AAU basketball tournament invades Hermiston this weekend

By ANNIE FOWLER East Oregonian

Nearly every between Umatilla and Echo will be in use Saturday and Sunday as the 16th annual Best of the West AAU basketball tournament tips

According to Hermiston High School athletiic directory Larry Usher, who helps coordinate the event, there will be 119 boys and girls teams playing nearly 300 games on 17 courts. The teams will range from second to eighth grade.

"We will use all 12 gyms in the Hermiston School District, Umatilla High School, Echo's two gyms, and Stanfield High School and elementary," Usher said. "We have 20 teams from the Boise area, local teams, and teams from Lewiston, Clark-ston, Spokane, Portland, Seattle, the Tri-Cities and the Yakima area."

Teams pay a \$230 entry fee that helps pay for facilities and officials.

It is the third of four AAU tournaments held in the area, with one more coming Feb. 9-10.

The events have a big economic impact for the region, with families staying in hotels, eating out, buying gas and shopping.

Each tournament brings about 1,100 players, around 4,000 people, and pumps roughly \$400,000 to the local communities.

The cost per day to watch games is \$6 for adults and \$4 for children and seniors.

3A District Bowling

Hermiston will host the 3A district girls bowling tournament Friday Desert Lanes.

Action will begin at 2 p.m. The top team, and the top two bowlers, not on the winning team, will advance to state.

The state tournament will be held Jan. 31-Feb. 1 at Narrows Plaza Bowl in University Place.

BMCC swept by Spokane at home

By ANNIE FOWLER East Oregonian

A sluggish first half cost the Blue Mountain women on Monday in a 70-47 NWAC East Division loss to Spokane in Pendleton.

Spokane jumped out to a 28-16 lead over the Timberwolves (2-14)overall, 0-6 East), then held BMCC to a meager three points in the second to take a 44-19 lead at the

CCS (15-4, 4-3) held BMCC scoreless the last 5:03 of the second quarter.

Shania Graham had 14 points, including a 3-for-3 performance from beyond the arc, for Spokane in the

Chloe Morrison scored all eight of her points in BMCC's 14-point third wille Gerlinger had eight of her team-high 15 points in the fourth quarter.

Brooke Wheeler added 13 points and 14 rebounds for the Timberwolves, who have lost 12 consecutive games. Ammarea Broncheau (Weston-McEwen) chipped in six

points and five rebounds. Koyama Young led CCS with 18 points and 10 rebounds. Graham had 16 points and three assists, and Alexia Novelli 10 points and nine rebounds.

SPOKANE 83, BMCC 73 — Dante Clayton scored 12 of his 19 points in the second half, but it wasn't enough to help the Timberwolves overtake the Sasquatch in an NWAC East Division battle in Pendleton.

BMCC (4-13 overall,

2-4 East) led 8-7 early in the first half, then scored just two points over the next three minutes as Spokane went out front

The Timberwolves came back to tie the score at 18, and then took a 20-18 lead on a layup by Bryson Pierce (Pilot Rock). BMCC would lead 27-26 with 6:50 to play, but that would be its last lead of the game.

Spokane (15-5, 6-1), which led 41-37 at the half, extended its lead to 59-50 mid-way through the second half.

BMCC would pull within 63-60 with 6:27 remaining, but would get no closer as Spokane pulled away.

Mekhi Foreman (Pendleton) added 14 points and handed out 10 assists for the Timberwolves. Jeremiah Hillard had 12 points and five assists, and Dylan Grogan (Stanfield) 10 points, 15 rebounds and five assists.

Dedrick Pakootas had a game-high 23 points, six rebounds and six assists for Spokane, which has won three games in a row. Isaiah Gotell added 12 points, and Garrett White 11 points and eight rebounds.

Women's Game

Spokane 28 16 16 10 — 70 BMCC 16 3 14 14 — 47 SPOKANE — Graham 16, Young 18, Olson 6, Ostrowski 9, Novelli 10, Anderson 3, Blair 2, Bearcub 2, Cox 4. BMCC — Broncheau 6, Morrison 8, Gerlinger 15, Munoz 5, Wheeler 13.

Spokane 41 42 — 83 BMCC 37 36 — 73 SPOKANE — Pakootas 23, Gotell 12, McCliment-Call 2, White 11, Delgado 8, Parker 10, Alstrom 7, Stith 3, Cox 7. BMCC — Clayton 19, Foreman 14, Grogan 10. Hillard 12, Pierce 2, Garza 4, Hibbard-Brooks 12.

BRIEFLY

Big River Golf Men's Club accepting handicap applications

Umatilla's Big River Golf Course has opened handicap applications for members of the Men's Club.

Scores can be posted starting on Friday, February 1, which has been moved up from its original Friday, March 1 date. Big River encourages early sign-ups. Each application comes with a \$45 fee.

