

Basketball:

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Graduation gutted the roster, and when assistant coach Ryan Sams took the head coaching job at Nixyaawii Community School, his two sons, Dakota and Greyson, went with him.

“Graduating nine seniors and losing the Sams boys leaves us pretty depleted,” Pendleton coach Zach Dong said. “We are trying to find guys to fill roles. We have athletes, it’s a matter of getting them in the right places. We are in a rebuilding mode.”

Dong was left with two returning players — senior guards Tucker Zander and Nic Sheley — but when it rains, it pours.

Zander, who has signed to play baseball at Eastern Oregon University, opted not to play basketball so he could focus on summer baseball. Sophomore Payton Lambert also took the baseball route.

“I can’t fault them for that,” Dong said.

The Bucks open their season on May 25, hosting Crook County at 6:30 p.m.

Sheley will be joined by senior Blake Swanson and junior Andy Oja from the junior varsity team.

“Andy is our best player, but he clipped a hurdle in track and fell and broke his arm,” Dong said. “We don’t have him right now, but hopefully by the last week or two of the season.”

The Bucks will turn to 6-foot-4 sophomore Easton Corey to bang inside, and talented freshman Ben Jennings to add depth, along with senior Ethan Carey, juniors Jacob Devereaux and Jayden Minthorn, sophomore point guard Gauge Rueber, and Lyle Soaring Eagle, a transfer from Nixyaawii.

“We are going to be young, for sure,” Dong said. “We are actually going to go for an hour (May 23), then (May 24), then throw a product out on the floor. We will see what happens.”

Mission: The A’s are also to visit Las Vegas

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Are the A’s actually serious about moving?

Meaning, is this a bluff?

That’s become the question to ask. Because it may very well prove that we’re all being used here. Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf said she’s committing to keeping the A’s. The city council is expected to review another stadium proposal in July. But the A’s are apparently discouraged enough with the landscape to stop privately talking and begin taking sight-seeing road trips.

Las Vegas will likely offer to build the A’s a new stadium. It will throw financial incentives at the baseball club, find investors willing to partner on the real estate, and attempt to add the A’s to its growing stable of professional sports offerings. Goodman will be the project manager, because at this point she’s essentially the entire A’s to Las Vegas pitch.

Portland has some disadvantages it needs to shore up. Ones I’ve written about that need more careful examination. Our downtown needs a massive and immediate clean-up effort. Our city and state politicians also need to study the “Goodman Effect” in Vegas and ask whether we’d be interested in adding a multi-billion-dollar entity to our region. The A’s to Portland would bring massive construction, real estate development, housing, infrastructure, jobs and tax revenue.

If the MLB franchise really is on the move, this feels like a Portland vs. Las Vegas battle. Right now, because of the aforementioned issues, I’d probably make Portland a six-point underdog. But that’s something our city could easily overcome with adjustments. It would require going all-in along with the smart, well-funded effort already underway. We’d



Portland Diamond Project/Contributed Rendering

The Portland Diamond Project released new renderings of their proposed MLB stadium.

also need a distinct and noticeable pivot from city and state leadership.

The Portland Diamond Project has some preferred stadium sites, owns ballpark renderings, and already has an estimated \$2 billion-plus in financial commitments. The group has solid momentum and has positioned itself as either a relocation or expansion candidate. (The more I think about it, maybe the line should only be Portland +3?) Team Goodman’s “Pleasure Island” pitch will be difficult to resist at first glance, but if I’m the Oakland A’s I’m tired of being treated like a second-class franchise.

The A’s have to ask themselves where they’d rank among the entertainment offerings if they moved to Las Vegas. Not in front of the NHL’s Golden Knights or the NFL’s Raiders. They’d again be second-tier. Probably just after the Knights/Raiders and somewhere just above the Blue Man Group and UNLV athletics. Also, they’d be playing games when it’s 114 degrees outside.

In Oregon, the A’s would be the summer headliner.

MLB’s regular season works nicely in contrast to the Trail Blazers’ (October to April) NBA regular season. Baseball isn’t likely to cannibalize the success of the Timbers and Thorns, either. There’s a finite amount of local corporate sponsorship dollars but we’re essentially the most underserved sports market in the country.

It should be noted that there’s a difference between event “attendees” in Las Vegas and “fans” in Portland at play here. The A’s might draw a crowd in Vegas. But they’d get a fan base in Portland. I’m not sure the fact finding visit will capture how much untapped enthusiasm there is in Oregon for another major league sport.

Also, the potential TV rights contract for market No. 21 (PDX) would be stand to be more lucrative than No. 39 (LAS). Currently, six MLB clubs claim Las Vegas in their broadcast “territory” rights. That will be a headache to unravel. Only the Seattle Mariners — three hours away by car — currently claim Portland.

I have to think families from Eugene, Corvallis,

Bend and other parts of the state would make regular outings to downtown Portland to catch a weekend A’s series. They’d stay in hotels, visit restaurants and help revitalize the city. But I’m getting ahead of myself now. We’ll remain underdogs until the city is cleaned up and the politicians actively support MLB to PDX.

