SCOREBOARD

LOCAL SCHEDULE

Friday

PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL

McLoughlin at La Grande, 6 p.m.
Grant Union at Enterprise, 6 p.m.
Weston-McEwen at Union, 6 p.m.
Nixyaawii at Elgin, 6 p.m.
Joseph at Powder Valley, 6 p.m.
Griswold at Wallowa, 6 p.m.
Cove at Imbler, 6 p.m.

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL

McLoughlin at La Grande, 7:30 p.m.
Weston-McEwen at Union, 7:30 p.m.
Grant Union at Enterprise, 7:30 p.m.
Joseph at Powder Valley, 7:30 p.m.
Nixyaawii at Elgin, 7:30 p.m.
Griswold at Wallowa, 7:30 p.m.
Cove at Imbler, 7:30 p.m.

PREP WRESTLING

Enterprise at Grant Union Tournament, John Day, all day

MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Oregon Tech at Eastern Oregon, 7:30 p.m.

WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Oregon Tech at Eastern Oregon, 5:30 p.m.

WOMEN'S COLLEGE WRESTLING

Eastern Oregon at Southern Oregon, 7 p.m.

COLLEGE INDOOR TRACK AND FIELD

Eastern Oregon at Ed Jacoby Invitational & Multis, Boise, Idaho, all day

Saturday

PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL

Enterprise at Union, 4 p.m.
Pine Eagle at Elgin, 4 p.m.
Joseph at Nixyaawii, 4 p.m.
Wallowa at Cove, 4 p.m.
Powder Valley at Griswold, 4 p.m.

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL

Enterprise at Union, 5:30 p.m.
Joseph at Nixyaawii, 5:30 p.m.
Powder Valley at Griswold, 5:30 p.m.
Pine Eagle at Elgin, 5:30 p.m.
Wallowa at Cove, 5:30 p.m.

PREP WRESTLING

Enterprise at RD Brown Invitational, New Plymouth, Idaho, all day
Imbler, Joseph/Wallowa, Elgin at 1A state wrestling preview tournament, Pine Eagle, all day

MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Southern Oregon at Eastern Oregon, 7:30 p.m.

WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Southern Oregon at Eastern Oregon, 5:30 p.m.

MEN'S COLLEGE WRESTLING

Eastern Oregon vs. Warner Pacific, Embry-Riddle at Forest Grove, TBD

COLLEGE INDOOR TRACK AND FIELD

Eastern Oregon at Ed Jacoby Invitational & Multis, Boise, Idaho, all day

— Subject to change

HOCKEY

NHL Standings

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Boston	51	29	10	12	70	169	135
Tampa Bay	48	29	15	4	62	175	137
Florida	49	28	16	5	61	183	163
Toronto	49	25	17	7	57	176	165
Buffalo	49	22	20	7	51	145	152
Montreal	50	22	21	7	51	155	157
Ottawa	48	17	23	8	42	130	163
Detroit	51	12	35	4	28	109	199

Metropolitan Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Washington	49	33	11	5	71	177	144
Pittsburgh	50	31	14	5	67	168	136
N.Y. Islanders	49	29	15	5	63	143	132
Columbus	51	27	16	8	62	138	130
Carolina	50	29	18	3	61	159	132
Philadelphia	50	27	17	6	60	158	150
N.Y. Rangers	48	23	21	4	50	158	159
New Jersey	48	17	24	7	41	126	173

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
St. Louis	49	30	11	8	68	158	134
Colorado	49	28	15	6	62	179	143
Dallas	48	27	17	4	58	125	120
Chicago	51	24	21	6	54	155	161
Winnipeg	51	25	22	4	54	152	160
Minnesota	50	23	21	6	52	156	166
Nashville	47	22	18	7	51	156	154

Pacific Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Vancouver	49	27	18	4	58	162	149
Edmonton	49	26	18	5	57	155	153
Calgary	50	26	19	5	57	135	147
Arizona	51	26	20	5	57	146	138
Vegas	52	25	20	7	57	161	159
San Jose	50	21	25	4	46	130	167
Anaheim	48	19	24	5	43	122	150
Los Angeles	50	18	27	5	41	125	158

All Times PST

Monday's Games

Colorado 6, Detroit 3
Florida 5, Minnesota 4

Tuesday's Games

Boston 3, Vegas 2
Carolina 4, Winnipeg 1
N.Y. Islanders 4, N.Y. Rangers 2
Philadelphia 3, Pittsburgh 0
Florida 4, Chicago 3

Wednesday's Games

Columbus 4, Winnipeg 3
Minnesota 4, Detroit 2

Thursday's Games

No games scheduled

Friday's Games

No games scheduled

Saturday's Games

Metropolitan vs. Atlantic at Enterprise Center, 5:15 p.m.
Pacific vs. Central at Enterprise Center, 6:15 p.m.
TBD vs. TBD at Enterprise Center, 7:15 p.m.

