

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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## OSAA 5A CHAMPIONSHIP PREVIEW

# Dawgs sticking to script against unbeaten Lancers

Hermiston preps for final OSAA game in Hillsboro

By ALEXIS MANSANAREZ  
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The only sure thing about Saturday's 5A state championship game is that it will be the last time this Hermiston football team suits up as a group, and as a member of the OSAA.

The Bulldogs (10-2) are getting ready for a unprecedented move to the WIAA, but not before they take one last run at an Oregon state title.

"We're one of two teams left," head coach David Faaeteete said.

He also preached the same message that has led to Hermiston's success on its 'Farewell Tour,' and what will help the Bulldogs with a win Saturday in Hillsboro.

"The message is going to be and continue to be focus on the details," Faaeteete said. "Dot our i's, cross out t's, finish, take care of the little things so they can take care of the big things in the end."

But a victory will be no easy task. Churchill remains unbeaten after taking down No. 1 Mountain View for its first finals appearance in program history, and with a win the Lancers (12-0) could be one of five teams in the entire state with a perfect record.

The Bulldogs punched their own ticket to the state championship after holding off a strong second half effort from Wildcats and coming away with a 35-27 win, and now have to prepare to face an even greater threat in Churchill.

"They are a very explosive team," Faaeteete said. "They have got multiple plays for 80-plus yards this season."

Leading the impressive offense is quarterback Jack Blackburn, who is the mastermind behind some ridiculously

See DAWGS/3B



Photo courtesy of Chase Allgood/The Oregonian  
Hermiston's Jonathan Hinkle carries the ball during the Bulldogs' 35-27 win over Wilsonville in the 5A semifinal on Saturday in Hillsboro.



Collin Andrew/The Register-Guard  
Churchill quarterback Jack Blackburn celebrates his touchdown run with teammate Quinn Parker in the first-half during Churchill's 63-21 win over Crater to go 9-0 in league play on Oct. 27.

## Men's College Basketball

# St. John's fends off Oregon St.

By MARK DITLER  
Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Guards Shamorie Ponds and Marcus LoVett helped St. John's get off to its best start in years.

Ponds scored 26 points and LoVett added 18 as St. John's rallied from a double-digit second-half deficit to beat Oregon State 82-77 Thursday in first round of the Advocate Invitational.

"If the guards set the tone, then it sets the tone for the game," Ponds said. "So I feel like if we come out there hungry with a dog mentality, it changes the whole game."

After trailing by 10 midway through the second half, St. John's went up 69-67 with 4 minutes left on Kassoum Yakwe's rebound slam.

Marvin Clark II added 10 points, including a 3-pointer shortly after Yakwe's go-ahead basket, for St. John's (5-0), which last opened a season with

five straight wins in 2009-10.

"We train to play forty minutes of pressure defense," St. John's coach Chris Mullin said. "Be active and energetic ... we feel that's going to wear down on people in the long haul."

Oregon State (2-2) got 22 points from Stephen Thompson Jr. and Ethan Thompson had 19. Both players made four 3-pointers as the Beavers hit 11 of 24 from distance.

"They're certainly a tough group," OSU coach Wayne Tinkle said of St. John's. "Their perimeter players, those guards can hawk you defensively and are really good at getting to the rim."

Stephen Thompson had 13 of his points in the first half, helping Oregon State go up 40-37. The Beavers turned it over 12 times, compared to St. John's two during the opening 20 minutes.

Oregon State finished with 21 turnovers, while St. John's had six.

**COMING BACK:** Oregon sophomore forward Tres Tinkle, who received a medical redshirt year after missing 26 games due to a broken wrist in 2016-17, scored 14 points on 3 of 9 shooting. He had 20 or more points in each of his first three games.

**BIG PICTURE:** Oregon State: Stephen Thompson entered 1 for 15 from 3-point range. He has 109 in his career and needs 23 to break into the Beavers top-10 after going 4 for 8 Thursday.

NCAA  
St. John's  
82  
Oregon State  
77

# Cousins rules Thanksgiving night

LANDOVER, Md. (AP) — Kirk Cousins threw two touchdown passes to compensate for a pick-6, and the Washington football team beat the New York Giants 20-10 on Thursday night on a drab field in a drab game between two injury-depleted teams that did not look ready for prime time.

