Former CWU president James Brooks dead at 91

By Xander Fu

On April 2, former Central Washington University President James E. Brooks, whom Brooks Library is named after, passed away at the age of 91.

While active, Brooks’ administration saw campus growth in numbers: 20 buildings were added, acreage was more than tripled and the student body grew from 2,320 to 7,483. During his time in office, he saw the establishments of the CWU Foundation and the CWU faculty senate, as well as notable growth in faculty.

At 35 years old, Brooks was the youngest person, as well as the only CWU graduate to serve as president. He served from 1961 to 1978. It was in 1986 when CWU named him distinguished alumnus.

After stepping down as president, he taught geography and geology courses in 1985 and again from 1987 to 1993. He received a Distinguished Professor in 1989 for his work in the department of geography and land studies.

Before he took office, Brooks received his bachelor’s degree in education and social science at CWU in 1949. While teaching, Brooks also pursued his master’s and doctoral degrees in geography from the University of Washington. Other notable achievements of Brooks’ include Friends of the Library, an organization dedicated to funding and promoting the library, and the James and Lillian Brooks/Reginald and Isabel Shaw Geography Endowment. The endowment has awarded over $50,000 to undergraduate geography majors in the past 20 years.

Brooks will be remembered by many. Current CWU President Jim Gaudino had this to say about his late friend: “No one loved Central more than Jim and we’ll all miss his commitment, humor and friendship.”

The star of Ellensburg: La Estrella

By Daisy Perez

As they drove down the uneven roads of Los Angeles, seven-year-old George Moreno peeks out the window as his grandpa drives a silver Toyota; his Hawaiian shirt sways in the breeze. George keeps a lookout for the dirty pink apartment complex that was right before the Mexican store.

His grandpa opened the door to the backseat and George sprang out of the car. Once inside the crowded store, George bolted to the candy aisle, passing by spices, bread, individually wrapped tamales and the statue of the Virgin Mary. He grabbed a pack of pelones—a sweet and spicy candy. George showed his grandpa the candy, and his grandfather smiled and nodded.

On the way home, in the backseat of the car, George opened his bag and stuffed his mouth with candies. His grandfather’s dark eyes looked at him through the rear-view mirror and chuckled, “Slow down, buddy!”

- See “La Estrella” on page 6

CWU women’s volleyball scores trip to Italy

By Natalie Hyland

Over Spring Break, the CWU Volleyball team went on the program’s first foreign tour to Italy. While overseas the team played three matches, visited landmarks, bonded, and indulged in authentic Italian food. The group of 43 included the team, their families and CWU alumni. Head coach Mario Andaya brought his wife with him to share the journey.

“The history of the country is amazing,” Andaya said. “To experience that with the players and their families was very memorable.”

The NCAA allows each team to participate in a foreign tour every four years, but this is the first trip of the kind for CWU Volleyball in all of Andaya’s 21 years as head coach.

“This was a tremendous experience for our first one, learning about that culture and also playing against those teams was something that we’ll always remember,” Andaya said. “I recommend [foreign tours] if teams have the chance to do that.”

Many of the players, including redshirt freshman Maggie McTaggart, had never been to another continent.

“I’ve been to Canada and Mexico, but nowhere overseas,” Cook said. “And when I have travelled it’s been with my family, not a big group like we had.”

- See “Volleyball” on page 9

Look for our top things to do at CWU this spring at CWUObserver.com
The results are in: Underage use not getting higher

By Ryan Kinker
news@cwuobserver.com

The perceived case of obtaining marijuana is relatively unchanged which leads Jill Hoxmeier, public health professor at CWU, to think perceptions about marijuana are not on the same level as alcohol despite recent legalization.

Legalization “hasn’t changed the perception that pot is easier to get,” Hoxmeier said. “Underage marijuana use is still stigmatized differently than underage drinking.”

