

Trophies are a lie

The Heisman finalists came out Monday. If you've been listening to the national media, Derrick Henry of Alabama is going to win it.

But he shouldn't. It should go to Christian McCaffery, who broke Barry Sanders' record of all-purpose yards in a season. Granted, the college football seasons are longer than they were in the late 1980s when Sanders set the mark, but it's a valid accomplishment and should be celebrated. I mean, 3,496 all-purpose yards is a ton. Not to disparage Henry, who broke Herschel Walker's single-season SEC mark with 1,983 yards and 23 touchdowns, which led the country. But it won't — not fully, at least — because McCaffery plays on the West Coast, and most of his games are late, even for us left coasters.

This brings an interesting discussion to mind: one of credit and one of recognition.

There is a large argument in sports about participation trophies and what it's doing to the current generation learning the wonders of sports. One side says only winners should be recognized, the other says youth sports aren't about winning, but about learning the values of teamwork, respect, etc., things I value.

I got participation trophies. In some ways, the pizza parties at the end of the seasons were more fun than the seasons themselves, culminating in our coach — which was almost always my dad — standing in front of the group of players and parents and saying a few words about each kid before handing them a trophy, something to remember the season by.

Many times we didn't win very many games. Scratch that. I have no idea how any of those teams did. Except my 12-year-old baseball team. We won the after-season tournament and were crowned the best 11/12-year-old team in the area. We sat in the dugout before the championship game and sang "We Are the Champions" while the other team did Tom Emanski drills (remember the Fred McGriff commercials?) in the outfield.

Yeah, we won the game and got a trophy, but who really cared? Not us, obviously. It was just a game to us. We were fifth- and sixth-graders having fun playing a game that had no real consequence in our lives.

So we were recognized as the best, and we didn't really care. We all got our participation trophies days after and moved on to the summer. For some of us that meant continuing to play baseball on the all-star team, for many of us it just meant summer vacation. It didn't matter. Hell, we even got participation trophies on the all-star team.

So what of any of this has to do with the Heisman Trophy?

McCaffery won't get the recognition he deserves. And you know what? It matters not. Not. At. All.

Why? Because anyone who knows anything and watched the guy play even for a quarter knows how good he is at playing college football. But I imagine he also enjoys it thoroughly. It's why he plays. Some will get up in arms about him being "snubbed" or it's a "travesty" that East Coast bias reigns again. On the surface, that's what I think, too. But it doesn't matter. It's sports. It's an award that no longer is awarded to the best player, it's awarded to the player with the best story, who's on the best team, who has the best media support. If that were the case in 1969, Terry Baker wouldn't have won. He played at Oregon State for crying out loud.

Recognition only goes so far as the people who give it. It's not real. It's also not why you play. You don't play because you want trophies. You play because it's fun. Sure, recognition from guys like me is good, but respect from your peers is the best thing. I've told the story about talking to a rival football player walking off the field when he told me they respect us now after two years of throttling us easily. That meant more than any media recognition we could have gotten.

McCaffery has that from his peers. For most competitors, that's enough.

Sam Barbee is a sports reporter for the Hermiston Herald and East Oregonian based out of Hermiston. He can be reached by email at sbarbee@hermistonherald.com or on Twitter @SamBarbee1. Follow Herald Sports @HHeraldSports.

Hermiston holds off Braves 64-61

Sophomore Maddy Juul gets hot in third quarter, scores 15 in second half

By SAM BARBEE
Staff Writer

With the Hermiston girls basketball team up double digits in the fourth quarter, the result seemed set.

Normally in the situation, Hermiston goes four corners and runs out the clock, forcing the opposition to foul. At Kamiakin in Kennewick, Washington, however, a shot clock forced the Bulldogs into taking rushed threes or turning it over, allowing the scrappy yet young Braves to climb back in it before Oumou Toure's 3-pointer went in and out at the buzzer.

Hermiston held on for a 64-61 win in both teams' season debut.

Jansen Edmiston had 23 points to lead the way, and Maddy Juul added 15 second-half points to lead the game-deciding run.

"I had a lot of trust," Hermiston coach Steve Hoffert said. "In the first few games, I'm really apprehensive and wondering what's gonna happen. What happened was what I expected to happen: Maddy Juul has matured and is a force inside. Jansen's a great shooter and if you leave her open she's gonna knock it down."

The first half started slowly for Hermiston. Kamiakin, meanwhile playing with no seniors, made its first two three-pointers when Kiley Larsen and Kendyl Holle hit



STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE

Hermiston sophomore Maddy Juul (14) drives against Kamiakin's Oumu Toure (left) and Jayden Williams during the first half of Hermiston's 64-61 win in Kennewick Friday night.

them to put Kamiakin up 8-5. The Braves would lead by as many as six in that first frame with Hermiston's offense a bit out of sync. It was the first time the starting five of Edmiston, Sara Ramirez, Maddy Juul, Rileigh Andreason and Kynzee Padilla played together, and it showed. Hoffert said there was some timidity in that first quarter, and it held over into the second.