Additionally, Senior Blues sign-ups are now available for men aged 50 and older. There is a \$90 fee for the

Applicants with any questions can call the Big River Pro Shop at 541-571-0572.

Blazers: Fall to the Thunder

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Nurkic and going for a layup to extend Oklahoma City's lead to 117-108 with 2:17 left. Westbrook capped the win with a pair of ferocious dunks in the final 1:24.

Oklahoma City led almost all the way—trailing for less than 30 seconds —

Hermiston Raceway unveils 2019 schedule

By BRETT KANE East Oregonian

After an action-packed 2018 season, the Hermiston Raceway is preparing to burn even more rubber this year.

A total of 14 events are slated for this year's season, including the last-minute addition of the Chump 300 Enduro on the Roval — a race in which the oval track is altered to detour into a paved section in the infield at the back of the course.

"That way, our racers aren't just turning their cars right the entire time," said owner Greg Walden.

Walden promises this season will continue to "revive the facility" and "bring action-packed, pavement-pounding racing" to Hermiston.

The schedule kicks off on Saturday, April 20 with the Raceway's Saturday Night Thunder event. The race will include appearances from Washington's Wesco Sprint Cars, the Quinn Preston Memorial Bombers and Road Hogs, and competitions with drivers in the raceway's six standard categories.

Two double-header events are also slated in May and August, including the Hermiston debut of the Labor Day Spectacular, which runs from Saturday, August 31 to Sunday, September 1. The weekend will feature modified races from the Intermountain Outlaw Modified Series, Intermountain Winged Sprint Car Series, and the Northwest Super

Late Model Series in their only Hermiston appearance for the season.

"It should be a great year," Walden said. "We gained a lot of interest last year. We have a plan for improvement, and we're on the right track."

Gates for Saturday Night Thunder open at 4:30 p.m., with races commencing at 6 p.m.

Saturday, April 20 — Saturday Night Thunder, 4:30 p.m. Saturday, May 4 —

Northwest Mini Stock Tour, 4:30 p.m. Saturday, May 18 — Best

of the West, 4:30 p.m. Friday, May 31 — North American Big Rigs Semi

Trucks, 5:30 p.m. Saturday, June 1 —

tion, 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, June 15 -Hometown Heroes, 4:30 p.m. Saturday, June Thunder on the Hill,

4:30 p.m. Saturday, July 6 — Intermountain Outlaw Modified

Series, 4:30 p.m. Saturday, July 20 — Washington Midget Racing

Association, 4:30 p.m. Saturday, August 31 — Open Wheel Thunder, 4 p.m. Sunday, September 1 -

Atomic Screenprinting 125, 4:30 p.m. Saturday, September 7 — Hometown Heroes Champi-

onships, 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 28 - Fall Brawl, 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 12 — Chump 300 Enduro on the Northwest Figure 8 Associa- Roval, 4:30 p.m.

Hall: Rivera first unanimous HOF pick

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homers against Mussina and 8 for 18 (.444) against Halladay.

"Especially early in my career, I got two strikes on Edgar, and the third one never showed up," Rivera

Martinez got just 36.2 percent of the vote in his first ballot appearance in 2010 and fell as low as 25.2 percent in 2014 — the cutoff for induction is 75 percent. With a push from the sport's analytics community and a hearty social media campaign, Martinez made major progress in recent votes, including 70.4 percent in 2018.

"Some of the sabermetrics really helped," Martinez said.

Rivera is baseball's career saves leader with 652. With a steady demeanor and a fearsome cut fastball, he won five World Series over 19 seasons with the New York Yankees. He was always at his best in October, getting 42 saves with a 0.70 ERA over 16 postseasons, including 11 saves in the World Series.

Barry Bonds and Roger Clemens made gains but again fell short in their seventh times on the ballot. Bonds got 59.1 percent and Clemens 59.5, cases muddied by steroid accusations.

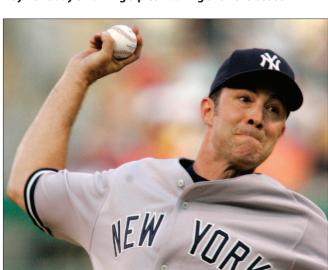
Rivera grew up in Panama the son of a fisherman. He signed with New York in 1990, debuted in the majors as a 25-year-old in 1995 and a vear later emerged as one of the game's best relievers. Part of a core that included Derek Jeter, Andy Pettitte and Jorge Posada, Rivera helped the Yankees win four World Series from 1996-2000 and another in 2009.

"The scouting report was the same every time," Jeter wrote at The Players' Tribune. "Mo knew he was going to throw that cutter. The guy at the plate knew he was going to throw that cutter. Fifty thousand plus at Yankee Stadium knew he was going to throw that cutter. And it wouldn't matter."

The Yankees didn't even wait until Rivera's final game to retire his No. 42 - he was the last player in the major leagues to wear that number, grandfathered to him when No. 42 was retired in honor of Jackie



Roy Halladay throwing a pitch during the 2013 season in Philadelphia.