While the percentage of students surveyed who used alcohol in the past 30 days was higher than students who used marijuana, Hoxmeier said the stigma against marijuana, primarily in rural areas, discourages students from using.

These findings are a positive sign for the nationwide movement towards legalization, only two years have passed since recreational use became legal in Washington. Hoxmeier said that from a scientific perspective, more time would be needed to make the findings truly significant.

“I don’t think two years is enough,” Hoxmeier said. “I think it’d be important to see the trends across all states where pot is legal and build the case. I only err on the side of caution because it hasn’t been a longer amount of time. But the short term results show that [underage] use isn’t increasing with legalization.”

The full survey results can be found through the Washington State Department of Health seat website. The results can be broken down by grade, age, county, and school district, showing the varying scope of the random testing procedure.

Hello, Wildcats. This is my first time writing to you from the EIC desk and it’s honestly a bit strange. I couldn’t be happier to have the position, don’t get me wrong, but I never expected to get here. I started attending CWU in fall 2015 and I’ve been on the Observer every quarter since. My predecessors are people who usually prendre their leave, they did all they could to make this publication the best it could be for CWU students.

This shouldn’t surprise me then, when I think about it. I’ve watchedpast EIC’s either gradu- ate or pursue other jobs. My turn was coming to step into the role. My first quarter at CWU, I joined as a staff reporter. The next quarter I became a staff reporter then the next year I became the news editor. Now, I’m at the top and it’s a bit scary. But I’m also really excited about this. Some Observer staff members went to San Francisco for a collegiate news conference last quarter. I went to workshops and keynotes, which gave me a ton of ideas on how I can handle my new position.

So here we are, I’m writing this cheesy first letter that very few of you will actually read. This’ll be a good relationship, I’m sure.

Looking forward, I want to do what those before me did: Make the Observer the best it can be. I plan to make a career out of this. Some Observer staff members went to San Francisco for a collegiate news conference last quarter. I went to workshops and keynotes, which gave me a ton of ideas on how I can handle my new position. For, I’ve got a ton of things on my mind and I don’t want to keep on until 3 a.m. on production night without showing anyone else your pages.

A lot of these mistakes and lessons are better applied to your previous position as news editor. I feel as if I finally learned the ropes of my last job as I moved on to the next one. I also have a ton of new advice I can give to you. I have a ton of other things I can guide him to avoid the mistakes I made.

I’m looking forward to implementing all of these ideas this quarter and I think they’ll really improve the content you see.

Many people don’t realize the Observer is just a class. Any student can apply, we have anyone from communications majors to engineering majors to theatre majors (albeit mostly communications majors).

This means we have students with a huge variety of experiences in writing news. We, the editors, are the teachers and the Observer is an amazing teaching tool for student journalists.

We’re not supposed to be a professional paper, but often we print issues that could give some “real” newspapers a run for their money.

We’ve won national awards, for issues I’ve contributed minimally to, but I couldn’t be more proud of my coworkers and staff.

The workers and editors we have are the best we could ever ask for and they’re always surprising me.

Unfortunately, my first quarter as editor-in-chief will also be my last. I graduate summer quarter and I’m going to miss all of this staff.

The editors are all veterans and the writing staff is the larg- est I’ve ever seen here. I want to lead all these people to create the best product we can and hopefully in the process, go out with a bang.

I’ll see you next week, Wildcats.

-Kailan Manandic, EIC
Students from across Washington state gathered in McCom- nell Auditorium, decked out in Seahawks colors, to hear Richard Sherman answer a few vetted student questions ranging in topic from homemade food to police brutality.

Sherman, Seattle Seahawks cornerback and Super Bowl champion, gave a keynote Saturday evening during CWU’s Students of Color Summit.

Several students traveled from schools such as University of Washington, Washington State University Vancouver and Gonzaga University to hear Sherman talk.

“My girl’s jambalaya is really good,” Sherman said when responding to a CWU student about favorite home-cooked meals. “Just throw that on some rice and that’d probably do it for me.”