The news here is that the A’s are coming to Portland to kick the tires. They’ll visit with the Portland Diamond Project partners and probably get an aerial tour of the city. There’s no more strategic way to see the Portland right now. The wonderful potential of our city, now a sleeping giant, has to be part of the pitch.

The A’s are going to visit Las Vegas this week. I hope they have a nice trip, see a show, and think about whether they’d matter much amid the noise. It’s a growing city with great night life and memorable pool parties. But no way is Las Vegas the best place for the A’s franchise. Not as long as Portland is in play.

John Canzano is a columnist with The Oregonian.

LOCAL STANDINGS

Through games played May 24

MEN’S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

NWAC EAST DIVISION

Team	League	Overall
Wenatchee Valley	10-1	10-1
North Idaho	4-1	5-1
Columbia Basin	6-3	7-3
Walla Walla	4-4	4-6
Spokane	6-7	6-7
Big Bend	4-5	5-7
Yakima Valley	3-4	5-4
Treasure Valley	2-7	2-7
Blue Mountain	1-8	1-8

WOMEN’S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

NWAC EAST DIVISION

Team	League	Overall
Big Bend	11-1	11-1
Walla Walla	9-1	9-1
Spokane	5-2	6-2
Wenatchee Valley	5-3	5-3
North Idaho	2-2	2-3
Columbia Basin	5-6	5-6
Treasure Valley	3-6	3-6
Yakima Valley	1-8	1-8
Blue Mountain	0-12	0-12

COLLEGE BASEBALL

NWAC EAST DIVISION

Team	League	Overall
Spokane	22-4	29-7
Yakima Valley	23-7	23-7
Big Bend	16-6	17-9
Columbia Basin	14-10	18-14
Treasure Valley	9-17	9-17
Wenatchee Valley	6-18	6-18
Walla Walla	4-14	4-14
Blue Mountain	4-22	4-24

COLLEGE SOFTBALL

NWAC EAST DIVISION

Team	League	Overall
North Idaho	22-4	23-4
Walla Walla	15-7	19-7
Big Bend	10-7	10-11
Columbia Basin	10-10	10-10
Treasure Valley	8-12	10-16
Wenatchee Valley	5-14	5-14
Yakima Valley	4-12	7-17
Spokane	3-11	4-15
Blue Mountain	0-0	0-0

COLLEGE MEN’S SOCCER

NWAC EAST DIVISION

Team	League	Overall
Blue Mountain	6-0-3	6-0-3
Wenatchee Valley	4-4-2	4-4-2
Columbia Basin	4-3-1	5-3-1
North Idaho	3-4-1	3-5-1
Spokane	2-2-3	2-2-3
Treasure Valley	0-6-0	0-6-0
Walla Walla	0-0-0	0-0-0

COLLEGE WOMEN’S SOCCER

NWAC EAST DIVISION

Team	League	Overall
Walla Walla	6-2-4	6-2-4
Columbia Basin	6-2-3	6-2-3
Spokane	5-0-3	5-0-3
Blue Mountain	4-4-0	4-4-0
Yakima Valley	2-5-4	2-5-4
North Idaho	1-4-3	1-4-3
Treasure Valley	0-7-1	0-7-1
Wenatchee Valley	0-0-0	0-0-0

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL

5A INTERMOUNTAIN CONFERENCE

Team	League	Overall
Pendleton	0-0	0-0
Hood River Valley	0-0	0-0
Redmond	0-0	0-0
The Dalles	0-0	0-0
Ridgeview	0-0	0-0
Crook County	0-0	0-0

4A/3A MID-COLUMBIA

Team	League	Overall
Kamiakin	5-0	5-0
Walla Walla	4-1	4-1
Richland	4-2	4-2
Hanford	3-2	3-2
Kennewick	3-2	3-2
Chiawana	3-2	3-2
Hermiston	1-5	1-5
Southridge	1-5	1-5

Pasco 0-5 0-0

3A EASTERN OREGON LEAGUE

Team	League	Overall
Burns	0-0	0-0
Nyssa	0-0	0-0
Vale	0-0	0-0
Umatilla	0-0	0-0
Riverside	0-0	0-0
Irrigon	0-0	0-0

2A BLUE MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE

Team	League	Overall
Heppner	0-0	0-0
Weston-McEwen	0-0	0-0
Pilot Rock	0-0	0-0
Stanfield	0-0	0-0
Grant Union	0-0	0-0
Union	0-0	0-0
Enterprise	0-0	0-0

1A BIG SKY LEAGUE

Team	League	Overall
Bickleton	0-0	0-0
Condon/Wheeler	0-0	0-0
Dufur	0-0	0-0
Echo	0-0	0-0
Horizon Christian	0-0	0-0
Ione/Arlington	0-0	0-0
Klickitat/Glenwood	0-0	0-0
Lyle/Wishram	0-0	0-0
Mitchell/Spray	0-0	0-0
Sherman	0-0	0-0
South Wasco County	0-0	0-0
Trout Lake	0-0	0-0

