

Football

Friday, Sept. 18

• Prairie City @ North
Lake in North Lake, 2 p.m.• Grant
Union @
Stanfield in
Stanfield,
7 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 19

• Day/Mon @ Joseph
in Baker, 10 a.m.

Volleyball

Thursday, Sept. 17

• Day/Mon
@ Crane
in Crane,
5 p.m.• Grant Union @ Elgin
in Elgin, 6 p.m.

Friday, Sept. 18

• Ukiah/Long Creek @
Burnt River
in Unity,
Noon• Prairie City
@ North
Lake in
North Lake, 2 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 19

• Day/Mon, Prairie City
GU @ Old Oregon/High
Desert League Tourney
in Baker, 8 a.m.

Cross Country

Friday, Sept. 18

• Grant Union, Monument @
Enterprise
Invitational, Alpine
Meadows in
Enterprise,
1:45 p.m.
(varsity)Panthers
finish
week 2-2
in matchesBy Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

UNITY – The Prairie City Panther volleyball team kept a busy schedule last week, ending with two wins and two losses.

“All of our matches have been close with ups and downs,” said head coach Louanne Zwegardt. “All three teams we played on the weekend had a lot of hustle, and the ball rarely hit the floor.”

The competition started with a match against the Grant Union junior varsity team which the Panthers lost, 2-3 (18-25, 26-24, 19-25, 27-25 and 9-15).

Prairie City defeated Pine Eagle in Unity last Friday, 3-2 (17-25, 25-18, 17-25, 25-14 and 15-9).

The victory was followed by a win and a loss at the Arlington Tournament where they beat Arlington 3-2 (25-16, 22-25, 15-25, 25-16, 16-14) and lost to Damascus Christian 1-3 (13-25, 26-24, 19-25 and 16-25).

“We struggled a little with staying up in intensity, especially on Saturday in the heat of the afternoon,” coach Zwegardt said.

Highlighting last week’s successes, the coach said, “Our serving is improving with Cassie Hire serving four aces against Pine Eagle and five against Arlington. Amaya Zwegardt served 100 percent Saturday and MaKenzie Jones 100 percent against Pine Eagle.”

The Panthers now prepare for a road trip to Silver Lake where they’ll face the North Lake Cowboys at 3 p.m., Friday.

“We will be looking forward to getting our team healthy and ready,” coach Zwegardt said.

TOP-RANKED GU TEAM
SETS GOALS HIGHPros bring state
experience to
volleyball seasonBy Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY – The volleyball season has rolled out and the 2A Grant Union Prospectors, three weeks into it, have a good handle on the competition.

Grant Union is on a nine-game win streak, even toppling talented 4A teams, but still, head coach Shae Speth is keeping her feet on the ground.

“Although a few teams in our league graduated some key players, we play in a league where any team can beat another on any given night,” she said. “We can’t underestimate anyone.”

Speth is in her ninth year with the Grant Union program, seventh as head coach.

The Prospectors are starting the year with memories of last season’s trip to the state championship final game in Redmond.

They entered the state tournament ranked 13th, but were seeded 12th, due to a higher-ranking team not making the top 16.

Grant Union went on a roll, finishing second at the final game to league foe Burns.

It was their first second-place finish in at least 12 years – it’s been 25 since they won the championship, when coach Speth was on the team.

“After placing second in state last year, we want to get back to that championship game,” Speth said. “Losing that game left a bitter taste. The girls weren’t just happy to have made it that far last year, they wanted to win.”

The coach said her team has become more offensive-minded the past few seasons, while continuing to keep a defensive focus.

“This is the best offensive team I have coached,” she said. “Physically and skill-wise, this team is strong. The mental game is something that we will always continue to work on – we can always be tougher in that regard.”

While the team graduated four seniors who were all active on the court, there are five seniors this year, as well as some returning younger, gifted players.

The Prospectors have six returning starters, including sophomore Mariah Moulton, sophomore Kori Pentzer, senior Rheanna Cartner, junior Chelsie Kodesh and junior Heather Mosley, as well as senior Samantha Brock who shared time on the court last year.

Team captains are Cartner, Pentzer and senior Kenzie Wilson.

Pentzer and Moulton lead the team at the outside hitter position, Speth said, with Cartner as setter, Kodesh as libero, Mosley and Wilson as middle blockers and Brock as opposite.

She added Jocelynn Smith, a senior, is a talented utility player, and senior Taylor McCluskey sees time as setter and serving specialist.

Grant Union’s program also has two junior varsity teams with 27 girls

The Eagle/Angel Carpenter
Prospector senior Kenzie Wilson is in hitting position during the Grant Union Invitational earlier this season.

GRANT UNION SENIOR PLAYERS

Samantha
BrockKenzie
WilsonRheanna
CartnerJocelynn
SmithTaylor
McCluskey

Lady Pros continue winning ways

Lady Prospectors started off a successful week with their first league win at home, a 3-0 victory over the Imbler Panthers.

“We had a great team performance for our first league match,” said head coach Shae Speth. “We focused on that goal and executed pretty well on serve-receive – this was one of our best passing matches of the season so far.”

