

Boys tennis advances three to State

By Rongi Yost
Correspondent

The Outlaws competed in round two of district competition on Monday, May 6, and finished play on Thursday, three days later. Sisters will send three players to the 4A/3A/2A/1A state tennis championships, which will be held in Corvallis on Friday and Saturday, May 17-18.

On Monday, Nate Weber (sophomore and the No. 3 seed) won two singles matches, qualified for the semi-finals, and was guaranteed a top-four finish and berth to state.

Weber defeated Austin Thatcher of Cascade 6-2, 6-0. It took Nate three sets to beat North Marion's Gage Hurst, 6-2, 4-6, 6-2.

"Hurst consistently got balls back, but without much pace and spin," said Coach Carl Click. "As is often the case, a hard hitter like Weber can get into trouble sometimes when he feels like he has to increase the pace of the points. Errors occur, and it cost Nate the second set. He settled down in the third set to win the match."

Weber said, "I'd met Hurst before in league and knew it wouldn't be an easy match. I just tried to work on hitting my second serve harder and ultimately, I just wanted to win the match to get the most points I could for my team."

Seniors Jed Kizziar and Isaiah Chapen also won two matches to make the semi-finals and secure a state berth in doubles. The No. 4-seeded pair wasn't challenged and beat Colton Lee and Brayden Burdoff of Cascade 6-2, 6-0, and went on to defeat Kobey Jorgenson and Roberto Garcia of Madras by the same score in the quarterfinals.

Kizziar said, "We went into the matches with the mentality that no matter who we'd play, we were going to win. As seniors, we know that each match could be our last, so we played our hardest. It was pretty cool at the end of the day knowing I'd made it to state for the third time. But, this time is special because I get to do it with Isaiah, one of my best friends."

Juniors Goerge Gates and Drew Collins-Burke scored a surprise win in the round of 16. The No. 3 doubles team beat Stayton's Nolan Cramer and Daniel Johnson 6-3, 4-6, 6-4. They lost their quarter-final match to Gomes and Giron 6-0, 6-1.

"It was a huge accomplishment for these two kids to win two matches at district and score team points," said Click.

On Thursday, singles

player Weber and doubles duo Kizziar and Chapen competed in the semifinals and finished fourth. They will all move on and compete at the state tournament in Corvallis next week.

Weber lost 6-3, 6-2, to last year's district champ senior Ben Suezle of Cascade. Suezle was the eventual district singles champion.

Click said, "Suezle was at the top of his game. He handled everything Weber threw at him. He did not make many mistakes at the baseline or when Weber pulled him to the net."

Weber went on to lose 6-3, 6-3, to Molalla's Lucas Kendrup in a third-place match later in the day. Nate, just a sophomore, finished fourth.

Kizziar and Chapen lost 4-6, 6-4, 7-5 in a nail-biter in the doubles semifinal to Madras' Tony Giron and Esteban Gomez.

"The Outlaws tied the final set 5-5 and had Kizziar serving, but lost the last two games," said Click. "Both of them struggled to get their serves on track and it proved to be costly in a close match."

The pair went on and lost 6-4, 1-6, 6-2 to Pietro Elia and Mason Simpson of Molalla in a three-set match for third place.

Kizziar and Chapen played the first half of the season as singles players, but combined to play as a combo and make a run at the state tournament in doubles. Jed and Isaiah

See TENNIS on page 20

Rally for education...



PHOTO BY CHARLIE KANZIG

Sisters educators, along with other supporters including students, parents, board members and other citizens, rallied after school on May 8 along Cascade Avenue as a message to legislators and Governor Kate Brown to fully fund education in Oregon. Rallies were held across the state and included full-day walkouts by teachers in some districts.



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