

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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Pendleton 10U softball defends state title

By **BRETT KANE**
East Oregonian

PORTLAND — Before Pendleton's 10U Little League All-Star softball team hit the field on Tuesday to defend its state title, it knew one player stood in their way.

Hope Ashbrook.
The South Beaverton Fury pitcher had just taken Pendleton down earlier in the week, hurling 17 strikeouts for a 10-1 victory in pool play. But the All-Stars knew what to expect from them on Tuesday, when

they played the Fury once again in a championship contest in Portland.

The All-Stars would end up making a critical fourth-inning rally to take South Beaverton down 9-7, successfully defending its 10U state title on Tuesday.

"She's probably the fastest pitcher we've faced so far this season," Pendleton coach Jason VanNice said of Ashbrook. "She dominated. They were a little intimidated by (Ashbrook). We knew we'd have to face her again if we made the finals. We had to come out fired up."

And they did just that.

Katelyn Boatman and Kelsi Primus got Pendleton on the board with RBI singles in the top of the first.

"Those singles really helped our dugout realize that we had a shot against this team if we came out ready to play," VanNice said.

South Beaverton returned to knot the score at 4-4 in the bottom of the third with a three-RBI single, but Pendleton wouldn't stay down for long.

In the top of the fourth, Brianna Medrano sent a 2-2 pitch

towards second base, driving in a pair of runs. Primus followed with her game's second RBI single, and scored on a wild pitch two at-bats later. The comeback put the All-Stars up 8-4.

"(South Beaverton) played as expected — we just eliminated our mistakes," VanNice said. "They were ready for us. We came out a little more aggressive. We were good at getting runners on base, and when we do that, we cause problems

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AP Photo/Sean Meagher
Portland Timbers' Zarek Valentin, left, and Orlando City's Robinho vie for control of the ball during the first half of Thursday's MLS soccer game in Portland.

Timbers tie Orlando City 1-1

MLS



Portland
1

Orlando City
1

By **ANDY BUHLER**
Associated Press

PORTLAND — Jeremy Ebobisse scored on a header in the 83rd minute soon after subbing in to give the Portland Timbers a 1-1 tie with Orlando City on Thursday night.

Jorge Moreira crossed from the right wing to Sebastian Blanco, who lowered to flick a header behind him to the open Ebobisse.

The Timbers (7-8-5) are unbeaten in their last four regular season games. They outshot Orlando (7-9-6) 26-2.

Santiago Patino scored for Orlando off of a deflection in the box from Moreira in the 44th minute. Moreira intended to clear a cross out of the box, but it went right to Patino's feet in the middle of the box.

The Timbers played short-handed in the back. Marco Farfan was injured in a 2-2 draw with Colorado on Saturday, a game in which center back Julio Cascante was given a one-game suspension for a red card. Outside back Jorge Villafana also is working his way back from injury.

Orlando City goalkeeper Brian Rowe finished with three saves. In a crowded box, Blanco got off a left-footed shot on the ground in the 17th minute, but missed wide right. In the 37th minute, Blanco headed Diego Valeri's cross from the left wing, and though it got past Rowe's outstretched arms, it hit the crossbar and bounced close enough for Rowe to corral. Rowe blocked another shot on goal in the 43rd, a near-post low line drive by Brian Fernandez.