Sunday's Games

No games scheduled

FOOTBALL

NFL Playoffs

All Times PST

Conference Championships

Sunday

Kansas City 35, Tennessee 24
San Francisco 37, Green Bay 20

Pro Bowl

Sunday, Jan. 26

At Orlando, Fla.

NFC vs. AFC, noon (ESPN)

Super Bowl

Sunday, Feb. 2

At Miami Gardens, Fla.

Kansas City vs. San Francisco, 3:30 p.m. (FOX)

BASKETBALL

NBA Standings

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	30	14	.682	—
Boston	29	14	.674	½
Philadelphia	29	17	.630	2
Brooklyn	18	25	.419	11½
New York	12	33	.267	18½

Southeast Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	31	13	.705	—
Orlando	21	24	.467	10½
Washington	15	29	.341	16
Charlotte	15	30	.333	16½
Atlanta	11	34	.244	20½

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	39	6	.867	—
Indiana	29	16	.644	10
Detroit	17	28	.378	22
Chicago	17	29	.370	22½
Cleveland	12	33	.267	27

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Dallas	28	16	.636	—
Houston	27	16	.628	½
San Antonio	20	23	.465	7½
Memphis	20	24	.455	8
New Orleans	17	28	.378	11½

Northwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	31	13	.705	—
Denver	30	14	.682	1
Oklahoma City	26	19	.578	5½
Portland	19	27	.413	13
Minnesota	15	29	.341	16

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Lakers	36	9	.800	—
L.A. Clippers	31	14	.689	5
Phoenix	18	26	.409	17½
Sacramento	15	29	.341	20½
Golden State	10	36	.217	26½

All Times PST

Monday's Games

Washington 106, Detroit 100
Toronto 122, Atlanta 117
Philadelphia 117, Brooklyn 111
Milwaukee 111, Chicago 98
New Orleans 126, Memphis 116
New York 106, Cleveland 86
Oklahoma City 112, Houston 107
Orlando 106, Charlotte 83
Miami 118, Sacramento 113, OT
Boston 139, L.A. Lakers 107
Denver 107, Minnesota 100
Utah 118, Indiana 88
San Antonio 120, Phoenix 118
Portland 129, Golden State 124, OT

Tuesday's Game

L.A. Clippers 110, Dallas 107

Wednesday's Games

Oklahoma City 120, Orlando 114
Toronto 107, Philadelphia 95
Detroit 127, Sacramento 106
Atlanta 102, L.A. Clippers 95
L.A. Lakers 100, New York 92
Boston 119, Memphis 95
Miami 134, Washington 129, OT
Houston 121, Denver 105
Chicago 117, Minnesota 110
Indiana 112, Phoenix 87
San Antonio 121, New Orleans 117
Utah 129, Golden State 96

Thursday's Games

Washington 124, Cleveland 112
L.A. Lakers 128, Brooklyn 113
Dallas 133, Portland 125

Friday's Games

Milwaukee at Charlotte, noon
Boston at Orlando, 4 p.m.
Memphis at Detroit, 4 p.m.
Toronto at New York, 4:30 p.m.
Atlanta at Oklahoma City, 5 p.m.
Denver at New Orleans, 5 p.m.
Houston at Minnesota, 5 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at Miami, 5 p.m.
Sacramento at Chicago, 5 p.m.
Phoenix at San Antonio, 5:30 p.m.
Indiana at Golden State, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday's Games

Dallas at Utah, 2 p.m.
Brooklyn at Detroit, 4 p.m.
Chicago at Cleveland, 5 p.m.
Oklahoma City at Minnesota, 5 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at Philadelphia, 5:30 p.m.

Sunday's Games

Houston at Denver, 12:30 p.m.
Toronto at San Antonio, 1 p.m.
Boston at New Orleans, 3 p.m.
Brooklyn at New York, 3 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at Orlando, 3 p.m.
Phoenix at Memphis, 3 p.m.
Washington at Atlanta, 3 p.m.
Indiana at Portland, 6 p.m.

