

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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HERMISTON

Dawgs doubles team stays hot

Hermiston boys edge The Dalles in league match

By MATT ENTRUP
East Oregonian

Thomas McCullough and Patrick Wicks kept their hot streak going on a blustery afternoon at Hermiston High school, and the Bulldogs boys tennis team pulled out a narrow victory over The Dalles on Thursday.

Each team won four matches, and Hermiston earned the win based on sets 10-9.

McCullough and Wicks remained undefeated in district matches at No. 1 doubles with their 6-0, 7-5 win over Alex Lopez and Omar Rodriguez. The whipping gusts encouraged teams to keep shots low and rallies were short, but Wicks said it didn't affect their game too much.

"Not much difference, just when someone lobs it or serves it it's hard to read," he said. "(The Dalles) were pretty consistent with the ball and they were good at the net, and tall."

The Bulldogs were fairly steady with their serves, but seemed to be their strongest on defense and won several points with well-placed returns.

"My defense was really good today, I got a lot of shots back that I usually don't," McCullough said.



Hermiston junior Patrick Wicks serves the ball as his partner junior Thomas McCullough stands ready at the net during their match against The Dalles seniors Alex Lopez and Omar Rodriguez on Thursday in Hermiston.

Hermiston coach Shann West said he thought it was another quality win for the duo.

"The other team really picked it up to rise to their level and they did a good job to hold off that surge," he said.

After winning just one match at districts last season, McCullough and Wicks aim to reach the state tournament this year and improved to 6-1 on the season with the win.

A tournament in Madras this weekend that will feature some of the district's top

players should give them a better idea of where they stand with three weeks left until the district championships.

"It's a big one," McCullough said. "We want to be able to do good so we can get seeded for districts."

Hermiston No. 2 doubles team Koby Grigg and Jason Morris have had a bumper go in their first season as a pairing, but got a boost with a three-set comeback win over Brandon Bustamante and Ethan Martin. After

See DAWGS/2B



Hermiston senior Jose Mendoza returns a volley during a match with The Dalles freshman Quinn Wilson on Thursday in Hermiston.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

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Prep Roundup

Rockets beat 'Scots

Teams finally finish game on hold from March

East Oregonian

ATHENA — When the Weston-McEwen TigerScots and Pilot Rock Rockets originally met on the softball field on Mar. 25, the Rockets appeared to be on their way to a big non-league win.

The Rockets held an 18-2 lead in the second inning, but then a big rain storm came through Eastern Oregon halted play and effectively put the game on hold. The two teams were able to pick up where they left off on Thursday and finish the game on Thursday and Pilot Rock prevailed with a 24-10 victory.

TigerScots (5-4) coach Jeff Griggs said he knew it was unlikely his team could come back to get a win on Thursday, but it didn't stop his girls from giving 100 percent effort.

"We told the kids to just win the day," Griggs said, "And they did not only that we outth them too. We were able to refocus and get some good things done on the field. There was a lot of pride in our girls, it would have been easy just to forfeit but the girls wanted to give (Pilot Rock)

See PREPS/2B

MLB

Mariners loses as Paxton struggles

Lefty pitcher's scoreless inning streak halted at 23

By JANIE MCCAULEY
Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Cesar Valdez pitched in the major leagues for the first time in nearly seven years and the Oakland Athletics beat the Seattle Mariners 9-6 on Thursday night.

He allowed three runs and five hits in four innings, struck out four and walked two. This marked just the third start of his career at age 32 and 10th appearance in all — and he is probably headed right back to the minors soon.

A right-hander from the Dominican Republic, he was called up from Triple-A Nashville to fill in for injured opening day starter Kendall Graveman. Valdez last pitched in the big



Seattle Mariners starting pitcher James Paxton, center, is pulled from the baseball game by manager Scott Servais during the fifth inning against the Oakland Athletics, Thursday, April 20, 2017, in Oakland, Calif.

leagues on June 10, 2010, with Arizona just more than a month after his previous start on May 8.

"What a great story. It's been a while since he's been in the big leagues," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "You really feel good about guys that have persevered and hang around with the aspirations to get back to the big leagues. He performed well for us this spring, he's done well early in the season in Triple-A so we're rewarding him with a start and it's great to see because

very competitive guys like that don't take no for an answer and end up coming back to the big leagues again you know they have some moxie."

Trevor Plouffe hit a three-run homer in the seventh and Ryan Dull (1-1) pitched 1 1-3 scoreless innings for the victory in Oakland's third straight win.

Reliever Evan Scribner (0-2) took the loss against his former club.

