

PREP CROSS-COUNTRY

Sisters is OSAA Team of the Month

The Sisters boys cross-country team was named the Class 4A Team of the Month for February by the Oregon School Activities Association on Tuesday.

The honored teams in each of the classifications are recognized for their performance, dedication in the classroom and service to the community.

Outlaws cross-country coach Josh Nordell said that his squad checked all the boxes. Sisters finished second at the 4A state cross-country meet in 2019 and returned most of its varsity runners for the upcoming season — including reigning state champion John Peckman and third-place finisher Will Thorsett.

While having team-wide success in the classroom, much of the cross-country team is also heavily involved as mentors in Sisters High School's life skills programs as well as Project Unify, a team-based program through the Special Olympics.

"That's a pretty big honor for our little school out here," Nordell said.

The Outlaws are the second Central Oregon team to receive the honor this year. The Bend High softball team was the 6A Team of the Month in October for its various team activities — writing a book, snowman contest, various athletic challenges — while high school athletics were limited.

— Bulletin staff report

WOMEN'S PAC-12 HOOPS TOURNEY

Beavs beat Cal, next face Ducks

Oregon State survived several nervous moments by game No. 12-seeded California before eventually putting away the Bears in a 71-63 first-round win Wednesday afternoon at the Pac-12 women's basketball tournament in Las Vegas.

The fifth-seeded Beavers (10-6) advance to the quarterfinal round, where they'll face No. 4 Oregon at 11 a.m. Thursday. It is the first time OSU and Oregon have played in a Pac-12 women's tournament game.

Taylor Jones had 17 points and 13 rebounds as four Beavers scored in double figures. The Beavers shot 51% from the floor, yet needed most of 40 minutes to put away the scrappy Bears (1-16).

Talia von Oelhoffen led OSU's scorers with career-high 20 points, while Aleah Goodman scored 12 points and Sasha Goforth 11.

Leilani McIntosh led California with 14 points. The Bears shot 40% (26 of 65) from the floor, and out-rebounded Oregon State 39-33.

Oregon State led 39-27 at halftime, after pulling away from the Bears early in the second quarter. The Beavers trailed 13-10 late in the first quarter, then tore off on a 20-4 run to take a 13-point lead with 4:44 left before halftime.

California gave the Beavers a scare early in the third quarter, as the Bears scored the first nine points to trim the deficit to three. But OSU regrouped, as Jones and Goforth scored four points each during a 11-2 run to put the Beavers up 50-38.

— The Oregonian

PREP SPORTS

Livestreaming the only way to watch most events

BY BRIAN RATHBONE
The Bulletin

If a volleyball match is played, but no one is around to see it, did it actually happen?

Tuesday night La Pine was gearing up for its first volleyball match of the season against Harrisburg. Like most other high school competitions so far in this "fall" season, spectators were not allowed and the only way to view was through a livestream from the National Federation of State High School Associations Network (www.nfhsnetwork.com).

The Hawks fell in straight sets to the Eagles (25-19, 25-17, 25-18) in their first match of the year. But no one outside of the teams who were there got to see it.

Instead of a view of the volleyball match through the automated cameras that track the action by following the ball, those who tuned into the

stream were welcomed with a video of a speaker hanging from rafters.

Unsure of what caused the camera to malfunction, La Pine athletic director Aaron Flack said he believes the camera was bumped by something prior to the match. The camera was functioning properly shortly after it was installed. He also said that the outdoor cameras functioned properly for the Hawks' soccer match on Monday.

Flack said that he was told by the NFHS Network that the camera will be back in operation in time for La Pine's next match against Trinity Lutheran on Thursday.

For the time being, spectators are not allowed to attend high school athletic contests while Central Oregon counties

remain in either the high or extreme risk tiers. Livestreams through nfhsnetwork.com are available for many Central Oregon high school events.

Elsewhere in Central Oregon athletics, Grace Toney scored three goals and assisted on another in the Bend High girls soccer team's 5-2 win over Redmond in both teams' season opener on Tuesday at Bend's 15th Street Field.

Lilianuna Lucas and Jordan Welsh scored the other two goals for the Lava Bears. All five of the goals came off of assists, and Katelyn Jolley led the team with two assists.

"We hadn't been on our home field since Oct. 30 (of 2019)," said Bend coach Gavin Meyers. "It was a nice welcome back for us."

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— Gavin Meyers, Bend girls soccer coach

Junior Isabelle Ludi and sophomore Natalie Lockey scored goals for Madras in the team's 2-2 tie against Molalla Tuesday evening.

Mountain View boys soccer defeated Redmond 6-1 in the teams' season opener on Tuesday. Kade Ahern led the way with two goals, and Owen Behnke, Parker Harrison, Angel Rosales and Aiden Willis each added a goal. Shae Sanchez broke the scoring drought for the Panthers.

