

Snowmageddon
After record year of drought, snow is back and with a vengeance

@CWUObserver
cwuobserver.com
Online daily, print weekly
Photos by Chase Tibbles
Designed by Grace Lindsley

DEFENSIVE BATTLE
Central takes on Alaska Anchorage in rematch of GNAC’s top defenses

FESTIVAL’S A BREWIN’
Ellensburg welcomes 12th annual Brewfest
On July 1, the previously unregulated medical marijuana market will merge with Washington's current retail marijuana system.

According to Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board spokesman Mikhail Carpenter, there are currently three different marijuana markets, and only one, the retail marijuana market, is regulated. The others are the medical marijuana market and the black market.

The merger will coincide with changes to the continuously evolving legal marijuana laws in the state.

“I think generally the public has seen the issues from two systems and the confusion it can cause,” Carpenter said. “People just want clarity.”

I-502 passed in November of 2012 and legalized the sale of useable marijuana.

Brands will only be allowed to possess up to 15 with doctor recommendations.

The above differences were a cause for concern at the LCB’s recent public hearing in Ellensburg.

Two out of the five citizens who spoke were troubled by the amount of marijuana they’d be able to grow and possess without registering with the database.

A female medical patient, who claims to not smoke her marijuana, said that the amount of marijuana it takes to make the oils she uses for cooking is far greater than four plants.

Both the DOH and LCB will have several months to take into consideration all they have heard from the public thus far.

The DOH plans to hold a public hearing on the database in April.

Medical weed coming soon to retail shops in Washington
Mass incarceration dialogue continues in 2016

BY JONATHAN GLOVER

It’s no secret: The United States locks up more of its citizens than any other nation on earth. And in most cases, people of color bear the brunt of America’s love affair with prisons.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics estimates that black and Hispanic male inmates comprise roughly 59 percent of the U.S. state and federal prison population, despite occupying about 29 percent of the general population.

The Bureau of Justice statistics report shows 3 percent of black males of all ages were imprisoned by the end of 2013, compared to just 1 percent of white males.

And there is a problem, and the faculty, staff and students at Central have taken notice.

“For some students, finding this big divide of inequality is startling. It goes against every assumption we might have,” said Michelle Cyrus, a director of Disaster, which won the National Book Award for Between the World and Me, are two of the biggest names around. He is in the process of rescheduling after having to cancel his first presentation date.

Dyson is the author of multiple books discussing the role of race in America, including Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster, which won the National Book Award in 2007. “He’s a world-renowned leader, author on mass incarceration. Other important voices campaigning for racial equality.”

“The content is difficult,” Cavazos said. “It forces us, as young Americans, to look at the mirror of America.”

The idea originated from Stacey Robertson, dean of College of Arts and Humanities. Hearing that Central used to feature an annual speakers series, Robertson decided to revitalize that concept, but with her own twist.

“In terms of a series like this, we’re unique,” said Robertson. “We haven’t seen another university doing what we’re doing here on mass incarceration. Other institutions haven’t come close.”

In fall quarter, the National Prison Project’s David Fathi was the “big get,” while this quarter prominent black scholar Michael Eric Dyson and The Atlantic magazine writer Ta-Nehisi Coates, who recently won the National Book Award for Between the World and Me, are two of the biggest names around. He is in the process of rescheduling after having to cancel his first presentation date.

Dyson is the author of multiple books discussing the role of race in America, including Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster, which won the National Book Award in 2007. “He’s a world-renowned leader, author on mass incarceration,” said Michelle Cyrus, a diversity officer at the Center for Diversity and Social Justice and a member of the steering committee. “We wanted to bring him here to educate the populace on this.”

Other events include a documentary screening of ‘The House I Live In;’ artist Fabrice Monteiro’s presentation of ‘Prophesizing the Global,’ which shows people of color and the treatment they endured in the slave trade; scholar Leslie Shore’s presentation ‘Reuniting Families Torn Apart by Incarceration: Mother’s Day in California Prisons,’ about mothers in prison; and a panel discussing community policing titled “Community Policing in a Diverse and Global Society.”

Mark Auslander is the director of the Museum of Culture and Environment and, with English professor Kathy Whitcomb, oversees the mass incarceration website.