1A OLD OREGON LEAGUE

Team	League	Overall
Cove	0-0	0-0
Elgin	0-0	0-0
Griswold	0-0	0-0
Imbler	0-0	0-0
Joseph	0-0	0-0
Nixyaawii	0-0	0-0
Pine Eagle	0-0	0-0
Powder Valley	0-0	0-0
Wallowa	0-0	0-0

PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL

5A INTERMOUNTAIN CONFERENCE

Team	League	Overall
Pendleton	0-0	0-0
Hood River Valley	0-0	0-0
Redmond	0-0	0-0
The Dalles	0-0	0-0
Ridgeview	0-0	0-0
Crook County	0-0	0-0

4A/3A MID-COLUMBIA

Team	League	Overall
Richland	5-1	5-1
Kamiakin	4-1	4-1
Pasco	4-1	4-1
Kennewick	3-2	3-2
Hermiston	3-3	3-3
Hanford	2-3	2-3
Southridge	2-4	2-4
Chiawana	1-4	1-4
Walla Walla	0-5	0-5

3A EASTERN OREGON LEAGUE

Team	League	Overall
Burns	0-0	0-0
Nyssa	0-0	0-0
Vale	0-0	0-0
Umatilla	0-0	0-0
Riverside	0-0	0-0
Irrigon	0-0	0-0

2A BLUE MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE

Team	League	Overall
Heppner	0-0	0-0
Weston-McEwen	0-0	0-0
Pilot Rock	0-0	0-0
Stanfield	0-0	0-0
Grant Union	0-0	0-0
Union	0-0	0-0
Enterprise	0-0	0-0

1A BIG SKY LEAGUE

Team	League	Overall
Bickleton	0-0	0-0
Condon/Wheeler	0-0	0-0
Dufur	0-0	0-0
Echo	0-0	0-0
Horizon Christian	0-0	0-0
Ione/Arlington	0-0	0-0
Klickitat/Glenwood	0-0	0-0
Lyle/Wishram	0-0	0-0
Mitchell/Spray	0-0	0-0
Sherman	0-0	0-0
South Wasco County	0-0	0-0
Trout Lake	0-0	0-0

1A OLD OREGON LEAGUE

Team	League	Overall
Cove	0-0	0-0
Elgin	0-0	0-0
Griswold	0-0	0-0
Imbler	0-0	0-0
Joseph	0-0	0-0
Nixyaawii	0-0	0-0
Pine Eagle	0-0	0-0
Powder Valley	0-0	0-0
Wallowa	0-0	0-0

Track:

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including the MCC title, where her leap of 18-1 broke the school record of 17-10½, set by Mariah Delepierre in 2011. Young also was an honorable mention pick

for the 100 meters.

“That girl has been waiting and dreaming for a big jump,” Strot said. “It was something she and I knew was coming. I’m glad she got to go out on a high note.”

Young was the only Hermiston girl on the first team, but Bailey Young was a second-team pick for the

shot put (41-10¼). There also were several athletes sprinkled throughout the honorable mention team.

“Two years ago, it was a rough year,” Strot said of the Bulldogs’ first year in the MCC. “We had two make all conference. This year, when I saw the list, we had boys and girls all over the place.

It’s a testament to the kids, our program and the work they have put in. It was exciting to see.”

Walla Walla senior Ella Nelson, who has signed to run at University of Oregon, was named the Track Athlete of the Year, while Hanford junior Katelynn Gelston was the Field Athlete of the Year.

2021 BUTTE CHALLENGE

5K RUN, 5K WALK AND 10K RUN

Saturday, June 5th 8:30am

All races begin and end at Butte Park

DOOR PRIZES!

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

Online registration and race information can be found at www.ButteChallenge.com Register online by May 22nd to order a custom technical race T-Shirt.

Free kids race for youth 10 and under @ 8 AM (no registration)

All proceeds benefit the Hermiston Cross Country Program

Thank you for your support!

EAST OREGONIAN
Hermiston Herald

ON THE SLATE

Schedule subject to change

TUESDAY, MAY 25

Prep boys basketball
Crook County at Pendleton, 6:30 p.m.
Umatilla at Stanfield, 7:30 p.m.
Pilot Rock at Riverside, 7:30 p.m.
Irrigon at Heppner, 7:30 p.m.
McLoughlin at Weston-McEwen, 7:30 p.m.
Cove at Griswold, 6 p.m.

Prep girls basketball

Pendleton at Crook County, 7 p.m.
McLoughlin at Weston-McEwen, 6 p.m.
Irrigon at Heppner, 6 p.m.
Pilot Rock at Riverside, 6 p.m.
McLoughlin at Weston-McEwen, 6 p.m.
Prep bowling
Kennewick at Hermiston, 3:30 p.m.
College men’s basketball

Blue Mountain at Treasure Valley, 6:30 p.m.
College women’s basketball
Blue Mountain at Treasure Valley, 4:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 26

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