

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2022

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B1

THE TRADITION CONTINUES



Hermiston's Jesse Vassey, top, wrestles Dallin Bowman, of Southridge, in the 220-pound first place match Feb. 5, 2022, at the Mid-Columbia Conference 3A District wrestling tournament in Hermiston. Vassey will continue his wrestling career at Eastern Oregon University. East Oregonian, File

Hermiston's Vassey will continue his wrestling career at EOU

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The Hermiston wrestling program has been churning out top-notch wrestlers for years, and Jesse Vassey is part of that tradition.

The Hermiston senior, who placed third at the 3A state tournament, has signed a letter of intent to wrestle for Eastern Oregon University in La Grande, where the Mountaineers have him penciled in to wrestle at 197 pounds.

"At first I wasn't too sure I wanted to wrestle beyond high school," Vassey said. "As I continued to wrestle, I found a passion. It helps me deal with anger and my emotions. It wasn't until my senior year where I thought I could do this."

Vassey looked at Southern Oregon University, Corban University and Warner Pacific, but once he got to Eastern Oregon, I knew he had found the right place.

"It's going to be very awesome," he said. "I feel the coaches and my teammates will help me get better. When I went for a visit, they were amazing people. I want to strive to be just like them."

"IT'S GOING TO BE VERY AWESOME. I FEEL THE COACHES AND MY TEAMMATES WILL HELP ME GET BETTER."

— Jesse Vassey, Hermiston senior

Hermiston coach Kyle Larson said he is excited for Vassey to begin the next chapter in his wrestling career.

"I told him to go in and wrestle, become a good teammate, get good grades, show up

on time and be ready," Larson said. "Everything we have been preaching for four years. Things happen, and those are the opportunities you have to take advantage of."

After a makeshift junior year because of the pandemic, Vassey excelled in his senior season.

He ran the table in the Mid-Columbia Conference and earned first-team honors at 220 pounds.

Vassey then won the Mid-Columbia Conference district tournament, and placed second at the Region 4 Regional Tournament. He also placed fourth at the always tough Rollie Lane Invitational.

"He started out really well," Larson said. "I thought he would do really well and he had confidence. When we were going to the Muilenburg Tournament, he tested positive for COVID. He didn't get to go to Tri-State. Those are a good measuring stick early. Then he placed at Rollie Lane. That's when his attitude changed and we started telling him he

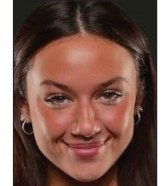
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SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

Hermiston's Reagan wins NWAC track title

East Oregonian

GRESHAM — Hermiston graduate Scout Reagan won the women's 100 meters at the Northwest Athletic Conference Track and Field Championships with a time of 12.38 seconds, helping Lane Community College to the women's team title May 24 at Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham.



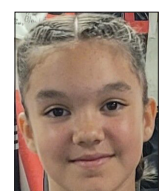
Reagan

The Titans ran away with the women's title with 288 points. Umpqua was second with 109.

Reagan also placed second in the women's 200 meters (25.63), and ran a leg on the 4x100 relay team that placed second in a time of 49.01.

Youth boxing

Pendleton's Teresa Strook stepped in the ring for her first boxing match May 28 at the Northwest Amateur Boxing Championship at the West Central Community Center in Spokane.



Strook

The 12-year-old from Pendleton Boxing, competing at 95 pounds, lost her match to Araeya Nelson of Polson, Montana.

"Her opponent had a few fights and has been boxing for a while," Pendleton coach Rob Brooks said. "It was a pretty tough matchup for her first fight."

Pendleton Boxing's Ean Carroll, 17, had his first match May 7 at the Fuerza de Mayo in Pasco. He lost a split decision to Andres Morales of the Righteous & Chosen Boxing Club in Pasco.

Butte Challenge scheduled for June 11

The 23rd annual Butte Challenge will be June 11 at Hermiston's Butte Park.

The annual event, which benefits the Hermiston cross-country programs (high school and middle school, has a 5K walk, and chip-timed 5K and 10K runs. The fee for each race is \$25. There are special packages for families of four or more who want to race together. Signups are online at ButteChallenge.com.

Bib pickup begins at 7:30 a.m., and racing starts at 8:30 a.m.

The start and finish for each race is in front of the Spray Park/Funland Community Playground.

Participants will receive custom Butte medals and a gift bag when they finish. All participants who are registered by June 10 will be entered into drawings for door prizes from area businesses.

There also is a free kids race at 8 a.m. for runners 10 and under.

ON THE SLATE

SATURDAY, JUNE 4

Prep softball
5A state championship game: Pendleton vs. Wilsonville, Jane Sanders Stadium, Eugene, 11 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8

Rodeo
Oregon High School Rodeo, Prineville

THURSDAY, JUNE 9

Rodeo
Oregon High School Rodeo, Prineville

FRIDAY, JUNE 10

Rodeo
Oregon High School Rodeo, Prineville

SATURDAY, JUNE 11

Rodeo
Oregon High School Rodeo, Prineville

The return of the night eel



DENNIS DAUBLE

THE NATURAL WORLD

Pacific lamprey have endured the effects of dam-building

It is a breezy day in late May and I am knee deep in the Umatilla River. Flows dropped enough following a recent surge of snowmelt and rainfall to allow for safe wading. Cliff swallows carve a graceful path through the air as they pick



Dennis Dauble/Contributed Photo

An adult lamprey uses its buccal mouth to attach to river cobble prior to spawning.

See Lamprey, Page B2