

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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1B

College Football



Collin Andrew/The Register-Guard via AP

Oregon athletic director Rob Mullens fields a question from a reporter at the Hatfield-Dowling Complex in Eugene on Tuesday after head coach Willie Taggart accepted the same position at Florida State, less than a year after he accepted the Oregon job.

Here the Ducks go again

Oregon begins search for another football coach with a long list of candidates

By STEVE MIMS
The Register-Guard

EUGENE — Oregon quickly promoted Mario Cristobal to interim head coach for the Las Vegas Bowl after Willie Taggart left for Florida State on Tuesday.

Cristobal, the former Florida International coach, appears to be one of many candidates for the full-time job.

Oregon athletic director Rob Mullens is seeking a football coach for the second year in a row after pulling Taggart out of South Florida last year only to see him head back home with the Seminoles following a 7-5 season with the Ducks.

Mullens hired Taggart on Dec. 7 last year, eight days after firing Mark Helfrich. There is a greater sense of urgency this season because of the new NCAA early

signing period that runs Dec. 20-22.

Taggart compiled a recruiting class ranked No. 1 in the country by 247Sports.com, but after the coach's departure, Oregon has already lost some players who committed to the program. Because of that, the next coach will have to be hired quickly to keep as many commitments as possible.

Some candidates that might have intrigued Mullens are off the market, including former UO offensive coordinator Scott Frost, who was hired by Nebraska on Saturday after he took Central Florida from winless to undefeated in two seasons.

TCU's Gary Patterson has been rumored to be on Oregon's radar during each of the past two coaching searches because of his friendship with UO boosters Phil See DUCKS/3B



AP Photo/Chris Pietsch, File

In this Nov. 18 file photo, former Oregon head coach Willie Taggart, center, greets his players during warmups before a game against Arizona in Eugene. Taggart accepted the head coaching position at Florida State on Tuesday after just one season in Eugene.

Rodeo

Hermiston girl to compete at JrNFR

East Oregonian

The National Finals Rodeo week in Las Vegas will have a bit of local flair added into it this year.

Hermiston barrel racer Alyson Terry is one of 120 cowgirls that earned a spot to compete at the KK Run for Vegas/JrNFR Barrel Race, Dec. 12-16, held in conjunction with the main event, the NFR. All 120 cowgirls are aged 16-and-under from all parts of the United States, Mexico and Australia and will be competing for more than \$130,000 in prizes on top of a chance to qualify for The American Semifinals in Forth Worth, Texas in February.



Alyson Terry

The top 20 cowgirls with the fastest times on two runs will advance to the championship round on Dec. 16. Terry, 12, will be competing at 9 a.m. on Dec. 13 and then again at 10:45 a.m. on Dec. 15, riding her mare IMA Biankus Babe.

"This is the culmination of a lot of hard work by these kids, and they have all earned the right to compete in Las Vegas," said Kelly Kaminski, event organizer and a two-time world champion barrel racer said in a press release.

Terry qualified for the JrNFR by competing in a KK Run For Vegas American Qualifier competition back in September in Moses Lake, Washington, where she made it into one of the necessary top five spots. It was the first time that Terry had entered one of the competitions and it was the final qualifier of the season.

"I am still in shock and must pinch myself every now and then to realize just how fortunate I am to have an opportunity to participate in the JR NFR," Terry said in a statement. "I feel very lucky to have such a great horse and support from my parents and friends."

Prep Football

Pendleton native to play in All-American Bowl

Draco Bynum one of 100 to earn the honor

East Oregonian

Each January, 100 of the top high school football seniors get the chance to play in the prestigious U.S. Army All-American Bowl, played at the Alamo dome in San Antonio, Texas.

This coming January, there will be a Umatilla County native among the exclusive group. Draco Bynum was selected to play in the game earlier in the year and received his game jersey at a ceremony on Wednesday at Wilsonville High School, part of the Army All-American Selection Tour Presented by American Family

Insurance. Bynum was born and raised in Pendleton by his parents Rob and Sue Bynum until prior to his freshman year in 2014, when the family moved to Wilsonville.

