

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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PILOT ROCK

Mustangs ground Rockets

Heppner drops first set, rallies to win fifth straight match

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

PILOT ROCK — After Heppner upset top-ranked Culver on Tuesday night to earn a tie for first place atop the Columbia Basin Conference standings, the Mustangs were feeling confident in themselves.

Volleyball



Heppner

3



Pilot Rock

1

Perhaps, a little too confident. On Thursday night, Heppner traveled north to take on Pilot Rock and looked all out of sorts on both offense and defense in the first set as the Rockets handed them a 25-8 loss. However after that set, the Mustangs settled down, got back to playing their style and breezed through the next three sets 25-21, 25-14, 25-15 to defeat Pilot Rock 3-1.

“They had a tough match with Culver ... and we talked this week is you can relish in those moments but you have to move forward. And I think the first set was a reality of ‘Oh I really have to move forward,’” Heppner coach Mindy Wilson said. “It was good for them, a humbling experience that made them work in the last three games. The girls knew they were going to have to dig deep and Pilot Rock was going to push them to do the little things and they did.”

Heppner (15-5 overall, 5-1 CBC) took the first point of the match on a block by Morgan Correa and trailed 3-2 early. Pilot Rock (13-8, 2-4) overwhelmed the Mustangs in the rest of the set, as Grace Austin smacked three kills and served two aces and Abby Rigby smacked two kills with three aces as the Rockets went on a 17-2 run quickly after. However, Heppner was able to regroup in the huddle after the set was over with the help of a short

See MUSTANGS/3B



Pilot Rock's Grace Austin tips the ball into the block from Heppner's Jenna McCollough in the Mustangs' 3-1 win against the Rockets on Thursday in Pilot Rock.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Prep Roundup

Bucks falter on the road

Pendleton drops match to La Grande

East Oregonian

LA GRANDE — The Pendleton volleyball team stepped away from its league schedule on Thursday night to take on La Grande for the second time this season.

Volleyball



Pendleton

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La Grande

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But the Tigers were wanting some revenge, with the Buckaroos winning 3-0 in Pendleton on Sept. 7, and this time handed the Buckaroos a 3-0 loss, 25-23, 25-14, 25-14. After Pendleton's unbeaten start, the Buckaroos (10-4 overall, 5-1 CRC) now fall to 3-4 in their past seven games.

“We fell apart fundamentally tonight,” Pendleton coach Amanda Lapp said. “(We were) making adjustments too late and playing tense ... We're going to work hard tomorrow and Monday to get back into our groove and solidify what we've been working toward all season.”

Maureen Davies was the team's leader in kills for the match with eight, and Elisabeth House followed with four. Aspen Garton had a team-high six digs as she again moved from her spot as a defensive specialist to libero on Thursday night and played well, Lapp said.

Pendleton will next travel back to Hood River next week to take on the Eagles (10-6, 5-1) for the rubber match of the three-game series on Tuesday evening.

See PREP ROUNDUP/3B

MLB Playoffs

Altuve hits 3 homers as Astros thump Red Sox

By KRISTIE RIEKEN & TOM WITHERS
Associated Press

HOUSTON — Jose Altuve had just arrived in the Astros dugout after launching his third home run of the game when George Springer grabbed his right biceps and examined it, as if searching for an explanation for his teammate's extraordinary pop.

“He makes sure he stays on top of his gym routine, whatever it is,” Springer said. “The dude is just a joke.”

The major league batting champion put on an unprecedented show of power Thursday as Houston roughed up Chris Sale and the Boston Red Sox 8-2 in Game 1 of the AL Division Series.

ALDS - Game 1	
Boston	Houston
2	8

Buoyed by chants of “MVP” in each trip to the plate, the 5-foot 6-inch Altuve hit solo homers in the first and fifth innings off Sale. He connected again in the seventh off reliever Austin Maddox to give Houston a quick boost in the best-of-five series.

“As soon as I cross the white line, I feel the same size as everyone else,” Altuve said.

