

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2018

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1B

Mary Stewart, of Nixyaawii, goes up for a layup during Saturday's state play-in game against the Camas Valley Hornets at Sunridge Middle School.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney



## Saturday Prep Roundup

# Golden Eagles fly to playoff victory



Nixyaawii advances back to state quarterfinals

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — On paper, Saturday's Class 1A playoff game between No. 2 Nixyaawii and No. 15 Camas Valley appeared to favor Nixyaawii by a wide margin.

And as soon as the game tipped off on Saturday afternoon at Sunridge Middle School in Pendleton, it played out just as one would expect. The defending state champion Golden Eagles shocked the Hornets from the start and throttled visitors for a 69-15

**1A Second Round**

 #15 Camas Valley <b>15</b>	 #2 Nixyaawii <b>69</b>
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victory.

"I just basically wanted us to come in and take care of business and not let them hang around, which we did a pretty good job of," Nixyaawii coach Jeremy Maddern said. "Just to make sure everybody got in and got out healthy, that was the main focus."

The Golden Eagles (26-0 overall) swarmed the Hornets (15-12) with their defensive pressure all game long,

forcing 32 turnovers and only 31 shot attempts for the game. Nixyaawii led 23-0 after the first quarter, and Camas Valley did not break onto the scoreboard until a bank shot from Michel Bartlett at the 4:23 mark of the second quarter.

Nixyaawii's big three of Milan Schimmel, Mary Stewart and Kaitlynn Melton carried the load offensively, combining for 46 points. Schimmel matched her jersey number with a game-high 24 points to go with nine rebounds, five assists, five steals and three blocked shots. Stewart had 14 points with eight rebounds, seven assists and six steals, and Melton

See PREP ROUNDUP/3B

## PILOT ROCK

# Trojans ground Rockets

Shooting woes end Rockets season in Class 2A first round

By ERIC SINGER  
East Oregonian

PILOT ROCK — Throughout the latter half of the regular season, the Pilot Rock Rockets handled their success well.

The Rockets rolled through conference play and won 11 straight games down the stretch — all by nine points or more — and wrapped up the program's first league and district championships in years. However, on Saturday afternoon, the pressure and nerves appeared to finally get to the Rockets.

In a Class 2A first round playoff game at Pilot Rock High, the No. 7 seed Rockets made just 12 of its 54 field goal attempts (22 percent) as the visiting No. 10 Kennedy Trojans' defense stifled the Rockets and secured the 52-36 victory, ending the Rockets' season.

"We had a great season and it is really disappointing because we thought we could keep moving on," Pilot Rock coach Eric Smidt said. "But our shooting ... I don't know what happened. Not sure if that was their defense or what, we were just so nervous we couldn't make them."

Smidt added that he believed a lot of the shooting performance simply stemmed from a lack of experience playing in high-pressure games. Even in the district championship game one week ago, the Rockets shot poorly in the first half (6 for 24, or 25 percent) before finally settling in late in the second half.

The Rockets (18-7 overall) shot very poorly in the first half as well against the Trojans (16-13), making only 4 of 23 attempts (17 percent). Except this time when the Rockets found their shot late in the second half, the hole was far too deep to climb out of. The Rockets trailed 19-9 at halftime, but then stared at a 34-17 deficit at the end of the third quarter.

"These boys over the last four



Levi Thieme, of Pilot Rock, goes up for a shot as Kennedy's Nick Suing defends during Saturday's Class 2A first round playoff game.

years have had no real basketball program to speak of," Smidt said. "They've been shuffled in and out of coaches and they should've

been playing in tournaments like this since they were freshmen. And I think that hurt (us) tonight, the inexperience and stress."

Bryson Pierce concluded his stellar career with a game-high 14 points, all of which came in the

See ROCKETS/3B

## IRRIGON

# Knights win on Roa's 3-pointer

Irrigon moves on to Class 3A state tournament with win

By ALEXIS MANSANAREZ  
East Oregonian

IRRIGON — With 1:45 left on the game clock inside Irrigon High's gym, Catlin Gabel sophomore Jett Sheng hit a 3-pointer to knot the score at 47 points apiece — capping off a 11-4 run by the visiting team.