In his four years playing for the Wilsonville Wildcats football program, Bynum has developed into one of the top defensive linemen recruits in the nation. He is a four-star prospect according to the national recruiting sites 247 Sports and Rivals, ranking No. 15 among all strongside defensive ends and No. 7 overall in the state of Oregon. Bynum verbally committed to the University of Washington on April 22, choosing the Huskies from more than 15 Division I offers including schools such as Nebraska, Oregon, UCLA

and USC.

Bynum is one of four Oregon prep stars that were selected for the game, joining South Medford wide receiver Chase Cota, Crescent Valley five-star athlete Talanoa Hufanga, and Jesuit four-star running back and Washington commit Trey Lowe.

Bynum, standing six-feet, five-inches tall, finished his four-year career with the Wildcats with 152 total tackles, 27 tackles-for-loss and 15 sacks. His best year came as a junior, where he had 82 tackles, 19 tackles-for-loss and 10 sacks as he burst onto the national recruiting scene.

As a senior, Bynum often faced doubleteam blocks from the opponents, which limited him to just 41 total tackles

but he still helped his team to a 10-2 record and a trip to the state semifinal. In the semifinal loss to Hermiston, Bynum was the team's top tackler with nine total.

In an email to the *East Oregonian* on Wednesday, Draco and his family wanted to mention all of Draco's coaches from his youth days in Pendleton that helped shape his path to becoming a prep star, including Jason Villers, Jim Malcom, Mark Kirsch, Matt Liscom, Rick Keilm, Jon Cortazar, Devin Correa, Mitch Sanders, Randy Crawford, John Summerfield, Michael Blanc, Aaron Schmidt and Coach Reeser.

The 2018 All-American Bowl will be broadcast nationally on Jan. 6 NBC at 10 a.m.



Photo contributed by Rob Bynum

Wilsonville High senior and Pendleton native Draco Bynum smiles after receiving his U.S. Army All-American Bowl jersey on Wednesday.

Sports shorts

Mariners, Angels trade for bonus pool money in race for Ohtani

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The Seattle Mariners and Los Angeles Angels each have acquired \$1 million in international bonus pool money from the Minnesota Twins, aiding their pursuit of Japanese outfielder and pitcher Shohei Ohtani.

The teams announced the deals Wednesday night. Seattle sent minor league catcher David Banuelos to Minnesota, while the Angels traded minor league outfielder Jacob Pearson to the Twins.

Seattle can now offer Ohtani \$2,557,500 and Los Angeles can spend \$2,315,000. The Texas Rangers have the most slot money available with \$3,535,000. Seattle, Los Angeles and Texas are among seven teams in the running for Ohtani.

Banuelos was a fifth-round draft pick this year from Long Beach State. He is considered a strong fielder and was a finalist for the Johnny Bench Award as one of the nation's top amateur catchers.



"I play a lot of NBA 2K. It's the most realistic basketball game you could ever play. I mix and match a lot of lineup changes and things of that nature to see how we can be really good."

— LeBron James

The Cleveland Cavalier said of awaiting the return of all-star point guard Isaiah Thomas. Thomas played 4-on-4 on Wednesday, which is another step closer to returning to the court after a severe hip injury.

BMCC men top Multnomah JV

PENDLETON — The Blue Mountain men's basketball team snapped a two-game losing streak with a 89-83 victory over Multnomah JV on Wednesday night at McRae Activity Center.

Trey Wolfman had a game-high 27 points for the Timberwolves (2-3), making 9-of-13 shots and going a perfect 8-of-8 from the free throw line.

Dedi Seme added 22 points and six rebounds Jalil Massey had 14 and Anthony Landeros scored nine points in a team-high 31 minutes of playing time.

The Timberwolves shot an efficient 47 percent in the game and scored 16 points off of 22 Multnomah turnovers.

Blue Mountain next plays on Dec. 28-30 at the North Idaho College New Year's Tournament.



THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1991 — AJ Kiit becomes the first American in seven years to win a men's World Cup race, taking the first downhill of the season in Val D'Isere, France.

2008 — The Arizona Cardinals clinch their first division title in 33 years by beating the woeful St. Louis Rams 34-10. The Cardinals earn their first playoff berth since 1998 and first divisional title since they won the NFC East in 1975.

2014 — Robbie Keane scores on a breakaway in the 111th minute, and Landon Donovan wins his record sixth MLS title in the LA Galaxy's 2-1 victory over the New England Revolution. Contact us at 541-966-0838 or sports@eastoregonian.com