

## HERMISTON

## Challenge of Champions Tour brings bull riding, fighting action

East Oregonian

Some of the biggest and baddest bulls will be matched up against cowboys from across the Pacific Northwest during The Coastal Farm & Ranch Challenge of Champions Tour.

Presented by Bonney's Ag & Auto Repair, catch the action Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at the old

Umatilla County Fairgrounds, 515 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston. Tickets are \$14 in advance or \$17 at the gate. Kids 5-and-under are free. The gates open at 6 p.m. The event features bull riding and freestyle bullfighting.

Also, earlier in the day, the Rascal Rodeo offers a chance for kids and adults with mental or

physical disabilities to be a cowboy or cowgirl for the morning. Individuals with special needs are invited to experience rodeo fun Saturday from 10-11 a.m. at the rodeo arena at the old fairgrounds. People should enter by the post office.

No horse or rodeo experience is required. Participants will receive a T-shirt and other free items.

Register at [www.rascalrodeo.org](http://www.rascalrodeo.org). Also, volunteers are still needed to help with the event from 9-11:30 a.m. For more information, contact 509-528-5947 or [info@rascalrodeo.org](mailto:info@rascalrodeo.org).

The public is invited to meet some of the cowboys and a live bull Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Bonney's Ag & Auto, 81600

Highway 395 North, Hermiston. Also, free hot dogs, refreshments and test drives are offered from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Then, head back to the fairgrounds at 5 p.m. for a peddle tractor pull off. Kids ages 4-11 will be divided into four classes, with the top in each class winning a peddle tractor.

## BULLDOGS: Softball wins

Continued from 1B

base. The ball rolled all the way down the right field line and brought two more runs in for a 5-2 Bulldog lead.

It was a gutsy call from Hawkins to pull out the squeeze in that situation, and one that showed the kind of desperation that the Bulldogs were in. Hermiston managed just three hits in the game and none after the third inning as the Bulldogs struggled to put together consistent at-bats against The Dalles pitchers Jordan Wetmore and John Miller.

"We were just going for one run there, one we needed," Hawkins said of the squeeze. "We didn't have the quality mental approaches at the dish today, we were all over the place and we won't be very successful doing it that way."

Following the error, The Dalles loaded the bases again with two intentional walks with one out, giving Hermiston another prime chance to put the game out of reach. Instead, the Riverhawks induced two easy outs to get out of the inning unscathed as Hermiston boosted its stranded runner total to eight.

"Leaving the bases juiced there, that's not good enough for us," Hawkins said. "We left too many guys on today and we didn't help ourself out much."

The Riverhawk comeback spoiled a gritty start by Bulldog starting pitcher Caden Schwirse, who battled through command issues to give Hermiston six quality innings on the mound. Schwirse allowed only two hits and one earned run with three strikeouts, three walks and three hit batsmen and threw 103 pitches.

He then gave way to Dufloth who came on and attempted to earn the save in the seventh. Dufloth — usually a starter for the Bulldogs — was called on over Jordan Ramirez, who had been Hermiston's go-to guy in the late innings of late. After the game Hawkins



**Hermiston's Kaden Caldwell swings and misses on a pitch in the seventh inning of the Bulldogs 6-5 loss to The Dalles on Tuesday in Hermiston.**

Staff photo by Eric Singer

said the decision to go with Dufloth came down to the fact that Dufloth had been on the bench and had some time to get loose in the bullpen.

"I don't like bringing in guys out of the field without warming up," he said. "Yeah, Jordan's been the guy we've been going to, but I just thought Brylee's on the bench and he's been throwing well and went with him and it didn't work out, but that's just baseball."

The loss sets up a huge must-win game for the Bulldogs on Friday at Pendleton, as a win coupled with a The Dalles loss to Hood River secures the third postseason spot in the Columbia River Conference. A loss ends Hermiston's season.

"We told the guys, we've played 24 games and now the 25th one counts," Hawkins said. "We have to refocus and it's all or nothing now for Friday and that's how we're going to prepare the kids and we'll see what the boys are made of."