Sherman kept the mood positive and constructive during his keynote despite more serious subjects.

An unnamed student asked Sherman how he’d advise his 2-year-old son, Rayden Sherman, when navigating this country in light of police brutality against black men.

“It’s a tough answer because all I can tell him is to be respectful in those situations and give him the knowledge that my dad gave me and that was to shut up,” Sherman said. “As a man I could tell him, ‘Hey son, you go and you tell [the officer] these are the laws.’ Well [the officer] can say, ‘That’s not the law today, son’ and slams me kid on the car.”

Sherman grew up in Compton, California and spoke about his background, saying he’s experienced tough situations with police.

“There’s no rulebook for it. There’s no policing the police, if that makes sense,” he said. “You stay calm, you keep quiet and move forward because until they change the system, that’s all you can do.”

The summit focused on bringing together students of color to share stories and experiences from their campuses. Several workshops focused on issues that affect how the educational system treats students of color.

Sherman talked about persevering through the unique challenges of being a person of color in America.

“It’s always going to be difficult,” Sherman said. “Everything is trial by fire and a lot of time in our lives that’s what you have to go through. It’s unfortunate, but don’t let the color of your skin or any other discrimination stop you.”

Throughout the keynote, Sherman emphasized the importance of improving the world through education and helping others.

“I think it’s the most important thing for young people to stand up and be advocates in their community,” Sherman said. “You can’t expect outsiders to come to your community and improve it. It’s up to you to make your community better … don’t let anyone blow your candle out.”

Photos by McKenzie Lakey/Alex Observer

Seattle Seahawks cornerback Richard Sherman points to the crowd after an audience member shouts out his alma mater, Stanford University.
CWU signs new lease in Sammamish

Ryan Kinker
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After 123 years as an institution catering to high school, Central Washington University will now be an option for high school students to receive college credit away from campus.

On March 21, CWU President James Gaudino officially signed the lease for Mars Hill Church in Sammamish with the intent of using the location as an instructional site.

On the same day, Gaudino signed the lease, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) approved CWU’s request to allow Running Start instruction at the church next fall.

Running Start is Washington's program for high school students to earn dual credit for college and high school at the same time. The program gives high school students the option to get a head-start on the general education requirements for a bachelor's degree or even finish an associate's degree as juniors and seniors in high school.

According to Katherine McKenzie Lakey, strategic communication manager for running start.

The City of Sammamish purchased Mars Hill Church with the intent of placing a post-secondary outreach center in March 2015. The property is 22 acres with a full gym and parking spaces for 300 vehicles. Within a few miles there are four high schools (Skyline High School, Eastlake High School, Tesla STEM High School and Eastside Catholic High School), which makes the site easier to access for high school students. "[Mars Hill Church] is a very short walk or drive from four high schools,” Frank said. “So that’s wonderful for their community.”

Kortzina King, principal of Eastside Catholic High School, said that the agreement with CWU is a much better option for Running Start than Eastside Catholic’s current agreements with Bellevue College and Lake Washington Technical College. “We’re very excited about this opportunity,” King said. “We want to give students of all kinds of backgrounds the opportunity to be successful and an opportunity to get some rigorous coursework in. I think it’s good for a specific group of students who can make the high school portion and college portion work in tandem.”

The lease, publicly available on CWU’s website, between CWU and Sammamish is for $60,000 per year in base rent for three years. After three years, CWU has the option to purchase the property for $8 million, continue the lease for up to an additional 15 years in five-year increments, or to terminate the agreement. The rent has the possibility of increasing depending on the income of the operation.

“The lease creates some flexibility depending on if programming is successful,” Frank said. “We’re all very hopeful and confident on working towards a high success rate.”

CWU is also working on other programming. Frank said, for professionals and students alike who are looking for additional training. This includes certificate programs, cultural enrichment and community outreach, training for high school students and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs.

