

NFL

Toppling troubling opponent has Seahawks flying into bye

By **TIM BOOTH**
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — By toppling one of their more troubling opponents, the Seattle Seahawks went into their bye week on Monday back in control of the NFC West.

Yes, the Seahawks continue to have their own issues. But the 16-10 win over the Los Angeles Rams on Sunday followed what's been Seattle's blueprint early in this season — relying on a stifling defense that held the Rams 25 points below their season average while doing just enough on offense to get out of Los Angeles with a victory.

It was a significant early win. A loss to the Rams would have left Seattle (3-2) two games behind and with Los Angeles holding

the tiebreaker. Instead, the Seahawks are tied for the division lead headed into their break.

"We were able to keep them from being effective in the ways they had been effective and we'll see how many times people hold them to 10 points," Seattle coach Pete Carroll said. "They started fast and got off to a real good roll and our guys rallied and came back and played three quarters of really great football and kept them down. They're good. They're doing a lot of really good stuff. It took us some special plays and good fortune."

Seattle slowed down the Rams by containing Todd Gurley. The do-everything running back for Los Angeles was held to 43 yards rushing and had just two catches for 7 yards.

Gurley was also at the



AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill

Los Angeles Rams wide receiver Robert Woods, right, catches a pass in front of Seattle Seahawks cornerback Justin Coleman during Sunday's game in Los Angeles.

center of one of the biggest plays for Seattle when safety Earl Thomas chopped Gurley's arm just short of the goal line and forced a fumble that went off the pylon and became a touchback for Seattle. It happened on the

first drive of the game and by the end was a massively important play.

Thomas made a similar play in a 2014 game against the Rams. The Seahawks have held four of their first five opponents under 20

points, the one outlier being a 33-27 loss at Tennessee.

"It's a phenomenal play. And what's really exciting is he's done it before. The picture is on the wall in the hallway down there," Carroll said, pointing toward the Seahawks locker room. "To watch the play and watch the absolute maximum intensity from the first step he took in chasing the football to making that play and to get it done with just a fraction of an inch ... it was because of his phenomenal will to stop that play."

Seattle will need to make changes on the offensive line when it returns from the bye. Starting left guard Luke Joeckel is scheduled to undergo arthroscopic surgery on his left knee later this week to clean up a lingering issue. Carroll said Joeckel has been able to play through the discomfort for the first five

weeks but needs the surgery. Carroll said it's unlikely Joeckel would be able to return in time for the Oct. 22 game at the New York Giants.

"We brought him back very carefully and there was something that was kind of hanging in there that was irritating him for some time," Carroll said. "We tried to wait it out and see what it was, and we have waited as long as we can wait and he's been a stud about it. Now it's time to get cleaned up."

Seattle brought in veteran Branden Albert for a workout on Monday as a potential option. The 32-year-old was released by Jacksonville in August. But the loss of Joeckel for likely one game won't help the Seahawks' struggling ground game. Seattle has been held under 100 yards in three of five games.

BOYS SOCCER: Hermiston had scoring chances late, but couldn't capitalize



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton's Aiden Henderson challenges Hermiston's Oliver Parades for the ball in the Bulldogs' 1-1 draw against the Bucks on Tuesday in Pendleton.

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on the shorter side of the net so I sent it longways over hoping he wouldn't be able to get there in time to the top right corner, and it worked. I don't really remember after that, it was kind of like seeing stars."

Hermiston had a few prime chances to take the advantage back, but just could not cash in. Joel Mendez had perhaps the two best chances, with a shot from 10 yards out that was punched away by Pendleton goalkeeper

Andrew Wolotira, and then sailed one high over the net with six minutes left. Hermiston finished with 10 shots on goal to Pendleton's five.

Hermiston coach Rich Harshberger was clearly frustrated with the result afterwards, especially knowing how close his team was to punching home a few more goals.

"It's incredibly frustrating. I don't chalk it up wholly to luck, but I chalk it up to the fact that we didn't have enough of those opportunities," he said. "We should've had more

opportunities so that one or two more would've fallen in if we could've tested their goalkeeper more than we did."

Hermiston will look to get things straightened out on Thursday when it travels to The Dalles. The Buckaroos will also hit the road, traveling to Hood River to take on an Eagles team that handed them a 9-0 loss earlier in the year. But the Bucks are hoping Tuesday's game can give the team something to build on and maybe pull off another stunning game.

"We're learning that we can compete with anybody," Talbot said. "The way to build on it is we keep working and stay consistent, don't get too high or don't get too low. The guys are working hard in practice and it's sticking. We're not winning every game, but we're competitive in every game and we're starting to believe that we can do it."

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PREP ROUNDUP: Weston-McEwen, Helix, Echo, Irrigon volleyball all earn wins

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we played The Dalles we've gotten closer and closer to a win," Dyck said. "It's put us to where we're at now, it's put us in this position. When we trust our training we play really really well."

That is exactly what the girls did. The Bulldogs rallied back to win the fourth and fifth set 25-20 and 15-11, respectively.

"One of our biggest strengths is our girls have a really great dynamic together," Dyck added. "They genuinely love being around each other, and tonight it showed. Tonight they made plays they wouldn't normally make because they had that extra motivation."