It was his idea to bring Fabrice Monteiro to Central, who Auslander describes as “really one of the great artists of our time.”

“He’s one of the most imaginative people out there,” Auslander said. Monteiro “really pushes the art forward.”

Monteiro has volunteers dress in apparel of oppression—including devices meant to torture—that were common during the slave era. He then snaps pictures of the subjects. The results are startling.

“These conversations are sometimes painful, but they’re necessary,” Auslander said. “Our students are willing and mature enough to tackle these issues.”

As a professor of anthropology, Auslander has studied Monteiro’s work for many years. He plans to publish a paper in the coming months.

“I’ve read one of his favorite artists is on his way to Central, Auslander said the year-long dialogue isn’t about the size of the event, or the name of the guest. “A lot of it is not the big events,” he said. “It’s the small conversations in classrooms, or at the Tas, or in dorm rooms; wherever students are.”
Wellington’s makes way for new cafe

BY KAILAN MANANDIC
Assistant News Editor

The newest addition to Central’s cafe scene, 1891 Bistro, has made itself known a month after its soft opening.

Filled with faculty and students alike, the bistro maintained a steady stream of customers throughout its grand opening last Thursday. According to Joel Klucking, the assistant vice president of finance, it was their busiest night yet.

“We knew if we didn’t make it before Thanksgiving,” Klucking said, “we wouldn’t have enough students here because we were heading into finals week.”

Formerly known as Wellington’s Cafe, 1891 Bistro was overhauled from a sit-down restaurant to a coffee house. According to Klucking, the focus is no longer food, “it’s more about the environment and the space.”

The bistro will also work with the food truck stationed just outside its door, so students can grab a meal to eat in the cafe.

D&M coffee, Central’s coffee supplier, designed the bistro. Taking inspiration from Seattle and Portland-style cafes, 1891 uses a “mix match of furniture,” with everything from sofas to dining tables.

Students are excited about the new space to socialize and study. “There’s lots of open space and seating,” said Camie Rodd, senior elementary education major.

Annelise Fishel, freshman theatre major, has been going since the opening and is excited for business to pick up. “It hasn’t been this packed yet,” Fishel said. “Once the snow melts, I’ll be coming here every day.”

Upperclassmen are happy with the switch from Wellington’s Cafe. “It’s a huge improvement from my freshman year,” said Connor Fobes, senior elementary education major.

The idea for the bistro began with students. Multiple surveys asked students how they wanted the space to be used. The results came back with overwhelming support for a coffee shop. “Hands down that was the most popular idea,” Klucking said.

From there, a student committee was formed in April 2015 and development began. By June, they had their first designs from D&M.

Central President James Gaudino attended the grand opening to congratulate the staff for fitting the space to the students’ needs.

“This is how a university should work,” Gaudino said, “and it’s how CWU now does work.”

Gaudino encourages students to continue giving feedback. “That’s the way projects like this are most successful,” he said.

The bistro team plans on working on future events. According to Klucking, they’ll do everything they can to keep students interested, including Seahawks games, open-mic nights and happy hours.

1891 Bistro Hours
Monday: 7 a.m.- 10 p.m.
Tuesday: 7 a.m.- 10 p.m.
Wednesday: 7 a.m.- 10 p.m.
Thursday: 7 a.m.- 10 p.m.
Friday: 7 a.m.- 8 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.- 8 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.- 10 p.m.

President Gaudino and the owners of D&M Coffee cut the ribbon at the grand opening of 1891 Bistro.

President Gaudino and the owners of D&M Coffee cut the ribbon at the grand opening of 1891 Bistro.
Sorry golfers, there’s a new tax in town

New entertainment tax to affect patrons county wide, includes Suncadia

BY ELLIOTT LLERA
Managing Editor

Recently, the Kittitas County Commissioners held a public hearing to discuss the possible implementation of a new admissions tax that would fund the county’s Public Health Department.

The county-wide proposal would add a 5 percent tax anywhere admission is charged, tickets are sold, or equipment is rented out for recreation or amusement.

Robin Read, Kittitas County public health administrator, said that the tax would provide much-needed relief for the department, which is currently underfunded.

