

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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Pendleton's Reilly Lovercheck kicks the ball Thursday, Sept. 23, 2021, during the Bucks 3-2 win over the Redmond Panthers at Pendleton High School. Lovercheck is closing in on the school's record for career goals and goals in a season.



Photos by Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian  
Pendleton's Kelsey Lovercheck drives the ball up the sideline Thursday, Sept. 23, 2021, during the Bucks 3-2 win over the Redmond Panthers at Pendleton High School. The win moved the team to 4-0.



Luke Ovgard/Contributed Photo

A black bullhead catfish.



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## Bullish on bullheads

Few fish are as overlooked and maligned as the bullhead catfish. These diminutive slimeballs represent a total of seven species concentrated in a native range primarily within the Southeastern United States: black bullhead, brown bullhead, flat bullhead, snail bullhead, spotted bullhead, white catfish and yellow bullhead.

I grew up catching brown and yellow bullhead in Oregon, but I found the other, less widely introduced species over the years. Blacks came first in Utah and then again in Texas. Whites came first from Washington, D.C., and then California, Illinois and Alabama. Spotted came from Florida's panhandle. Finally, flats and snails came from North Carolina to complete my set, and I sort of forgot about them afterward.

After all, they've been introduced far outside their range and are highly invasive — particularly in Oregon — where they displace the native sculpins that fill a similar ecological niche but reach only a fraction of the size of the bullheads.

Though I spent plenty of summer nights fishing for bullheads in my home waters, it was always because there was nothing better available. It was also more of a social event than serious fishing. We'd make a small fire on the gravel or muddy bank, soak some worms, roast some marshmallows with friends and kill every one of the invasive mudcats we caught to save its weight in native fishes. Some of my friends ate them, but that's a mistake I only made once or twice. In the less-than-pristine waters we always caught them, they tasted muddy, the meat often covered in parasites.

It wasn't until I was 30 years old, fishing in Florida this year, that I realized some people not only seriously pursue them, but actually prize them.

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Luke Ovgard/Contributed Photo

A brown bullhead catfish hooked in Florida.

# DOUBLE TROUBLE

Twins Kelsey and Reilly Lovercheck potent duo in Pendleton sitting at 4-0

By ANNIE FOWLER  
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Reilly and Kelsey Lovercheck have been playing soccer since they were 5 years old. That's 13 years the identical twins have been confusing youth coaches, high school coaches and opposing coaches.

Pendleton High School coach Kiana Rickman, who started with the Bucks last year, still has moments when she gets the two confused, but she's come to real-

ize it doesn't matter who is who, they will get the job done on the field.

"I had seen them play their sophomore year, I knew there were two of them," Rickman said. "They are very connected. If one is not wearing glasses, I mix them up."

Both girls have been starters since they were freshmen, but Reilly is the one who gets a little more glory as the team's leading scorer the past three years. This season, she leads the team with

nine goals in three games.

Reilly also has two hat tricks this season, has been the team's leading scorer the past two seasons. She is sneaking up on the school records for career goals and goals in a season.

"Ultimately, my goal is to do as well as we can," Reilly said. "The records are a side quest, but it would be pretty cool. I would not be there without my wonderful coaches and teammates to play the beautiful game with."

A big part of the Bucks getting

off to a 4-0 start to the season is Kelsey's unselfish move of going from left wing to midfield. This has helped strengthen the middle of the field of play.

"I really do like being in an offensive position, but I knew being in the midfield was best for the team," said Kelsey, who is the older of the two by 5 minutes. "We wouldn't be where we are now. We are undefeated because we learned to work as a team."

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## OSAA panel weighing proposals for classifications



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian, File

Griswold's Ellery Flerchinger spikes the ball as two Pilot Rock defenders attempt to block during a game on Aug. 26, 2021 in Helix. Griswold beat Pilot Rock in four games. The Oregon School Activities Association is considering changes to the classifications system.

By JERRY ULMER  
OSAAtoday

WILSONVILLE — Proposals for both six and five classifications remain under consideration for the Oregon School Activities Association classification and districting committee, which began meeting last month.

The OSAA sent updated drafts of both proposals to the schools on Sept. 17, as it moves forward in the plan for the four-year time block that begins in 2022-23.

The committee revised the drafts after meeting Sept. 13. It will meet again Oct. 11, Nov. 1 and Nov. 22 before presenting a final recommendation to the executive board Dec. 13.

"We're still looking for feedback from schools," OSAA Executive Director Peter Weber said. "We haven't gotten a ton, but we anticipate that we'll get some more because

we're heading for the halfway point of the process."

The six-classification proposal would keep schools from Bend and the Salem area together in the 6A Mountain Valley Conference. The five-classification plan would have the Bend schools in a conference with those from the Eugene area and southern Oregon.

Representatives from Salem schools testified about remaining in a league with Bend schools.

"They're not in favor of going to Bend," Weber said.

Under the five-classification proposal, the Metro League would add Lake Oswego, Lakeridge, Tigard and Tualatin. The big-school classification would have 62 schools, among them current 5A football powers West Albany, Wilsonville, Silverton and Thurston.

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### SPORTS SHORT

## Contract personnel announced for National Finals Rodeo

East Oregonian

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — The Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association on Wednesday, Sept. 22, announced the contract personnel for the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo and the National Finals Steer Roping.

For the eighth time in nine years, two of the announcers for the Wrangler NFR remain the same. Randy Corley and Wayne Brooks will be on the microphone for the 10 nights Dec. 2-11 in Las Vegas. Announcer Roger Mooney will join them.

Corley, who has worked the Farm-City Pro Rodeo for more than 25 years and was inducted into the ProRodeo Hall of Fame in 2017, will be making

his 20th NFR appearance while it will be the 10th of Brooks' career. Mooney will be making his third appearance at the NFR and second in a row.

Livestock superintendent John Barnes makes his 15th consecutive Wrangler NFR appearance, according to the announcement. The chute bosses are Tony Amaral for timed events and Tom Neuens for roughstock.

Sunni Deb Backstrom, who was inducted into the ProRodeo Hall of Fame in 2021, is the NFR secretary, marking the 16th year in a row she has been selected.

Timers are Shawna Ray, making her second NFR trip in a row; Michelle Corley, who is making her first appearance as a timer; and Molly Twitchell,

also making her NFR debut as a timer. Benje Bendele, who is the music man at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo, is the music director.

At the NFRS at the Kansas Star Arena in Mulvane, Kansas, Nov. 12-13, Doug Mathis and Jody Carper will handle the announcing duties. This is Mathis' second appearance at the NFRS and Carper's seventh.

Also according to the announcement, Chute boss John Gwatney is back for his 12th consecutive trip, and the arena usher is Dalton Ward, who is making his first appearance. The NFRS secretary is Mikey Jo Duggan, who is making her third trip. The timers are Sandy Gwatney and Tammy Braden.



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

Bareback rider Kaycee Feild, of Genola, Utah, rides Toy Soldier to win the day with a score of 86.5 points at the Pendleton Round-Up on Sept. 17, 2021. Feild will be making his 12th trip to the National Finals Rodeo in December.