The Bulldogs had many contributors en route to their first successful five-set match. Senior Breena Wadkamper ended the match with a team-high four aces and 14 assists while also tallying 14 digs. Sophomore Halee Stubbs was the only Bulldog perfect from the service line, and recorded 15 digs. Junior Scout Reagan notched a team leading seven kills and also had three aces and five digs on the night. Fellow junior Ireland McDonough led the

team with 16 digs, and also racked up six kills and two aces.

Up next, Hermiston will have a quick turnaround with a road trip to Hood River Valley on Thursday.

HOOD RIVER 3, PENDLETON 1 — At Hood River, the Pendleton Buckaroos came up short on the road against Hood River Valley on Thursday night, losing 3-1 to fall one game back of the Eagles in the Columbia River Conference standings.

Pendleton (10-5 overall, 5-2 CRC) won the first set 25-20, but Hood River stormed back to win the next three 25-17, 25-23, 25-18. Maureen Davies led Pendleton's offense with 12 kills and one block, while Rylee Gentner had seven kills. Kalan McGlothlan had six and Elisabeth House had four.

Aspen Garton led the defensive effort with seven digs while Lauren Richards served three aces.

Pendleton next plays on Thursday when it hosts The Dalles at 7 p.m.

ECHO — The Echo Cougars had a full night of

play in store, as they hosted a double header with Nixyaawii and Helix. The Cougars split their matches against their respective counterparts. After defeating Nixyaawii in straight sets (25-7, 25-17, 25-3), Echo buckled down for a five setter against Helix — which it ultimately lost 3-2.

Helix (16-7 overall, 7-4 Old Oregon League) had a strong performance with seniors Sadie Wilson and Kailey Mize and junior Arianna Krol leading the way. Wilson ended the night with 14 kills, while Mize added 13 of her own while also being perfect at the service line. Krol also had a good night serving, as she finished 23-of-23.

"We started hot, strong," Helix head coach Dianna Melton said. "I don't know what happened in the third set. We really struggled. The fourth started rocky but (we) came back and (in the) fifth (was) able to pull it off. (Got to) hand it to Echo, they hung in there."

UP NEXT
Echo (11-7, 7-4) next plays on Friday at home against Joseph, while Helix will host Powder Valley and Willowa on Saturday. Nixy-

awii (1-10, 1-10) will next play on Thursday at Joseph at 5 p.m.

WESTON-MCEWEN 3, STANFIELD 0 — At Athena, Weston-McEwen swept Stanfield in three straight (25-21, 25-9, 25-9) sets pushing its league record to .500. The TigerScots (15-10 overall, 3-3 CBC) are now just two games back from second place.

At first things were close than they would have liked. The Tigers (2-18, 0-6) put up a fight in the first set, and the TigerScots squeezed by with a four-point win. The next two sets came easy for Weston-McEwen.

"We've been working on playing more aggressive and hitting more aggressively," head coach Shawn White said. "But credit Stanfield for playing super tough, and making us work."

The upperclassman had a big night. Junior Bryce Thul finished with 10 assists, eight kills, and six aces. Seniors Alyssa Finifrock and Chelsea Queampts each lead the team in one category or another. Finifrock tallied 11 kills and three aces and Queampts ended with 12 digs and went 17-of-17 from the service

line. Fellow senior Maddi Muilenburg added seven kills, and sophomore Ellie Scheibner had a team-high 25 assists and two aces.

With only two games left, Weston-McEwen will need to win both but it won't be easy. Before the TigerScots end their regular season against the Pilot Rock Rockets, they have to face the No. 1 team in the league on their home court. Weston-McEwen will travel to Heppner for a 5 p.m. match Thursday. As for Stanfield, it will also have its hands full with the No. 1 and 2 team to close out its season. The Tigers will welcome the Culver Bulldogs on Thursday at 5:30 p.m.

IRRIGON 3, UMATILLA 0 — At Umatilla, the Irrigon Knights continued a string of five-straight road games with a 3-0 sweep of the Umatilla Vikings on Tuesday night.

It was the third time this season that Irrigon has defeated Umatilla in straight sets. The Knights (19-5 overall, 5-2 Eastern Oregon League) came away with the first two sets 25-19 and 25-17, and were to get by the Vikings (8-12, 2-5) with a comfortable lead.

It was the final set that would be the most challenging for Irrigon. Umatilla put up a fight at the end and finally eclipsed 20 points. But the Knights would ultimately take the set 25-22.

Irrigon is just shy of second place, which it will need to advance to for a playoff birth. As its schedule winds down, that feat won't come easy. The Knights will begin their quest Friday when they travel to Burns. The Hilanders currently hold the No. 2 spot in the league.

CULVER 3, PILOT ROCK 0 — The Culver Bulldogs continued their dominance at Pilot Rock. They defeated the Rockets 3-0 (25-19, 25-11, 25-16) to push their league record to 21-2 on the season and 6-1 in league play.

Culver rebounded from its only league loss to win its next five matches, including Tuesday's against the Rockets (13-9, 2-5).

The Bulldogs only have on regular season match left. They will travel to Stanfield on Thursday to try and beat the Tigers from the second time this season. Pilot Rock will next host Weston-McEwen at 5 p.m. on Tuesday.

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