

WALLOWA COUNTY FINALLY BESTS BURNS AND TAKES STATE

By Alex Castle
For The Observer

EUGENE — Wallowa County had been chasing Burns all year. A year ago, Burns beat Wallowa County by two points to narrowly took home the 3A cross county state championship. Last week, the Hilanders won the Special District 3 championship over the Outlaws by way of tiebreaker after each team scored 32 points. At Lane Community College on Saturday, Wallowa County finally overtook Burns, winning the 2019 OSAA 3A Cross County State Championship as a team by three points, while sophomore Henry Coughlan took home the individual title with a time of 15 minutes, 58.9 seconds. “With such a young team, they don’t run young,” Outlaws coach Dan Moody said. “It was in their mind the whole time, ‘we got to step up, we got to step up.’ And they all did.”

The state title is the third in program history and the first since winning back-to-back in 1995 and 1996. All three have come under Moody. While Coughlan led the way and finished four seconds ahead of second-place finisher J.P. Friedrichsen, his teammates weren’t far behind. Sophomores Zac Knapp and Bayden Menton were third and fourth with personal-bests of 16:07.1 and 16:23.8, respectively. All seven Outlaw runners finished inside the top 30, but the difference on Saturday was John Paul Matthews and Ian Goodrich, who together outkicked Creswell’s Brandon Moehlmann and Taft’s Matias Vesma to finish 15th and 16th, respectively.



Kim Tingelstad photo

The Wallowa County boys cross country team won the 3A state championship Saturday, edging rival Burns by just three points. The title is the first for the program since winning it all back in 1996.



Kim Tingelstad photo

Henry Coughlan won the individual boys title with a time of 15:58.9.

“They were the key,” Moody said. “Even though the other kids did what they had to do, it was Ian and John Paul that pulled us through.” Coughlan led the race from start to finish despite barely running all week due to an injury. Last Sunday, the sophomore’s knee swelled up after a run and was bothering him throughout the week. Coughlan felt good enough to go on Saturday and tried to build separation in the opening mile. A season ago, Coughlan led heading into the final 300 meters when the course spits out onto the LCC track but couldn’t keep it down the stretch and ended up finishing second. The pack stuck with Coughlan until the second loop around the course when

he built a lead up a hill and kept control the rest of the way. “I couldn’t hear as much breathing behind me, so I knew I was getting away from them,” he said. Even with several seconds of space between him and Friedrichsen, Coughlan said he was nervous as he came around the final curve of the track. “I kind of had my head on a swivel seeing where everyone was, and I was trying to just finish strong,” he said. After watching him fall just short a year ago, Moody was ecstatic to see Coughlan capture the title this year. “He is such a scholar of the sport,” he said. “He knows everything about running and he is always working. He was intent on what he’s got to do to get there. He

wanted to be state champion and he worked at it.” Knapp and Menton stayed near Coughlan with the front group for the first mile until slowly fading a few seconds behind. Knapp battled the rest of the way with Friedrichsen before falling behind in the final mile to finish third. “It was fantastic,” Knapp said. “Definitely very nerve-racking.” Individual medals aside, the entire Wallowa County team relished finally overcoming Burns. “We’ve worked so hard this year,” Coughlan said. “It’s just insane how well we’ve improved as a team and how well we came together.” Coughlan said last year’s team struggled to unite in tough moments, but this

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Buckaroos get by Powder Valley in state final again

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

It didn’t end the way they hoped. But the Powder Valley Badgers left the Class 1A state volleyball tournament with one of the best finishes in program history. For the second year in a row, though, St. Paul got the best of Powder Valley in a matchup of 1A volleyball powerhouses. The Buckaroos used a big run in each set and an 18-kill performance by Isabelle Wyss to top the Badgers, 25-13, 25-14, 25-16, in the 1A championship match Saturday night in Redmond. The loss dropped the Badgers (34-2 overall) to second place for the second year in a row and fifth time in program history. Powder Valley also took second in 2001, 2010 and 2011. The Badgers’ lone state title came in 2012. “Overall it was a good season. I obviously would have wanted to get first, but I’m not disappointed with how things ended,” said setter Brooke Allen, who had



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Powder Valley’s Brooke Allen serves during the championship match against St. Paul Saturday in Redmond.

four kills and 12 assists in the final. The loss ended a 29-match winning streak for the Badgers, who returned to the championship despite losing six seniors from the team that faced St. Paul a year ago and losing a key performer to an injury in the latter stages of the season this fall. “It was really impressive,” Keanna Bingham, who had five kills, said of her

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Bobcat harriers take second



Andrea Bolton photo

The Union/Cove boys cross country team finished in second place at the 2A/1A state race Saturday in Eugene.

By Alex Castle
For The Observer

EUGENE — In a pair of strong performances at Saturday’s 2019 OSAA Cross Country State Championship, Union/Cove’s girls and boys teams both brought home second-place trophies from Lane Community College in Eugene. In the 3A/2A/1A girls championship, the Bobcats finished with 110 points in a distant second from state champion Burns, which won with 43 points. Catlin Gabel was third and Bandon was fourth with 121 and 122 points, respectively. Union/Cove bested Bandon by just six

points for second place in the 2A/1A boys race, finishing with 89 points overall. St. Stephens Academy ran away with the state title, finishing with 42 points and placing three in the top five, including individual champion Seth Bergeron. “It’s a good day today,” Bobcats coach Steve Sheehy said, smiling. To get it done, Sheehy said his team needed the type of effort you can give only a couple times each year. For the girls team, Sheehy hadn’t expected they’d get that chance. After struggling at the beginning of the

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