“If there were an outbreak at an event within the county, that falls under our Communicable Disease Program, which currently doesn’t have any funding,” Read said.

The proposal allocates the first $100,000 generated by the admissions tax to the Public Health Department every year. Anything in excess will go directly to the county’s general fund.

Since this is the first time admissions throughout the county would be taxed, the commissioners were hesitant to give an exact estimate on how much funding would be generated.

“I would be very surprised—happily surprised—if it’s more than $100,000,” Kittitas County Commissioner Paul Jewell said.

The proposed county tax wouldn’t affect events held in Ellensburg or Roslyn because both cities have already implemented their own admissions tax.

Events at primary and secondary schools won’t be subjected to the tax either.

If implemented, golfers in Kittitas County can expect to pay five percent more to play a round of golf.

The commissioners stated that a good chunk of the revenue from the tax would be generated at Suncadia, a high-end golf resort in Cle Elum.

“If implemented, this tax would be similar to the current lodging tax, where the bulk of the funding is paid by visitors rather than residents,” Kittitas County Commissioner Gary Berndt said in a statement.

The majority of public comments at last month’s hearing addressed the proposal’s exemption of recreational activities like skiing and snowboarding, but not golfing or bowling.

“If you’re going to have an admissions tax, you need to have it across the board,” community member Lee Davis said.

Frank Crimp, owner of the Ellensburg golf course, said that the exemption of so many forms of recreation leads to golfers being disproportionately affected.

“Setting aside snowmobiling and sledding, this is essentially only a tax on people who play golf,” Crimp said. “This tax is very unfair because people who don’t play golf will never pay a dime of this county admissions tax.”

The commissioners stated that a good chunk of the revenue from the tax would be generated at Suncadia, a high-end golf resort in Cle Elum.

“If implemented, this tax would be similar to the current lodging tax, where the bulk of the funding is paid by visitors rather than residents,” Kittitas County Commissioner Gary Berndt said in a statement.

The majority of public comments at last month’s hearing addressed the proposal’s exemption of recreational activities like skiing and snowboarding, but not golfing or bowling.

“If you’re going to have an admissions tax, you need to have it across the board,” community member Lee Davis said.

Frank Crimp, owner of the Ellensburg golf course, said that the exemption of so many forms of recreation leads to golfers being disproportionately affected.

“Setting aside snowmobiling and sledding, this is essentially only a tax on people who play golf,” Crimp said. “This tax is very unfair because people who don’t play golf will never pay a dime of this county admissions tax.”
OBSEVER EDITORIAL

Obama’s gun control sounds good, but is it good enough?

BY OBSERVER EDITORIAL BOARD

When Columbine happened, America mourned. We were shocked. It wasn’t just one of the worst mass shootings, but also the worst school shooting in history. But then we picked ourselves up by our bootstraps, as is the American way, and moved on.

Then there was Wakefield. Then there was Virginia Tech. Then there was Fort Hood. Then there was Aurora. Each time, we mourned and moved on. The microphones were packed up, the notebooks were put away and the news vans drove off. The Wikipedia pages were updated. Then the unthinkable happened on Dec. 14, 2012. Twenty first graders and six adults were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. After, nothing really changed. America decided gun control and mental health were fine as is.

That was, of course, until last Tuesday. During a passionate press conference (where his teary eyes received the most news coverage) President Obama laid out a plan. It’s not a 300-page document, nor is it political hot air without any substance. It’s just, sort of, common sense.

Things like closing the “gun show loophole,” by narrowing who can sell guns without a federal license should have been a no brainer. But it’s only just now getting attention.

Or, having the FBI hire more than 230 people to run background checks. Seems like a great idea, but why now?

The Department of Health and Human Services will also remove barriers to allow mental health records available to the background check system. Again, not a bad idea.

Many around the country are wondering (rightfully so) why now? Why not then? And many others on the other side of the aisle are wondering why at all.

And in 2013 Obama tried to curb gun violence following Sandy Hook. After congress failed to pass gun control legislation, he proposed a list of 23 actions that would tighten the background check system.