	TDS	101000	4	6	9	1
HHS	010013	0	5	3	2	

(T) J. Wetmore, J. Miller (7) and D. Seufalemua. (H) C. Schwirse, B. Dufloth (7), J. Ramirez (7) and S. Gritz. W — J. Miller, L — B. Dufloth.  
2B — J. Miller (TDS).

## SOFTBALL

**HERMISTON 6, THE DALLES 0**—At Hermiston, the Bulldog softball team put together their second

straight shutout victory, this time taking down The Dalles Riverhawks 6-0 on Tuesday afternoon. The win earns the Bulldogs with a season series split with the Riverhawks.

The Bulldogs (9-15, 3-8 CRC) had a fantastic pitching performance from Julissa Almaguer in the circle, as she allowed just four hits and one walk in seven innings. The Riverhawks (3-20, 2-9) got a runner past second base only one time against Almaguer, when she stranded a runner at third base in the fourth inning.

The Bulldogs got the scoring started in the bottom of the first when Ellery Jones hit an RBI single to score Sydney Stefani for a 1-0 lead. Hermiston played add-on in the second when it pushed across four runs in the frame, thanks to an RBI double by Bailee Noland and a two-RBI single by Amanda Barron.

Hermiston's final run of the game came in the bottom of the sixth, when Almaguer hit an RBI single to make it a 6-0 game.

UP NEXT

Hermiston will finish off the regular season on the road Friday at Pendleton. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.

	TDS	000000	0	0	4	2
HHS	140001	X	6	7	1	

W — Ja. Almaguer, L — B. LeBreton.  
2B — B. Noland (HHS).

## BUCKAROOS:

Continued from 1B

"We'll take this as a learning opportunity," he said.

Hood River (14-10, 8-3) had runners on right away in the seventh with a hit batter and a walk from Richards. Then the Eagles strung together three singles to win.

Kalah McGlothan (2 for 3) and Kirah McGlothan (2 for 4) led Pendleton at the plate, but pitcher Hannah McNerney limited the Bucks' offense to five singles in the game.

Tuesday's results split the season series for the teams, but keeps Pendleton one game up on the Eagles with one game left in the regular season.

UP NEXT

Pendleton closes the regular season Friday against Hermiston with first pitch scheduled for 4:30 p.m. A win locks up the CRC title for the Bucks. A loss, coupled with a Hood River win over The Dalles would set up a tie. Cary said he'd have to check on what criteria would be used to determine the champion in that scenario.

	Game 1	PHS	400	010	2	7	8	9
HRV	000	000	2	2	1	0		

L. Richards and K. Solomon. H. McNerney and Z. Munn. W — Richards, L — McNerney.  
2B — K. Winans (HRV); L. Richards (PHS).

	Game 2	PHS	000	100	1	2	5	0
HRV	000	000	3	3	3	6	2	

L. Richards and K. Solomon. H. McNerney and Z. Munn. W — McNerney, L — Richards.

## BASEBALL

**HOOD RIVER 11, PENDLETON 3**—At Hood River, the Buckaroos were unable to take advantage of numerous scoring chances and the Eagles put the game away with a five-run fifth inning that made it 10-3 in Tuesday's Columbia River Conference game.

Pendleton (9-15, 5-6 CRC) had the bases full in the first inning with one out and a 1-0 lead after Daniel Naughton singled to drive in Wyatt Morris and Ryan Russell walked to load the bags.

But Hood River (17-7, 9-2) shortstop Greyson Losee snagged a hard-hit line drive by Jared Beveridge for the second out, and a ground-out to first ended the threat.

The Eagles struck back with a two-RBI single by Caden Leiblein in the bottom of the inning, but the Bucks regained the lead 3-2 in the third when Shaw Jerome and Nick Bower scored when Hood River pitcher Conner Coerper threw the ball away on a squeeze bunt by Naughton.

Naughton would later be thrown out by Losee trying to score from third on a grounder for the second out, and center fielder Jacob Smith tracked down the third out to strand two more Bucks.

"We put ourselves in good situations, we hit the ball hard," said Pendleton

coach T.J. Haguewood. "We just couldn't get a break, but we didn't create our own break either."

