

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 2018

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER @EOSPORTS

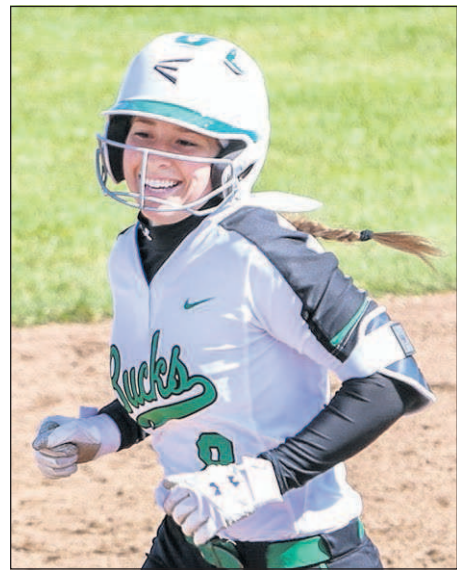
1B

Baseball



Pendleton's Shaw Jerome slides headfirst into home plate as Sandy catcher Jacob Dukart looks for a throw from the outfield in the Bucks' 13-5 win against the Pioneers on Monday in Pendleton. Staff photos by E.J. Harris

Softball



Staff photo by Kathy Aney
Lauren Richards, of Pendleton, jogs around the bases after smashing a home run during Saturdays game against Chiawana at Steve Cary Field.

Bucks blank Riverhawks

Pendleton smashes 3 HRs in victory over Chiawana

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — On a sunny and windy afternoon at Steve Cary Field on Saturday, the Pendleton softball earned a valuable victory.

After its two previous wins came of the blowout variety, Pendleton played a game full of some pressure situation against Chiawana. The Buckaroos held only a slim two-run advantage for a majority of the game but still hung on to win 5-0 over the Riverhawks in a non-league game.

"Obviously we'd like to go out and score 10-plus runs every game, but if you do that every single time, you're never really faced with pressure situations," Buckaroos coach Tim Cary said. "And even though we felt like we were in pretty good shape for most of the game, it was still only a 2-0 game so there was really no margin for error and we had to be on top of our game."

The Buckaroos (3-1) picked up its first two runs right off the start, when Kirah McGlothlan and Lauren Richards hit back-to-back wind-aided solo home runs. However through the next four-plus frames Pendleton managed zero runs on five hits as Chiawana continued to hang around. In the meantime, the Riverhawks put pressure on the Buckaroos defense and pitcher Lauren Richards nearly every inning, and twice had two runners on base with one out or less.

See SOFBALL/3B

Bower back, Bucks bash

Bower returns and Pendleton pounds 18 hits in victory

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — For the first two weeks of the baseball season, Pendleton senior captain Nick Bower was forced to watch each one of the Buckaroos' six games from the dugout, as a minor back injury relegated him to the bench. For a fierce competitor like Bower, it was irritating to simply sit and watch.

"I like to play sports, that's my whole life, so sitting on the bench and watching my teammates was hard," Bower said.

However Bower was finally able to trade in his sweatpants and sneakers for baseball pants and cleats on Monday afternoon as Pendleton hosted Sandy during Day 1 of the Red Lion Buckaroo Baseball Classic at Bob White Field. Hitting sixth and patrolling centerfield, Bower tallied three hits including two doubles, scored two runs and drove in two runs as Pendleton defeated

Sandy 13-5.

"It was good to be back, for sure," Bower said. "I went to the cages over the weekend and got my timing back with coach (Wes) Armstrong ... but this win is a confidence boost, no doubt. Overall I think we played well today, need to clean up the defense a little bit, but we hit the ball around the yard and anytime you do that you're going to have a good chance to win."

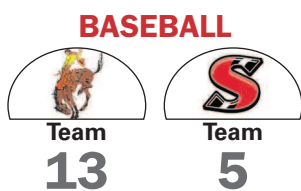
Bower was not the only Buckaroo (2-5) to hit the ball well. The team tallied 18 hits overall and five different players tallied at least two hits. Gabe Umbarger and Daniel Naughton each had three hits apiece for the Buckaroos, with Umbarger hitting two triples, scoring two runs and driving in a team-best four runs.

Umbarger, a switch hitter, reached base a total of four times as he was hit by a pitch in the sixth inning. In seven games, Umbarger has now reached base safely 19 times in 28 plate appearances and has scored eight runs.

See BASEBALL/3B



Pendleton's Chris Large throws from the mound for the Bucks in their 13-5 win against Sandy on Monday in Pendleton.



