

Trio of EOU wrestlers garner WCWA all-American nods

Observer staff

ATLANTA — The Eastern Oregon University women’s wrestling team finished 11th at the WCWA National Championships Friday and Saturday in Atlanta. Three of the six competitors who made the trip left as all-Americans, led by a fourth-place finish from Jessica DeHart, who claimed her third

all-American nod with the Mountaineers.

Fifth-place Erin Redford and seventh-place Dempsey Talkington also picked up top-eight finishes to earn all-American status.

DeHart won her first two matches by fall to reach the semifinals at 109 pounds, which included a pin of Alicia Mahoe of Schreiner

to reach the semifinals. She lost a 13-0 technical fall in the semifinals to Campbellsville’s McKayla Campbell before adding one more win by fall over Presbyterian’s Cassandra Lopez. She finished with a 15-10 loss to Tiffin’s Sugay Ceja.

Redford shook off a loss in her first match at 143 pounds to win four in a row. She had a close 2-0

loss to Gabrielle Garcia of Campbellsville, then had three straight wins by technical fall and a fourth win by fall when she pinned Campbellsville’s Mhina Oseitutu. After a 5-3 loss to Erica Sotelo of Life University, she ended with a win over Grace Miller for fifth. The final score of the match was 5-5, but Redford won on criteria for scoring

the final point.

Talkington finished with a 4-2 record at 155. Like Redford, she dropped her first match, a loss by fall to Tiffin’s Taylor Hites, then took three matches in a row, two by fall and a 7-6 decision over Life’s Destinee Rivera. After a setback against Jamestown’s Myranda

See Eastern / Page 8A



Staff photo by Ronald Bond

Erika Adams (25) leads the celebration at a timeout Saturday during Elgin’s 53-41 win over Joseph. The win moved the Huskies into first place in the Old Oregon League.

Huskies’ huge win

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

ELGIN — Jayden Palmer turned in a senior-night performance Saturday nobody in Elgin will forget anytime soon. The Huskies’ other senior, Tymra Anderson, had a solid night, crashing the glass and scoring timely baskets.

The end result was the duo helping the Elgin girls basketball team to the program’s biggest win in more than two decades.

Palmer hit six 3-pointers and finished with 30 points, Anderson had a double-double and the Huskies used a dominant third quarter to take over the lead for good on the way to a 53-41 home win over Joseph that leapfrogged Elgin over Joseph into first place in the Old Oregon League.

“I’m so proud of the girls,” Elgin head coach Brian Evans said. “From the get-go, they played their hearts out, and that’s what I asked them before the game, to play with this game with heart, and they showed up and did it. Super proud.”



Staff photo by Ronald Bond

Jayden Palmer scored 30 points and hit six 3-pointers for Elgin.

The win was the latest — and most important — in what has been a transcendent season for Elgin, one that has seen the program put behind it a run of on-court struggles that has lasted nearly two decades. The Hus-

kies, who are seeking their first playoff berth since 1996, earned the program’s biggest victory since that ‘96 squad won the district tournament on the way to the 2A state playoffs.

“It feels amazing, and it’s awesome knowing I can be a part of it,” Palmer said.

The highly entertaining contest, which was full of lead changes, scoring runs and scrappy defense by both teams, turned in the third quarter when Elgin shot the lights out, crashed the boards and frustrated the Eagles’ offense.

Palmer, who had already scored 15 points in the first half, scored the first five points of the third with a putback and a 3-pointer 80 seconds apart to put the Huskies up 26-25.

“I knew it was a big game for us, and to never give up and play my best,” Palmer said. “I played my hardest tonight.”

Anderson followed with two rebounds and putbacks later that gave Elgin a 30-25 lead midway through the third

See Elgin / Page 7A

Eagles slip by Elgin in key OOL battle

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

ELGIN — It was much closer than the first match-up, but the Joseph Eagles boys basketball team again got the best of the Elgin Huskies.

Saturday’s win was an important one, too, as it gave Joseph a major advantage over Elgin in the battle for second place in the north half of the Old Oregon League.

Chase Murray scored 12 of his game-high 24 points in the fourth quarter and Hadley Miller added a double-double as Joseph outlasted Elgin on the road, 53-48.

“That’ll help us take second for league on our half, and that helps us get to where we need to be to avoid a matchup (with Nixyaawii) on that Friday night (at districts),” Joseph head coach Olan Fulfer said.

The win puts the Eagles a half-game ahead of the Hus-



Staff photo by Ronald Bond

Joseph’s Chase Murray, right, scored 24 points Saturday in the Eagles’ 53-48 win over Elgin.

kies for second headed into the final week of the regular season, but also gives Joseph a tiebreaker as it swept the Huskies, winning the first contest, 64-47.

In the rematch Miller, who had 16 points and 10 rebounds, was a force early for Joseph, while Murray took over late.

“It was a good win to get

our stuff back together and set us back on our feet and know what we need to work on,” Miller said.