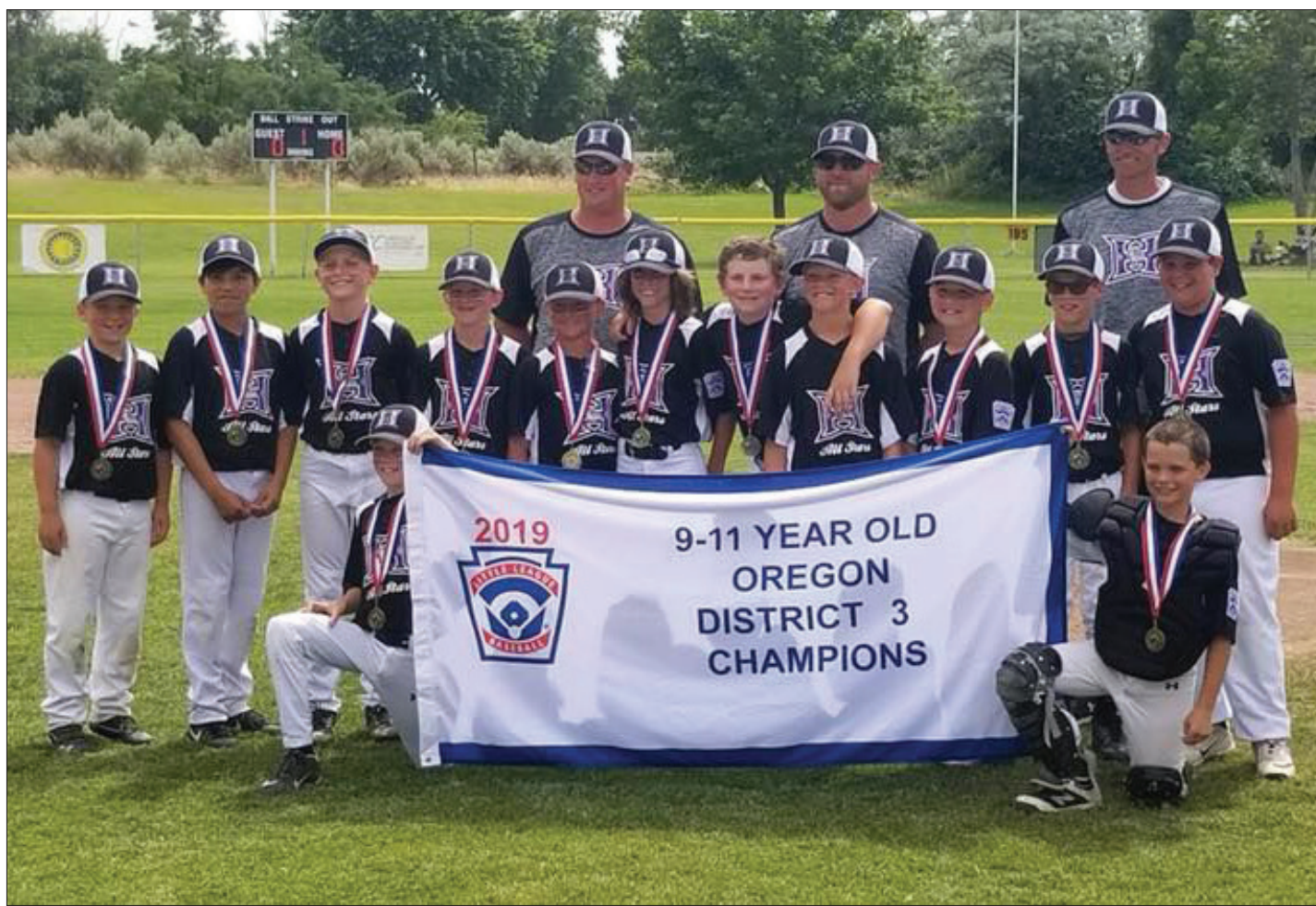


Photo courtesy of Hermiston Little League

The Hermiston 9-10-11 Little League team opens state play against Southeast Portland on July 20 in Klamath Falls. The team includes: front row (from left) Cougar Philippi and Hunter Link. Middle row: Brocc Haagenon, Ruben Mendez, Brody Woodard, Quinn Warner, Camden Venoy, Lane Simmons, Ryder Wilson, Evan Hays, Carter Waelty, Barrett Stanek and Wyatt Larson. Back row: coaches Blake Philippi, Justin Simmons and Kirby Warner.

Hermiston Little League opens state play Saturday

Hermiston will play Southeast Portland in its first game

By **ANNIE FOWLER**
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Hermiston coach Justin Simmons said it has been difficult to keep his Little League team engaged this past month in waiting for the 9-10-11-year-old state tournament, but with its first game approaching Saturday, the team is ready to go.

"It was hard to take that much time off," said Simmons, whose team won the District 3 title June 26 with a 4-1 win over Pendleton. "We would go hard for two or three days, then let them have a four-day weekend to let them be kids in the summer."

Hermiston will open play at 9:30 a.m.

Saturday against Southeast Portland in Klamath Falls.

Other first-round games include Lake Oswego vs. Hollywood-Rose City, Bend North vs. Sprague, and host Klamath Falls vs. Grants Pass National.

The opening ceremonies are at 5 p.m. today.

The Hermiston team has been together for two years and Simmons said team chemistry is one of its strengths.

"They are really tight and they genuinely care about each other," Simmons said. "They care about baseball and doing Hermiston proud."

There are no super stars on the Hermiston team, according to Simmons. In fact, not one player has a home run to his credit.

"We have a bunch of utility players," Simmons said. "They can play anywhere, and they all are a vital part of our team."

Like most baseball coaches, announc-

ing a starter was not something Simmons was ready to do just yet.

"We have four guys, that if they are on the hill, we have our best games. Our horse on the mound is Ryder Wilson. In big games, if Ryder pitches well for us, we have a bit more of an edge."

Though the tournament is for 9-11 year olds, the Hermiston team has no 9-year-olds on its roster.

"We rely on our 11-year-olds to set the pace," Simmons said. "They take the lead and the rest of the team follows."

Simmons, a graduate of Hermiston High School, shares coaching duties with Blake Philippi, a graduate of Riverside High School, and Kirby Warner, who graduated from Crook County.

"They are good friends," Simmons said. "Kirby and I played baseball together at Lane Community College. It's awesome to have a group of coaches who care about the team and the game as much as I do."

SPORTS SHORTS

FIFA claims progress in letting women attend games in Iran

ZURICH (AP) — FIFA says Iran's soccer federation supports letting women attend 2022 World Cup qualifying games of its men's national team, though government approval is still needed.

FIFA is working with Iranian authorities to overcome a ban on women entering stadiums for men's games since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Some women were allowed to watch the Asian Champions League final in Tehran

last November when FIFA President Gianni Infantino also attended.

FIFA wants the issue resolved before Oct. 10 when Iran — the top-ranked team in Asia — hosts its first home World Cup qualifier against Cambodia. The next is March 26 against Hong Kong.

Soccer's world body says Iran federation president Mehdi Taj has replied to Infantino saying "the matter has been taken up directly with the minister of sports and youth."



French President Emmanuel Macron, right, and FIFA President Gianni Infantino, left, congratulate United States' Megan Rapinoe, center, after the Women's World Cup final soccer match between U.S. and The Netherlands in the Stade de Lyon in Decines, outside Lyon, France, on July 7, 2019.

AP Photo/Alessandra Tarantino, File