

ON TOP OF HIS GAME

Mekhi Foreman worked hard to be one of BMCC’s best shooters, and still isn’t done

By **BRETT KANE**
East Oregonian

Today, Mekhi Foreman is being eyed by basketball teams from Greenville University, Corbin, and Okanagan in British Columbia.

This year, he’s averaged 30.5 points per game as a 6-1 point guard with the Blue Mountain Timberwolves for his first and only season, and was selected to play in the Northwest Athletic Conference All-Star game in Everett, Washington.

But it wasn’t easy getting there.

Getting started

Born and raised in Pendleton, Foreman first picked up a basketball when he was 3 years old. From there, he played in local youth leagues, and has always known that basketball was the sport for him.

“I knew right from the jump,” said Foreman, 20. “But it was tough.”

Foreman suffers from beta thalassemia, a blood disorder that limits the amount of oxygen carried throughout the body. But he’s never let that slow him down.

“Of course, there are times where I just want to stay in bed,” he said, “but I always make myself get up and keep going.”

Foreman sought to continue his basketball career through high school, but the obstacles didn’t stop coming.

As a sophomore at Pendleton High, he was afflicted with osteochondritis dissecans of the knee, and he tore the meniscus on his left leg in the summer prior to his senior year. He would have two knee surgeries before he was finally able to try out for the Bucks varsity team.

But he never once started a game.

“I just kept working,” Foreman said.

After high school, he was a redshirt at Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario as a freshman.

“It just wasn’t a good fit for me,” he said of his time as a Chukar. “Honestly, I wasn’t able to grow there.”

Joining the pack

Foreman then transferred to Blue Mountain back in his hometown, but wasn’t able to join the basketball team until he accumulated his fall term credits.

Even that didn’t keep him from playing with the Timberwolves in any way he could.

“Even though he couldn’t



Pendleton native Mekhi Foreman led the Timberwolves in scoring this season, averaging 30.5 points per game. Foreman was also chosen to play in the Northwest Athletic Conference All-Star game in Everett, Wash.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

play a game with us yet, he still came to every practice,” said BMCC head coach Doug Baxter. “That set him above and beyond the rest. He was our best practice player.”

Foreman was finally able to join the team once the preseason had finished and NWAC play began.

If you ask Foreman or Baxter, they’ll both tell you that the NWAC’s East Region is among the toughest in the conference.

The Timberwolves finished the season at the bottom of the region’s standings with a 2-14 record in league play.

“The East Region is crazy,” Foreman said. “Every team goes at you. Everyone wants that open No. 4 spot in the standings.”

But Foreman still showed the conference what he was made of.

The Timberwolves squared off against the North Idaho Car-

dinals twice in the season, and lost both times. The Cardinals would go on to take the No. 1 spot in the East Region.

During their second meeting, Foreman sunk a career-high 40 points — accounting for nearly half of his team’s final score (Blue Mountain lost 128-85).

“He played really well against us. He was good off the bounce,” said North Idaho

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PREP SPORTS

Roseburg keeps early lead to outlast Bucks

Bucks baseball falls to Indians in Red Lion Buckaroo Classic matchup

By **BRETT KANE**
East Oregonian

All it took was a home run and an RBI for Roseburg to get the best of Pendleton on Monday night.

In day one of the Red Lion Buckaroo Classic, the Bucks baseball team couldn’t manage a run as they lost 2-0 to the visiting Indians.

“Roseburg is a great team. They’re always tough on us,” said Bucks catcher Justin Duso. “They have a good command over their fast ball.”

Indians pitcher Jace Stoffal threw all seven innings, striking out 14 and walking just one to swiftly take care of the Bucks. Meanwhile, Pendleton managed just four hits, but could never make it home.

“If we had hit better tonight, it would have been a different game,” Duso said.

At the top of the second, Indians senior Zack Mandera led off with a home run over the left field fence to take the lead early on. Juniors Doran Gillespie and Jett Black would follow up with deep fly balls, but Bucks center fielder Gabe Umbarger grabbed both of them.