The two NFC East rivals combined for more punts (nine) than points (six) in the first half, which ended 3-all on a pair of short field goals — from 30 yards by New York's Aldrick Rosas, and 28 by Washington's Nick Rose. The big play on Washington's lone scoring "drive" of the half? A 37-yard flag for pass interference on New York's Ross Cockrell; the entire possession covered 38 yards.

But Cousins led Washington

## Thurs. Night Football

New York  
10  
Washington  
20

(5-6) on two TD drives in the second half, connecting with Jamison Crowder on a 15-yarder in the third quarter that broke a 3-all tie, and with Josh Doctson on a 14-yarder with 3 1/2 minutes remaining in the game.

In between, cornerback Janoris Jenkins intercepted Cousins' pass and returned the ball 53 yards to make it 10-all.

That one play involved more yardage than Eli Manning and the Giants (2-9) generated in the entire

second half. They gained 47 yards and one solitary first down. One possession end with an interception by Manning, four ended with punts, and another dissolved they turned the ball over on downs.

This was the first time Washington had hosted a game on Thanksgiving, and they and the Giants didn't exactly treat the national TV audience to a thriller. More of a snoozer.

Given the ugliness, perhaps it was fitting that it was contested on a terrible-looking field. A large swath of brown ran down the middle, all the way from one end zone to the other.

Route-runners stumbled and fell for no apparent reason. Washington back Samaje Perine gained 3 yards on five carries in the first half.



AP Photo/Mark Tenally  
Washington quarterback Kirk Cousins celebrates wide receiver Josh Doctson's touchdown as he walk past New York Giants defensive end Olivier Vernon during the second half on Thursday.

## Sports shorts

### Barcelona saves Messi for crucial Valencia match

MADRID (AP) — Barcelona started preparing for a key Spanish league match against Valencia even before stepping out onto the field to face Juventus in the Champions League.

They put Lionel Messi on the bench. The Argentina forward, who is rarely rotated out of the starting lineup, did end up playing in Wednesday's 0-0 draw, coming on in the 56th minute.

Barcelona holds a four-point lead over Valencia, which is coming off eight-straight victories. Barcelona has won 11 of its 12 league games.

The few times Messi had been left out of Barcelona's starting 11 in recent years came after injury layoffs or long trips with Argentina's national team.



Messi

"I think it's fitting today to be thankful we're still right there. Each game is going to be bigger and bigger. It will be a fun December if we do what we're supposed to do the next few weeks."

— Phillip Rivers

The Los Angeles Chargers quarterback, after the 28-6 win over the Dallas Cowboys on Thursday. The Thanksgiving Day victory helped the Chargers boost their playoff hopes as they now sit at 5-6 on the season and are a half-game out of the wild-card picture.

### Four bowl play-in games this weekend, 8-of-78 spots open

(AP) — There are 70 teams already bowl eligible, having won at least six games, and eight more spots to fill in 39 bowl games.

The past two seasons teams with 5-7 records have received bowl bids because there were not enough teams eligible with the minimum six victories. Those teams are selected using the most recent Academic Progress Ratings. The five-win teams with the highest APR scores are first to be invited to fill open slots. The way things stand, there is a good chance there will be enough bowl-eligible teams and no five-win teams will be needed.

Four games this weekend are bowl play-in games, with each team sitting at 5-6: California at UCLA, Colorado at Utah, Indiana at Purdue and Middle Tennessee at Old Dominion.



## THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1960 Wilt Chamberlain of the Philadelphia Warriors sets an NBA record with 55 rebounds in a 132-129 loss to the Boston Celtics. Boston's Bill Russell held the record with 51 rebounds against Syracuse on Feb. 5, 1960.

2000 LaDainian Tomlinson caps the fourth-best rushing season with 174 yards and a touchdown in Texas Christian's 62-7 victory over Southern Methodist. Tomlinson, who also won his second straight NCAA rushing title, finishes the season with 2,158 yards.

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