LOCAL STANDINGS

Men's College Basketball

Cascade Collegiate Conference

Team	CCC	All
College of Idaho	11-0	18-3
Southern Oregon	9-2	15-4
Northwest	7-2	12-6
Oregon Tech	6-3	16-3
Warner Pacific	7-5	11-9
Northwest Christian	4-5	9-10
Eastern Oregon	**3-6**	**9-9**
Multnomah	3-7	10-10
Walla Walla	3-7	5-15
Corban	3-8	9-12
Evergreen	0-11	3-14

Women's College Basketball

Cascade Collegiate Conference

Team	CCC	All
Northwest Christian	7-2	13-4
Corban	8-3	12-7
Southern Oregon	8-3	12-6
Oregon Tech	6-3	12-7
Eastern Oregon	**6-3**	**12-7**
Warner Pacific	7-5	10-10
College of Idaho	6-5	8-12
Northwest	4-5	6-13
Evergreen	4-7	4-10
Multnomah	0-10	3-14
Walla Walla	0-10	2-17

OSAA Boys Basketball

4A-6 Greater Oregon League

	GOL	All	PF	PA	RK
La Grande	**2-0**	**3-10**	**646**	**757**	**26**
Baker	1-1	10-9	1048	960	18
McLoughlin	1-1	7-9	728	750	27
Ontario	0-2	2-17	832	1203	34

2A-6 Blue Mountain Conference

	BMC	All	PF	PA	RK
Grant Union	5-1	10-5	822	735	13
Pilot Rock	3-2	13-2	877	688	6
Heppner	3-2	8-7	744	712	24
Stanfield	3-2	8-8	828	795	22
Union	**2-3**	**11-7**	**903**	**785**	**17**
Enterprise	**1-4**	**5-7**	**596**	**632**	**27**
Weston-McEwen	1-4	4-12	782	966	39

1A-7 Old Oregon League

	OOL	All	PF	PA	RK
Powder Valley	**4-0**	**12-3**	**1067**	**769**	**14**
Nixyaawii	3-0	12-4	1123	873	7
Elgin	**3-0**	**8-5**	**660**	**608**	**30**
Joseph	**1-0**	**10-3**	**731**	**569**	**5**
Imbler	**2-2**	**4-9**	**517**	**637**	**42**
Pine Eagle	1-2	4-6	499	488	44
Cove	**0-2**	**1-12**	**448**	**767**	**62**
Griswold	0-4	5-10	665	849	51
Wallowa	**0-4**	**4-10**	**604**	**760**	**47**

OSAA Girls Basketball

4A-6 Greater Oregon League

	GOL	All	PF	PA	RK
Baker	1-0	14-2	842	520	2
McLoughlin	1-0	8-8	575	619	24
La Grande	**1-1**	**10-5**	**805**	**616**	**5**
Ontario	0-2	1-13	443	685	32

2A-6 Blue Mountain Conference

	BMC	All	PF	PA	RK
Union	**5-0**	**15-3**	**839**	**531**	**7**
Stanfield	4-1	13-3	773	546	11
Enterprise	**4-1**	**12-2**	**646**	**428**	**5**
Grant Union	3-3	5-10	501	648	23
Heppner	2-3	9-5	629	534	15
Pilot Rock	0-5	4-11	455	642	39
Weston-McEwen	0-5	2-14	440	711	40

1A-7 Old Oregon League

	OOL	All	PF	PA	RK
Elgin	**3-0**	**11-2**	**633**	**389**	**14**
Joseph	**1-0**	**8-5**	**547**	**464**	**7**
Wallowa	**3-1**	**8-7**	**659**	**593**	**14**
Powder Valley	**3-1**	**7-6**	**492**	**468**	**20**
Nixyaawii	2-1	6-8	623	621	25
Pine Eagle	1-2	5-5	383	427	35
Imbler	**1-3**	**1-13**	**313**	**588**	**54**
Cove	**0-2**	**7-6**	**530**	**453**	**29**
Griswold	0-4	8-7	464	523	45

TENNIS

Australian Open

Friday

At Melbourne Park

Melbourne, Australia

Men's Singles

Third Round

Diego Schwartzman (14), Argentina, def. Dusan Lajovic (24), Serbia, 6-2, 6-3, 7-6 (7).

Marton Fucsovics, Hungary, def. Tommy Paul, United States, 6-1, 6-1, 6-4.

Novak Djokovic (2), Serbia, def. Yoshihito Nishioka, Japan, 6-3, 6-2, 6-2.

Tennys Sandgren, United States, def. Sam Querrey, United States, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.