“We have a very successful craft brewing program that allows for people to really learn about the brewing process,” Frank said. “We have very robust music and arts programs as well, so there’s some possibilities there with a strong focus on the arts in the [Sammamish] community.”

His biggest benefit to the instructional site is the cultural enrichment and its possible impact on the community, but acknowledges that introducing students to post-secondary education will also be helpful to students.

“I see there is a benefit to give [students] the college mindset at a young age,” Frank said. “We have pretty advanced students who are looking at where their college careers will be at 12... We’re happy to be a beta tester for anything CWU wants to try, we’re willing to get creative and we’re willing to try things. It should be a great relationship.”

Warm weather, new budget

At community colleges, and we don’t offer Running Start programs there,” Frank said. “They’re for completion programs for students who want to transition out of the community college experience to the Central Washington University experience to complete their degrees. At an instructional site, we’ll be able to offer classes to high school students.”

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CWU to switch to Responsibility Centered Management budget model

Start summer quarter, students will not be the only ones managing a tight budget. A change in budget model means the dean of each individual college will be in charge of managing their department's budget.

CWU will be switching to a Responsibility Centered Management (RCM) budget model, which will cause funds to be distributed at a college-level instead of at a department level. Funds are currently being allocated based 80 percent on student credit hours, 10 percent of time spent on community service, 5 percent for pre-majors and 5 percent based on graduation rates.

According to a presentation by Joel Klucking, vice president of business and financial affairs, the current model is intended to protect any downturn in enrollment; however, CWU is currently on an upswing. It also encourages spending students from other departments because funds are distributed at a department level, leading to a relationship between number of majors and amount of funds.

The key differences in the RCM model are that funds are distributed at a college-level (i.e. College of Business) and it is based entirely on student credit hours. This will benefit colleges that have a large amount of students taking general education credits, credits that all students are required to take (i.e. English 101).

While implementation of this model has been slowly introduced since 2014, it has only gained steam in the last nine months. There were open forums during both fall and winter quarter concerning how finances work here at CWU and any implications of the change in financial model. This quarter, open forums will be held on how changes will occur.

While the academic side of CWU has had to become transparent with their budgets, there was concern that the administrative side did not have to do the same. As a result, there will be a budget summit later this month comprised of 25 half-hour presentations over the course of a couple days. They will be held in the SURC and open to the public.

"Flipping the switch is more seamless than expected," said Katherine Frank, vice president for academic and student life. Frank has experienced this change during her time at Indiana University-East. She says they are “trying to involve as many people as possible” in the process.

"Tell us what you don’t like,” said Frank. “If we’re making decisions that don’t put the students first, then we’re making the wrong decisions.”
Planning on walking at commencement? Purchase your cap and gown package by May 21, 2017 and receive 35% off any frame over $100.

Mark your calendar for Grad Kickoff
Pick up your regalia and enter for a chance to win a FREE Graduation Frame and other great prizes.

CWU-Ellensburg
April 18 and 19
10 a.m.–5 p.m.
SURC Ballroom

CWU-Des Moines
April 26
1–7 p.m.
Higher Ed Center

CWU-Lynnwood
April 27
1–7 p.m.
Snoqualmie Hall

ewu.edu/summer | Cheney | Spokane | Online

EWUSummerSession
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“La Estrella” from page 1

By Daisy Perez
@CWUObserver

One building is hard to miss because of its vibrant red and teal store exterior: the only Mexican store in Ellensburg. A giant sign reads “LA ESTRELLA MEXICAN GROCERY STORE.” Seventeen years and 1,071 miles later, 24-year-old George digs for pelones in a clear plastic jar in Ellensburg’s LA ESTRELLA Mexican grocery store. “My grandfather is gone now,” says the broad-shouldered CWU senior. “This is the only place in town that I can get my candy.” He continues to search for candy and stuffs his hand into one of many clear plastic jars filled with spicy mango lollipops and pelones that sit atop a cafeteria-style table. He pulls his hand out of the jar and smiles widely at the handful of lollipops.