But negotiations fell through, phone calls went unanswered, lines of communication were severed, and again (as in the American way), nothing happened.

Had those actions gone into place, perhaps Christopher Sean Harper-Mercer would have had another boring Thursday in English class at Umpqua Community College, instead of killing 9 others and himself.

Perhaps Dylan Storm Roof would have cooled off, having not been able to purchase a gun, instead of killing nine people in prayer at Charleston church in downtown Charleston, South Carolina.

But that didn’t happen. Even now, as America moves forward with some of the most substantial gun control action in years, it doesn’t seem like it’s enough.

Had Obama stuck with his original plan three years ago, we would have a sampling size. Something that could be used to silence the critics and encourage the supporters. Something that could produce data that answers the question: Does gun control actually work?

Now we may never know. If a republican president were to come into office next year, they could repeal the executive action in about a year. Even if that doesn’t happen, congress has threatened to block funding for the Justice Department to stop the order.

So we’re left asking ourselves, is this too little too late?

STEVE JURVETSON/Flickr

TWEETS FROM THE STREETS

Played Taboo, Cards Against Humanity, took Tequila shots, then went walking in the snow. It’s so nice to walk down middle of the street.

SAMJEA_II_Samuela-Ab 21 Dec 2015

The snow was dope at first but now its a little much goddamnit #CWU

Kristine Kormann @KristineKormann Jan 9

Absolutely loving the snow here in Ellensburg #cwu #lovewinter

DEAR READERS:
The Observer welcomes brief letters of 300 words or less from readers on current issues. Please include your full name and university affiliation: year and major, degree and year graduated, or staff position and department. To be printed in the following week’s issue, use the “Submit a Letter” link on cwuobserver.com by 5 p.m. Sunday.

To be featured in our weekly “Tweets from the streets,” Tweet the Observer @cwuobserver and use the hashtags #CWU or #Observer.
Forget the hot chocolate, here comes the beer!

BY VICTORIA SHAMRELL

Craft beer has become more popular as a tourist attraction in recent years. In Ellensburg, breweries and different craft beers are quite common.

The biggest brewing attraction is that Ellensburg hosts a Brewfest, which has been running every January for the past 15 years. This year’s Brewfest is this Saturday from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. and is being held in over 10 different venues in downtown Ellensburg which is why the event is held in winter, the slowest season for brewing.

Most of the breweries are from Washington, but one brewery is from Oregon, called Nikiski, and the other is Lagunitas from California, Tate said.

While brewing is becoming more popular nowadays, it’s still growing and has a long way to go before being at the level it was before Prohibition. Steve Wagner, director of the craft brewing program at Central, said that back in the 1920s, there were over 3,000 breweries in the United States. Even Ellensburg and Roslyn had a brewery.

A lot of people come for Iron Horse throughout the year, also Colokum Brewery in Kittitas, Roslyn in Roslyn and also the new one, Drew Brew in Snoqualmie [Pass].

St. Brigid’s Brewery from Moses Lake attended Brewfest last year and is coming back again this year.

They were like some of the most enthusiastic, excited volunteers I’ve ever worked with.

Jessica Tate
Director of Events

Wagner explained that a man named Bert Grant started a micro brewery in Yakima in 1983 and he started what is now known as the craft beer revolution.

Since Brewfest began in 2003, Wagner boasts that he has been to every Ellensburg WinterHop Fest since it started.

Amy McGuffin, director of tourism for Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce, said Brewfest is the big tourist attraction in January that starts off the New Year.

Over 1,600 people attend Brewfest every year, and it’s a mix of locals and tourists.

Over until 1980, there were only 33 breweries in the United State, a drastic decrease from the 3,000 back in the 1920s. Wagner explained that a man named Bert Grant started a micro brewery in Yakima in 1983 and he started what is now known as the craft beer revolution.

Since Brewfest began in 2003, Wagner boasts that he has been to every Ellensburg WinterHop Fest since it started.

Amy McGuffin, director of tourism for Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce, said Brewfest is the big tourist attraction in January that starts off the New Year.

Over 1,600 people attend Brewfest every year, and it’s a mix of locals and tourists.

