

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2019

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL | NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

CLEMSON ROUTS 'BAMA



AP Photo/Ben Margot

Clemson's Justyn Ross makes a one-handed catch in front of Alabama's Josh Jobe during the second half of the NCAA college football playoff championship game on Monday in Santa Clara, Calif.

Trevor Lawrence passes for 347 yards, three touchdowns as No. 2 Tigers roll

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP College Football Writer

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — With stunning ease — and a freshman quarterback — Clemson toppled college football's greatest dynasty again to become the first perfect playoff champion.

Trevor Lawrence passed for 347 yards and three touchdowns and the second-ranked Tigers beat No. 1 Alabama 44-16 on Monday night in the College Football Playoff national championship game.

In the fourth consecutive playoff meeting between the Tigers and Tide, Clemson evened the series and beat 'Bama for the national championship for the second time in three seasons. Clemson is the first team

in the AP poll era, dating back to 1936, to finish 15-0.

Coach Nick Saban and the Tide (14-1) were looking for a sixth national championship in 10 years, trying to add to an already unprecedented run in the sport. Instead, Clemson crushed Alabama, becoming the first opponent to beat the Tide by more than 14 points since Saban became coach in 2007.

Coach Dabo Swinney's Tigers sealed their status as a superpower, no longer just 1A to Alabama's 1.

Two seasons ago it was Deshaun Watson dethroning the Tide with a last-second touchdown pass. Clemson's new star quarterback didn't need the late-game heroics. The long-haired Lawrence cut through Alabama's defense with the help of another fabulous freshman. Justyn Ross made a

juggling grab, a one-handed snare and broke a 74-yard touchdown about midway through the third quarter that made it 37-16 and had Swinney high-stepping down the sidelines.

Ross, who scored two touchdowns in the semifinal rout of Notre Dame, had six catches for 153 yards against his home-state team.

Swinney takes a different approach than Saban, running a more fun-loving program than Alabama's all-business organization. But the results have been every bit as good. And on Monday night at Levi's Stadium, in a championship game played more than 2,000 miles away from Clemson's South Carolina campus, the Tigers were way too much for an Alabama team that had spent the season mauling its opposition by an average of 31 points per game.

Sharp-shooting Kamiakin takes down Dawgs

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

After a hot start to the season, the Hermiston Bulldogs have cooled off.

Winners of seven on a row to open their first season in the Mid-Columbia Conference, the Bulldogs have dropped three conference games in a row, the latest being a 67-51 road loss Saturday to Kamiakin.

"I don't think we were ready to play," Hermiston coach Casey Arstein said. "I thought they didn't play with any energy. I was disappointed in our attitude. It was an ugly game to coach and an ugly game to watch."

Steven Westermeyer had 19 points, and Messiah Jones added 17 to lead the Braves, who improved to 4-3 in MCC play.

"We had good flow, shared the ball and played to our strengths," Kamiakin coach Brian Meneely said. "We were able to make some outside shots and have balance in our offense. Trey (Arland) and Steve made some jumps shots that opened things up for us."

The Bulldogs (8-3 overall, 4-3 MCC) were a bit undersized compared to the Braves, who averaged 6-foot-4 among their starting five, but they were able to match Kamiakin point for point in the first quarter.

Ryne Andreason scored seven of his team-high 19 points in the first as the teams were tied at 13.

Andreason poured in nine points in the second quarter, but the Bulldogs would trail 32-30 at the half as Jones and Westermeyer each had six points to pace the Braves.

"I thought (Andreason) was really good in the first half," Meneely said. "We moved Messiah to him, and tweaked some things to make it harder on him. They are a really good team. Casey does a

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Hazel, Toure lead Kamiakin past Hermiston

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

Alexa Hazel and Oumou Toure have been the face of the Kamiakin girls basketball team since they were freshmen.

In their final season, the dynamic duo still is turning heads and scoring baskets. The two combined for 44 points Saturday, as the Braves ran past Hermiston 62-26 in a Mid-Columbia Conference game in Kennewick.

"Holy smokes," Hermiston coach Juan Rodriguez said. "A team like that exposes you in so many areas. They are very athletic and they get in the passing lanes. I am disappointed that they got easy baskets off of turnovers, and layup after layup."

Hazel had a game-high 23 points — 16 combined in the middle quarters — while Toure, who has signed to play basketball at Butler University, had 21.

"They work well together," Kamiakin coach Lane Schumacher said of his top players. "Oumou has been special for us for four years. She is really talented, and they work well together. Alexa is a four-year starter, and when her shots are falling she is hard to stop."

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Mustangs take off for two wins over Weston-McEwen

By BRETT KANE
East Oregonian

Only one team would emerge 3-0 in the Blue Mountain Conference after Saturday. The other would leave with their first league loss.

In the end, the Heppner boys pulled away in the second quarter to down host Weston-McEwen 48-33.

"We knew it was going to be extremely tough," said Mustangs coach Jeremy Rosenbalm. "They (Weston-McEwen) were going to come out with fire after their Stanfield win on Friday (the TigerScots beat Stanfield 62-47 on the road). It was going to be a dog fight."

The TigerScots held the lead for

the opening four minutes before Heppner hit eight unanswered points to close the first quarter 10-6. The Mustangs then went on a 10-point run in the second quarter to leave the TigerScots behind for good.

"I challenged my team on defense, and they accepted it," Rosenbalm said. "We really ramped it up. I couldn't be more proud."

Senior Trent Smith sparked Heppner's second quarter rally. The 5-foot-8 shooting guard hit six straight points to put the Mustangs out of reach. Heppner would go on to score 10 more points and allow only eight for a 28-14 halftime advantage.

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Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Two TigerScots, Theo White and Andrew Gambill, battle for the ball with Logan Burright, of Heppner, during Saturday's league game in Athena.

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