Ellensburg’s population is 18,000 and 85 percent are Caucasian, while 9 percent of Ellensburg’s population are Hispanic or Latino. It’s no surprise that for the Hispanic and Latino residents, LA ESTRELLA is a place that reminds you of home.

Rosalba Cuevas, 46, is the owner of LA ESTRELLA. She sits on a dark stool behind a glass counter, legs crossed, answering endless phone calls and clients’ questions. Her business is successful in her business, and customers are now able to purchase much more than they used to. “It doesn’t look like much,” she gestures to her small store, her dark curly hair bounces as she laughs. “But it looks better than when I first bought the place.”

Cuevas’ business has grown from one aisle at Safeway to many clear plastic jars filled with spicy mango lollipops and pelones that sit atop a cafeteria-style table. She pulls her hand out of the jar and smiles widely at the handful of lollipops.

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Creating a scene without a plot is daunting to the average student, but to the members of the Hot New Jam, flying by the seat of their pants is nothing new.

The Hot New Jam (HNJ) is CWU’s student-led improv troupe. Improv—or improvisation—is the art of creating a scene from only a given prompt, no scripts involved.

According to its Facebook page, the group was formed in January 2013. Chelsey Sheppard is a third-year BFA Candidate of theatre production and is one of the team members of HNJ.

“This club has actually been around since before either of us got here,” Sheppard said. “We were both put on the team last year.”

Club President Deven Austin, a theatre performance BFA candidate, run the group with the help of other team members like Sheppard.

Austin said that there is an audition process to joining the group, but said that it didn’t stop him when he wanted to join.

At the time he wasn’t in any of the theatre productions and he had some background in improv during high school. That influenced his decision to audition.

“I got on the team and I have been doing it ever since,” Austin said.

Both Austin and Sheppard heard about HNJ through the theatre department, which according to Sheppard, hosts different activities for its students. The two of them and the rest of the members of HNJ are working to get the group more recognition throughout campus so people outside of the theatre department get to know them.

“We are branching out,” Austin said. “Theatre performance every other Friday in [the 1989] Bistro and we are in the process of making a radio show, an hour long audio-only radio show on 88.1 The Burg.”

In addition to performing at the bistro, HNJ also holds both open and closed practices every Friday in Hertz 122 at 4 p.m.

The closed practices are for official members of HNJ.

These members, all of whom are in the theatre department, work together to hone their skills and prepare for their time on the stage. To become an official member, actors must go to the auditions at the beginning of each quarter.

According to Sheppard, before the auditions the current team members discuss what they are looking for in a new teammate and if the auditions are held to fill any gaps in the group. Sheppard said that they prefer to have eight people as their standard improv team.

For those who are not members, there are always the open practices, which are open for anyone who wants to try their hand at improv.

Icebreaker games like “physical telephone” and “zip zap zop” help to bring participants out of their shells and get them ready for the harder games.

Once the ice breakers are over, it is time for the short or long-form exercises to begin. Participants take part in scenes that are created by audience members.

These scenes can have anywhere from two to six actors and can cover any topic that can be thought up by the audience.

One scene was created when an audience member decided that the group should perform a story on the topic of grass. However, as the different actors came in and added to the story, it changed and became a story about a dead dog—with some interesting additions.

“The cheese is good,” Jackson Berhow, a BFA candidate, said about his “dead dog” who liked cheese. “I do like the cheese.”

There are no real rules for the scenes, except maybe to not laugh at any mistakes that might be made by another actor.

Anyone can participate in the scenes, but they must be willing to follow the guidelines of the activities. For example, if the goal is to create a scene without laughing, none of the actors are allowed to laugh the audience however, is free to act at the scene.

According to Sheppard and Austin, to succeed at improv an actor has to be willing to fail.