In inning three, Roseburg junior Luke Van Norman singled on a ground ball to left field, and advanced to second on a sacrifice bunt from junior Spencer Six. Junior Caden Johnson would drive him home on the next at-bat.

“Defensively, we had a good game,” Duso said. “They only got two runs — one on a home run. We handled their batting well.”

Bucks senior Matthew Demianew and sophomore Tucker Zander would advance to second and third base respectively at the bottom of the third, but the Indians got three straight outs on the following three Bucks batters to strand them.

“Roseburg pitched really well tonight,” said Pendleton pitcher Chris Large. “We weren’t ready for it.”

Four more scoreless innings would pass as the Indians made off with the win.

Demianew led the Bucks’ offense, going 2 for 2 at the plate

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Oregon State advances to Sweet 16 with 76-70 win over Gonzaga

By **ANNE M. PETERSON**
Associated Press

CORVALLIS — Mikayla Pivec had 19 points, 11 rebounds and six assists, and fourth-seeded Oregon State withstood No. 5 Gonzaga for a 76-70 victory on Monday night in the second round of the NCAA Tournament.

The Beavers (26-7) will travel across country to Albany to face top-seeded Louisville, which defeated No. 8 Michigan 71-50 on Sunday.

Destiny Slocum, Taya Corisdale and Maddie Washington and Aleah Washington added 12 points apiece for Oregon State, which is headed to the Sweet 16 for the fourth straight season.

Zykera Rica finished with 20 points for Gonzaga (29-5). Chandler Smith added 13.

Trailing 50-49 going into the final quarter, Gonzaga took a 55-53 lead on Rice’s layup, but Goodman got one on the other end for the Beavers to tie it with just

over six minutes left. The teams traded baskets until Washington’s layup put Oregon State in front 59-57 with 3:46 to go.

After Rice tied it up again with a pair of free throws, Pivec made a layup and a free throw to give the Beavers a 62-59 lead. Chandler Smith scored for the Zags before Corisdale’s 3-pointer made it 65-61 for Oregon State with under two minutes left.

Rice made things interesting with a 3-pointer that cut the gap to 74-70 with 4.6 seconds on the clock but ultimately the Bulldogs couldn’t catch up.

The Zags, ranked No. 16 in the AP’s final Top 25 of the season, were making their 11th NCAA Tournament appearance, and third straight. The Bulldogs’ best finish was an Elite Eight appearance in 2011. They’ve made the round of 16 four times.

Gonzaga downed No. 12 seed Little Rock 68-51 in the opening round on Saturday. Katie Campbell had 15 points, hitting five

3-pointers while Rice added 18 points and six rebounds.

Oregon State’s first-round game against No. 13 Boise State didn’t go so smoothly. The Beavers, ranked No. 11 in the final AP poll, eked out an 80-75 overtime win, led by Pivec with 20 points and 12 rebounds.

It’s Oregon State’s sixth straight visit to the NCAA Tournament. In addition to their four consecutive appearances in the round of 16, the Beavers advanced to the Final Four in 2016.

The Bulldogs were shaken in the West Coast Conference tournament, losing senior starter Laura Stockton and reserve guard Jill Townsend to season-ending injuries.

Jessi Loera started for the second straight game in place of Stockton, the daughter of Gonzaga great John Stockton, who watched from the bench in street clothes. Townsend was also courtside on crutches.

Both Townsend and Stock-



AP Photo/Amanda Loman

Oregon State’s Mikayla Pivec (0) looks for a way through Gonzaga’s Jessie Loera (15) and LeeAnne Wirth (4) during the first half of a second-round game of the NCAA women’s college basketball tournament in Corvallis on Monday.

ton were injured during the West Coast Conference tournament.

The injuries were not the only blow to Gonzaga in recent weeks. Coach Lisa Fortier lost her brother to complications from

muscular dystrophy on March 13. Fortier left Gonzaga’s bench in the final quarter of the team’s loss to BYU in the WCC championship game to be by his side in the hospital.