

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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PENDLETON

Bucks, Dawgs anxious to compete



Members of the Pendleton swim team do warm-ups during practice on Thursday at BMCC in Pendleton.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

HERMISTON

Delgado ranked No. 1 by Pac-12

East Oregonian

CORVALLIS — Oregon State junior 149-pounder Joey Delgado was ranked No. 1 in his weight class in the initial Pac-12 power rankings released this week.

Delgado (11-6) also was ranked No. 13 in the nation by *The Open Mat* and *Amateur Wrestling News* and No. 19 by *InterMat*.



Delgado

Fellow Hermiston High School graduates and current Beavers Abraham Rodriguez (4-6) and Bob Coleman (4-10) were ranked fifth in the Pac-12 at 157-

and 184-pounds, respectively.

The Beavers (1-3) won't open Pac-12 competition until Jan. 30, and will be in action tonight at Northern Colorado and Sunday at Wyoming.

The team is coming off a 21st-place finish at the Ken Kraft Midlands Championships at Northwestern University on Dec. 30 where Delgado placed sixth and junior heavyweight Cody Crawford was seventh.

Delgado won his first three matches by decision before getting pinned in the second round by Central Michigan's Justin Oliver. He then took a 7-4 loss to Northwestern's Ryan Deakin before his final match ended with a medical forfeit early in the third round.

Rodriguez was 3-2 but didn't place, and Coleman went 0-2.

Local swim seasons depleted by winter weather

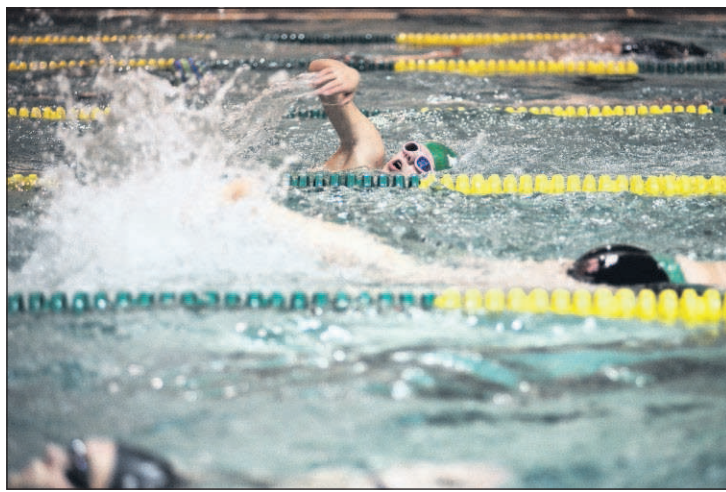
By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

Prep sports teams all across the state of Oregon have been affected in one way or another by the frequent snowstorms that have hit this winter, but perhaps none are affected more than the swim teams.

The Hermiston Bulldogs and Pendleton Buckaroo girls teams, for example, have yet to compete this season as the snow created bad highway conditions that canceled the first three meets of the season at Baker, La Grande, and most recently last weekend at The Dalles.

The cancellations are especially frustrating to the teams when it adds up to half the regular season schedule.

"It's a bummer," Pendleton coach Amy Ashton-Williams said before the team's practice



Freshman Janessa Headley swims the freestyle during swim team practice Thursday in Pendleton.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

on Thursday. "For coaches it's hard to see the progression in practice because what they do here isn't always what they do in the race. And some of my swim-

mers like (senior) Jon Jennings have some really big goals for the season that are pretty much getting trampled on and now we have to adjust."

Hermiston coach Kevin Hamblin said that he hasn't seen a season have as many cancellations in his 11-plus years of coaching.

"It's just been a strange winter," he said. "In the past there's been times where everything before Christmas is canceled, but it's never been pushed back this far."

Some of the Pendleton athletes haven't been totally sidelined, though, as the boys team squeezed in a last-minute dual meet in Walla Walla on Dec. 29 in addition to several of the varsity swimmers that have gotten to compete on the side through the Pendleton Swim Association. Jennings, the defending Class 5A state champion in the 50-yard freestyle, is one of the PSA members and is

See SWIMMING/3B

Men's College Basketball

Gonzaga remains undefeated

By NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS
Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — Fifth-ranked Gonzaga may be the nation's last remaining undefeated major college basketball team, but the Zags say they aren't feeling any extra pressure.

"We do just a great job of taking care of business and keeping control," guard Josh Perkins said after Gonzaga crushed Loyola Marymount 93-55 on Thursday night. "We want to keep it going."

"There's no pressure," added Nigel Williams-Goss, the team's leading scorer. "We have the same motto: get better every day, each week."

"We focus on one game at a time," freshman Zach Collins said. "We lock in to every single game like we are not going to play again."

Przemek Karnowski scored 17 points to lead Gonzaga to its 16th consecutive win, longest streak in the nation.

Collins scored 15 points and Silas Melson added 13 for Gonzaga (16-0, 4-0 West Coast). Six Zags scored in double figures.