“This biggest thing is to not be afraid,” Austin said. “I think we’re a bunch of people who just try to laugh at any mistakes that might be made by another actor.

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By Daisy Perez  @CWUObserver

Purple stage lights danced around the room during last year’s Evening at the Brooks, as men twirled women in little black dresses across the dance floor. Star decorations glittered overhead as a woman stood beside a jazz ensemble and sang a light and catchy tune. Other party-goers sat at round tables and chattered over a glasses of wine.

“Our dean [Patricia Cutright] came up with the idea of the gala [about four years ago], and I just implemented her vision… And it came out very well the first time so we’ve stuck with it,” Michele Reilly, the associate dean of libraries, said with a smile. “We wanted to feature the talents that we have here at the university and in the community.”

The Brooks Library is partnering with the Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce to hold its fourth annual gala and silent auction. The evening will feature music, hors d’oeuvres, wine, art and student performances. Usually, between 150 and 250 students and community members attend. A few of the items up for auction include a variety of artwork, two Jazz in the Valley tickets and a Purity Soapworks basket.

“But I had seen it done in another library,” Patricia Cutright, the dean of libraries, said. “It was an amazing demonstration…I saw it as an opportunity for the people of Ellensburg to see the library and resources.”

The night will begin at 7:30 p.m. with short speeches from CWU President James Gaudino, CEO of Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce Jim Armstrong and the Friends of the Library. All four floors of the library will then be transformed for the gala with a different activity on each.

The Ellensburg Big Band with Music Director Josh Parrill will perform songs such as “Come Fly with Me,” “Cheek to Cheek” and “Why Don’t You Do Right?” Student musicians from the music department will perform and offer swing dance lessons and CWU theatre art students will give a theatrical performance. There will also be an art gallery featuring CWU artists.

“Previous galas featured student poetry and prose. This year, we’re excited to highlight theatre performances by students…[who] are donating their time to the gala fundraiser,” said Elizabeth Brown, instruction coordinator and research librarian.

The proceeds from this year’s event will fund the new Family Friendly Space initiative which aims to provide a more supportive environment for the campus and community families. The initiative will provide expanded services for non-traditional, visually impaired, deaf and autistic students. The library staff hope to reach their goal to provide these expanded services within the next three to five years.

A portion of the proceeds will also be used for a scholarship that will be awarded to a CWU student pursuing one of the Library and Information Science programs.

“I would love to see more students” attend, Reilly said. “Because the proceeds go towards funding projects for students.”
Baseball continues hot streak vs. ‘Cavs

By Natalie Hyland

Wildcat baseball looks to improve on its win streak and potentially advance in the GNAC standings in Portland on April 8 against Concordia.

The Wildcats are currently 12-12 overall with an 11-8 conference record, placing them third in GNAC standings, one win behind No. 2 Northwest Nazarene who are 12-8 in GNAC play. While this week's GNAC East series vs. 'Cavs will be crucial in determining the end of the season, the team is looking to build on its win streak and prove on its win streak and potential to make an impact in the GNAC.

Charlotte Chapman University.

By Natalie Hyland

The CWU Volleyball team mixed business with pleasure. Touring the historic sites of Italy by day, while playing volleyball at night when the Italian players finished their jobs.

Many of the players, including redshirt freshman Maggie McTaggart, had never been to another continent. “I’ve been to Canada and Mexico, but nowhere overseas,” Cook said. “And when I have traveled, it’s been with my family, not a big group like we had.”

During the daytime, the team went on sightseeing tours including Rome and Sienna—a favorite of many, including freshman Nikki Cook.

“I liked Sienna because it was like picture-perfect, what you expect Italy to be, Cook said. “There’s not a lot of people like there was in Rome.”

The Wildcats took to the courts at night, waiting until the Italian teams got off work. The Italian players ranged in age from 18 to 40 years old and competed using a club system instead of the typical university programs seen in the United States.

