



Pumped up
Evan Lysacek becomes first American man to win skating worlds in 13 years.
IN BRIEF, B2

FAST BREAK



COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Eastern will play at Qwest Field

Eastern Washington University will offer its local fans a chance to take a road trip to watch a home game the fall.

The Eagles, who announced their 2009 schedule on Thursday, will travel to Seattle to take on Big Sky Conference rival Portland State in Qwest Field on Oct. 31. The game, which is believed to be the first Eastern has played in Seattle in its 100-year football history, is part of an 11-game schedule that includes four other traditional home games at Woodward Field.

EWU athletic director Bill Chaves said the decision to play a game in the home stadium of the NFL's Seattle Seahawks was based, in part, on the fact that nearly 2,500 Eastern alumni live west of the Cascade Mountains, with an estimated 1,500 residing in King, Snohomish and Pierce counties.

"We are glad to be able to bring Eagle football to Seattle, where we have a tremendous alumni base," Chaves said. "The game will also afford our team the opportunity to play in an NFL stadium."

Ticket prices for the Portland State game will be announced later, along with those for the four home games in Cheney, starting with the opener against Western Oregon on Sept. 5.

See complete schedule, B6

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Ducks pick Westhead

Paul Westhead, who has won titles in the NBA and WNBA, has been hired as the women's head coach at Oregon.

The 70-year-old Westhead replaces Bev Smith, who was let go last week after the Ducks went 9-21 this season.

Westhead most recently was an assistant for the NBA's Oklahoma City Thunder. He was dismissed along with head coach P.J. Carlesimo in November after the Thunder started the season 1-12.

Westhead guided the Los Angeles Lakers to an NBA title in 1980 and the Phoenix Mercury to the WNBA championship in 2007.

Smith, a former All-American as a player for the Ducks from 1978-82, was 123-121 in eight seasons as the coach.

Associated Press

MOWER RACING

Grass cutters have no shame

In an effort to continue to legitimize the sport it brought to America in 1992, the U.S. Lawn Mower Racing Association (USLMRA) has announced the creation of the USLMRA National Lawn Mower Racing Hall of Fame & Museum of America.

"Every legitimate sport and endeavor has a Hall of Fame," said Bruce Kaufman, USLMRA Founder and President, also known as "Mr. Mow It All."

"Now lawn mower racing takes its rightful place along such noble American pastimes as baseball, country music, motorcycle racing, pinball, juggling, trivia and quilting with a place to honor ingenuity and 'mowtivation.'"

The location of the hall of fame will be announced July 4.

Lawn mower races feature riding lawn mowers - with cutting blades removed - at speeds up to 60 mph.



TODAY, 7 P.M., CBS
Gonzaga vs. UNC

Minds on Carolina



Gonzaga's Matt Bouldin completes a reverse jam during Thursday's practice session before tonight's Sweet 16 game.

CHRISTOPHER ANDERSON The Spokesman-Review



JOHN BLANCHETTE

GU must avoid oh-oh moments

MEMPHIS, Tenn. - In the 10 years since Gonzaga crashed the national basketball party, the Bulldogs have made four marches to within a game of their own meridian, the latest a date tonight with North Carolina.

Each of the previous three has been a moment of truth - hard truth, alas.

The Zags have not managed to duplicate that 1999 surge to the Elite 8 of the NCAA tournament - or, rather, recreate it, since the joy, improbability and lightning of those two weeks cannot be duplicated. That has been a disappointment to some, though hardly a shame. Sixty-eight schools have reached the Sweet 16 this decade; only nine have

See BLANCHETTE, B5

ZAGS AWARE OF TAR HEELS' TALENTS

BY JIM MEEHAN
Staff writer

MEMPHIS, Tenn. - Gonzaga senior guard Micah Downs grew up in the West, but he dreamed of playing for North Carolina.

"I don't really talk about it much, but North Carolina was my favorite team when I was a kid," he said. "They were like the only major school that didn't send me a letter. I still root for them when we're not playing them, but it's going to be cool to play against them."

As a Chicago native, GU guard Jeremy Pargo knew what words were coming before every Chicago Bulls game for years. "At 6-6, from North Carolina..." said Pargo, imitating Bulls P.A. announcer Ray Clay's distinguished introduction of Michael Jordan. "I mean you had no choice but to listen to it when you lived in Chicago. I thought I was going to be 6-6 and go to North Carolina."

Pargo ended up being 6-foot-2 and a three-year starter for the Bulldogs, who take on North Carolina, one of college basketball's most storied programs, tonight in the South Regional semifinals at FedExForum.