Marin Cilic, Croatia, def. Roberto Bautista-Agut (9), Spain, 6-7 (3), 6-4, 6-0, 5-7, 6-3.

Milos Raonic (32), Canada, def. Stefanos Tsitsipas (6), Greece, 7-5, 6-4, 7-6 (2).

Fabio Fognini (12), Italy, def. Guido Pella (22), Argentina, 7-6 (0), 6-2, 6-3.

Roger Federer (3), Switzerland, def. John Millman, Australia, 4-6, 7-6 (2), 6-4, 4-6, 7-6 (8).

Women's Singles

Third Round

Ashleigh Barty (1), Australia, def. Elena Rybakina (29), Kazakhstan, 6-3, 6-2.

Petra Kvitova (7), Czech Republic, def. Ekaterina Alexandrova (25), Russia, 6-1, 6-2.

Ons Jabeur, Tunisia, def. Caroline Wozniacki, Denmark, 7-5, 3-6, 7-5.

Wang Qiang (27), China, def. Serena Williams (8), United States, 6-4, 6-7 (2), 7-5.

Maria Sakkari (22), Greece, def. Madison Keys (10), United States, 6-4, 6-4.

Alison Riske (18), United States, def. Julia Goerges, Germany, 1-6, 7-6 (4), 6-2.

Cori Gauff, United States, def. Naomi Osaka (3), Japan, 6-3, 6-4.

Sofia Kenin (14), United States, def. Zhang Shuai, China, 7-5, 7-6 (7).

Men's Doubles

First Round

Ji Sung Nam and Min-Kyu Song, South Korea, def. Lleyton Hewitt and Jordan Thompson, Australia, 6-2, 6-3.

James Duckworth and Marc Polmans, Australia, def. Christopher O'Connell and Andrew Harris, Australia, 7-6 (4), 7-5.

Jamie Murray and Neal Skupski (14), Britain, def. Vasek Pospisil, Canada, and Hubert Hurkacz, Poland, 6-4, 6-4.

Maximo Gonzalez, Argentina, and Fabrice Martin (15), France, def. Dusan Lajovic and Nikola Cacic, Serbia, 7-6 (3), 6-3.

Lukasz Kubot, Poland, and Marcelo Melo (2), Brazil, def. Guillermo Duran and Diego Schwartzman, Argentina, 6-3, 6-2.

Simone Bolelli, Italy, and Benoit Paire, France, def. Nicolas Mahut and Pierre-Hugues Herbert (1), France, 6-4, 7-6 (3).

Juan Sebastian Cabal, Colombia, and Jaume Munar, Spain, def. Taylor Fritz and Tommy Paul, United States, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3.

Men's Doubles

Second Round

Ivan Dodig, Croatia, and Filip Polasek (4), Slovakia, def. Chris Guccione and Matt Reid, Australia, 6-3, 6-4.

Luke Saville and Max Purcell, Australia, def. Horia Tecau, Romania, and Jean-Julien Rojer (8), Netherlands, 7-6 (2), 4-6, 6-4.

Bruno Soares, Brazil, and Mate Pavic (10), Croatia, def. Artem Sitak, New Zealand, and Divij Sharan, India, 7-6 (2), 6-3.

Jonny O Mara, Britain, and Marcelo Arevalo-Gonzalez, El Salvador, def. Jurgen Melzer, Austria, and Edouard Roger-Vasselin (12), France, 5-7, 7-5, 7-6 (11).

Andres Molteni, Argentina, and Hugo Nys, Monaco, def. Oliver Marach, Austria, and Raven Klaasen (9), South Africa, 6-7 (5), 6-3, 6-4.

Michael Venus, New Zealand, and John Peers (7), Australia, def. Leonardo Mayer and Federico Delbonis, Argentina, 6-3, 1-6, 7-6 (7).

Franko Skugor, Croatia, and Austin Krajicek (16), United States, def. Adrian Mannarino and Gregoire Barrere, France, 7-6 (5), 6-4.

Women's Doubles

First Round

Darija Jurak, Croatia, and Nina Stojanovic, Serbia, def. Kateryna Bondarenko, Ukraine, and Aleksandra Krunic, Serbia, 6-1, 6-4.

Kveta Peschke, Czech Republic, and Demi Schuurs (8), Netherlands, def. Fanny Stollar, Hungary, and Dayana Yastremska, Ukraine, 6-4, 6-2.

Kristina Mladenovic, France, and Timea Babos (2), Hungary, def. Raluca-Ioana Olaru, Romania, and Dalila Jakupovic, Slovenia, 7-5, 6-3.