“They were very good competitors,” Andaya said of the Italians. “A lot of the women that we played could play at our level or at the division one level.”

In order to play professional volleyball in Italy, players start at the bottom and work their way up through the club levels. The CWU players played a player that was on the Russian national team who came over to play professionally in Italy but he has to go through the club program to do that,” Andaya said.

CWU played three tough clubs while in Italy. The Wildcats faced Liberi & Forti 1914, Palavolo Notolini, and PGS Pallavolo Senago in their matches. The team has been able to improve their skills since transferring from Chapman University.

CWU’s #8 Rory Graf-Brennen high-fives #31 Yi-Fan Pan after rounding the bases.

The CWU Volleyball team mixed business with pleasure. Touring the historic sites of Italy by day, while playing volleyball at night when the Italian players finished their jobs.

“I would love to continue to tour Europe,” Andaya said. “I think that the quality of volleyball is very high, the level of volleyball is very high.”

The Wildcats have begun taking the things they learned in Italy and finding out how to best make those lessons translate into playing together next season. “We bonded a lot,” Nikki Cook said. “We’ll be able to play more together and have that unity we created!”

While the team was bonding, Coach Andaya set his focus on the idea that being able to go switch from vacation to competition in a matter of hours may mean better performance at away games during the season. “It’s very easy to let those distractions affect your play,” Andaya said. “It will be very good for us knowing that we can travel that far, go on tours, meet new people, speak a different language and then all of a sudden go back to what we know.”

The universal lesson the team took from their journey abroad is how valuable it is for teams to travel together. “I really hope we do another trip like this, maybe before I graduate,” Nikki Cook said. “It was awesome and I really hope other sports take advantage of that.”

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GNAC STANDINGS

MEN’S BASEBALL

1. Western Oregon [11-5]
2. Northwest Nazarene [12-8]
4. Montana State Billings [9-10]
5. Saint Martin’s [7-11]
6. Concordia [5-13]

WOMEN’S SOFTBALL

2. Saint Martin’s [6-4]
3. Northwest Nazarene [7-5]
4. Montana State Billings [8-8]
5. Western Washington [5-5]
6. Concordia [5-11]
7. Simon Fraser [3-7]
8. Western Oregon [1-5]

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Wrestlemania: Thrills and heartbreaks

By Mitchell Johnson
johnsmctic@cwu.edu | @SportsWithMitch

The World Wrestling Entertainment’s (WWE) version of the “Super Bowl” provided many thrills for its motto “The Ultimate Thrill Ride.”

There were tables, ladders, steel chairs, sledgehammers and lots of pin attempts during the five-hour show, plus a two hour pre-show consisting of three matches.

Cruiserweight Championship: Neville defeats Enzo Amore via pinfall – 3.7/5 rating

This was the first match of the day and was the cruiserweight championship. Neville, cornered with a submission attempt in the middle of the ring, but Neville poked at Amore’s pre-existing injured eye, which led Neville to finish Amore off with a move off the top turnbuckle to remain champion.

United States Championship: Kevin Owens defeats Chris Jericho (c) via pinfall – 4.2/5 rating

The former best friends set their differences in the ring. Jericho was back-and-forth for most of the match. The match consisted of competitors hitting their finishers and kicking out. With both wrestlers outside of the ring, Kevin Owens picked up Chris Jericho and threw him to the corner. Jericho opened up the ring. Owens pinned Jericho and got the victory.

Raw Women’s Championship: Bayley defeats Nia Jax, Sasha Banks and Charlotte Flair via pinfall – rating 3.9/5

Bayley, Sasha Banks and Charlotte Flair ganged up on the powerful Nia Jax. The three wrestlers threw Jax from the top turnbuckle. They stacked themselves on top of Jax to pin and eliminate her. Banks tried to pin Flair, but Flair kicked her leg. Bayley and Flair went to the ring to turn the tide in their favor.