But it isn't North Carolina's 41 NCAA tournament appearances, the NCAA-record 23 trips to the Sweet 16 or the four NCAA titles that worry fourth-seeded Gonzaga (28-5). It isn't even the Tar Heels' current collection of eight McDonald's All-Americans.

It's the fact that the top-seeded Tar Heels (30-4) are a deep, talented team with a devastating transition game, a relentless four-time All-American center in Tyler Hansbrough, dogged rebounders and dangerous shooters on the wings.

"They play really fast, they have a lot of offensive weapons and they really get after it on defense," GU junior guard Matt Bouldin said. "They've been around that No. 1 ranking all year."

North Carolina was ranked No. 1 for the first eight weeks and had national pundits debating the possibility of an undefeated season. A January loss to Boston College ended UNC's chances at an unblemished record.

The biggest question surrounding UNC's program has been the health of speedy point guard Ty Lawson, who has been battling a sore toe for weeks.

See ZAGS, B4

More Zags on B5:

Buddies: Few and Williams develop close friendship. Plus matchups, notebook

Meet the new Cougars

James Montgomery

Montgomery, a junior running back who transferred from California, redshirted last year after deciding to head north with cornerback Brandon Jones, so Thursday's drills weren't anything new. "It's good to get back out where it means something," he said. "I look at it the same way. I came out (last year) and tried to practice hard. I'll try to do the same thing now that I have a bigger role."

BY VINCE GRIPPI
Staff writer

PULLMAN - It may have been spring, and only the first spring practice at that, with everyone wearing just shorts, jerseys and helmets. But the intensity? That was, at times, more like late October than late March.

Take what happened Thursday after Marshall Lobbestael, coming off an off-

season marred by knee surgery and an alcohol violation, lofted a perfect pass to tight end Tony Thompson during a 7-on-7 passing drill. The connection was good for what passes for a touchdown in the drill and ignited a celebration.

As in Lobbestael awkwardly sprinting/jogging the length of WSU's Rogers practice field in an attempt to chest-bump an excited Thompson.

The ensuing contact was more like a

clumsy man-hug than demonstrative chest bump.

"We're just trying to get into it," Lobbestael said. "The defense gets really enthusiastic after they make a play so we're trying to get a little hyped up after we make a play, too. Celebrate a little bit. It's fun when we do that sort of stuff."

Fun maybe, but it wasn't what WSU

See COUGARS, B2



Missouri's Matt Lawrence celebrates a first-half score.

Associated Press

Missouri stuns Memphis

BY BOB BAUM
Associated Press

GLENDALE, Ariz. - A career night by J.T. Tiller put Missouri one win away from its first trip to the Final Four. Memphis' 27-game winning streak, meanwhile, is history.

Tiller scored a career-high 23 points - 15 more than his season average - and Missouri held off Memphis' frantic rally for a 102-91 win Thursday night in the semifinals of the West Regional.

Third-seeded Missouri led by 24 points with 16 minutes left, then saw Memphis close within six with 2:14 to play. Mizzou put it away from the foul line.

Missouri (31-6) advanced to play top-seeded Connecticut for the West title on Saturday.

"We came out and kind of took the fight to Memphis early on, and before you know it, our guys had a little confidence," Missouri coach Mike Anderson said.

Tyreke Evans scored 33 for second-seeded Memphis (33-4). The Tigers shot 18 for 32 from the foul line - last year, a poor showing at the foul line cost them in an overtime title game loss to Kansas.

Missouri's Marcus Denman had the game's most jaw-dropping basket, a swish from three-quarters court at the halftime buzzer for a 13-point lead.

Tiller made 10 of 16 shots and had three steals.

All five Missouri starters reached double figures.

A whopping 77 free throws were taken, with Missouri making 30 of 45.

Robert Dozier had 19 points and 16 rebounds in Memphis' first loss since a Dec. 20 setback against Syracuse. Antonio Anderson scored 18 in his last game for Memphis.

NCAA tournament

Thursday's results

East Regional
Pittsburgh 60, Xavier 55
Villanova 77, Duke 54

West Regional
Connecticut 72, Purdue 60
Missouri 102, Memphis 91
(More coverage, B4)

Today's games

Midwest Regional
• Louisville vs. Arizona, 4:07 p.m.*
• Michigan State vs. Kansas, 6:30 p.m.
South Regional
• Oklahoma vs. Syracuse, 4:27 p.m.
• North Carolina vs. Gonzaga, 7 p.m.*

*Featured locally on CBS