NCAA Women's Basketball

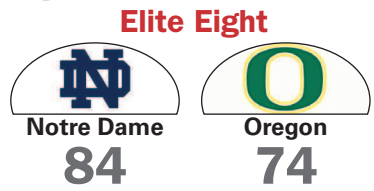
Irish dancing back to Final Four

By TIM BOOTH
AP Sports Writer

SPOKANE, Wash. — Kathryn Westbeld scored 20 points, Jessica Shepard added 18 and Notre Dame reached the Final Four for the eighth time in school history by defeating Oregon 84-74 on Monday night.

Westbeld came up with the biggest game of her Notre Dame career despite being slowed by an ankle injury from the first round of the NCAA Tournament. Westbeld had scored a combined 12 points in the previous four games, but she teamed with Shepard for an inside attack that hurt the Ducks.

Westbeld made 9 of 12 shots. Notre Dame (33-3) outscored Oregon 52-38 in the paint and outrebounded the Ducks 51-29 in



the Spokane Regional final.

Arike Ogunbowale added 19 points and Marina Mabrey had 15 for the Irish.

Despite a handful of costly injuries along the way, the Irish are back in a familiar spot in the national semifinals. It's the sixth Final Four for Notre Dame since 2011 and old friend UConn awaits in the semis Friday night in Columbus, Ohio.

First-team all-American Sabrina Ionescu led Oregon (33-5) with 26 points, but the Ducks

struggled offensively over the final 20 minutes. Oregon shot 8 of 31 in the second half and Ionescu had just seven points after the break.

The Ducks were unable to find other scoring options. Ruthy Hebard had 12 points in the first half and just five in the second half.

Oregon also never got into a rhythm with its outside shooting. The Ducks were 4 of 15 on 3-pointers after entering as the No. 2 team in the country at 40.4 percent from beyond the arc.

Notre Dame's defense was a big reason why Oregon shot so poorly.

After a first half that was an offensive showcase, Notre Dame did a better job of pressuring Ionescu and getting the ball out of her hands. When she did get a shot attempt, it was often a challenged look.



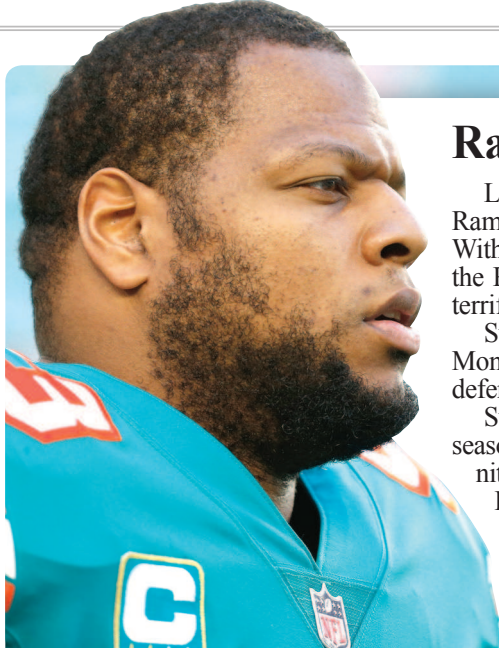
AP Photo/Young Kwak
Notre Dame forward Kathryn Westbeld and Oregon forward Satou Sabally go after a rebound during the first half in a regional final NCAA women's tournament Monday in Spokane, Wash.

Sports shorts

"I'm really concerned about the things I hear that we can't get confirmed. I share with people an old quotation: 'In the absence of fact, rumor must suffice.' That's what everybody has to deal with now."

— Jay Bowerman

Legendary track coach Bill Bowerman's son on the secrecy of the Hayward Field renovation plan, as quoted in The Oregonian.



Rams sign DT Suh to 1-year deal

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Decades ago, the Los Angeles Rams' defense was fronted by the Fearsome Foursome. With Ndamukong Suh playing alongside Aaron Donald for the Rams this fall, NFL offenses are about to experience a terrifying twosome.

Suh agreed to a one-year contract with Los Angeles on Monday, joining three-time All-Pro Donald in a remarkable defensive line pairing.

Suh was released by the Dolphins this month after three seasons in Miami. He examined several free-agent opportunities before choosing the defending NFC West champion Rams, who have revamped their already solid defense with several impressive offseason additions.

Suh's deal in Los Angeles is worth \$14 million, according to the NFL Network and ESPN.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1939 — Oregon beats Ohio State 46-33 in the NCAA's first national basketball tournament.

1971 — UCLA defeats Villanova 68-62 for its fifth NCAA crown.

1998 — Michael Jordan scores 34 points to lead the Chicago Bulls to an 89-74 victory over the Atlanta Hawks before 62,046 at the Georgia Dome — the largest crowd in NBA history.

2017 — The UConn's women advance to its 10th consecutive Final Four with a 90-52 victory against Oregon.

Contact us at 541-966-0838 or sports@eastoregonian.com