

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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Olympics



In this Friday, Oct. 13, 2017, photograph, rancher Tom Johnston is shown on his ranch near Pinedale, Wyo. Johnston, who ranches on nearly 1,800 leased acres near the tiny town of Pinedale, is one of the world's foremost experts on shaping an Olympic skiing race course, most notably the tracks for the downhill and Super G competitions including those in the upcoming games in South Korea.

AP Photo/Pat Graham

THE SNOW MAN

WYOMING RANCHER HAS BIG IMPACT ON 2018 WINTER OLYMPIC DOWNHILL SKIING

By PAT GRAHAM
Associated Press

PINEDALE, Wyo. — The rancher from western Wyoming wears tan overalls pulled over a U.S. ski team jacket, and is every bit as versed in the nuances of hay farming as the subtleties of snow grooming.

He doesn't even ski for pleasure much anymore due to aching hips, yet the Olympic fates of Lindsey Vonn, Aksel Lund Svindal and many of the best speed skiers are directly tied to the handiwork of Tom Johnston, a no-nonsense cowboy who spends his days toiling among hay bales on nearly 1,800 acres of leased fields near his home in Boulder, Wyoming (population: 170ish). Johnston also just happens to be

one of the world's foremost experts on shaping a race course, most notably the downhill and super-G tracks that Vonn, Svindal and the rest will zoom down in February in South Korea.

Every tooth-rattling bump and knee-buckling jump on the Pyeongchang course will have been exhaustively groomed by Johnston and his crew, whose goal, in ski parlance, is to create "hero snow" — the grippy surface on which these world-class speedsters can confidently push the envelope.

"A very nice track," is what the 55-year-old Johnston is promising for a course that was designed by Bernhard Russi, the Swiss downhiller who won Olympic gold in 1972. Johnston has made seven journeys from his home to South

See RANCHER/3B



This Feb. 7, 2016, file photo, shows Tom Johnston standing near the finish area following a men's World Cup super-G race, also a test event for the Pyeongchang 2018 Winter Olympics, at the Jeongseon Alpine Centre in Jeongseon, South Korea. The Olympic fates of Lindsey Vonn, Aksel Lund Svindal and many of the best speed skiers are directly tied to the handiwork of Johnston, a cowboy who spends his days toiling among hay bales on nearly 1,800 acres of leased fields near his home in Boulder, Wyoming.

(P Photo/Andrew Dampf, File)

Prep Sports

New OSAA football proposal 'has some momentum'

Proposal intended to help struggling teams

By JERRY ULMER
The Oregonian/OregonLive

A plan that would give struggling Oregon high school football teams the option to play down one classification continues to take shape.

The OSAA's ad-hoc football committee, formed in October to address issues specific to football, added more details to its proposal in an update released late last month.

Feedback has been generally positive, according to OSAA executive director Peter Weber.

"It seems like it has some momentum," Weber said. "We haven't really had people say they don't think this is the right direction, at this point."

In a previous update, the committee proposed that any school with a winning percentage of 22 or lower over a four-year span be given the opportunity to move down for a two-year period. In the recent update, the committee favored extending the same option to teams meeting those parameters in a two-year span.

"Once they put that out with that original list, they got some feedback from some schools that said, 'Hey, we're right around that number. Are there some other things that could be taken into account?'" Weber said.

"There were some schools that weren't on that original list because their teams from three or four years ago were decent, but their teams in the last couple years have been not very good."

Of the 48 schools that meet the criteria, 16 already were ticketed to move down based on the new classification plan for the four-year time block that begins in 2018-19. Of the other 32 schools, 21 qualify to move down based on a four-year span and 11 on a two-year span.

Nine Class 6A schools would have the option to move down: Aloha, Benson, Cleveland, David Douglas, McKay, South Eugene, Forest Grove, Roosevelt and Wilson.

In Eastern Oregon, Mac-Hi in 4A and Riverside in 3A would have the option to move down as well.

See OSAA/3B

College Basketball

Timberwolves' struggles continue as men, women swept by Chukars

East Oregonian

ONTARIO — The struggles continued for the Blue Mountain men's and women's basketball teams on Wednesday evening as the Timberwolves began league play.

