

EAST OREGONIAN

SPORTS

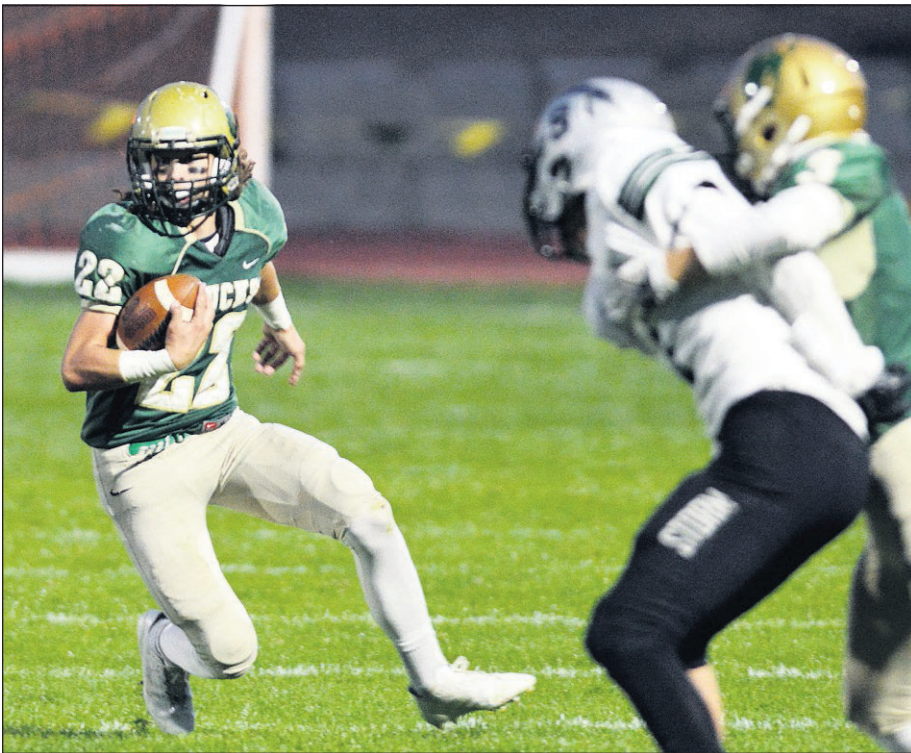
SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 2018

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER @EOSPORTS

1B



Staff photo by Kathy Aney
Weston-McEwen's Katie Vescio challenges Jessica Neal of Central Linn during the 2A 800-meter run at the 2018 OSAA State Track and Field championships at Hayward Field in Eugene. Track and Field is still the most popular girls sport in Oregon, with more than 7,200 participants in the 2017-18 season.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Pendleton's Shawn Yeager (22) rushes the ball in the Bucks' 2017 loss to Summit. Football remains the most popular sport in Oregon with more than 12,000 participants in 2017-18, though the number has dropped 17 percent in the last 10 years.

Prep sports participation drops

Oregon participation hits a five-year low in 2017-18, football declines again

East Oregonian

Participation in high school sports was down in the state of Oregon for the 2017-18 season, with the number dipping below 100,000 for the first time since 2012-13.

The National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations released its annual nationwide athletics participation report on Friday, where it reported that there were 99,907 total participants in Oregon athletics last year — 55,572 boys and 44,335 girls. All three numbers are down from the previous year, with 102,762 participants — 57,651 boys and 45,111 girls.

It is a continued trend of fewer boys and more girls participating in athletics, however, as girl participa-

tion has risen six percent since the 2009-10 season, while boys participation has dropped 7.5 percent.

The most popular sport in the state was football yet again with 12,419 players between the 11-man and 8-man ranks; however, that total is down 17 percent from the 15,009 players from 2008. Rounding out the top five for most popular boys sports were track and field (9,526), basketball (7,620), soccer (6,397) and baseball (5,596).

While football's decline grabs the headlines, baseball and boys golf continued its troubling, and surprising, drop-offs. In baseball, participation has dropped each of the past four seasons, from 6,071 in 2015 to 5,596 last season, and it has dropped 17 percent from 2008 when 6,766 kids played.

Meanwhile, golf's 2017-18 participation number of 1,464 is down 32 percent since 2008 when 2,162 kids teed off.

Track and field keeps its spot as the most popular girls sport with 7,289 players, which is a 11 percent

increase over the past 10 years. Following track is volleyball (7,086), basketball (5,824), soccer (5,398) and softball (4,568).

Girls swimming was the only major team sport in the state that saw an increase in participation last season, with 2,685 swimmers increasing from the 2,512 in 2016-17.

Nationally, boys and girls participation increased for the 29th consecutive year and reached an all-time high of 7,979,986, with 3,415,306 girls and 4,564,680 boys.

