



Ronald Bond/Observer file photo

Powder Valley's Belle Blair had 19 points and 10 rebounds in the Badgers' win Thursday.



Ronald Bond/Observer file photo

Ashlyn Gray, left, and Lexie Gassett helped Enterprise top Vernonia Thursday night.

Badgers, Outlaws reach semifinals

■ Powder Valley ekes out close win over Crane in rematch

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

The Powder Valley Badgers girls basketball team got revenge again.

Belle Blair had 19 points and 10 rebounds, including the go-ahead layup with 1:53 to play, and the Badgers avenged an earlier loss to the Crane Mustangs with a nail-biting 46-44 victory Thursday night in the 1A quarterfinals at Baker High School.

"It was a tight game the whole way," Badgers Head Coach Allen Bingham said. "Just what a playoff game should be, I think. We were evenly matched. They had some advantages in some things, and we had some advantages in some things."

Shelie Doman had just hit a game-tying 3-pointer for Crane with less than three minutes to play. The teams then traded missed baskets before Blair got free for a layup — off an assist from her sister, Sonora Blair — for a 44-42 edge.

Belle Blair had a big game despite battling an illness earlier in the week, according to the head coach.

"She was sick Monday and Tuesday,"

Bingham said. "Wednesday she was at practice. (Thursday) she said she was all right."

Autumn Davis and Megan Bingham both hit free throws to extend the Badger margin to four before things got crazy at the end. Riley Davis scored with 17 seconds left to get Crane within two. The Mustangs forced a turnover and had two shots at the tie miss before time ran out. A third attempt by Riley Davis — which went in — came after the final buzzer.

Crane was one of only three teams to have beaten Powder Valley entering Thursday's game, having scored a 44-35 win when the teams met in December. The Badgers, much like they did to Joseph two weeks ago, avenged the earlier loss in the game that mattered the most.

Crane led for a large portion of the contest, and for much of the night did just enough to keep Powder Valley at arm's length. A 6-0 run by the Badgers, capped by a Bingham layup, tied the score at 15-15 with 5:13 to play in the half when the cat-and-mouse game started. The back-and-

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■ Enterprise defense shuts down Vernonia for 37-31 victory

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

For the first time since 2012, the Enterprise Outlaws girls basketball team will play in the state semifinals.

Lexie Gassett scored 11 points, Karli Bedard added 10, and the Outlaws' defense shut down the Vernonia Loggers in the second and third quarters on the way to a 37-31 win Thursday night in the 2A state quarterfinals at the Pendleton Convention Center.

"It is a blessing to be here," Enterprise Head Coach Mike Crawford said. "To win a game here, we're sure of finishing in the top five. It speaks highly for the league and highly for the program. This is a good team."

The contest, which was tight early, turned in the second quarter when Vernonia went cold. The Outlaws held Vernonia without a point for more than 7:30 while they built a lead they wouldn't relinquish. Bedard started an 8-0 run with a field goal, and Gassett capped the rally with a pair of free throws for a 19-11 lead with 1:13 to play in the first

half. Shelby Moncrief added a jumper just before halftime for a 21-13 lead at the break.

"I thought we played pretty good defense all night," Crawford said.

He pointed out that Vernonia often seemed content to shoot deep 3-pointers, especially with sisters Brooklynn Walters and Jordan Walters, and Enterprise let the Loggers have those shots.

"I've been doing this a long time," Crawford said. "If you want to shoot from 25-28 feet, I'm going to let you."

The lead reached double figures in the third on a jumper by Bedard. A Carsyn Miller basket and a free throw by Moncrief later put the Outlaws ahead 28-15 after three quarters for their largest lead.

Brooklynn Walters, who led the Loggers with 14 points, hit a pair of 3-pointers in the fourth quarter to get the Loggers back in the game, but they got no closer than six points as the Outlaws held on.

Vernonia hit three first-quarter 3-pointers to hang close early, and was tied with Enterprise at 11-11 after one quarter before

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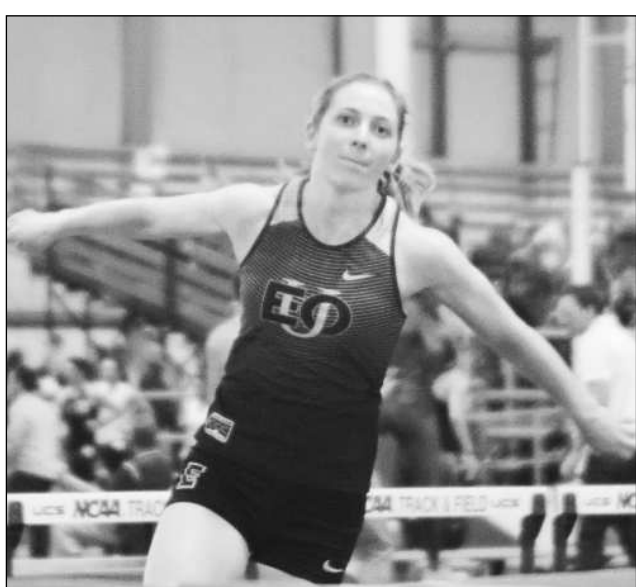
Dodd claims all-American

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

Paige Dodd became the second Eastern Oregon athlete to garner an all-American in the women's pentathlon — and the highest EOU placer ever — as she took third in the event with a score of 3,469 points Thursday at the NAIA Indoor National Championships in Brookings, South Dakota.

"Just surprising," Dodd said of learning she was the top EOU placer ever, as her third-place finish bested Kimmy Moore's fifth-place effort in 2012. "Doing so well never hits me until later. I just went out there and competed. That's pretty cool."

Dodd's top placing was in the high jump, where she cleared a mark of 5-foot-3-3/4 to tie for second and score 759 points. Her top point total was



Alex Navarro photo

Paige Dodd, shown earlier this season, scored 3,469 points to take third in the women's pentathlon Thursday.

in the 60-meter hurdles, where she took fifth in a time of 9.32 seconds and scored 844 points. She also took sixth in both the 800 (2:29.17, 703 points) and the long jump (17 feet even, 609 points) and sev-

enth in the shot put (34-foot-0-3/4, 554 points). Her overall score was 15 points off her own school record, which she posted in a January meet.

"I think the day went

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Buckaroos clip Joseph again

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

The top-ranked St. Paul Buckaroos girls basketball team got the best of the Joseph Eagles for the second time this season.

The Buckaroos took a 12-point lead into the fourth quarter, then held off a last-ditch rally by Joseph for a 42-37 win Thursday in the quarterfinals of the 1A state tournament in Baker City.

"Lots of credit to St. Paul for sure," Joseph Head Coach Lance Homan said. "There's nothing (for my team) to hang their heads (about)."

"You never like to lose, but at the same time if you do lose, knowing you left it out there (is) what matters."

A 7-0 run to start the second half gave St. Paul its largest lead at 30-18, and the Buckaroos still led 35-23 entering the fourth before Joseph closed in.

A 3-point play by Emma Hite, who led all scorers with 17 points, pulled Joseph within 37-29. Hite then followed with a layup and two free throws to trim the deficit to 37-33, and Joseph was within 37-35 after a Madelyn Nelson free throw with 3:27 to play.

But Karlee Southerland connected on a trey on the ensuing possession to push the margin back to five with just over three min-



S. John Collins/WesCom News Service

Joseph's Haley Miller, left, attempts a shot during the Eagles' loss to St. Paul Thursday.

utes to go. Hite scored with 2:26 to play to get the margin back to three, but the Eagles didn't score again.

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