“We get a lot of tourists that come for Brewfest every year, and it’s a mix of locals and tourists. It seems to be a growing attraction for a lot of people. We’ve already gotten calls wondering when the tickets are going to be released. The breweries are reacting or responding earlier in the year than we have had in the past,” McGuffin said. “It should be a great event this year.”

The different breweries coming from around the state do help to attract tourists to Ellensburg. All the people that come with the different breweries are considered to be tourists since they are coming from out of town, Tate said.

“I think that the format, which is it being in so many different locations, I think that’s a big attraction because it’s a unique format and it’s just really fun,” Tate said. “Also we do live music, in pretty much all the venues so that’s another attraction.”

Brewfest is an Ellensburg-only event because of the liquor liabilities.

There are only a certain number of venues in Ellensburg that have liquor licenses, so the breweries can only set up in those venues, McGuffin said.

Tate is working to incorporate the Central craft brewing program into Brewfest more since it hasn’t been incorporated much in the past.

Just recently the students volunteered at an event on Oct. 10, Tate said.

“They were like some of the most enthusiastic, excited volunteers I’ve ever worked with,” Tate said. “It was really great for them because they got facetime with brewers and people from breweries that were literally offering them internships, so that was really exciting.”

Wagner said that the craft brew students who volunteer to help with Brewfest will most likely help breweries unload their equipment, and set up and clean the venues.

In addition, Tate said that the students will probably sell pretzel necklaces as a fundraiser at the event.

The tourism business is important to Ellensburg and craft beer and breweries has become one of Ellensburg’s known tourist niches. Craft beers are becoming more popular.

“A lot of people come for Iron Horse throughout the year also Colokum Brewery in Kittitas, Roslyn in Roslyn and also the new one, Drew Brew in Snoqualmie [Pass], so they’re getting a lot of the Seattle, North Bend traffic,” McGuffin said.

We get a lot of tourists that come for our craft breweries and it also helps with CWU’s brew master certification that brings a lot of people into that niche. Craft brews are just big anyway.”
Star Wars returns at full force

BY GRACE LINDSLEY
Copy Editor

Star Wars is a force to be reckoned with, and as ticket sales from the franchise’s latest installment keep pouring in, the world has been reminded of that fact.

On its opening day, “Star Wars: The Force Awakens” raked in over $120 million domestically and finished off the weekend with a record-shattering $247 million, according to Box Office Mojo.

Ticket sales didn’t die down from here, with the film’s global sales reaching the billion dollar mark 12 days after opening, setting another record as the fastest grossing film of all time, with over $770 million in sales and growing, according to Forbes.

“All told, according to Box Office Mojo, “Star Wars: The Force Awakens” holds 41 different all-time records,” according to Bedford, there was some concern that “The Force Awakens” would be a repeat of the prequel trilogy. The Star Wars prequels are held in very low regard by fans and critics alike. Bedford said he tried to temper his expectations.

“I wasn’t really sure how it would turn out, but I had faith in [J.J.] Abrams,” Bedford said. Abrams directed “The Force Awakens” and it was not his first foray into science fiction. Abrams directed the new Star Trek movies, the TV show “Lost,” the Steven Spielberg film “Super 8” and a whole host of other shows and movies.

According to Bedford, Abrams’s popularity and accomplishments gave fans new hope. And they weren’t disappointed. “It was just awesome,” Bedford said. “I saw it three times.”

Bedford isn’t the only one who feels that way, with reviews from across the internet backing up his opinion.

An article in The New York Times pointed out, “director J.J. Abrams resuscitates a franchise and delivers the movie event of the year.”

Variety’s chief film critic called the movie “a roaring, even restorative seventh chapter in the immortal space-opera saga.”

“Star Wars: The Force Awakens” was a home-run for everyone’s seen the new Star Wars movie and ticket sales certainly back up his claim, as domestic sales continue to climb every weekend.

It made over $119 million on opening day alone. According to Box Office Mojo. As of Jan. 11, sales sit over $812 million.

“Star Wars: The Force Awakens” holds 41 different all-time records.

Record Breaker
Opening Weekend: $247 million
Domestic Gross: $812 million
Global Gross: $1.7 billion
Data as of Jan. 11, 2016

“I wasn’t really sure how it would turn out, but I had faith in [J.J.] Abrams.”