Taylor Motter hit a two-run

See MARINERS/2B

NFL

NFL releases 2017 schedule

Season starts Sept. 7 as Patriots host Chiefs

By BARRY WILNER
Associated Press

One of the spoils of being champion: The New England Patriots will kick off the NFL season on Sept. 7 by hosting the Kansas City Chiefs.

New England earned that honor with its record comeback to beat Atlanta in the Super Bowl. Its opening opponent in a Thursday night game won the AFC West last season.

The Falcons visit Chicago in their first game.

The rest of the opening weekend will feature what seems like a yearly occurrence, with Dallas hosting the New York Giants on Sunday night. They finished 1-2 in the NFC East in 2016.

On Monday night, New Orleans is at Minnesota, followed by the Chargers, in their first game representing Los Angeles since 1960, at Denver.

Five games will be held abroad, beginning with Baltimore vs. Jacksonville in London on Sept. 24. The next week, Miami hosts New Orleans. In Week 7, the Rams host the Cardinals, followed the next week by Minnesota vs. Cleveland.

New England is the visitor against Oakland at Mexico City on Nov. 19.

Seahawks Schedule

Sept. 10	at Green Bay	4:25 p.m.
Sept. 17	vs. San Francisco	4:25 p.m.
Sept. 24	at Tennessee	4:05 p.m.
Oct. 1	vs. Indianapolis	8:30 p.m.
Oct. 8	at L.A. Rams	4:05 p.m.
Oct. 15	BYE	
Oct. 22	at NY Giants	4:25 p.m.
Oct. 29	vs. Houston	4:05 p.m.
Nov. 5	vs. Washington	4:05 p.m.
Nov. 9	at Arizona	8:25 p.m.
Nov. 20	vs. Atlanta	8:30 p.m.
Nov. 26	at San Francisco	4:05 p.m.
Dec. 3	vs. Philadelphia	5:30 p.m.
Dec. 10	at Jacksonville	1 p.m.
Dec. 17	vs. L.A. Rams	4:05 p.m.
Dec. 24	at Dallas	4:25 p.m.
Dec. 31	vs. Arizona	4:25 p.m.

Thanksgiving's traditional games will have Minnesota at Detroit and the Chargers at Dallas. In prime time, the Redskins will be home for the Giants.

Christmas weekend will be busy. Two Saturday matches have Indianapolis at Baltimore in late afternoon, Minnesota at Green Bay at night on Dec. 23. Most of the rest of the schedule will be played on Dec. 24, with no night game. On Christmas Day, Pittsburgh will go to Houston in a late-afternoon matchup, followed by Oakland at Philadelphia.

The season ends when 2017 does, on Dec. 31.

The Falcons are scheduled to open
See NFL/2B

Sports shorts

Woods undergoes 4th back surgery

(AP) — Two days after Tiger Woods said his back was progressing, he announces on his website he has had a fourth back surgery to alleviate pain.

The surgery was performed at the Texas Back Institute.



Woods

Typical recovery is six months, meaning Woods is likely to go another full year without playing a major.

Woods first had surgery a week before the 2014 Masters. He had two more back operations after the 2015 PGA Tour season and did not play again for 15 months. His last competition was Feb. 3 in the Dubai Desert Classic, where he shot 77 and withdrew because of back spasms.

He has started just 19 events worldwide since that first back surgery, and he has completed 72 holes in just nine of them.

"We have one more extra day before the game starts, we'll see how I feel. But I'm getting better every day. Hopefully I can be out there with my teammates grinding it out, trying to move forward and get a W in Game 3."

— Kevin Durant

The Golden State Warriors forward said he hopes to play in Saturday's game against Portland after suffering a calf injury during Game 1, which caused him to miss Game 2.

Raiders may get free rent in Vegas

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The Oakland Raiders wouldn't pay rent at a proposed tax-funded stadium they want to call home in Las Vegas under the most recent version of a lease agreement unveiled Thursday during a meeting of the public entity overseeing plans for the \$1.9 billion project.

The stadium authority board justified the lack of rent for the Raiders with the up to \$1.15 billion investment that the team is making on the 65,000-seat domed stadium to which guests of hotels and other lodging facilities in the Las Vegas area are contributing \$750 million through a room tax increase.

The previous draft of the agreement that was made public called for a \$1 annual rent. The Raiders paid \$3.5 million to play at Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum in 2016, up from \$925,000 for the 2015 season.



THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1951 — The Toronto Maple Leafs win the Stanley Cup for the fourth time in five years by beating the Montreal Canadiens 3-2 in the fifth game.

1996 — The Chicago Bulls wrap up the most successful regular season in NBA history with their 72nd victory, getting 26 points from Michael Jordan in a 103-93 win over Washington.

2012 — Phil Humber throws the first perfect game in the majors in almost two years, leading the Chicago White Sox to a 4-0 victory over the Seattle Mariners.

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