The Prospectors traveled to the North Marion Tournament last Saturday, competing, their second year there, against 4A and 5A schools.

Speth said their play started with a lack focus and too many errors – but Grant Union bounced back to win the championship game against Sutherlin, 3-1 with scores of 25-12, 16-25, 29-27, 25-7.

“We had a big letdown in the second set while Sutherlin picked up their level of play,” Speth said. “In the third set, we were down 12-21 before making a big run behind tough serving from Kenzie Wilson. We were able to hold off a few set points before coming up with the win ourselves.”

Speth continued, “In the fourth set, we came out strong and Kori Pentzer had a huge serving run giving us a commanding win. I am so very proud of the girls for coming away with another tournament championship.”

Grant Union now takes to the road with a game in Elgin at 6 p.m. Thursday and a tournament in Baker on Friday.

total, including varsity.

Rhonda McCumber coaches JV, Shanna Northway coaches JV2, and Steve Speth is varsity assistant.

This year’s Wapiti League competition includes: Union, Cove, Burns, Imbler, Elgin and Enterprise.

Currently, Grant Union (9-0) is ranked No. 1 for OSAA 2A teams in

the state, and Burns (8-1) is ranked No. 4.

“They have a lot of offensive weapons, and don’t make a lot of mistakes,” Speth said of Burns. “We’ll have to play our best in order to beat them.”

She added her players have set high goals for themselves, and there are outside expectations this year as well.

She believes the team is up to the task of handling the pressure.

Experience is lending confidence. Spring and summer were spent focusing on fundamentals, with lots of time in the gym.

“This is a highly competitive group of girls, and it is tough competition every day in practice – that all makes our team stronger,” she said.

Seniors talked about their team’s performance and outlook for the season.

McCluskey said they use “co-ope-tition” in practice.

“We’re all competing in order to help everybody increase their skills,” she said. “Since we made it to the state championship game last year, we have to work harder to make sure we get there again.”

She added, “We’ve come together as a family and a team to make sure that not only we, ourselves, get better, but the entire team.”

Brock said the family aspect of their team is something she enjoys the most.

“We’re really strong with the positivity and energy on the court,” she said.

Wilson agreed, adding, “Our chemistry is strong, and we’re fighting our way back to the state championship game.”

Cartner said the team has a “good sense of family.”

“I love the intensity and the level of play we have on the court,” she said.

“I think we’ve realized how much potential we really have after last year,” Smith said. “I like how competitive and also how supportive we are to each other.”

Lady Tigers rally for win over Honkers

Team travels to Crane
Thursday, Baker SaturdayBy Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

MONUMENT – The Dayville/Monument Tigers enjoyed a home victory over Arlington last Friday at the Monument court.

The Lady Tigers won, 3-0, in a hard-fought battle.

“They came ready to play the game, and it definitely showed,” said head coach Tiffnie Schmadeka. “All the girls put their hearts into this game and were very focused.”

The team won the first set 25-21, and when they were down 19-24 in the second set, held on and rallied for a 27-25 win.

“This was a great boost for our ladies to help us push through the third set with confidence,” the coach said.

She said the team made tough serves and passed well.

“Ravyn Walker, our libero, played amazing and had great digs to keep us in the match,” Schmadeka said. “The girls were hitting the floor for every ball and had some great saves – all the girls hustled and had a fun day of volleyball.”

She said the Tigers would be working

Contributed photo/Skip Inscore
Dayville/Monument Tiger Emma Hettinga (3) faces an Arlington opponent at the net with teammates Kendall Hettinga (2) and Skylar Powell (8) in the action.

hard in practice this week, preparing to face Crane at the Mustang home court at 5 p.m. Thursday for both teams’ league opener.

“The girls are ready to play tough and get a win to start off league play,” the coach said.

Her assistant coach is Kristi Emerson. The Tigers then travel to Baker on Saturday for a tournament and another chance to match up with league teams.

“I’m very proud of our team,” Schmadeka said.

Two schools take on mud
at XC Scamper courseMark Thomas
takes second
for junior highBy Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

CATHERINE CREEK – Cross country teams from Grant Union and Monument schools enjoyed a mudfest at last Friday’s 39th Annual Catherine Creek Scamper.

Monument coach Chuck Thomas said one mud bog in particular is known for hanging onto the competitors’ shoes.

This year, Maya Thomas is the sole varsity runner for Monument with Dinorha Vidrio Landin running junior varsity.

Among the coach’s junior high athletes running in the Scamper was seventh-grader Mark Thomas who placed second out of 108 sixth- through eighth-grade runners.

The week before, the junior high runner had a first-place fin-



Contributed photo/Maria Thomas

ish at the Runner Soul XC Fest in Hermiston for his age group.

Grant Union head coach Sonna Smith said she has a full boys varsity team this year.

“They ran hard at Catherine Creek, and I expect their times to drop at Enterprise this Friday as the Scamper has many obstacles to slow runners down,” she said.

Grant Union will host a river run in the near future with details in the works.

The two schools will compete at the Enterprise Invitational Friday with varsity beginning at 1:45 p.m.