Makoto Ninomiya and Nao Hibino, Japan, def. Andreja Klepac, Slovenia, and Lucie Hradecka (11), Czech Republic, 6-4, 6-0.

Hayley Carter, United States, and Luisa Stefani, Brazil, def. Zheng Saisai and Duan Ying-Ying (9), China, 6-3, 6-2.

Barbora Strycova, Czech Republic, and Hsieh Su-wei (1), Taiwan, def. Marie Bouzkova, Czech Republic, and Tamara Zidansek, Slovenia, 6-3, 7-5.

Georgina Garcia Perez and Sara Sorribes Tormo, Spain, def. Katarina Srebotnik, Slovenia, and Monique Adamczak, Australia, 6-2, 6-4.

Kirsten Flipkens, Belgium, and Taylor Townsend, United States, def. Tatjana Maria, Germany, and Anastasija Sevastova, Latvia, 6-4, 6-4.

Mandy Minella, Luxembourg, and Anett Kontaveit, Estonia, def. Wang Yafan, China, and Anna Blinkova, Russia, 7-5, 6-0.

Zarina Diyas and Elena Rybakina, Kazakhstan, def. Alize Cornet and Fiona Ferro, France, 6-4, 6-7 (1), 7-6 (5).

Lara Arruabarrena, Spain, and Ons Jabeur, Tunisia, def. Sam Stosur and Ellen Perez (12), Australia, 6-4, 1-6, 7-5.

Women's Doubles

Second Round

Latisha Chan and Hao-Ching Chan (7), Taiwan, def. Alexa Guarachi Mathison, Chile, and Kaitlyn Christian, United States, 6-4, 6-2.

Shuko Aoyama and Ena Shibahara (10), Japan, def. Alicja Rosolska, Poland, and Danielle Collins, United States, walkover.

Elise Mertens, Belgium, and Aryna Sabalenka (3), Belarus, def. Arina Rodionova and Jaimee Fourlis, Australia, 6-2, 7-5.

RIVALRY

Continued from Page 7A

Rueck said the Beavers had been improving each week heading into the game, then were shell-shocked at the half.

"We only lost by (nine) down in Eugene, (so) maybe, you know, we can get them here," Rueck thought at the time. "Then just to get kind of ambushed the first half, it just went the complete opposite of what we hoped. They shot the lights out and so we're in the locker room down 20 and what are you going to do this half? And we just came out and chipped away, and I just remember El Sara Greer, our one senior, just demanding the ball down the stretch in the post and scoring three-point plays and then Anna Marchbanks getting that rebound and the place going absolutely crazy."

That victory was a turning point not only in the rivalry — the Beavers went on to win 14 in a row in the series — but also the belief inside the program.

"That was one of those moments that you know we'll never forget and it was one of those days that made everybody think, hey maybe we can turn this thing around here," Rueck said.

The Beavers (16-2, 4-2) have become a national power and have made six straight NCAA tournaments, winning three Pac-12 titles, a Pac-12 tournament title, reached four straight Sweet 16s, two Elite Eights and a Final Four in 2016.

The Ducks (15-2, 5-1) have also turned things around under coach Kelly Graves. Oregon has made three straight NCAA tournaments, won two Pac-12 titles, one conference tournament title and been to the Elite Eight three times with a trip to the Final Four last season.

"Nobody could have seen this coming, that long ago, no way," Rueck said of both programs' success. "Too many unknowns back then for me and for us to know what we could become here, it hadn't been done at that level. For them, they weren't at that level yet.

"And so just the build of it, the attention on both programs, the national success we've both had, that our conferences has had, has gotten us a lot of attention to the point where there's household names now — both teams have people that go by one name on the roster — and so many people care which is just crazy, really, to be a part of and just awesome."

Both programs have pushed each other to reach this level.

"I think we've made each other both better over the years through our competition with each other, through recruiting battles, through the games on the court," Rueck said.

"Certainly every school has a rival and it's fun to compete against your rival. But I mean we've all been trying to catch up to Stanford forever. That was the initial goal and then this conference just pushes you. Shoot, you relax you're going to get beat, and so competition is healthy if you handle it correctly and I think we both have."

HOOPS

Continued from Page 7A

front to stay.

"At that point in the game coach (Mick) Cronin told me, 'somebody's gotta be able to drive to the cup,'" said Smith, the Bruins' leading scorer this season. "I was attacking, so the right play was to get fouled. … I was just trying to do whatever I could to get a win for the guys."

