

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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## PILOT ROCK

# Rockets to play 8-man football

Only 13 athletes participating for start of 2017 season

By ERIC SINGER  
East Oregonian

The 2017 football season for Pilot Rock will be much different than the Rockets are used to.

The OSAA conditionally approved a petition from the school district to drop from Class 2A Columbia Basin Conference to a Class 2A independent status for 2017 to play an 8-man football schedule, due to a lack of necessary participants. Pilot Rock superintendent Steve Staniak said that just 13 eligible athletes came out for the football team this fall, which is two athletes below the OSAA's requirement of 15 athletes to play 11-man football.

"It's not an ideal situation. We were hoping to play 11-man but when you don't have the necessary athletes, this is our only option," he said. "We had 22 kids express interest last spring, but once summer ended only the 13 were there. We're in a situation where we either play 8-man now or no football at all."

The official petition was made on Aug. 7, which is just 26 days prior to the kickoff of the 2017 season across the state on Sept. 1. OSAA executive director Peter Weber said that the OSAA's final approval is pending a vote by the

See ROCKETS/2B

## FARM-CITY PRO RODEO

# Farm-City wraps up 30th year



Zeke Thurston, of Big Valley, Alberta, rides Stampede Warrior for an 83.5 ride to win Saturday's saddle bronc event at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston. Thurston finished tied for third overall.

## Bulls keep upper hand versus cowboys while stars shine bright

By ERIC SINGER  
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Bull riding is one of the more popular rodeo events for fans, and for good reason.

Watching a sub-200 pound cowboy hop on a 1,500 pound bull and try to ride it for eight seconds is as thrilling as it sounds, and when done right it is perhaps the most thrilling eight seconds of rodeo any fan will see. But it is one of the toughest rodeo events for the very same reason, as staying on a large bull that's doing everything it can to buck the cowboy off it's back is not one of the easiest things to do.

It was a tough week for the bull riders at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo with only five qualified rides through the first three nights, and it didn't get any easier on Saturday. Only one of the eight competitors for the final night of the rodeo was able to tame his bull, and that was Challis, Idaho cowboy Ruger Piva, who rode Corey and Lange's Anchor Man for 86.5 points.

"Any time you come to Oregon and try to ride bulls, it's a step up," Piva said of the stock,

See FARM-CITY/2B



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Steer wrestler Chason Floyd, of Buffalo, South Dakota, puts in a 3.6 second run Saturday at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston to win the night. Floyd's times of .75 on two were also good enough to win the rodeo as well.

## MLB

# Orioles slug way past slumping Mariners

Seattle loses fifth consecutive game

By TIM BOOTH  
Associated Press

SEATTLE — Tim Beckham hit the first pitch of the game out for his first career leadoff homer, Manny Machado hit the sixth grand slam of his career an inning later, and the Baltimore Orioles routed the Seattle Mariners 11-3 on Monday night.

Baltimore pounded Seattle's pitching, scoring double-digit runs for the second time in three games and the sixth time since the All-Star break. Beckham got the Orioles started with



AP Photo/Elaine Thompson

Baltimore Orioles' Manny Machado slugs a grand slam against the Seattle Mariners in the second inning of a baseball game, Monday, Aug. 14, 2017, in Seattle.

his 16th homer, but it was Machado's slam that broke the game open as part of Baltimore's six-run second inning. Machado drove a 1-2

pitch into the first row of the second deck in left field for his second grand slam this season. Trey Mancini hit his 21st

homer and Seth Smith added his 12th to turn it into a blowout.

That was plenty of runs for Baltimore starter Kevin Gausman (9-8), who stumbled early before settling into a groove to allow just one earned run in seven innings. Gausman retired 12 of 13 at one point, the stretch broken up by Mike Zunino's homer leading off the fifth inning.