Football is still king, as well, even as the numbers continue to drop. There were 1,034,942 kids playing 11-man football last season, down from the 1,057,382 participants in 2016 and down seven percent from the 1,112,303 kids that played in 2008.

Soccer was the biggest gainer nationally for the boys, with 6,128 more participants last season, while competitive spirit had the biggest gain for the girls with 18,426 more participants.

The most popular sport in the state was football yet again with 12,419 players between the 11-man and 8-man ranks

MARINERS BASEBALL

Seattle starts road trip with a win

Diaz earns team-record 49th save

By JOSE M. ROMERO
Associated Press

PHOENIX — Mitch Haniger hit his 21st homer and had three hits, Mike Zunino added a solo shot, and the Seattle Mariners beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 6-3 on Friday night.

Edwin Diaz pitched a scoreless ninth for his major league-leading 49th save, helping Seattle keep pace in the AL West and wildcard races. Diaz set a club record for saves in a season, passing Fernando Rodney's 48 in 2014.

Haniger, an All-Star who made his major league debut with the Diamondbacks in 2016 before being traded to Seattle, added two singles and scored twice.

Mariners starter Erasmo Ramirez (1-2) turned in his longest outing of the season, allowing one earned run and six hits with six strikeouts and a walk. Ramirez dropped his ERA from 5.49 to 4.56.

Zack Godley (13-7) allowed



AP Photo/Rick Sauter
Seattle Mariners catcher Mike Zunino (3) and Edwin Diaz celebrate after the Mariners defeated the Arizona Diamondbacks 6-3.

MLB

Mariners
6

D-Backs
3

and Dee Gordon's hustle to plate four runs in the third inning. Gordon led off with a double, and with one out, his delayed steal attempt led to Godley's overthrow of third base and allowed Gordon to score.

Former Diamondback Jean Segura singled in a run, Denard Span hit an RBI double and Kyle Seager's sacrifice fly made it 4-0

five runs and seven hits in five innings.

The Mariners used a pair of doubles, three singles, a sacrifice fly

See MARINERS/3B

SEAHAWKS FOOTBALL

Seahawks still winless in NFL preseason

Vikings rally in fourth quarter for Friday night victory

By DAVE CAMPBELL
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Kirk Cousins helped Minnesota's offense make some progress by passing for 182 yards in the first half, and third-stringer Kyle Slotter threw for two fourth-quarter touchdowns as the Vikings rallied for a 21-20 victory over the Seattle Seahawks on Friday night.

Sebastian Janikowski kicked field goals from 35 and 55 yards in the first half for the Seahawks, who kept their starters in past halftime. Russell Wilson led one scoring drive against the vaunted Vikings defense, finishing 11 for 21 for 118 yards.

Out of sync in their previous game, Cousins and the Vikings assembled three possessions of 12 or more plays despite some

disruptions by the Seahawks. Cousins went 17 for 28 without a turnover, and running back Dalvin Cook had two carries to complete his recovery from reconstructive knee surgery last season.

Vikings rookie Daniel Carlson, who just won the kicker job this week when seventh-year veteran Kai Forbath was released, pulled two 42-yard field goal attempts wide left in the first half, one on each side of the field.

The mention of a missed kick against the Seahawks still makes Vikings fans wince, three seasons after Blair Walsh's 27-yard try went, yes, wide left in the play-off game on a below-zero afternoon in Minnesota. Walsh spent last year with Seattle, struggled anew and was not brought back. The 40-year-old Janikowski, having edged out Jason Myers for the job, has taken over.

Rookie punter Michael Dickson, who beat out stalwart Jon Ryan this week, was just as sharp

See SEAHAWKS/3B

Sports shorts

Hawaii faces Georgia for US title at LLWS

SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT, Pa. (AP) — Those who had hoped to see a rematch of last week's 11-inning thriller between Hawaii and Georgia at the Little League World Series got their wish.

The two teams will meet again Saturday, this time with a championship berth on the line. The winner of the game for the U.S. title will face the victor of Japan and South Korea on Sunday.

As Hurricane Lane nears landfall back



home, Hawaii is making the most of its dream 4,000 miles away in South Williamsport. The team, which hails from Honolulu, is undefeated through three games and has outscored its opponents 20-3. Coming off of an impressive 10-0 victory over New York's Staten Island, Hawaii has all of its pitching available and is the only team on the American side of the bracket with more than one home run.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1922 — In one of the wildest games ever played, the Cubs beat the Phillies 26-23. The Cubs led 25-6 in the fourth inning, but held on as the game ended with the Phillies leaving the bases loaded.

2011 — The New York Yankees become the first team in major league history to hit three grand slams in a game, with Robinson Cano, Russell Martin and Curtis Granderson connecting in a 22-9 romp over the Oakland Athletics.

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