

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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1B



Staff photo by Eric Singer
Hermiston's Vaemu Ena poses with his mother Katelyna and father Eti during a signing party Thursday at Hermiston High School. Ena signed a national letter of intent to play football at Western Oregon University.

HERMISTON

Ena signs with Western Oregon

Former Bulldog helps bring Hermiston senior to WOU

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

For the past three years, Vaemu Ena has been a stud in the Hermiston defensive backfield.

And now for the next four or five years Ena will still roam the football field, but first he will trade in the Hermiston purple and black for the red and

black of Western Oregon University. On Wednesday, Ena joined 31 other high school seniors and signed a National Letter of Intent to play football for the Wolves, and celebrated the achievement with his family, friends, teachers, and coaches at a small party at Hermiston High School on Thursday.

Ena, who will major in criminal justice or computer science, said that he chose Western Oregon, a team that is coming off of a 4-6 season, over an opportunity to play at FCS Eastern Washington because of a better chance of playing time with the Wolves on top of a love for the small campus in

Monmouth.

"I feel like the environment over there is similar to here at home (Hermiston)," Ena said Thursday, "The community is very similar to here just with a university instead of a high school. And I feel really good about the coaches and facilities over there. With what I've seen and my experiences over there, I've really enjoyed it."

In 24 career games for the Bulldogs, Ena tallied 119 total tackles and 10 interceptions originating from his safety position atop the defensive sets. His best season came in 2015 as a junior, when

See ENA/2B

ECHO

Golden Eagles outlast Cougars in OT

Schimmel scores 27, Nixyaawii boys win 10th straight

East Oregonian

ECHO — With time running out, the Echo Cougars grabbed a rebound and hustled up the court to sink a game-tying layup at the buzzer on Thursday night against Nixyaawii.

Down four on its final possession in overtime, there would be no heroics this time.

Shayden Hoisington snagged a steal going the other way and the Golden Eagles hit a three-pointer at the buzzer to give them a final tally of 65-58 in their 10th straight win that kept them undefeated in Old Oregon League play.

Mick Schimmel carried the game for Nixyaawii (13-4, 10-0 OOL) with 27 points, and Joseph St. Pierre and Noah Enright each added 10.

Schimmel sank the two-pointer that made it 62-58 late in overtime.

Nixyaawii coach Shane Rivera said it was closely contested game throughout, with the teams trading big buckets in the fourth quarter. The Golden Eagles led 29-23 at halftime and Rivera said that was probably their largest lead of the game.

Nixyaawii was hampered by the absence of senior post Chandler Case as he battled foul trouble throughout the game and finished with six points in limited action.

Morgan Marcum scored 19 points to lead Echo (6-14, 5-6), Klay Jensen

Echo's Morgan Marcum draws contact from Nixyaawii's Chandler Case in a boys basketball game on Thursday in Echo.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Boys Basketball

Nixyaawii 65	Echo 58

added 14 and Devan Craig chipped in 10.

Nixyaawii has four games left in the regular season and hosts Helix on Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

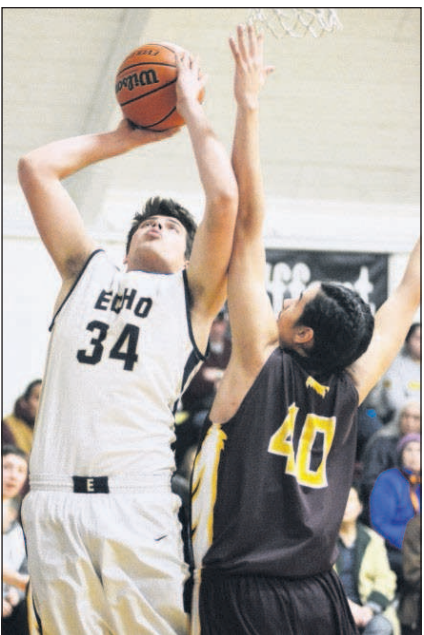
"We're inching up on the district tournament so trying to retain that No. 1 seed is huge," Rivera said.

Echo plays at Powder Valley on Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

NCS	12	17	14	12	10	—	65
EHS	13	10	15	17	3	—	58

NIXYAAWII — M. Schimmel 27, J. St. Pierre 10, N. Enright 10, D. Barkley 6, C. Case 6, S. Hoisington 4, A. Matamoros 2, J. Church.
ECHO — M. Marcum 19, K. Jensen 14, D. Craig 10, Caldera 9, Z. Gehrke 5, T. Mulder, C. Medrano.
3-pointers — NCS 4; EHS 1. Free throws — NCS 7-12; EHS 9-19. Fouls — NCS 17; EHS 12. Fouled out — C. Case (NCS); T. Mulder (EHS).