Meanwhile, Seattle's sudden fade from the wild-card race continued. The Mariners lost their fifth straight — all at home — coming off a nine-game road trip where they went 6-3 and were holding the second wild-card spot in the AL.

Starting pitching continued to be the primary issue for Seattle. Yovani Gallardo (5-8) was tagged for eight runs and failed to record an out in the fifth inning. He pitched that deep as Seattle tried to save its overworked bullpen.

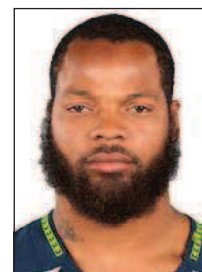
Nelson Cruz hit his 29th homer in the ninth inning for Seattle.

## NFL

# Seahawks' Bennett plans to sit for national anthem, expects backlash

By DAN GREENSPAN  
Associated Press

CARSON, California — Seattle Seahawks defensive end Michael Bennett plans to sit during the national anthem this season to protest social injustice — and expects a backlash over an issue that is "bigger than a sport."



Bennett

He sat on the visiting bench during "The Star-Spangled Banner" before a preseason opener against the Los Angeles Chargers, a decision he made before weekend protests by white supremacists at the University of Virginia.

The violence in Charlottesville, Virginia, including the death of a young woman struck by a car deliberately driven into a group of counter-protesters Saturday, solidified Bennett's decision.

"With everything that's been going on the last couple of months and especially after the last couple of days, seeing everything in Virginia, seeing what's going on out there earlier today in Seattle, I just wanted to be able to

See BENNETT/2B

## Sports shorts

### WWE star Ric Flair hospitalized

ATLANTA (AP) — World Wrestling Entertainment says pro wrestling legend Ric Flair is out of surgery and resting after being hospitalized.

The statement Monday did not give details about the nature of the surgery. A representative for the showman known as "Nature Boy" says the 68-year-old wrestler was admitted to the hospital for routine monitoring. Melinda Morris Zanoni of Legacy Talent asked on Twitter Monday for "prayers & positive energy" because Flair has "tough medical issues."

Former pro wrestler Mick Foley and wrestling executive Eric Bischoff are among numerous wrestlers wishing Flair well on Twitter.

Known for his flamboyant outfits and "Woooo!" catchphrase, Flair made his professional debut in 1972 and was inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame in 2008.



Flair

"I don't think I was really in tune to what was going on until about the fifth (inning). So many emotions; I was trying to get them under control, but it was taking a lot longer than expected. It was great, I was just trying to soak it all in."

— Chad Bettis

Colorado Rockies pitcher who made his return to the mound on Monday night after missing the first four months of the season recovering from cancer surgery and treatment. Bettis pitched seven shutout innings and struck out a pair in a 3-0 Colorado victory over Atlanta.

### Walla Walla team advances to Little League World Series

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. — For the first time ever, Walla Walla will be represented at the Little League World Series.

Walla Walla, playing as Team Washington at the Northwest Regional, defeated Oregon (La Grande) 4-3 on Saturday to clinch a spot at the LLWS. Walla Walla went 4-1 at the regional tournament, with the only loss an 8-4 to La Grande.

The world series tournament is held from Aug. 17-27 in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, where Walla Walla will play with seven other teams from the United States as well as eight international teams.

Walla Walla will start double elimination play on Friday when it plays the West team from Rancho Santa Margarita at 1 p.m. The games will be broadcast on ESPN and WatchESPN.com.



### THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1999 — Tiger Woods makes a par save on the 17th hole and holds on to win the PGA Championship by one stroke over 19-year-old Sergio Garcia. Woods, 23, becomes the youngest player to win two majors since Seve Ballesteros in 1980.

2011 — Jim Thome hits his 600th home run an inning after slugging No. 599, powering the Minnesota Twins past the Detroit Tigers 9-6.

2012 — Felix Hernandez pitches the Seattle Mariners' first perfect game and the 23rd in baseball history, beating Tampa Bay in a 1-0 victory.

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