Raw Tag Team Championship: Jeff & Matt Hardy defeat Enzo & Big Cass, Cesaro & Sheamus – rating 4.6/5

The Hardy brothers surprised everyone by coming the tag team in the ladder match. Each team had its chance to grab the tag-team titles but were stopped by another team.

AJ Styles defeats Shane McMahon via pinfall – 4.4/5 rating

Being known as the brawler of the sport, Shane McMahon showed great improvement for getting on the mat and wrestling.

As AJ Styles goes for a head kick in the corner, he misses McMahon and hits the referee in the face. This allowed both competitors to do whatever they wanted with no disqualification.

StYLES grabbed a trash can from underneath the ring and put the trash can in McMahon’s face. Styles jumped from the top turnbuckle. McMahon hit Styles with the trashcan in midair, then McMahon hit the same move on Styles but kicked the trash can into Styles’ face this time.

McMahon said Styles onto the announcers table and climbed up to the top turnbuckle. As McMahon jumped, Styles moved out of the way, putting McMahon through the table. Styles finished off McMahon with a jumping forormula to obtain the win.

Two ladders laid from the ring to the outside in the middle ring. Styles and Cesaro and Sheamus laying on top of them. Jeff Hardy jumped off a 20-foot ladder bending the ladders. Matt Hardy climbed up to grab the titles.

John Cena & Nikki Bella defeat Miz & Maryse via double pinfall – rating 3.7/5

The battle for the best Smackdown Live power couple was not one of the most exciting matches.

The Miz was in firm control for the first half of the match. When John Cena finally made the tag to girlfriend Nikki Bella, she dominated Miz’s wife Maryse. After Cena and Bella hit their finishers they both got the pin.

The best part was Cena posing to his three-year girlfriend Bella after the match.

Unsanctioned Match: Seth Rollins defeats Triple H via pinfall – rating 4.8/5

This was the best match of the day. Triple H’s strategy was to attack Seth Rollins’ injured knee, after teaing it two months ago.

Many times, Rollins’ knee gave in from pinning up Triple H. This did not stop Rollins from risking it all. Many times he jumped from the top turnbuckle, hurting Triple H, while hurting his knee in the process. As a ladder match came into play from under the ring, Triple H tried to finish Rollins off with it, but never could land a strike. Rollins took control of the laddermatch, but Triple H’s wife Stephanie McMahon tried grabbing it. Triple H tried to take advantage of the distraction, but ran into his wife. McMahon crashed through a table placed earlier. Rollins hit his finisher to win the match.

Smackdown Women’s Championship: Naomi submits Alexa Bliss (c) via pinfall and retains title – 5.4 rating

An extremely short match with a variety of back-and-forth action of one woman taking out the other. Naomi eventually submits Alexa Bliss to regain the title.

Roman Reigns defeats The Undertaker via pinfall – rating 4.6/5

The longevity career of The Undertaker more than likely came to an end. This was a brutal match, with The Undertaker getting speared through a table and being hit with a steel chair numerous times. Even after each painful hit, The Undertaker managed to kick out of the pin attempts. It took Reigns bouncing off the ropes three times for the spear to get Reigns the victory.

After The Undertaker stood up, he took off his jacket, hat and gloves and laid them in the center of the ring, kissed his wife sitting ringside, and left to a standing ovation.

WWE Championship: Randy Orton defeats Bray Wyatt (c) via pinfall – rating 3.9/5

Bray Wyatt was dominating this match until Randy Orton hit his signature RKO outside of the ring to turn the tide in his favor.

Orton hit Wyatt a DDT from the second rope and caught him with another RKO to seal the victory.

Universal Championship: Brock Lesnar defeats Goldberg (c) via pinfall – rating 3.6/5

A match lasting less than five minutes consisted of Brock Lesnar hitting 10 suplexes and his signature F5 to get the victory.