"That group of five never played together in a pressure game," Hoffert said. "I think a lot of confidence was built in Maddy Juul with her teammates."

The Braves took a four-point lead into the second period, but couldn't do much with it. Hermiston made the first two baskets of the period — both Edmiston 3s — right before Toure came back with one in a quick flurry to put the Braves back up a point at 21-20. Neither team scored for several minutes of game time before Toure dropped in a two off a Hermiston turnover for a 23-20 Braves lead. Andreason hit from range to tie, then Rylie Clark of Kamiakin put the Braves back up two.

It appeared that Hermiston would go into the break behind

Tuesday's game

The Bulldogs returned to the Tri-Cities Tuesday night for a date with Hanford, but results were not available in time for press time for today's edition. Go to www.hermistonherald.com for results from Tuesday's game.

when Andreason and Hayden Meyers each had chances but couldn't convert. It was only Edmiston's 3-pointer with one second left in the half that put Hermiston up one going into the break.

The Bulldogs made just four shots of 13 in that second quarter, and just nine of 23 in the half. Despite that, Hoffert wasn't worried about what the second half would bring. In fact, he was rather encouraged. Hermiston's aggressive drives put Kamiakin in foul trouble. Toure — a skilled freshman — had three, freshman forward Symone Brown had three, and Larsen had three.

With that foul trouble in mind, Hoffert and the Bulldogs made a concerted effort to find Juul on the block. She was held scoreless in the first half, but wouldn't be denied in the second. The offense went through her early in the third quarter, and she paid it off with two baskets to set the tone for the rest of the half.

The Braves offense caught fire then, too, making five of its first nine shots to take a six-point lead at 36-30. Down 38-33, however, Hermiston made its move.

Ramirez hit her first 3 of the night to get the offense rolling, then Juul went to the line

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Bulldogs finish seventh at Oregon Trail Tourney

By SAM BARBEE
Staff Writer

The Hermiston Bulldogs' 2015-16 wrestling season began with a seventh-place finish at the End of the Oregon Trail Tournament over the weekend in Oregon City.

The Bulldogs brought only 13 wrestlers west, while tournament champion North Medford brought 25 and third-place McMinnville had 36. Hermiston's performance was respectable, though, accruing 149 points. The Bulldogs averaged almost 11.5 points per wrestler, which was by far the best average of the tourney, where the next best team was North Medford, averaging 10.52 pppw.

Junior Emilio Landin finished second at 285 pounds and earned 21.00 points, going 4-1 and winning all four matches by fall. He was only bested by South Albany's Dexter Rimer by fall. Corey Mason, another junior 285-pounder, took third by going 4-1 with four pins

and earned 16.00 points. Rimer beat Mason in the semifinal by fall.

Junior Robert Crane, who moved up to 152 pounds from 145, also took second with a pin, a major decision, a technical fall, and an 8-2 decision over Asher Minich of Camas, Washington. North Medford's Caleb Dix pinned Crane in the 152-pound final.

Devin Bosner, a senior 170-pounder, took third, pinning JR Scott of The Dalles in the third-place match. He earned 14 points for Hermiston.

Will Sharkey finished fourth at 160 pounds, losing by fall in both the semifinal and third-place matches after two falls and a technical fall, and Kenny Bevan was the final Bulldog to place in the top five with a fifth-place finish at 220 pounds.

Dylan Eng (106) and Jack Meads (126) each finished seventh, Augustus Blackhurst (106) placed eighth,

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STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE

Hermiston freshman Andrew James rises for a layup against Kamiakin's Hayden Nelson (left) and Cooper Ellison during the Braves' 85-59 win Friday night in Kennewick. James led all Bulldogs scorers with 21 points in his first varsity game.

Braves womp Bulldogs 85-59 in season opener

By SAM BARBEE
Staff Writer

The Bulldogs traveled to Kamiakin to take on a long, athletic and skilled Braves team and had no answers, losing 85-59. Freshman guard Andrew James and sophomore guard Dayshawn Neal, though, showed why there is reason for optimism, combining for 31 points.

Hermiston started close, but the Braves long wing Isaiah Brimmer, its 6-foot-7 center Hayden Nelson and junior sharpshooter Koby Bailey

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO BY PAUL MCDOUNOUGH

Robert Crane, pictured here at last year's 5A OSAA wrestling championships, finished second at 152 pounds to lead the Bulldogs to its seventh-place finish at the End of the Oregon Trail Tournament this weekend in Oregon City.

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