Andrew Bedford
Junior biology major

BY GRACE LINDSLEY
Copy Editor

“Star Wars: The Force Awakens” holds 41 different all-time records.

“I wasn’t really sure how it would turn out, but I had faith in [J.J.] Abrams.”
Ringing in the New Year with resolutions

BY CODY NILSEN
Social Media Coordinator

The phrase “new year, new you” is usually heard when people talk about New Year’s resolutions. Several students at Central have made resolutions for 2016 and hope to stick to them.

Statisticbrain.com, along with several other sources, took polls of the top 10 New Year’s resolutions.

The top 10 were to lose weight, get organized, save more, enjoy life, stay fit, learn a new skill, quit smoking, help others, fall in love and spend more time with family.

Nothing too surprising or out of the ordinary on that list, however only 8 percent of people who make resolutions follow through. Less than half of the nation, 47 percent, makes resolutions.

Ben O’Reilly, senior business administration major, decided to make a New Year’s resolution this year.

“I haven’t made a New Year’s resolution since 2012, but I decided to make a couple simple ones and see if I stick to them,” O’Reilly said. “First is to not use my phone when I study and the second was to do cardio four times a week.

Resolutions don’t have to be big, major life-changing goals. Even sticking with one or two small resolutions can help cause improvement in your life.

“I stopped making them because they always were too unrealistic,” O’Reilly said. “But this year I think I will stick to them. Who knows though, no one likes running and it’s hard to leave your phone in another room and out of reach.”

Sam Swaney, junior accounting major, said he enjoys making resolutions, but also realizes he has a hard time sticking to them.

“My 2016 goals are meet new people and make friends outside my friend group,” Swaney said. “Also to get more involved in the college.”

Tanner Paschich, senior environmental major, said he stuck to his New Year’s resolutions last year to work out two or three times a week. What helped him, he said, was to write it down and look at it every day so he wouldn’t forget.

“This year I want to eat better, eat less, and cook at home — hopefully save some money that way, too,” Paschich said. “My other big goal for 2016 is to break into the EDM DJ and producing scene.”

Hayden Klein, senior clinical physiology major, is one of the eight percent of people who sticks to their goal. Last year, he made a resolution to lose the weight he’d gained for football. He started the year at 310 pounds, and managed to drop down to 240 pounds. This year Klein has a couple of new resolutions he plans to stick to.

“I want to stay in shape and keep working at getting toned,” Klein said. “My goals for education, [are] continuing my studies of fitness and nutrition. Now that I don’t play football, I want to start hunting again in the fall.”
Teamwork keys win streak

BY AUSTIN BENNETT
Assistant Sports Editor

Central’s men’s basketball team has been rolling early in the season, winning five games in a row lead by an offense that is averaging 81.2 points per game.

The Wildcats are 4-2 in the GNAC and 9-2 overall. Both losses came against the Alaska schools that sit at first and third in the GNAC standings.

To add to Central’s early offensive success, the team has had four players score 10 or more points during their five-game win streak.

Sparling was heading to Nicholson Pavilion at 7 p.m. Tuesday for their annual game against Seattle Pacific University. The Falcons are one game behind Central in the GNAC standings at 3-3.

The Wildcats will look to keep their offense rolling into next week as they host Western Washington University in their annual ROOT Sports game on Jan. 23 in Nicholson Pavilion at 7 p.m.

I would say it’s the unselfishness. When we get those guys in there that are unselfish and are moving the ball really well, you can see it develop on the court. — Joseph Stroud

According to Stroud and Harris, the offensive gameplan is to run the court. The team feels they have the best success when they are running the floor.

“We want to run and transition to get the buckets that we need,” Stroud said.

Harris believes that the team has a lot of talented athletes that can score the ball with ease.

“We try to really get it out and run the floor and get transition points. I think we got a lot of good athletes that are good at scoring,” Harris said.

Harris is sticking with head coach Greg Sparling’s game plan and says he won’t change any of the offense during his absence.

“I call a lot of our sets… [Sparling] lets me call a lot of our plays even when he is here,” Harris said.