Adam Cameron started Hood River in the bottom of the third with a single, then the Eagles went up for good with back-to-back doubles by Coerper and Leiblein.

Pendleton stranded Morris on third when he tripled with one out in the fourth, then left bases loaded again in the sixth. Pendleton stranded 11 runners.

Hood River also stranded 11, but had 14 hits and was led by Leiblein's 4 for 4 game with seven RBI. Cameron was 3 for 5 with two RBI and Coerper was 2 for 3 with three runs.

Coerper pitched the first four innings and got the win after allowing three earned runs on four hits. Losee threw the last three, allowing no runs on four hits and striking out three.

Morris went 2 for 3 at the plate and Hayden Villers was 2 for 4 to lead the Bucks.

Chris Large took the loss allowing four runs on seven hits in 2 1/3 innings. Nick Lani threw 2 1/3 of relief and allowed six runs on four hits.

UP NEXT

Pendleton closes the regular season on Friday by hosting Hermiston at 4:30 p.m.

	PHS	102000	0	3	8	2
HRV	202151	X	11	14	2	

W — C. Coerper, L — C. Large, 2B — V. Morris (PHS); C. Leiblein 2, C. Coerper, I. Enriquez (HRV). 3B — W. Morris (PHS).



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

**Hepner senior Logan Grieb chips his ball onto the twelfth green Tuesday during the Special District 3 championships at the Pendleton County Club.**

## GOLF: Mac-Hi boys take second

Continued from 1B

two-putted the final hole as well, and finished in second with 81-82—163 to lead the Mustangs to the boys' team title and their ninth-straight state finals berth with scores of 344-354—698.

"The greens were running really fast, so that was kind of what I struggled with, but other than that I thought it was a good two days," Grieb said.

The Mustangs girls made it a Heppner sweep and are headed to a seventh-straight state finals after beating La Grande by 135 strokes with a 730 total.

Grieb said he's seen the boys' team make a lot of improvement this season, and felt like the Mustangs were coming into the district tournament with lots of momentum.

"We knew we'd have a pretty good shot at winning districts at the beginning of the year, and I think we've just gotten better and better all season, and now we're at where we wanted to be," he said. "I think everybody on the team's gotten a lot better."

Dan Bretsch was second for Heppner with 86-83—169 that was fifth overall, and the Mustangs' No. 3 golfer Kellen Grant out-shot the No. 1 from seven of the 12 teams in the field.

"We've been winning a lot, so it was kind of a big push into this," Bretsch said. "It felt like we did really good as a team, and stayed together. It was great. ... Great weather, great day."

La Pine was second in the team scoring with 726. The top four teams earned state berths, with the other two going to Burns (756) and Enterprise (761). Only the top two girls' teams earned state berths.

Hepner's girls put all four of their golfers inside the top 10, led by Sophie Grant with 82-82—164 in third. Amanda Rea (182), Nicole Prophet (187) and Masison Combe (198) finished fourth through sixth. La Grande's Trinity McCarthy was medalist with 151 and Wallowa's Tori Suto was second with 162.

The top five individuals from both fields also earn state berths, and those additional spots were filled on the boys' side by Imbler's Cade Gorham (165) and Enterprise's Brycen Locke (166).

UP NEXT

The 3A/2A/1A boys state tournament will be held May 15-16 at Eagle Crest Ridge Course in Redmond. The 4A/3A/2A/1A girls state tournament will be on the same dates at Trysting Tree Golf Club in Corvallis.

## CLASS 4A

**BAKER CITY** — The Mac-Hi boys golf team is headed to state after placing second at the Class 4A Special District 4 championships on Tuesday at Quail Ridge Golf Course.

The Pioneers also had two of the top three individual placers as seniors Evan Kain and Riley Chester finished second and third, respectively.

They entered the second round on Tuesday tied for second and Kain edged Chester by one stroke 80-82—162.

The Pioneers scored 334-346—680, and Baker/Powder Valley won the team title with 324-342—666.

Baker freshman Caden Long was individual medalist with 78-82—160, and La Grande junior Wyatt Page earned an individual state berth after a fifth-place finish with 81-86—167.