See GOLDEN EAGLES/2B



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Nixyaawii's Joseph St. Pierre goes up for a lay-in guarded by Echo's Devan Craig and Chris Medrano (23) in the Golden Eagles' 65-58 win in overtime on Thursday in Echo.



AP Photo/Chris Pietusch
Oregon's Dillon Brooks, right, celebrates after shooting a 3-point shot in the closing minutes, as Arizona State's Torian Graham moves downcourt during Thursday's game in Eugene. Oregon won 71-70.

Men's College Basketball

Brooks helps Oregon hold off Arizona State

Victory extends Ducks home win streak to 39 games

By RON RICHMOND
Associated Press

EUGENE — Dillon Brooks scored 27 points, including the last 12 of the game for No. 13 Oregon, and the Ducks escaped with a 71-70 victory over Arizona

State on Thursday.

Brooks hit the go-ahead 3-pointer with 1:32 to play for Oregon (20-3, 9-1 Pac-12), which trailed 60-59 before its preseason All-America took over in the final 3 minutes.

Jordan Bell had 13 points and 11 rebounds for the Ducks, who outrebounded the Sun Devils 40-30. Oregon made 7 of 13 from 3-point range in the second half.

Arizona St. 70	Oregon 71

Shannon Evans II led Arizona State (10-13, 3-7) with 28 points and Tra Holder had 17.

Despite a decided height advantage, Oregon struggled to find any rhythm against Arizona State's four-guard

lineup. The Ducks were just 1 of 10 from 3-point range in the first half and trailed 28-25.

It was the fewest points Oregon had scored in a first half since early season losses to Baylor and Georgetown.

UP NEXT

Oregon plays its third ranked opponent when it hosts No. 5 Arizona on Saturday. The Ducks beat UCLA and USC, both ranked, earlier this season.

Sports shorts

McCollum heading to All-Star Weekend

PORTLAND — While no Portland Trail Blazer players were selected to the NBA All-Star team, the team will still have one representative on hand.

The NBA announced on Thursday that guard C.J. McCollum was named as one of eight players to participate in the 3-point contest. It's the second consecutive year that McCollum has been selected to the contest, though he failed to make it out of the preliminary round last season.

McCollum will compete against Eric Gordon (Houston), Kyrie Irving (Cleveland), Kyle Lowry (Toronto), Wesley Matthews (Dallas), Klay Thompson (Golden State), Kemba Walker (Charlotte) and Nick Young (L.A. Lakers).

McCollum is shooting 42.3 percent from 3-point range, 10th best in the NBA, and is averaging a career-best 23.4 points per game.



McCollum

"In 2017, where professional sports are so ruthless and cutthroat, survival rates and people that can last are rare. He would say, 'Well, that must mean I'm old.' I think it means he's good, really good."

— Brett Brown

Philadelphia 76ers coach on San Antonio Spurs coach Gregg Popovich, who tied Jerry Sloan of Utah for the NBA record for the most career wins with a single franchise, earning his 1,127th in the Spurs' 102-86 victory over the 76ers.

Briles drops defamation suit

WACO, Texas (AP) — Former Baylor football coach Art Briles has dropped the defamation lawsuit filed against four university officials he accused of making false statements against him, according to attorneys in the case.

Briles in December sued the three regents and a university vice president for libel and slander, claiming they falsely stated that he knew of reported assaults and alleged gang rapes by players and didn't report them.

Rusty Hardin, an attorney for the regents, told the Waco Tribune-Herald that the suit was dropped Wednesday.

The lawsuit that was filed in Llano County also asserted that Baylor officials conspired to damage Briles' reputation and keep him from getting another coaching job. It sought damages for emotional distress and likely ending his career as a coach "on any level."



THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1980 — Larry Bird hits the first 3-point shot in the history of the NBA All-Star Game. Bird' 3 came in overtime as the East team outscored the West 16-8 in the overtime for a 144-136 win.

2000 — World Wrestling Federation mastermind Vince McMahon unveils his latest creation: the XFL, a new pro football league.

2015 — Women's coach Geno Auriemma reaches 900 wins faster than any other college basketball coach when No. 2 UConn routs Cincinnati 96-36. It takes him 1,034 games to do it.

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