



Seager hits two homers, as Mariners beat Blue Jays/2B

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BASEBALL



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Daniel Naughton has led Pendleton's pitching turnaround this season.

Everything coming together for Buckaroos

Pitching, newcomers help Buckaroos' surge to league champions

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

Three full seasons had passed since the Pendleton baseball program earned the title of conference champion before the Buckaroos clinched the 2018 title on Tuesday night.

In those three years, the Buckaroos slipped into mediocrity where they averaged 12 wins and nearly 15 losses per season and compiled a 17-19 record in conference play.

This season, however, things finally clicked from top to bottom for the Buckaroos (15-8 overall, 9-2 Columbia River Conference). After a slow preseason start where the Buckaroos went 1-5 against the likes of Southridge (WA), Hanford (WA) and Walla Walla, the Buckaroos are winners of 14 of their last 17 games going into its league finale on Friday in Hermiston. That includes wins over some solid teams such as Sandy (No. 3 in Class 5A), Roseburg (No. 12 in 6A) La Grande (No. 2 in 4A) and Hood River Valley (No. 11 in 5A).

Some of the Buckaroos have a few theories for their improvement. Senior Daniel Naughton believes this version of the Buckaroos has found just the right chemistry to make them click.

"I think that we've become a family," Naughton said following Tuesday's win over Hood River. "We started doing everything together and we've gotten way more comfortable with each other than teams in the past. I wouldn't necessarily say our skill level is better, we're way more tighter with each other and I think that makes a huge difference."

And senior Nick Bower believes it's a tireless work ethic that started in the offseason, with the results showing on the field.

"I think we're just extremely focused, not only during the season either," Bower said following a game against The Dalles on May 5. "We had the majority of our team up in the cages during the winter putting in work at least three days a week. And then our practices, we're extremely focused and we know how serious we have to be. So I think that work ethic has played a big part in it."

See BUCKS/2B

TRACK & FIELD | COLUMBIA RIVER CONFERENCE

Dawgs on top, again



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Hermiston's Scout Reagan takes the baton from teammate MaKaylee Young in the pouring rain during the CRC Track and Field Championships at Kennison Field. Hermiston took first in the 4x100 with a time of 50.63 seconds and will compete at state.

Hermiston wins third straight district title

By ALEXIS MANSANAREZ | East Oregonian

HERMISTON — On the second and final day of the Columbia River Conference Track and Field District Championships, a brief spout of rain drenched Kennison Field.

The short storm came around 5 p.m. when the track events were starting and several field events were taking place.

First up was the girls 4x100-meter relay. Members of Hermiston's team each settled into their spots and with Scout Reagan at anchor, the cold weather drew some concern.

"Cold weather has always been a terrible thing for me," she said.

So, Reagan turned toward the fence and saw head coach Emilee Strot, who had an important message for the Bulldogs' top sprinter.

"As soon as I looked at coach Strot she goes, 'We train for this, Scout, you just remember, you know what you're doing,' and I looked at her and I was like, 'Oh yeah, okay. Who cares about the rain, let's get after it,'" Reagan added.

See TRACK/3B



Pendleton's 4x100 relay team celebrates after learning they took second after a close finish to clinch a spot at the OSAA state championships.

PREP ROUNDUP

Bulldogs' postseason hopes take a hit

Hermiston falls 9-2 at The Dalles

East Oregonian

The Hermiston Bulldogs' postseason hopes took a huge hit with a 9-2 loss to The Dalles on Thursday in a game that was finished following a rainout on Tuesday. The loss drops the Bulldogs

(7-16 overall, 3-8 Columbia River Conference) into a tie with the Riverhawks (6-16, 3-8) for the third postseason berth, however the Riverhawks own the tie-breaker with three wins in four games against the Bulldogs. The Bulldogs will now need a win at home on Friday against Pendleton coupled with a Riverhawks loss to Hood River to earn a postseason berth.

In the game, Hermiston's offense was kept in check by The Dalles' pitcher Jordan Wetmore, who threw seven innings of three-hit, two-run baseball with five strikeouts. The Riverhawks' Dalles Seufalamua peppered the Bulldogs' pitching with three hits and a double and drove in four runs.

Caden Schwirse pitched for Hermiston and allowed four runs

on four hits in four innings with three strikeouts. All of his runs allowed came in the third inning, and Jordan Ramirez threw two innings of relief and allowed five runs on six hits. Schwirse also had one of Hermiston's three hits, a double, while Landon Jones and Garron Anderson accounted for the other two hits.

See ROUNDUP/3B

Sports shorts

Oregon high school coach on leave for drinking before game

MEDFORD, Ore. (AP) — The head coach of the top-ranked South Medford High School baseball team has been placed on leave because he consumed alcohol before a game.

In his ninth season as head coach, Ray Smith has guided the Panthers to the Southwest Conference championship and No. 1 spot in the Class 6A power rankings as of Wednesday.

The Mail Tribune reports Smith admitted having drinks before Tuesday's game, a contest from which he was ejected after arguing a call at third base.

Smith says he "messed up big time" and let a lot of people down.

Tessitore, Witten, McFarland, Salters on ESPN 'MNF' crew

(AP) Three new voices will work ESPN's Monday night games this NFL season: play-by-play announcer Joe Tessitore, analysts Jason Witten and Booger McFarland.

Tessitore has been one of the network's top announcers for 16 years on boxing, college football and basketball, including calling the College Football Playoff semifinals the past two years. It will be his first NFL assignment.

Witten, one of the sport's finest tight ends and a likely Hall of Famer, retired from the Dallas Cowboys last week to move into the booth.



THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1892 — Azra, ridden by Alonzo Cayton, wins the first three-horse field in the Kentucky Derby, nipping Huron by a nose.

1992 — The Portland Trail Blazers win the highest-scoring playoff game in NBA history, 153-151 in double overtime against the Phoenix Suns in the Western Conference semifinals.

1918 — Exterminator, a 30-1 long shot ridden by Willie Knapp, loses the lead but regains it to win the Kentucky Derby by one length over Escoba.

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