It was just the 10th time a player hit three homers in a postseason game, and first since Pablo Sandoval for the

Giants in the 2012 World Series opener against Detroit. Babe Ruth did it twice.

“I told him the last time I've seen three home runs in a game was Pablo Sandoval and I gave up two of them, so I'm glad there's somebody new that's done it,” winning pitcher Justin Verlander said.

Altuve became the first Astros player to hit three homers in one game since 2007, when Carlos Lee did it in the regular season. He seemed as surprised as anyone else that he was now in a category with the Sultan of Swat, Reggie Jackson and Albert Pujols.

“I hit one and I was like: ‘Wow,’” he said. “And the second one is like: ‘Wow, what's going on here?’”

And his thoughts after the third?

“I got to wake up,” he said, flashing a huge grin.

After he finished talking to Springer following his third shot, Altuve's teammates goaded him into exiting the dugout for a curtain call. And as he tipped his hat to the crowd, one fan near the dugout held a sign that proclaimed in blue block letters: “That Kid Can Hit.”

Verlander pitched six effective innings and improved to 6-0 since Houston got him in late trade with Detroit. He is 5-0 with a 2.24 ERA in nine career starts in the division series.

Sale, the major league strikeout leader, was tagged for seven runs in five-plus innings of his postseason debut.

Game 2 is Friday, with See PLAYOFFS/2B



Houston Astros second baseman Jose Altuve (27) celebrates his first inning home run with teammate Evan Gattis (11) in Game 1 of the ALDS against the Boston Red Sox on Thursday in Houston.

AP Photo/David J. Phillip

Sports shorts

Ovechkin records hat trick as Capitals beat Sens 5-4 in shootout

Alex Ovechkin had a hat trick in a 6:33 span in the third period and Evgeny Kuznetsov scored the shootout winner in the Washington Capitals' 5-4 victory over the Ottawa Senators on Thursday night in the season opener for both teams.

Ovechkin scored twice in a 1:23 span to tie it early in the third period.

Cody Ceci turned the puck over down low, allowing Kuznetsov to find Ovechkin for a shot he roofed past Anderson. Then, the Senators were unable to clear the puck and the same line was able to move the puck quickly to allow Ovechkin to score.

Ottawa regained the lead 1:17 later when Stone tipped in Dion Phaneuf's shot.

Ovechkin tied it again with 9:12 left in the period.



Ovechkin

“They don't want to be denied what they feel is theirs right now. There's no flinch in these guys, I can tell you that.”

— Dave Doeren

North Carolina State head coach after his No. 24 Wolfpack's 39-25 victory over the No. 17 Louisville Cardinals on Thursday night. Nyheim Hines ran for two touchdowns and Ryan Finley threw for another to aid in the upset.

Blackhawks pound Penguins 10-1 in season opener

CHICAGO (AP) — Brandon Saad scored three times in his return to Chicago and Ryan Hartman had a goal and four assists, helping the Blackhawks pound the Pittsburgh Penguins 10-1 on Thursday night.

Nick Schmaltz added two goals and an assist as Chicago kicked off its season in style with a runaway victory against the two-time defending Stanley Cup champions. Patrick Kane also had a goal and three assists in the Blackhawks' highest scoring game since Oct. 12, 1988.

Pittsburgh was coming off a 5-4 overtime loss to St. Louis in its season opener on Wednesday. Antti Niemi was pulled after allowing four goals on 13 shots in his Penguins debut.

Richard Panik, Patrick Sharp and Brent Seabrook also scored for Chicago, and Corey Crawford made 28 saves.



THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1985 — San Francisco's Joe Montana passes for 429 yards and five touchdowns and sets an NFL record with 57 passes attempted and no interceptions in a 38-17 win over the Atlanta Falcons.

1993 — Michael Jordan announces his retirement after nine seasons in the NBA.

2013 — Tiger Woods beats Richard Sterne, 1 up, to give the Americans the 18 points they need to win the Presidents Cup for the fifth straight time. It's the third straight Presidents Cup that Woods wins the cup-clinching match.

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