Completing Mac-Hi's team score were junior Noah Wilson with 88-88—176, and sophomore Kodi Leidenfrost with 86-93—179. Junior Oliver Nordstrom the fifth shooter and finished 13th overall with 89-106—195.

UP NEXT

The state championships will be held May 15-16 at Trysting Tree Golf Club in Corvallis.

## ROUND-UP HALL:

Continued from 1B

on to work 14 National Finals Rodeos and 18 Professional Bull Riders finals. He worked the Round-Up arena from 1990-2008 and the Happy Canyon arena PBR from 1998-2008.

Baumgartner is known for his long arms and his ability to reach out and get to a bull's head quickly, avoiding many risks to the cowboy and himself. This is part of what earned him the honor of PRCA's Bullfighter of the Year from 2004-07. Following his retirement from rodeo in 2011, Baumgartner was selected to the ProRodeo Hall of Fame in 2013. He currently manages the Southpoint Casino's Arena and Equestrian Events Center in Las Vegas.

## Danny Torricellas

Toricellas was born into a rodeo family in the Eugene area in 1951 and gained inspiration from the rodeo success of his father Louie. Torricellas came to Pendleton as a member of Blue Mountain Community College's rodeo team in the early 1970s. In 1972, Torricellas was the National Intercollegiate Rodeo calf roping champion.

In subsequent years, Pendleton has continued to be good to him. As a contestant at Round-Up, Torricellas won steer wrestling titles in 1975, 1979, 1983 and 1994. In addition, he was the All-Around champion in 1979.

Toricellas qualified for the Wrangler National Finals six times in steer wrestling and three times in calf roping. In 1980, he was reserve steer

wrestling World Champion.

## Ruth Fletcher

Born in Adams County, Washington, in 1901, Fletcher's 40-plus years of volunteer service for Happy Canyon began around 1940.

While getting her children ready for their part in the covered wagon scene, Fletcher was approached by show director Walter Holt, who asked if she would help with makeup for the cast.

Later, Fletcher expanded her volunteer role when she became the costume repair person, often taking them home after the show to be fixed before the next night. This led to her becoming the wardrobe keeper. During the off-season, Fletcher sewed new costumes and looked for other items for the show.

Fletcher's family have all been involved with the show throughout its inception, including many who have served on the board of directors. Her father-in-law played the first sheriff in 1914, a role later held by her husband R.A. (Bob) Fletcher. All of her children and grandchildren as well as many of her great-grandchildren have been cast members.

Her volunteerism wasn't limited to Happy Canyon. As a longtime resident of the Ukiah area, Fletcher took over as the producer of the Ukiah Rodeo and served as its president in the early 1930s. Also, she was as a 4-H leader, home extension teacher, Ukiah School board member and was a member of the Heppner Rodeo court.

In 1983, Fletcher received the Happy Canyon Volunteer

Appreciation Award.

## Matt Duchek

Duchek began his extensive role as a Happy Canyon volunteer collecting evergreens for the scenery. He later signed on as one of the original 10 bartenders when Happy Canyon began serving whiskey, and helped engineer the original stage for the arena concerts.

In addition, he was elected to the Happy Canyon board in 1994 and served as president in 2002-03. Later Duchek served on the Hall of Fame board, and as its president from 2007-09.

The titles do little to explain the amount of work and dedication Duchek has shown for Happy Canyon and the community. Among his many achievements are sanding and repainting all the stadium seats, establishing the Wednesday night work parties at Happy Canyon, remodeling the back bar in the Pendleton Convention Center, designing an elevated floor for the orchestra pit, upgrading walkways behind the scenery, and changing out telephone poles and plywood to steel beams and sheet metal providing easier maintenance. It's estimated that Duchek has logged more than 2,500 volunteer hours in just the Wednesday night work parties alone.

Founded in 1969, the Pendleton Round-Up and Happy Canyon Hall of Fame preserves the history of the events. Open Monday through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., it's located at 1114 S.W. Court Ave., Pendleton. For more information, call 541-278-0815.