AP Photo/Gene J. Puskar, File

Mike Mussina throws during a baseball game in Pittsburgh in the 2008 season.

Robinson in 1997.

"Wearing No. 42, representing Jackie Robinson, I assume he was the first No. 42 elected," Rivera said. "To be the last No. 42 elected to the Hall of Fame, and unanimously, is amazing.'

Though his music taste skews more Christian rock than heavy metal, Rivera toed the Yankee Stadium rubber to Metallica's "Enter Sandman" for much of his "The Sandman" career. became synonymous with the song's foreboding guitar riff, and the Rock & Roll Hall of Famers performed it live at Yankee Stadium in 2013 before one of Rivera's final home games.

Like all the bats he sawed off with that dastardly cutter, Rivera shattered an 83-year-old standard with his selection. Ruth, Young and the game's other early stars fell short of unanimous

election in the first ballot in 1936 because of a backlog of worthy candidates. With the bar set so high, some writers began leaving worthy firstyear players off their ballots. Halladay, an ace with the

Toronto Blue Jays and Philadelphia Phillies, got 85.4 percent and will be the first posthumous inductee since Deacon White in 2013 and Ron Santo in 2012. Halladay died in November 2017 at 40 years old when an airplane he was flying crashed into the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Florida. He won two Cy Young Awards, one each with Toronto and Philadelphia, before ending his career in 2013 at 36 years old due to back injuries.

The right-hander was a first-round draft pick by Toronto in 1995, debuted in the majors in 1998 and struggled terribly until being demoted to the minor

leagues in 2001. With the help of sports psychologist Harvey Dorfman, Halladay reinvented himself and became an All-Star in 2002, then won 22 games and an AL Cy Young in 2003.

In an era marked by pitch counts and early hooks, Halladay was a workhorse. Since 2000, Halladay's 65 complete games are by far the most in the majors — Livan Hernandez is second at 39.

Mussina was a steady right-hander for the Yankees and Baltimore Orioles who went 270-153 with 2,813 strikeouts over 18 seasons. He received 76.7 percent, getting seven more votes than the 319 required for election. "Moose" and his nasty knuckle curveball also got a push from the advanced numbers. He felt lucky to get 20.3 percent in his first ballot in 2014 but steadily gained support.

Mussina's 3.68 ERA will be the third highest in Cooperstown behind Jack Morris (3.90) and Red Ruffing (3.80), but writers gave him a break for pitching in the slugger-heavy AL East, with its cozy ballparks.

"You know they're small or hitter friendly, it's just how it was," Mussina said. "I just kept trying to make adjustments.'

Bonds, Clemens and Schilling may get their best shot at the Hall in 2021, when no first-time candidates are odds-on favorites. Jeter heads the newcomers on the 2020 ballot.

Preps: Ione boys score first Big Sky League victory

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Girls hoops

POWDER VALLEY **51, ECHO 30** — The Big Sky League isn't getting any easier for the Cougars as they were handed their ninth league loss on Monday.

The Cougars were ahead 8-7 in the first quarter, but Powder Valley sprinted ahead in the second for a 22-15 halftime lead. They outscored Echo 16-4 in the third to ensure the game was theirs.

Echo was led by Faith when the Huskies made a

McCarty with 10 points and Tylene Skillman with eight.

The Cougars (2-16, 1-9 BSL) travel to Horizon Christian on Friday.

ELGIN 42, MAC-HI 28 — The Pioneers' hardfought battle at Elgin ended with a nonleague defeat on Tuesday.

Mac-Hi tied the Huskies 7-7 in the first quarter and trailed by just two points at halftime. They rallied to outscore Elgin 11-10 in the third quarter, but the game

slipped away from them

in the final eight minutes,

19-6 run to put the game out of reach.

Ally Marly led the Pioneers with seven points and shot 100 percent from the field. Courtney Breeding and Kayla Casillas each added five.

Mac-Hi (1-17, 0-3 GOL) resumes play in the Greater Oregon League on Saturday with a home game against

IONE 57, MITCHELL/ SPRAY 19 — The Cardinals claimed an easy Big

Sky League win at home on

Tuesday. The Ione girls (14-2, 9-0

BSL) sit at the top of the league standings. They'll host Dufur on Friday.

RIVERSIDE IRRIGON 19 — Riverside picked up their second Eastern Oregon League victory on Tuesday at home. Brendy Avalos had 10

points for the Pirates, and Faith Rosen added six. Ana Zacarias, JaLay Burns, and Alyssa Luna each scored five points for Irrigon.

Riverside (10-8, 2-3 EOL) travels to Umatilla on Friday. The Knights (11-8, 2-4 EOL) will host Umatilla on Thursday.

but Portland never let the Thunder become comfortable. Through three quarters, only once did the Thunder push its lead to double digits.