

# Herald Sports

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## 90 years of bridging cultures

I wasn't sure what to expect. Not in a bad way, like I was walking into something cringe-worthy, but I just didn't know. I had never seen the Harlem Globetrotters in person (seen them on TV), but their act is far better in person, I knew, so being there would be great.

I brought my friend Kyle, who lives in Yakima and went to high school and college with me, and we giggled and laughed and pointed at things we liked while crammed into the tight seating.

That was only for the first half. I moved down underneath the

basket for the second half to so could use my camera, and he stood and watched, not wanting to mess with the unbearably tight squeeze it was to get into our seats.

As fun as they were to watch inside the gym, it's better close. Perhaps that's obvious. But you can hear the things they're saying to each other, planning their next gag or talking to the other team to tell them what their plan is. It's interesting watching a basketball game where the score is irrelevant. They try to bring in elements to serious basketball talk — acknowledging the Globetrotters are losing, suggesting a couple ways they could come back, etc. — but you always know they'll win. It's a show, after all, a performance.

But there was one thing I kept thinking about, and it's related to the column I wrote last week. In a lot of ways, the Globetrotters are showing African-American culture to people — largely not black — and how much fun it can be.

They aren't throwing it in your face. They aren't holding up fists and wearing berets. Hip-hop music plays during action. The players dance and use slang. More so, both coaches were black. Both officials were black. All the Globetrotters and all but, like, three of the World All-Stars — the Globies' opponents who looked like there were a million places they'd rather be than getting paid to lose — were black.

After the show, Kyle and I were talking about what we liked, and he noticed the progressiveness that I wrote about. He brought up the women on the team — the 13th female Globetrotter, we were constantly reminded — as well as how many African-Americans were involved in the entire show.

I had another thought Sunday afternoon. The past, present and future all collide when the Globetrotters perform. The public address announcer still uses an old radio microphone. This is the 90th year of the Globies, so they wore really old-school uniforms complete with striped socks and short shorts (they changed to their current duds at halftime). The music, the jokes were of the present. One man had "Hello" by Adele lip-synched to him in a funny gag where he also held hands with a player and skipped across to the floor, where his wife was receiving her "stolen" purse as a gift. The dances were current, with a break to "Whip-It and Naenae," a popular dance making its way around the Internet.

And then there's the future. The idea that people are just people, with no physical features that easily separate people. The race thing. There was other stuff, too, like how hard it must be to be an active foil and how hard it is to get paid to lose every night. But the Harlem Globetrotters are a treasure to our culture, and crucial to our progress, as well.

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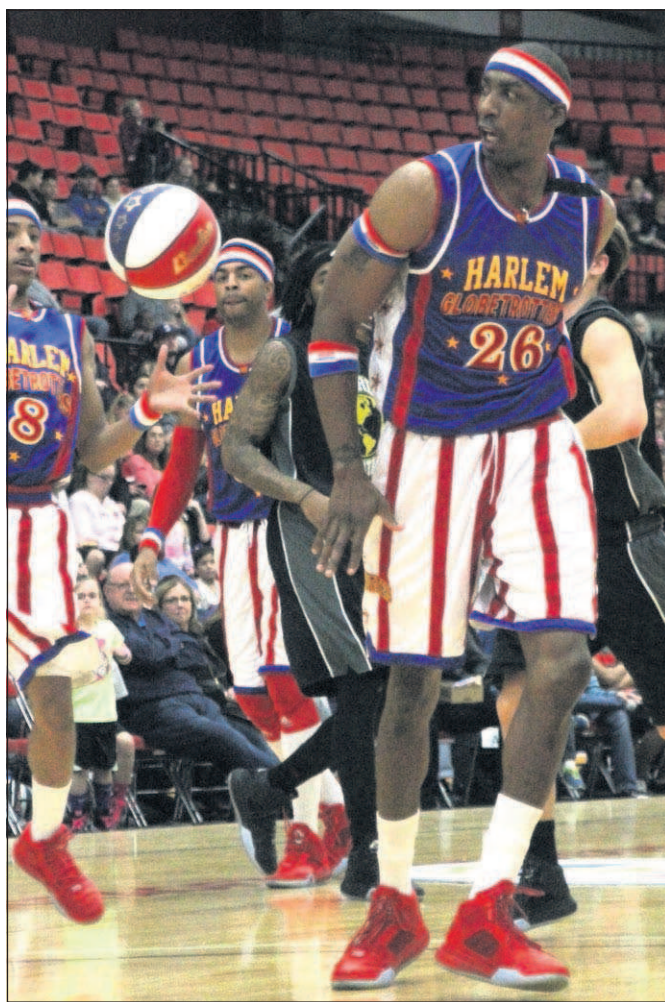