Buay Tuach scored 19 points for Loyola Marymount (8-8, 1-4), which has lost 15 straight games to Gonzaga dating to 2010.



LMU
55

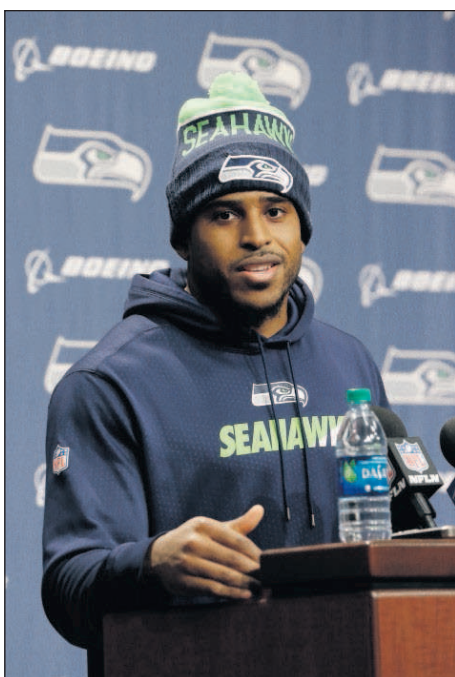


#5 Gonzaga
93

NFL

Understanding pass game big in Wagner's evolution

Seattle Seahawks linebacker Bobby Wagner talks to reporters, Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2017, in Renton, Wash. The Seahawks will play the Atlanta Falcons in an NFL football NFC playoff game, Saturday, Jan. 14, 2017 in Atlanta.



AP Photo/Ted S. Warren

Seattle linebacker led league in tackles

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — Listing all the ways Seattle linebacker Bobby Wagner believes he's a better player than four years ago when the Seahawks last came across the Atlanta Falcons in the postseason would be lengthy.

At the top of the list would be his improvement as a pass defender.

"There's a lot of routes that I probably did not see when I was a rookie," Wagner said this week. "I have more knowledge of the game than I did back then."

Ask around and you'll get raves from teammates, opponents and

observers about the linebacker Wagner has become heading into Saturday's NFC playoff game at Atlanta. He led the NFL in tackles during the regular season, was voted to the All-Pro team for the second time in his career, and in the playoff opener against Detroit last week had another 10 tackles to lead Seattle.

Wagner's always been a stout run defender and an excellent tackler. He's been steady playing behind a Seattle line that does its job keeping offensive linemen from getting to the second level. But Wagner agrees that his understanding of the passing game is the big reason he's making enough tackles to lead the NFL. And why he's grown from being a question mark when he was drafted in the second round in 2012 to one of the premier linebackers in the NFL, a Defensive Player of the Year contender.

See WAGNER/2B

Sports shorts

Rams make McVay youngest head coach in NFL history

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Los Angeles Rams have made Sean McVay the youngest head coach in NFL history.

The Rams on Thursday hired McVay, who turns 31 years old on Jan. 24.

McVay spent the past three seasons as Washington's offensive coordinator. He has been an assistant in Washington since 2010.

He replaces Jeff Fisher, who was fired 13 games into the Rams' homecoming season in Los Angeles.

McVay wowed the Rams' top brass during two recent interviews. He takes charge of a franchise rebuilding from a 4-12 season, its 13th consecutive non-winning campaign. The Rams have a 12-year playoff drought.

Lane Kiffin was 31 years old when the Oakland Raiders hired him in January 2007.



McVay

"In sports, teams win and individuals lose. The Chargers were ultimately never willing to work with us as a team so we could achieve shared success. Dean Spanos made a bad decision, and he will regret it. San Diego didn't lose the Chargers. The Chargers just lost San Diego."

— Kevin Faulconer

San Diego Mayor reacting to the announcement that the city's NFL team would be moving to Los Angeles after 56 years in San Diego.

Justin Thomas joins '59 club'

HONOLULU (AP) — Fresh off his victory on Maui, Justin Thomas joined the "59 Club" on the PGA Tour by making a 15-foot eagle on his last hole at the Sony Open for an 11-under 59.

Thomas holed a 10-foot par putt on the eighth hole to keep his hopes alive for a 59 at Waialae Country Club. From a deep fairway bunker on the par-5 ninth, Thomas hit a 5-iron to 15 feet and wasted no time making the putt.

Jim Furyk was the last player with a sub-60 round when he closed with a record 58 at the Travelers Championship last summer. Furyk also has a 59, along with Al Geiberger, Chip Beck, David Duval, Paul Goydos and Stuart Appleby.

Thomas made two eagles, along with a bogey.



Thomas

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1986 — NCAA schools vote overwhelmingly in favor of adopting the controversial Proposition 48. The rule requires that incoming freshman maintain 2.0 grade point averages and score 700 or more on the Scholastic Aptitude Test or a 15 on the American College Testing program.

2010 — Kobe Bryant nails a game-winning jumper with 28 seconds left, lifting the Los Angeles Lakers to a 100-95 victory over Dallas. The Lakers become the first NBA team to reach 3,000 wins.

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