Cavaliers forward Richard Jefferson should have been called for fouling the Warriors' Kevin Durant on the game's final play.

Jefferson's feet appeared to get tangled with Durant's on that last play. Durant tumbled to the floor, and could only manage a one-handed fling toward the basket as time expired.

Cleveland won the NBA Finals rematch 109-108.



THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1987 — Steve Largent of the Seattle Seahawks becomes the NFL's all-time reception leader in the Seahawks' 41-20 loss to Kansas City. Largent's six catches gives him 752, surpassing the 750 by San Diego's Charlie Joiner. Gayle Sierens announcing the game for NBC becomes the first female play-by-play announcer in NFL history.

2000 — Mario Lemieux makes a remarkable comeback after 3 1/2 years of retirement, scoring a goal and assisting on two others one on his first pass on his first shift, no less as the Pittsburgh Penguins beat the Toronto Maple Leafs 5-0.

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