Hood River Valley got the best of Redmond on the volleyball court Tuesday night, winning 3-1. The Panthers lone win came in the second set, which they won 25-13 before losing the third set and then narrowly losing the decisive fourth set. The Eagles won 25-13, 13-25, 25-17, 25-23. Redmond next plays host to Summit on Thursday evening.

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MLB

FINDING HIS GROOVE

Yusei Kikuchi faces his most important season yet for Mariners

BY TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

It feels very much like Yusei Kikuchi just arrived in the majors after his highly anticipated move from Japan.

Yet, the left-hander is already about to start his third season with the Seattle Mariners and easily his most important to date.

"I feel that he's kind of got his arms around where he's at as a pitcher and hopefully it starts playing out on the field more consistently," manager Scott Servais said. "We've seen it. We've seen it in flashes, we just haven't seen consistent stretches of it."

Kikuchi got in his first work of spring training Tuesday, throwing two innings, allowing one hit, one run and striking out three against the Cleveland Indians. His plan is to build up to five or six innings prior to the start of the season, when Kikuchi seems likely to fit into the six-man rotation behind staff ace Marco Gonzales. And when the season begins, so will the analysis of how and whether the Mariners will move forward with Kikuchi.

Kikuchi's contract is structured so that he and the Mariners will have to make major decisions follow-



Charlie Riedel/AP photo

Seattle Mariners pitcher Yusei Kikuchi throws during the second inning of the team's spring training baseball game against the Cleveland Indians on Tuesday in Peoria, Arizona.

"It's obviously a big year contract-wise personally, but I'm more focused on how big of a year it is for our team. This year and next year."

— Yusei Kikuchi, Seattle Mariners pitcher, through an interpreter

ing the conclusion of the 2021 season. Seattle holds a club option on Kikuchi to be exercised within three days of the conclusion of the World Series. This isn't just a one-year option, but a commitment for four years that would keep Kikuchi tied to the Mariners through the 2025 season.

That option would cost Seattle \$66 million over the life of the deal.

Should the Mariners decline the four-year option, Kikuchi has control over his future. He could exercise a player option to remain in Seattle for the 2022 season and be paid \$13 million. Or he could opt out of the deal entirely and become a free agent at age 30.

It's a massive decision that could lock Kikuchi in long-term or leave both sides searching for other options.

"It's obviously a big year contract-wise personally, but I'm more focused on how big of a year it is for our team. This year and next year," Kikuchi said through an interpreter. "We truly believe that this year, next year, we're going to make a good run for the playoffs and more. And so I'm just really focused on being able to be a big factor."

See **Kikuchi** / A6

WOMEN'S PAC-12 BASKETBALL

Can Oregon 'right the ship' in rematch with Oregon State?

BY JAMES CREPEA
The Oregonian

Oregon will open its post-season slate with a rubber match against Oregon State in the Pac-12 tournament.

The No. 4 seed Ducks will take on the No. 5 seed Beavers in the quarterfinals on Thursday at the Mandalay Bay Events Center in Las Vegas.

It's the first ever conference tournament meeting of the in-state rivals, who played Sunday in Eugene with Oregon State winning 88-77 to split the regular season series and snap a three-game losing streak to Oregon.

Next up



No. 19 Oregon vs. Oregon St.
When: 11 a.m. Thursday TV: Pac-12

It was the third of now four straight wins for OSU (10-6), which beat Cal on Wednesday afternoon and has won seven of its last eight to go from outside the NCAA Tournament to likely shoring up an at-large bid.

See **Oregon** / A6

PREP SPORTS | TRANSGENDER BAN

Lawmakers in more than 20 states seek to ban transgender girls

BY DAVID CRARY AND LINDSAY WHITEHURST
Associated Press

Legislators in more than 20 states have introduced bills this year that would ban transgender girls from competing on girls' sports teams in public high schools. Yet in almost every case, sponsors cannot cite a single instance in their own state or region where such participation has caused problems.

The Associated Press reached out to two dozen state lawmakers sponsoring such measures around the country as well as the conservative

groups supporting them and found only a few times it's been an issue among the hundreds of thousands of American teenagers who play high school sports.

In South Carolina, for example, Rep. Ashley Trantham said she knew of no transgender athletes competing in the state and was proposing a ban to prevent possible problems in the future. Otherwise, she said during a recent hearing, "the next generation of female athletes in South Carolina may not have a chance to excel."

In Tennessee, House Speaker Cameron Sexton

conceded there may not actually be transgender students now participating in middle and high school sports; he said a bill was necessary so the state could be "proactive."

Some lawmakers didn't respond to AP's queries. Others in places like Mississippi and Montana largely brushed aside the question or pointed to a pair of runners in Connecticut. Between 2017 and 2019, transgender sprinters Terry Miller and Andraya Yearwood combined to win 15 championship races, prompting a lawsuit.

See **Transgender** / A7