Harris feels comfortable in the role as interim head coach, mean-while, the players are equally as comfortable with having Harris taking control of the team.

“It’s a lot of the same, Coach Drew [does] all the same things as Coach Spar has done,” senior guard Joey Roppo said. “They’re different personalities too. Drew is quieter than Spar and Spar is more of an outspoken guy, it’s been an easy transition with all things said.”

Harris has learned a few new things in coaching since taking the reigns as head coach.

“Of the biggest things, is obviously getting on the refs a little more from a coaching standpoint,” Harris said. “And to just take command of the huddle.”

The players responded to Harris taking control of the team, as well as the good relationship he has with each one of his players. Even though this was Harris’s first time being a head coach, Sparling has prepared him throughout the years.

“Spar has given me a lot of responsibilities, and he puts me in positions where I can lead them in certain situations,” Harris said. “Since he has a lot of faith in me and confidence in me, he’s allowed me and prepared me for situations like this.”

Central plays their next game Thursday, Jan. 14 against Seattle Pacific University. The Falcons are one game behind Central in the GNAC standings at 3-3.

The Wildcats will look to keep their offense rolling into next week as they host Western Washington University in their annual ROOT Sports game on Jan. 23 in Nicholson Pavilion at 7 p.m.

BY AUSTIN BENNETT
Assistant Sports Editor

According to Central’s assistant coach Drew Harris, men’s basketball’s head coach Greg Sparling suffered a severe ankle injury outside his home this past Saturday Jan. 2.

Harris and the team did not find out about his injury until their first shoot-around before their home game against Concordia University that same day. Sparling was heading to Nicholson Pavilion when the accident occurred.

“There was really bad ice outside of his house,” Harris said. “He ended up slipping on that… and ended up breaking it, and had some damage to his ligaments.”

According to Harris, Sparling underwent surgery this Monday to repair his torn ligaments. Sparling stayed one night in the hospital and is on a one week of bed rest. Harris says the “surgery went well.”

Since Sparling has been out Harris has stepped into the role of head coach and has led the team to three victories without a loss. The team has averaged 90 points per game over those three games with an average point differential of 14.3 points per game.

Despite being the head assistant coach since the 2012 season, Harris still had a learning curve after taking on the leading role.

“Obviously you got to get on the referees a little bit more and take command of the huddle,” Harris said.

Harris has been texting his players frequently since his accident. Giving them words of encouragement.

“He’s been encouraging, saying good game and ‘keep the car rolling’ as he always says,” senior guard Joey Roppo said.

The team still doesn’t know what the exact time frame is for Sparling. According to Harris, he could be back next week or the week after.

Senior forward Joseph Stroud, who leads Central in points, rebounds and blocks per game, faces up an opponent during a 87-75 Wildcat victory.

Wildcat stats

Record: 9-2 (4-2)
GNAC standing: 4th
PPG: 91.1
FG%: 49.7
FT%: 72.5
3PT%: 38.8
APG: 18.7
BPG: 4.8
Win streak: 5
Wildcats prepare for Nanooks in match-up of two of the top defenses in the country Thursday in Nicholson Pavilion

BY ZAC HERETH
Sports Editor

Last Saturday, Central left Bellingham with its first win against Western Washington University (WWU) on the road since 2008. The win improved the team’s record to 10-4 overall and 3-3 in GNAC play.

“It was big,” senior center Jasmine Parker said. “It was a great feeling. I was glad I could be there with my team.”

However, the Wildcats won’t have much time to celebrate as they get ready for their toughest test of the season.

The Wildcats will match up with GNAC leading University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Thursday at Nicholson Pavilion. UAA is fifth in NCAA Division II in scoring and 10th in scoring defense.

Head coach Jeff Harada said the team would need to “stay even keeled” after a couple big road wins before Thursday’s game.

“We can’t have a let down after two big road wins,” Harada said.

He said the team needs to “understand that those games are over with and now it’s on to the next one. We need the same focus, the same energy, the same fight from those games for this upcoming game.”

Central will rely on their defense, ranked just behind UAA at 11th in the nation, to stifle a UAA team that is opposing opponents by 30 points per game on average.