Smith, who was limited to just 17 minutes of playing time due to foul trouble, was 4 of 6 from the field and 7 of 9 at the foul line. UCLA made its last nine free throws in the final 1:50 to stay in front.

"I was calling's his number," Cronin said of Smith. "He stepped up, got the ball in the paint and made sure that he got to the foul line."

Zach Reichle made two free throws with 11.6 seconds left that brought Oregon State (12-7, 2-5) to within one point at 56-55.

Jalen Hill then made two free throws for UCLA, his first points of the game.

Tyger Campbell fouled Oregon State's Ethan Thompson with 6.6 seconds left, preventing him from getting off a 3-pointer that could have tied the game.

Thompson made both free throws cutting the lead to one.

Hill went back to the line at the 5.4-second mark and came through again with two free throws.

Thompson made one of two free throws with 3.1 seconds remaining, and UCLA's Jules Bernard converted two free throws for UCLA to seal the win.

ELGIN

Continued from Page 7A

could beat," she said. "It was hard. That definitely had an impact on our mindset, and I think that's what got to us — why try when everybody knows we're going to lose."

The team began to win a bit more consistently the next two seasons, going 11-12 in 2017-18 but slipping back to 9-12 last season.

Brian Evans, who was in his first season as the head coach last winter after two seasons as assistant coach, said the losing mentality was one that permeated back to when he was in school in the 1990s. It carried over because, as a result, the "kids (didn't) know what it takes to be a winning team. It all comes into play. Up until this year, they didn't have the hunger and the drive."

Even last season in his first year leading the program, the team would struggle with how to respond when it was tested.

"A little success here and there, but when times got tough they would break," he said.

There were not any seniors on that team, though, and with all the key players returning for the upcoming season this year, there was a belief that this season could be different.

To get the players to buy in, Evans said, he had to emphasize on a consistent basis that they could break through the mentality and win, and he had to sell team basketball.

"Last year I tried pushing the team concept on them heavy, and toward the end of the year they picked up on that," he said. "This year they picked up where they left off. That's been my biggest push as far as a coach. (Assistant coach) Ashley (Knight) has played a big part, and my volunteer coach Doug Durfee — they back me 100%."

Palmer said team-bonding sessions, discussions and staying together as a team have aided in the culture change.

"To overcome we really had to have a team heart-to-heart and talk to each other," she said, and the message became: "If you're not willing to give if your best and your all, you shouldn't even be here."

Evans and Anderson both also noted that many of the players on the current roster have several years together on the court, which has added to the continuity.

"We've all played together since seventh grade. We know how the players work," Anderson said.

On the court, the team has shown depth and talent at multiple positions. Three players — the two seniors and Jocelyn Palmer — have scored at least 20 points in a game this season, and several others can get into the scorebook when needed. Evans said the team's ability to have players step up when needed is its strength.

"We were missing Tymra for one or two games and girls stepped in and picked up the slack," he said. "My youngest daughter's (Gracie Evans) arm is broken, and we've had other girls step in and fill that role. We haven't missed a beat."

Evans said the Huskies' 46-44 win over Grant Union in the second game of the season was an important early one for the team.

"We didn't blow them out of the water. It was a game we had to stick together," he said. "I feel that was a big win for us. We haven't beat Grant Union as long as I've been coaching. That was a big confidence booster right out of the gate."

The coach added that as a team, they talk a lot about the goals they have for this season.

"I tell them over and over what my expectation are, what I believe they can do. In doing that I hope it gives them the confidence and the will. At least once a week I tell them what I expect and what could happen," he said.

Those expectations go far beyond just finishing with a winning record.

Elgin is also eyeing a berth in the state playoffs, which the program has not reached since 1996. That team finished with a 20-6 record and clinched the second of back-to-back state berths, with an 18-8 team that dropped the third-place game in 1995.

Elgin's only other OSAA state playoff appearances came in 1984 and 1977, with the '77 squad dropping the third-place game. The program has yet to earn a state trophy, as fifth-place awards — which the team would have earned for dropping the third-place game under today's playoff format — were not given at the time.

"My goal for this team is to take them to state this year, and that's not out of reach by any means," Evans said.

Anderson added the team has a desire to do its school justice and make the community proud.

"We have the talent and we have the players," she said. "We are truly a team this year, and I feel like we're going to build off of that."

And for the seniors who endured the struggles since their freshman year, a trip to Baker City in early March for the state tournament would be an amazing sendoff.

"I want to take it to state. It feels like we can do it," Palmer said.