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ECHO



Staff photo by Brett Kane

Echo head football coach Rick Thew, right, guides his team through drills during practice on Thursday in Echo. The Cougars are one of 15 teams in the state preparing for their first year playing six-man football as part of a two-year OSAA trial for some of the state's smallest schools.

Fewer players, higher spirits

Echo ready for debut in six-man football in 2018

By **BRETT KANE**
East Oregonian

The Echo Cougars may be short on football players this year, but their spirits are as high as ever.

The team will hit the field with six core players this year as opposed to the eight that is traditional for the Class 1A schools in the OSAA. This transition for Echo came about when the school noticed that the amount of boys participating in their program dropped from the previous year.

In 2017, the Cougars had 18 players — 12 were seniors, and the remaining six were made up of younger students. Now that those seniors have graduated, the team is only comprised of 12 players total, three of whom are new to high school football.

The decline in participation doesn't



Staff photo by Brett Kane

Echo football players run through a tackling drill at Thursday's practice.

stem from a lack of interest in the sport, however. Echo High School's male student population is significantly lower than in years past.

"There's four boys in my class out of 12 students," said Echo's sophomore center Luke White.

Echo will be joining 14 other small

Oregon high schools in the Class 1A to compete in six-man games this season, including Prairie City, Joseph, and the Mitchell/Spray/Wheeler co-op. It is part of a two-year pilot program from the OSAA that was offered to Class

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OSU FOOTBALL

Beavers go bowling in Bend

OSU simulates roadtrip with trip to Bend

By **MARK MORICAL**
The Bulletin

BEND (AP) — Elu Aydon, a 378-pound defensive tackle, cradled the bowling ball in his hand, and it resembled a shot put in his gigantic grip.

He unleashed a surprisingly finessed roll with deadly spin down one of the lanes at Sun Mountain Fun Center.

Quarterback Jake Luton preferred a more straight-down-the-middle approach.

All sorts of bowling styles — and plenty of gutter balls and strikes — could be seen and heard Wednesday afternoon at the Bend facility as the Oregon State football team enjoyed a team-bonding outing during its three-day visit to the High Desert. There were also lots of shouts, chest bumps, hugs and high-fives as the Beavers let off some steam 10 days before their looming trip to No. 5 Ohio State to open the 2018 season.

First-year Beavers head coach Jonathan Smith did not participate, but he watched closely from behind the lanes as players took advantage of a couple of hours away from football before their scrimmage Thursday at Summit High to close out their Central Oregon stay.

"I've seen some bad bowlers, but I think they're having fun," Smith said with a smile. "I think it's good. It's something different to do with each other. Get in a different environment. That was the whole logic of coming over here to re-create (a game road trip) but also have some fun. You learn a little bit about their athleticism, or lack thereof, but also just watching them interact, man, and clapping and high-fiving."

Smith, a former quarterback at Oregon State (1998-2001), said he recalled some team-bonding activities from his playing days.

"I can remember we had a belly-flop contest, and some of those O-linemen going and belly-flopping, that was entertaining," he said. "You can't be just focused 24/7. You've got to be able to take a deep breath at times and they're doing it, so this is a good event."

Junior linebacker Andrzej

See OSU/2B

WNBA PLAYOFFS

Mystics ease past Sparks

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Elena Delle Donne had 19 points and 12 rebounds to help the Washington Mystics rout the Los Angeles Sparks 96-64 on Thursday night in the second round of the WNBA playoffs.

Los Angeles and Minnesota — the past three WNBA champions — have both been eliminated from the postseason.

Washington (23-12) will open a best-of-five series against Atlanta on Sunday, aiming for its first WNBA Finals appearance.

LaToya Sanders and Ariel Atkins each scored 14 points for

No. 3 seed Washington. The Mystics had 28 assists on 37 field goals, leading to six players in double-figure scoring.

Delle Donne made a baseline jumper to close a 15-2 run for a 21-13 lead and the Mystics extended it to 27-16 at the end of the first quarter. It was 50-29 at halftime and 75-46 entering the fourth.

It was a tough travel stretch for Los Angeles to end the year. The Sparks closed the regular season at Connecticut, hosted defending champion Minnesota two nights later and returned to the East Coast in a four-day stretch.

Candace Parker scored 16 points

for Los Angeles (19-16). Nneka Ogwumike and Chelsea Gray — part of the Sparks' top-three scorers — combined for 0-of-9 shooting in the first half.

The game was played at George Washington University's Charles E. Smith Center because the Mystics' regular home, Capital One Arena, is undergoing renovations.

Taurasi leads Mercury past Connecticut

UNCASVILLE, Conn. (AP) — Brittney Griner and Diana Taurasi each scored 27 points to help the Phoenix Mercury beat the Con-

See MYSTICS/2B



AP Photo/Nick Wass

Washington Mystics guard Elena Delle Donne (11) drives to the basket as Los Angeles Sparks guard Odyssey Sims (1) defends during the first half of a single elimination WNBA basketball playoff game Thursday, Aug. 23, 2018, in Washington.

Sports shorts

Williams sisters could meet in U.S. Open

NEW YORK (AP) — Serena and Venus Williams have been drawn into a potential third-round matchup at the U.S. Open, which would be their earliest Grand Slam meeting in 20 years.

If the sisters do play each other, the winner could face No. 1-ranked Simona Halep in the fourth round.

That is the most intriguing possible matchup to emerge in the women's and men's brackets at Thursday's draw for the last major of the year.



Woods starts slow in tourney

PARAMUS, N.J. (AP) — Tiger Woods failed to carry any momentum he had from his last tournament into the start of the FedEx Cup playoffs. Neither did Sean O'Hair. That was only good news for one of them.

O'Hair missed the cut last week and is No. 121 in the FedEx

Cup standings, meaning he had to play well at The Northern Trust or his season is over. He made one eagle, had a good look at another and shot a 5-under 66 to join Jamie Lovemark, Vaughn Taylor and Kevin Tway atop the leaderboard.

Woods, a runner-up at the PGA Championship two weeks ago, didn't do anything great or anything bad and shot a 71, leaving him in a tie for 60th.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1963 — The Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pa. is covered by ABC's Wide World of Sports for the first time.

1988 — Minnesota North Stars forward Dino Ciccarelli is sentenced to one day in jail and fined \$1,000 for hitting another player with his stick.

2007 — The NFL indefinitely suspends Michael Vick without pay after he acknowledged that he did bankroll gambling on dogfighting and helped kill some dogs.

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