Harada said the keys for the defense are communication, understanding the scouting reports, sticking to the game plan and understanding the team’s tendencies and taking them away.

“The message isn’t to shut teams out,” Harada said. “It’s to make them work. We know teams are gonna score, they’re gonna go below average in their basketball, we know Parker, leading the GNAC with 2.6 blocks per game, said the team works on its defensive fundamentals everyday.

“That’s what helps us in the games,” Parker said. “We practice really good defense.”

On the offensive side of the ball, the Wildcats will focus on their execution and being aggressive to conquer UAA’s defense.

Central has done just that so far this season. They are second in the conference in assist-to-turnover ratio. They are second in the conference in offensive production.

That can be attributed to the team being patient with its offense, which lowers the amount of possessions per game for each team.

“Obviously we’ll take layups at any time,” Harada said. “We do like to transition when we can, but if we don’t get anything right away we wanna run our offense and force teams to defend us for a full shot clock.”

Parker said the team will need to look for opportunities when they are presented and to take care of the ball.

“We just have to be aggressive,” Parker said. “We have to look for our shots, make good passes, [and] limit our turnovers. That’s the biggest thing, limit our turnovers. They’re a good defensive team and they like to trap a lot.”

To go along with Parker, who leads the team in scoring with 12.6 points per game, Central will look for big contributions from freshman guard Mandy Steward, who has stepped up her game, averaging 11.8 points per game in conference play. That includes a career-high 15 points against Northwest Nazarene University in Central’s first conference game of the season.

Steward didn’t know what her role on the team would be coming into the season.

“I had no idea, being a freshman, what I was expected to do and how much I would impact the team,” Steward said.

Harada wasn’t surprised with Steward’s offensive production.

“We knew she was a scorer, that’s why we recruited her,” Harada said. “The thing with her was, would she be able to defend at our level? Making that transition on defense was my biggest concern.”

Harada praised her effort on the defensive end.

“She struggled early, she knows it, but she’s made a conscious effort to improve her defense,” Harada said. “I’m very pleased with her effort defensively more than anything else.”

The Observer • Jan. 14 - 20, 2016 11

BY ZAC HERETH
Sports Editor

Coming off one of the luckiest finishes in playoff history, it’s hard not to think that this year’s Seahawks squad is a team of destiny.

The Seahawks offense sputtered, and Russell Wilson was running for his life and holding on to the ball too long—just like week one. Then Minnesota put together a final drive that looked all too similar to the late fourth-quarter losses that had plagued the team earlier this season.

But then the improbable happened.

Minnesota kicker Blair Walsh missed a 27-yard chip shot that would have given the Seahawks 22 seconds to get in field goal position for a potential game-winning kick.

Walsh had only missed one career field goal under 30 yards heading into Sunday’s wild-card match-up. And he hadn’t missed a field goal in under-20-degree weather in his career before that kick, according to ESPN stats and info.

This season may have been ugly—when the team was 4-5, the fans’ faith was tested—but now Seattle is in position to average 10-4 for the second straight year in a franchise that hasn’t been to the Super Bowl since 2005.

It should be another smash-mouth game, highlighted by the two teams’ defenses and a most accomplished young quarterbacks the NFL has to offer.

This will be the sixth match-up between the teams since 2012. The Seahawks knocked off four of the previous five games, and it’s hard to see them playing anything but their best game this Sunday.

It will be a hostile environment when they travel to Carolina, but nobody can say this team when they play their best.

Marshawn Lynch or not, this team has proven they can win through the air, something Carolina doesn’t look like they can do. A healthy Jersey Lane and an intact passing game will give Cam Newton fits, and the run defense looked as strong as ever against the best running back in the league this last weekend.

This is Seattle’s year. It’s been a long time since the most disappointing play in franchise history, but three more wins and the weight of last year’s questionable call will be lifted off the shoulders of this dynasty.
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
CELEBRATION & TRIBUTE
7TH ANNUAL REMEMBRANCE & CELEBRATION

JANUARY 14TH

REMEMBRANCE PROGRAM
4:00PM - SURC THEATRE

PEACE MARCH
3:30PM - SURC PIT

For accommodation: DS@CWU.EDU