

Top ropers, riders will compete in Hermiston

Seniors Trent Sorey, Jacee Currin and Jaiden Mahoney lead Intermountain team

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

Livestock was being delivered and contestants were bringing in their horses Thursday at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo Arena in Hermiston. Jacee Currin of Heppner rolled in with six horses for the annual Intermountain High School Rodeo Association event that will run Friday through Sunday. The rodeo will feature junior high and high school competition, with competitors coming from all over Oregon. Action begins Friday morning with the state finals in boys and girls cow cutting. Admission is free.

Friday will feature the state finals in cow cutting at 10 a.m., followed by the first round of the junior high rodeo at 5 p.m.

Saturday will feature the first round of the high school rodeo at 9 a.m., with junior high action at 5 p.m.

The second round of high school action will begin at 9 a.m. Sunday.

Hermiston is stop No. 5 on the seven-rodeo circuit. Ropers and riders earn points with each run or ride, with the top 20 in each event advancing to the state finals in June in Prineville. From there, the top four will move on to nationals.

The Intermountain group, which has athletes from Umatilla and Morrow counties, has three seniors, all of whom will continue their rodeo careers in college.



Seniors Trent Sorey of Pendleton, and Heppner's Jacee Currin (center), and Jaiden Mahoney, will compete Friday through Sunday at the high school rodeo in Hermiston.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Jacee Currin

Currin, who helped the Mustangs win a state 2A basketball title in March, will compete in just about every event this weekend that does not involve rough stock or steers. She will open with the cow cutting, an event that was near and dear to her great aunt, Jean Barbouletos.

"She was really into it, but it took me a long time to get the hang of it," said Currin, who leads the standings with a 1½-point lead over Lexi Harrell of Baker. "I have really good trainer, which helps."

Goat tying and breakaway roping are two of her favorite events. Currin leads the standings in goat

tying by six points over Brooklin Quinsberry of Roseburg.

"Goat tying takes a lot of work and a lot of practice," Currin said. "I have a really good horse, IRS (she was born on April 15), who took me to nationals in junior high and high school, but she got hurt last year."

Currin now rides IRS' daughter Nila.

"Last year at nationals we had a little oops, but we were just starting," Currin said. "Hopefully, we are over that."

Currin brought six horses to Hermiston, including cutting horse Buttercup, and barrel horse Flaxy.

"Consistency is key in high school rodeo," she said. "They all have their specialty."

Currin will carry on the family tradition of attending Montana State. Her brother Kolby already is there, and her parents Steve and Lianne met there in college while on the rodeo team.

Trent Sorey

Sorey, a senior at Pendleton, was the quarterback for the Bucks during their run to the state semifinals in the fall, and also has roped at the famed Pendleton Round-Up.

This spring, he finds himself atop the tie-down standings with 47 points.

Dillon Young of Redmond, who has signed play football at Eastern Oregon University, is second with 39 points.

"Fall was a lot better than spring has been, but there is a lot of spring left," Sorey said. "Tie-down competition varies. There are some darn tough kids who play other sports and are competitors. You have to draw good cattle to win. I have drawn pretty well. What separates the good from the best, is the best can draw anything and win."

Sorey also will team rope with Brady White from Burns. The pair is ranked fifth.

"Things have been going good," said Sorey, who will

ride his paint horse Spot in the event.

Sorey will attend Weatherford College, Weatherford, Texas, where he will major in agri-business. His scholarship includes full tuition, fees and books.

"Down there, they rope tough," Sorey said. "You want a chance to rope with the best and get better. To learn and get better with those guys is exciting. And the weather there is nice, which gives you more time to practice."

Jaiden Mahoney

The Heppner senior, who is headed to Washington State, will compete in the barrels, breakaway roping and team roping this weekend.

Like Currin, Mahoney saw her top barrel horse McGraw (named after singer Tim McGraw) go down last spring.

"We foaled him on the ranch, and I started using him in the seventh grade in poles," Mahoney said. "From eighth grade to last spring, I used him for everything."

Now, Mahoney will try her luck on Duke in barrel racing, and Dixie in team roping (with her younger brother Blane) and breakaway roping. She is ranked 10th in barrels and 11th in breakaway.

"I'm in a building year," Mahoney said. "I'm working with my horses. I have no expectations. It takes a lot of rodeo runs to get in sync and build a relationship with your horse."

In college, Mahoney will ride under the WSU flag, but will compete as an independent and practice on her own.

She plans on majoring in animal science, and would like to be a veterinarian.