PERFORMANCE AT KENNEWICK

# BIG HIT

Dunking specialist Beast Cunningham (23) hangs on the rim as Hi-Lite Bruton reacts during the Harlem Globetrotters' performance on Sunday in Kennewick.

STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE



Globetrotters showman Hi-Lite Bruton (26) passes to Rocket Pennington (8) behind the back Sunday in Kennewick.

## Famed Harlem Globetrotters entertain kids of all ages

By SAM BARBEE  
Staff Writer

Between the third and fourth quarters at Toyota Center in Kennewick on Sunday, music was blaring out of the speakers. Players and children alike were on the court, dancing to the classic "Y.M.C.A." by the Village People.

One toddler was sitting on the shoulders of 6-foot-9 Hammer Harrison, beaming. Another youngin' was being led by the hand, and was just as excited. The activity demonstrated the notion that the Harlem Globetrotters, one of the longest-running and most famous sports teams of all time, know what their target audience is. It's children.

"It was an awesome family activity," Echo resident Mike Barzee said. "It was really cool that they brought all the little kids out on the court and they were always keeping the show going that well, having the little kids involved."

The entire show was geared that way. The comedy is largely slapstick — physical jokes that work really well with kids. One gag involved a player "stealing" a purse from a court-side spectator, only for the purse to be brought back in a box and given back as a gift. The joke was funny, and it had all the kids laughing.

Another gag had 5-foot-6 Rocket Pennington sneak onto the rim while the audience's attention was elsewhere, and proceeded to comically misinterpret the instructions to "Get down, now!" Instead of climbing down, he and his teammates started dancing.

See TROTTERS, A12

## Hermiston hammers Hood River Valley

Strong first-quarter defense lifts Bulldogs

By SAM BARBEE  
Staff Writer

Kynzee Padilla doesn't usually score the most points, and her contributions to the Hermiston girls basketball team largely go unnoticed.

But the junior forward is crucial to the Bulldogs' success, as was the case in Friday's 87-38 win over the Hood River Valley Eagles in the penultimate Columbia River Conference game of the season. Friday's win was Hermiston's fourth straight by 40 points or more.

Padilla only scored two points, but her work on the glass and on the defensive end Friday night — and the season as a whole — have been a very important part of Hermiston's sixth straight CRC title.

"Kynzee Padilla has probably had seven of her best games in our last seven," Hermiston coach Steve Hoffert said. "If you watch her defensively, she's been a very solid person for our last seven games. Very crucial. She's one of those dark horses. ... Everyone needs to get credit where credit is due, but sometimes I think she gets overlooked."

Padilla led the defensive unit that outscored the Eagles by 30 in the first quarter Friday

night. The Bulldogs started the game in their trademark press, and it's only gotten better.

For about the first two and a half minutes of the first quarter, Hermiston barely let Hood River cross the timeline. When they did, the Eagles either threw the ball away or forced up a tough layup, which bounced out for easy Bulldog layups.

In those first few minutes, Hermiston scored 13 points, missed just two field goal attempts and forced five HRV turnovers before Eagles coach Scott Walker took a timeout. It's the exact kind of start Hoffert is looking for.

See GIRLS, A11

## Bulldogs run away with district title

The Hermiston Bulldogs placed 19 wrestlers on the podium on Saturday afternoon to boost the team to another Special District 4 championship.

Hermiston finished in first place with 435 points, while Redmond finished second with 347 points and Bend at third place with 233.5 points. The Pendleton Buckaroos had a disappointing performance at the tournament, finishing in sixth place with 132 points.

The Bulldogs were paced by eight district champions with Liam Tarvin (113 pounds), Andy Wagner (126), Adrian Tuia (132),

See WRESTLING, A11