

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2021

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER @EOSPORTS | FACEBOOK.COM/EOSPORTS

B1

Bulldogs ready to run

Hermiston teams seeking trips to 3A state championships

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — If everything falls into place as Hermiston cross-country coach Troy Blackburn believes they can, he will be taking the boys and girls teams to the state championships.

The Bulldogs will run Saturday, Oct. 30, at the District 8 3A/4A Cross-country Championships at Wandermere Golf Course in Spokane. The top three teams and top 21 runners will advance to state.

“They are pretty tough,” Blackburn said of the Spokane schools. “According to the standings, there are four of them ahead of us. Our guys are just as good as their third or fourth team. I think we can take that third spot to go to state.”

Mead and North Central are the top two Spokane schools, with Cheney in the mix.

Among the top runners are Mead senior Brycen Gardner, who ran under 15 minutes at the Max Jensen Richland Invite on Oct. 9 in Walla Walla, and Brody Hartley from Walla Walla, who has been one of the Mid-Columbia Conference’s top 3A runners all season.

See Bulldogs, Page B3



Troy Blackburn/Contributed Photo

Hermiston won the Mid-Columbia Conference 3A title last week, and looks to snag a spot to state at the District 8 3A/4A Cross-country Championships on Saturday, Oct. 30, 2021, in Spokane. From left, Zach Turner, Carson Bradshaw, Pedro Pacheco, Grant Anderson, Jaysen Rodriguez, Logan Springstead, Miguel Duron and Johnny Mills.

TOP OF HIS GAME



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Dillon George poses for a portrait Friday, Oct. 29, 2021, at Wildhorse Golf Course in Mission. George, a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, won the men’s division at the Native American Open on Oct. 23-24.

Pendleton’s Dillon George wins Native American Open golf tournament

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

SANTA ANA PUEBLO, N.M. — A few years have passed since Dillon George was teeing off for the Pendleton High School golf team, but the 2015 graduate hasn’t lost his touch.

George won the men’s division at the Native American Open on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 23-24, shooting a 150 over 36 holes on two courses. The second-place finisher shot a 159.

“I play in quite a few Native American Opens,” George said. “I have won a few of them before, but this was the first one in New Mexico. It has been a lot of fun. A lot of Native American cultures can find common ground even though we don’t share the same tribe. We do have common traditions and beliefs.”

George, a member of the Confederate Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, won a gold medal and prize money for his efforts.

George shot a 71 during the first round at Twin

Warriors Golf Club, and a 79 during the final round Oct. 24 at the Santa Ana Golf Club.

“The second day, that course played pretty tough,” George said. “The winds were up and the pins were in some tough locations. It was the first time I had played that course and I was a little hesitant on some of the tee shots.”

Out of high school, George, 24, played two years of golf for Walla Walla Community College, then he headed to Arizona State University, where in May he earned his bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering.

George did not play golf at ASU, but he said, “I still play quite a bit of golf, especially back here” and enters amateur tournaments.

He was entered in a tournament at Wildhorse Golf Course in September that his parents Gary and Kelly George hosted, but tightness in his back forced him to withdraw.

“I was happy to get out there,” George said of the New Mexico tournament. “I spent a lot of time rehabbing my back and stretching. I think the next tournament is in early February in Southern California.”

Until then, George has his hands full as an assistant coach for the Pendleton High School girls soccer team. He also plans to return to Arizona in hopes of finding a job.

Dillon was a three-sport athlete for the Bucks, playing golf, soccer and basketball.

In golf, he went to state his sophomore, junior and senior years. His junior year, he tied for 28th with a 164.

The Bucks went to state his senior year in basketball. They went 0-2, but played a thrilling consolation-round game.

“The second game we played went four overtimes,” he said. “That was crazy.”

Pendleton lost that game to Churchill 67-64.

In 2015, he was awarded the Damon Flagg Memorial Award and Scholarship.

This award and scholarship is presented to the Pendleton High School graduating senior who has dedicated himself to basketball, academics and community service throughout his four years of high school.