NFL

Seahawks enter NFL draft with scarcity of selections

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — Forgive Seattle general manager John Schneider for being a bit antsy going into this NFL draft. In fact, the Seahawks boss may be downright annoyed at having just four picks.

Seattle's four selections entering the draft — picks in the first, third, fourth and fifth rounds — are on track to be the fewest the Seahawks have ever made, behind making five picks in 1994 and 1997. The Seahawks' first selection is set to be at No. 21 in the first round, but no one expects them to stay there. It's not Schneider's style, and especially in a year when moving back once, twice, maybe even three times could land Seattle the second- and third-day picks it truly covets.

But for now, it's just four spots Schneider has to fill. For all the jokes he may tell about wanting to put a sticker up saying "Duane Brown" when the second round comes around and there's no pick for Seattle to make, the lack of picks entering the draft is unlike anything Schneider and his staff have faced in their tenure.

Seattle has never made fewer than eight selections during Schneider's regime.

Seattle lost its second-round pick when it acquired Brown from Houston during the 2017 season. Its sixth-round pick was sent to Green Bay last summer for backup quarterback Brett Hundley, and its seventh-round pick was traded to Oakland for safety Shalom Luani.

What makes it more troubling for Seattle to swallow is the apparent success of last year's draft. Seattle found itself starters in cornerback Tre Flow-



AP Photo/Bruce Newman, File

In this Sept. 22, 2018, file photo, Mississippi wide receiver D.K. Metcalf (14) makes a touchdown catch ahead of Kent State cornerback Darryl Marshall (30) in the third quarter of an NCAA college football game at Vaught-Hemingway Stadium in Oxford, Miss. Metcalf is a possible pick in the 2019 NFL Draft.

ers, punter Michael Dickson and tight end Will Dissly, and saw flashes of potential from running back Rashaad Penny and pass rusher Jacob Martin.

As it stands now, the Seahawks don't have the depth of picks to miss on any of their selections.

Here are other things to watch about the Seahawks draft:

Trading Places

The Seahawks have made a billion draft trades during Schneider's tenure. That's an exaggeration, but Seattle is typically one of the more active teams during the draft try-

ing to acquire more picks in specific segments.

They may be even more active this year because of the lack of picks. That No. 21 selection in the first round very likely could become a spot later in the round or more likely early in the second so Seattle can land more mid-round selections. Seattle hasn't chosen in its original first-round position since 2011, when it selected offensive lineman James Carpenter.

In each of the past three years Seattle has made three trades during the draft to either grab more picks or move up in later rounds.

Champion Patriots open vs. Steelers

By BARRY WILNER
AP Pro Football Writer

NEW YORK — The NFL's 100th season will begin with its most classic rivalry and feature the Super Bowl champion Patriots hosting Pittsburgh in the first Sunday night game.

As previously announced, NFL 100 will kick off with Green Bay at Chicago for the 199th meeting of a series that began in 1921. That Sept. 5 game in the Thursday night slot usually reserved for hosting by the NFL champ forced New England to open three nights later.

The Patriots have a home schedule loaded with top attractions, including Kansas City on Dec. 8 in an AFC title game rematch, and Dallas on Nov. 24.

Monday night's doubleheader on ESPN will feature Houston at New Orleans and Denver at Oakland.

"We know every year there seems to be a last-to-first story," said new Broncos coach Vic Fangio, the Bears' defensive coordinator last season. "We were that in Chicago last year. I suppose a lot of teams counted us as a win last year. Every season is a new season and the order they choose for us to play them in, we'll play them in."

Week 2 includes an

intriguing Monday night matchup of Cleveland at the New York Jets. The very first Monday nighter was a Browns win over Joe Namath and the Jets in 1970. This one will feature the return to the Meadowlands for now-Browns receiver Odell Beckham Jr., and two young, potential star quarterbacks in Cleveland's Baker Mayfield and New York's Sam Darnold.

National broadcasts rarely have included the downtrodden Browns, but they're a popular choice this year: Cleveland will have four prime-time games, also facing the Rams, San Francisco and archrival Pittsburgh.

Every team will have at least one national TV appearance. New England, Pittsburgh, Kansas City, Green Bay, Seattle and the Rams get the maximum prime-time games, five.

The traditional Thanksgiving Day games will have Detroit at home to Chicago, then Buffalo at Dallas. The night game to close the holiday schedule will be New Orleans at Atlanta in another long-time rivalry.

The NFC champion Los Angeles Rams will host Cincinnati in London for one of five international games on the 2019 schedule. The Rams and Bengals will face off at Wembley Stadium on Oct. 27.