Murray had 12 of his points in the final quarter, opening the period with a steal and dunk that put the Eagles ahead 36-30.

It was a basket that started an offensive frenzy for both teams, which was much different from the lackluster third quarter that saw the teams combine for 12 points on 4-for-18 shooting.

Hayden Hite’s 3-pointer gave Joseph an eight-point lead a minute into the fourth. Tristan Simpson then capped a 7-2 Elgin run with a pair of free throws and a 3-point play to make it 41-38 with 5:30 to go. Murray then went off with the next 10 Joseph points, at one juncture trading hoops with Simpson — Murray’s hook shot putting Joseph up 46-40; Simpson countering with

See Joseph / Page 7A

Bolton breaks more records at Jackson’s Invite

Observer staff

BOISE — Megan Bolton broke two more records and won a race against a field full of NCAA Division I athletes to pace a solid effort by the Eastern Oregon University women’s track and field team Friday and Saturday at the Jackson’s/ Nike Indoor Invite in Boise.

Bolton, who has already broken the women’s 600-meter record twice this season, shaved more than a second off the program record as she won the 400 in a time of 56.19 seconds. The next eight finishers in the race were D-I athletes. Bolton also was fifth in the preliminaries of the 60 dash with a time of 7.82 seconds to break the school record in that race.

One other program record fell on the women’s side, as the 4x800 relay team of Olivia Lane, Katie Jo Gebhardt, Calista Van Delden and Michelle Herbes took fifth with a program mark of 9:35.44.

Other top-eight finishes came in the 800 from Herbes (fourth at 2:19.80) and Gebhardt (sixth at 2:23.28); Lane, Herbes, Bolton and Elizabeth Herbes in the 4x400 relay (third at 3:55.80); Payton Jolley in the triple jump (sixth at 37-feet-1-1/4); and Maggie

Ledbetter in the shot put (second at 44-feet-6) and in the weight throw (seventh at 48-feet-11).

The men also had a record in the 4x800, with Travis Running, Alex Navarro, Hunter Schiess and Dustin Zimmerly taking third in 7:49.65.

Like the women, the men’s team had several top-eight finishes. Navarro took second in the mile in 4:19.54, with Schiess in eighth 4:28.24. Alex Kosel placed third in the long jump (22-feet-3-1/2).

John Stuvland (6-feet-1-1/4) and John Brown (5-feet-9-1/4) were fifth and sixth in the high jump.

Corey Sledge was seventh in the pole vault (16-feet-8-3/4).

Zimmerly and Running took seventh and eighth in the 800 in 1:58.56 and 1:59.10, respectively. Two 4x400 relay teams finished fifth and seventh — Cody Milmine, Felipe Madero, Running and Zimmerly placed fifth in 3:27.42, and Braxton Wilson, Hunter Wilson, Navarro and Schiess took seventh in 3:33.28. Adam Kopf finished eighth in the weight throw (47-feet-10-1/2).

EOU heads back to Boise for the BSU Team Challenge Saturday.

Gulzow punches ticket to state

Observer staff

Delia Gulzow became the first La Grande wrestler to qualify for the OSAA girls state wrestling tournament as she took second in her weight class at the North Regional Tournament Friday and Saturday in Hillsboro.

Gulzow was dominant on her way to the finals in the 100-pound bracket. She pinned her first four opponents — Southridge’s Zamira Cornejo, Adrian’s Virginia Tolman, Century’s Daniela Vasquez and Hood River Valley’s Gracie McCafferty — en route to the final. The run included a semifinal win over McCafferty that took just 80 seconds.

Gulzow’s bid for a regional title fell just short when she lost the final by fall to Oregon City’s Emma Baertlein.

Delia Gulzow’s sister, Bella Gulzow, went 3-2 at 110 for LHS. After an early loss, she won three matches in a row by fall over Yamhill-Carlton’s Elizabeth Hetzler, Century’s Hannah King and Woodburn’s Yajaira Reyes. Her regional

run ended with a loss to Lincoln’s Hania Halverson in an ultimate tiebreaker.

Luca Willins (115) went 2-2 with wins over Astoria’s Raver Gasser and Park-rose’s Di Nguyen, both by fall.

Rylee Weimer (120) went 0-2.

The girls state tournament is Feb. 28-29 in Portland.

Elgin has two winners at Pine Eagle

The Elgin Huskies wrestling team picked up two victories on its way to a fifth-place finish at the Pine Eagle Invitational Saturday in Halfway.

Both Gabriel Hasbell (113 pounds) and Joe Lathrop (132) needed just two wins to earn the championship in their respective brackets. Hasbell won his final by a 10-4 decision over New Plymouth’s Mossy Waite, and Lathrop got by Cutter Huff of Pine Eagle by a 7-3 decision.

Clayton Hammond went 3-2 on the day to take fourth at 170 and won two matches by fall. Kenny Terry (126), Bruce

See Wrestling / Page 7A