

TIGERS

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"I think overall the girls team is really a solid unit," Head Coach Darren Dutto said. "I liked a lot of the swims I saw today, especially from some of the younger girls. I think it was a pretty good effort."

The Tigers will need those big days from their top swimmers and from the younger ones throughout the season with one of the team leaders from the last two seasons, Riana Scott, sidelined with a ruptured ACL. Dutto said Ricker, Jensen and Kennedy Kruse have all stepped up as team leaders to help shoulder the load, while the underclassmen are filling in by grabbing high placings in their races.

"Romayne and Kristal have solidified that (leadership) position. Kennedy is the one who brings a really strong presence," Dutto said. "The three of them have stepped in to fill the role that Riana was part of. It makes a really cohesive girls team. We have a really well-functioning (team). They get along with each other great."

They by no means were alone Saturday, either. In addition to her role on the relay teams, Reagan Kruse grabbed third in both the girls 50 freestyle (27.00) and the girls 100 butterfly (1:10.71). Riley Weigand placed second in the girls 200 IM (2:38.38), was on the second-place girls 400 freestyle relay team (4:16.64) with Kennedy Kruse, Tulea Setser and Laramie Ricker, and was fourth in the girls 500 freestyle (6:30.45).

Meanwhile, Setser was third in the girls 200 freestyle (2:19.96) and part of the third-place girls 200 freestyle relay team (2:03.10) with Laramie Ricker, Elizabeth Zamora and Kelly Danzinger. Laramie Ricker added a third-place finish in the girls 100 freestyle (1:00.99). Grabbing fourth was the girls 400 freestyle relay team of Bouten, Corbyn Sexton, Zamora and Uma Gradinger (5:06.57). Bouten added fourth in the girls 100 backstroke (1:10.92) and Gradinger was fourth in the girls 100 breaststroke (1:27.24).

"Ary Bouten had a good meet. Reagan Kruse had a good meet. Laramie was another one who had some great



Photos by Ronald Bond/The Observer

La Grande's Grayson Jensen, top, and Tulea Setser, bottom, compete during the LHS December Invite Saturday.



times," Dutto said.

Romayne Ricker called it a challenge for the team to fill the shoes of Scott, who she said is "irreplaceable," but commended the team for its efforts so far in doing so.

"We're all working as hard as we can. They're doing great. They are stepping up to the plate," she said.

The LHS boys, meanwhile, finished second at the meet with 99.5 points, trailing Pendleton's 120-point effort.

Garren Dutto had individual wins in both the boys 50 freestyle (22.48) and the boys 500 freestyle (5:04.20), and helped the winning boys 200 freestyle relay team to victory, joining Caden Ricker, T.J. Clay and Grayson Jensen in posting a winning time of 1:38.64.

"Garren is definitely the leader of that team," Coach Dutto said. "It's his senior year. He's stepped it up, and he recognizes that. Grayson, this is just his second year swimming and he's

really coming along. Caden Ricker is also working on the sprints, and T.J. Clay is stepping up."

The LHS boys earned two more victories from Caden Ricker in the boys 100 freestyle (55.65) and from Clay in the boys 100 backstroke (1:04.50).

Grayson Jensen was second in the boys 100 breaststroke (1:13.50) and along with Clay, Dutto and Ricker, took second in the boys 200 medley relay (1:51.47). Ricker added a second-place finish in the boys 200 freestyle (2:03.27), and the boys 400 freestyle relay team of Devin Ingram, Logan Flynn, Adam Remily and Jack Seydel was second (4:38.32).

Flynn was also third in the boys 200 IM (2:26.77), and fourth in the boys 100 butterfly (1:08.69). Clay was fourth in the boys 200 IM (2:31.22). James Thurman tied for fourth in the boys 100 freestyle (1:02.30).

La Grande is back in action Jan. 5 at Hood River.



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Enterprise's Trace Evans, left, nearly pins Weiser's Robert Sudderth on Friday.

RYSDAM

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earned a tournament victory from Trace Evans (138). Evans went a flawless 3-0 in Saturday's action, edging Weiser wrestler Robert Sudderth by a 9-7 decision in the final.

Shane Lund (132) took second for the Outlaws at 2-1. He met Baker's Alex Duran in a tournament final for the second week in a row. After defeating Duran at the Muilenburg Invite in La Grande, Lund fell short in Elgin, dropping a 10-7 decision.

Enterprise's Andy Huwe (285) took fourth place with a record of 1-2.

Union/Cove, which took seventh with 41 points, received its biggest scoring boost from Lincoln Deem, who won the 132B round-robin weight class. Deem pinned both Crane's Wyatt Dimzoff and Grant Union's Casey Vaughan in the first round.

Jaxon Blackburn (138) went 3-1 and won his final three matches for third place. Also placing third was James Dempsey in the 152B round-robin bracket.

Both Garrett Burns (113) and Logan Butcher (145) went 3-1 and took third for Imbler, which placed eighth with 40 points. Burns rebounded from a

semifinal loss to Weiser's Conor Marsh and finished with three pins on the day. Butcher also shook off a semifinal loss, to Weiser's Matthew Morris, and also won three matches by fall.

MyKail Foster (145B) went 1-1 to take second in his round-robin class, and Zach Brown (220) placed fourth with a 1-2 record on the day.

Elgin earned 12 points to place 10th. Austin Greenlee went 3-1 to take second in the 138B weight class. Meanwhile Reece McConnell (138) and Clayton Hammond (170) both went 1-2 for the Huskies.

Friday featured a full day of round-robin wrestling. Joseph/Wallowa's effort was again paced by Brockamp, who went 4-0 at 170, while Miller (152C) and Staigle (195) finished 3-1.

Lund (132) and Drew Widener (220B) won all three of their matches for Enterprise Friday, and Kennison Knifong (138B) went 3-1.

Jack Deem led Union/Cove Friday by going 3-0 in the 132C division. Burns (113B) went 3-0 and Butcher (145) was 3-1 for Imbler. And Elgin received two wins apiece Friday from McConnell (138B), Greenlee (138C) and Hammond (170).

Grant Union's Drew Lusco was named the outstanding wrestler of the tournament.



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