There had been only one other tie when the No. 9 Eagles took on the No. 8 Irrigon Knights in the first round of the playoffs, and that was in the first two minutes of play.

The Knights stayed in control for almost the entire game, but head coach Davie Salas was beginning to think about overtime as the clock ticked down with neither team scoring.

Catlin Gabel had a few chances, but they resulted in turnovers and Irrigon's Johnny Phillips tried for field goal to regain the lead only to miss with 40 seconds left to play.

Each team had just one more chance to win in regulation.

With 14 seconds remaining, the Eagles are called for an over-and-back to give the Knights the ball.

Then with only 0.6 to go and the score still tied at 47-47, Irrigon's Adrian Roa received the inbound, and as he fell back, he heaved the ball toward the net.

It bounced off the front of the rim, hit the backboard, again touched the front of the rim before finally dropping in to give the Knights (21-4 overall, 7-3 Eastern Oregon League) a three-point advantage and the 50-47 win.

"I'm pretty amazed by coming out — there was sixth tenths of a second left, we just had to get a shot off real quick," Roa said. "If everybody wasn't

See KNIGHTS/3B

## 2A First Round



#9 Kennedy

52



#8 Pilot Rock

36

## Sports shorts

### Mariners ace Hernandez hit in pitching arm; X-ray negative

MESA, Ariz. (AP) — Seattle Mariners ace Felix Hernandez was hit in his pitching arm by a line drive Monday and forced to leave his spring training debut.

The Mariners said a precautionary X-ray of his right forearm was negative. Hernandez was listed as day-to-day. He will be re-evaluated Tuesday.

The 31-year-old star, slowed by injuries last year, was struck by a liner from Victor Caratini of the Chicago Cubs.

After being hit, Hernandez immediately grabbed his arm and didn't pursue the ball on the infield grass.

Hernandez went down to a knee, hopped up and walked around in obvious pain. He headed to the dugout with a trainer holding his arm, and Caratini gave him a tap of encouragement.



Hernandez

"Is this just a stunt? I think that if you really know me, baseball's been a part of my blood. It's been a part of who I am and where I've come from and what I've done. When you see me make plays on the football field, a lot of that's a direct correlation to baseball."

— Russell Wilson

Seattle Seahawks QB reported to spring training with the New York Yankees on Monday for a week of workouts. Wilson played 93 baseball games in the minor leagues in 2011-2012, and had his rights traded from Texas to New York this winter.

### US Open abandons 18 holes for 2-hole playoff

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. (AP) — The U.S. Open is changing to a two-hole aggregate playoff, making it the last of the four majors to do away with an 18-hole playoff.

The change takes effect immediately and would be used at Shinnecock Hills on Long Island in June if there is a tie after 72 holes. The U.S. Golf Association also decided to make its other three open champions two-hole playoffs — the U.S. Women's Open, U.S. Senior Open and U.S. Senior Women's Open.

The U.S. Open has had 33 playoffs in its 117 years, all decided by 18 holes or more. The last U.S. Open playoff was 10 years ago at Torrey Pines, where Tiger Woods beat Rocco Mediate in 19 holes for his 14th major.



## THIS DATE IN SPORTS

2010 — Steven Holcomb drives USA-1 to the Olympic gold medal in four-man bobsledding, ending a 62-year drought for the Americans in the event. Holcomb's four-run time was 3:24.46, with Justin Olsen, Steve Mesler and Curt Tomasevicz pushing for him.

2015 — Travis Kvapil's NASCAR Sprint Cup car is stolen from a hotel parking lot, forcing him to withdraw from a race at Atlanta Motor Speedway. The team didn't have a backup car in Atlanta, so it's forced to drop out when the car couldn't be found in time for NASCAR's mandatory inspection.

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