ON THE SLATE

Saturday, Oct. 30

Prep volleyball

1A state tournament: Umpqua Valley Christian at Echo, 1 p.m.

2A state tournament: Portland Christian at Stanfield, 1 p.m.

Prep girls soccer

District 8 playoffs: Hermiston at Southridge, 1 p.m. (loser out)

College football

Carroll College at Eastern Oregon, 1 p.m.

Prep cross-country

Hermiston at District 8 3A/4A Prep cross-country Championships, Spokane, TBD

College men’s soccer

Eastern Oregon at Evergreen State, 12:30 p.m.

College women’s soccer

Eastern Oregon at Evergreen State, 3 p.m.

College volleyball

Oregon Tech at Eastern Oregon, 5 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 31

College men’s basketball

Eastern Oregon at Gonzaga, exhibition, 1 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 3

College men’s wrestling

Eastern Oregon vs. Wyoming Community College, American Falls, Idaho, TBA

Thursday, Nov. 4

Prep volleyball

District 8 playoffs: Hermiston vs. TBD

Friday, Nov. 5

College volleyball

Blue Mountain at Wenatchee Valley, 6 p.m.

Eastern Oregon at Northwest, 7 p.m.

College cross-country

Eastern Oregon at Cascade Collegiate Conference Championships, TBA

College men’s basketball

Eastern Oregon at Whitman, 7 p.m.

College women’s basketball

Whitman at Eastern Oregon, 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 6

Prep cross-country

3A/2A/1A State Championships, Lane Community College, TBD

Pendleton at 5A State Championships, Lane Community College, TBD

College football

Eastern Oregon at College of Idaho, noon

College volleyball

Eastern Oregon at Evergreen State, 5 p.m.

College men’s wrestling

Southern Oregon at Eastern Oregon, 6 p.m.

College women’s wrestling

Southern Oregon at Eastern Oregon, 5 p.m.

SPORTS SHORT

Stetson Wright wins Big 4 Rodeo Association award

East Oregonian

Stetson Wright, of Milford, Utah, rides Lunatic From Hell, for a 91.5-point to win the bareback competition Sept. 18, 2021, at the Pendleton Round-Up. Wright won the Big 4 Rodeo Association’s Best in the Northwest title for his showings at the Kennewick Horse Heaven Round-Up, Walla Walla Frontier Days, Lewiston Round-Up and the Pendleton Round-Up.



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian, File

PENDLETON — Stetson Wright won the coveted Big 4 Rodeo Association’s Best in the Northwest title as a result of competing at the Kennewick Horse Heaven Round-Up, Walla Walla Frontier Days, Lewiston Round-Up and the Pendleton Round-Up.

The Best in the Northwest award is given to the contestant accumulating the most points while competing at all of the Big 4 Rodeo Association events.

Wright of Milford, Utah, won the tightly contested 2021 title, while competing in saddle bronc and bull riding at all four rodeos. The award is a custom-made saddle designed

especially for the winner by Stoney Saddlery of Wickenburg, Arizona.

Wright’s combined winnings were \$27,120 at the Big 4 Rodeos, plus another \$18,106 in Xtreme Bulls events.

“I am honored to win the Big 4 Award,” Wright said. “This is a very coveted award and the contestants all know about and want to win this award. Winning an award that my dad (Cody Wright) previously won is what our family always tries to accomplish.”

Wright, and his father Cody, are the first father-son Big 4 Champions. Cody won the award 10 years ago in 2011.

The saddle will be awarded to

Wright at the Big 4 Rodeo Association Reception on Dec. 1, at the South Point Hotel Casino & Spa, during the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo.

The Big 4 Rodeo Association, which was established in 1948, celebrated its 73rd anniversary this year paying out over \$1,436,000. It remains one of the oldest associations of its type in professional rodeo today.

The Big 4 Rodeos are held annually in consecutive weeks starting in late August with Kennewick’s Horse Heaven Round-Up and finishing with the Pendleton Round-Up the second week of September.