The men's team fell just short of a victory as they fell to Treasure Valley 56-52,

while the women lost their seventh consecutive game with a 84-47 loss to the Chukars.

In the men's game, Linton McAllister led the team with 14 points and five rebounds, while Dedi Seme added 14 points and four boards. Anthony Landeros contributed eight points, four steals, three rebounds and

Women
BMCC 47
TVCC 84

Men
BMCC 52
TVCC 56

two assists.

The Timberwolves (3-8, 0-1 East) shot just 36 percent from the field and were

out-rebounded 51-26 by the Chukars, which led to 14 second chance points for the home team. BMCC also

struggled at the free throw line shooting 6-of-14.

In the women's game, the Timberwolves (1-11, 0-1) had 22 turnovers which led to 18 Treasure Valley points, while shooting just 27 percent (16-of-59). Sydney Wammock led BMCC with 19 points and 12 rebounds, while Catti Sidney had 10.

Men
BMCC 25 27 — 52
TVCC 28 28 — 56
BMCC — D. Seme 14, L. McAllister 14, A. Landeros 8, E. Kaden 7, J. Hillard 6, J. Massey 3, J. Moran, C. Lonebear.
3-pointers — BM 6, TV 6. Free throws — BM 6-14, TV 10-21. Fouls — BM 19, TV 18.

Women
BMCC 4 16 13 14 — 47
TVCC 20 23 13 28 — 84
BMCC — S. Wammock 19, C. Sidney 10, H. Meyers 6, M. Bisbee 3, S. Short 3, K. Gerlinger 3, R. Willingham 2, M. Boyer 1, A. Hill.
3-pointers — BM 2, TV 7. Free throws — BM 13-25, TV 9-16. Fouls — BM 17, TV 23.

Sports shorts

Seahawks sign K Jason Myers

RENTON, Wash. (AP) — The search for a kicker in Seattle now includes former Jacksonville kicker Jason Myers after he signed a reserve/future contract with the Seahawks.

The deal with Myers was completed Wednesday. Seattle was able to sign Myers now because he was cut by Jacksonville earlier this year and was not with any other team at the conclusion of the regular season.

Seattle appears unlikely to bring back Blair Walsh after he missed eight field goals this season, including missed kicks that played a major role in three Seattle losses.

Myers was the full-time kicker in Jacksonville for the 2015 and 2016 seasons, making 53 of 64 field goal attempts over those two seasons. He was cut after six games this season after making just 11 of 15 field goal attempts.



Myers

"I almost walked that way in their locker room. No, I mean, I love this city, I love this organization. They've given me the opportunity to be who I always wanted to be, and I can't thank them enough. So there's no hard feelings to anybody in this city or anybody in this organization. And I'm glad I'm back."

— Isaiah Thomas

Cleveland Cavaliers' guard prior to Wednesday's game in Boston on being back in Boston for the first time since his offseason trade to the Cavs.

Grambling's Shakyla Hill gets 4th D-I women's quad-double

GRAMBLING, La. (AP) — Shakyla Hill's assist with the closing seconds of Grambling State's win over Alabama State gave the guard the fourth quadruple-double in NCAA women's basketball history on Wednesday.

Hill found Monisha Neal for a 3-pointer that wrapped up the Tigers' 93-71 win over the Hornets and accounted for Hill's 10th assist to go with 15 points, 10 rebounds and 10 steals.

The last quadruple-double was by Soja Tate of Arkansas State against Mississippi Valley State on Jan. 27, 1993. Tate had 29 points, 14 rebounds, 10 assists and 10 steals.

Hill did most of her damage in the second half when the Tigers pulled away from the Hornets. She had 11 points, seven rebounds, seven assists and six steals after the break.



Hill

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1992 — Mike Gartner of the New York Rangers scores his 1,000th NHL point with a power-play goal in the third period of a 6-4 loss to the New Jersey Devils.

2002 — Michael Jordan becomes the fourth player in NBA history to score 30,000 points, reaching the milestone for the Washington Wizards in an 89-83 win over his old team, the Chicago Bulls.

2013 — Mikaela Shiffrin becomes the first American woman to win two World Cup races before turning 18. The 17-year-old captures a slalom in Zagreb, Croatia by a massive 1.19-second margin.

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