

BOBCATS

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She really caught fire after the break.

Her fourth trey 2:28 into the third quarter put Union ahead 32-16. Another 3 just over three minutes later capped a 10-0 run to make it 39-16, and she capped the period with two 3s in 21 seconds — including her seventh just before the buzzer sounded — to push the lead to 45-22 after three quarters and send an already raucous Union gymnasium and bench into a frenzy.

“I don’t even know what happened tonight,” Kohr said. “I was just feeling it. I’m at a loss for words. It was a team effort and everything. I’m really proud of myself. The last few games I’ve had good shots, but tonight it all came together for me.”

She added three more 3-pointers and a long field goal during an 13-0 run that gave the Bobcats a 61-28 lead in the closing minutes.

“What an exciting time for her,” Union head coach — and Kohr’s mom — Rhondie Rickman-Johansen said. “What an exciting time for our team. Our team is so selfless. They just kept feeding her the ball. That’s one of the things I love most about this team is their selflessness. When one person gets hot, we all get excited. I couldn’t be more happy for Brianna tonight, playing

her last home court game and she goes off for 35 points, 10 3s.”

Overshadowed by the big night from Kohr was the effort by the Union defense, which held the Honkers scoreless for the first 6:11 of the game as it built a 10-0 lead and ended up forcing 28 turnovers on the night, frustrating the visitors from southern Oregon.

Kylie Marriott added eight points for the Bobcats and both Taylor Daggett and Callie Glenn scored six.

Union (24-3 overall) faces either Portland Christian or Lost River Thursday at 8:15 p.m. in the quarterfinals of the state tournament in Pendleton.

Also Friday Joseph returns to state

The Joseph Eagles girls basketball team is headed back to the 1A state tournament in Baker City.

Camille Crenshaw and Sabrina Albee both scored 17 points Friday, Madelyn Nelson added 14 and the Eagles pulled away in the second half for a 61-37 win over Livingstone Adventist Academy in the second round of the 1A state playoffs in Enterprise to reach the final eight for the third year in a row.

“With everything that’s happened (I’m) just overwhelmed with joy for our girls to be able to go back to Baker,” head coach Lance Homan said. “I couldn’t be happier for the team for sure.”

Joseph raced out to an early lead, but Livingstone hung around for most of the first half to stay within 33-23 at the break. Albee had 11 at the break, and Nelson and Crenshaw had nine each in the first half.

The Eagles pushed the lead to 16 after three and added on in the fourth.

“They don’t get rattled easy, and the gradual pull away was good to see,” Homan said. “That team was very athletic.”

Joseph (21-6 overall) faces Damascus Christian at 3:15 p.m. Wednesday in the state quarterfinals in Baker City.

Badgers’ season ends

The Powder Valley girls basketball team held a halftime lead Friday at North Douglas, but struggled in the second half offensively as the Warriors pulled away for a 34-23 win in a defensive battle in the second round of the 1A state playoffs.

“We played phenomenal defense the first half. To their credit they came out in the second half with pretty good vengeance, got some steals, got aggressive,” Powder Valley head coach Allen Bingham said. “In the fourth we played better and got our feet back under us (but) they went into a pretty deliberate offense the fourth quarter.”

The Badgers scored grabbed a five-point first-quarter lead and were ahead 13-11 at the half. North

LOCAL SCHEDULE

Saturday PREP WRESTLING

La Grande at Class 4A state tournament, Portland, all day
Imbler, Elgin, Enterprise, Union/Cove, Joseph/Wallowa at 2A/1A state tournament, Portland, all day

COLLEGE SOFTBALL

Eastern Oregon at Southern Oregon (2), 11 a.m.

MEN’S COLLEGE

BASKETBALL

Eastern Oregon at College of Idaho, CCC semifinals, 6 p.m.

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL

Class 1A state playoffs
South Wasco County vs. Joseph at Enterprise, 4 p.m.

Sunday WOMEN’S COLLEGE WRESTLING

Eastern Oregon at CCC Championships, Ashland, all day

— Subject to change

Douglas, though took the lead for good in the third at it held the Badgers to four points and went ahead 24-17.

Both Keanna Bingham and Autumn Davis finished with six points, and Josie Krieger added five.

The loss ends the Badgers’ season at 15-11 overall.

“I’m really proud of them,” Allen Bingham said. “We felt like we could be pretty good, but we started so poorly. It was hard to overcome that stuff, but we did.”

Outlaws fall just short of upset on the road

The Enterprise girls basketball team gave Monroe everything it had Friday night, but its upset bid fell just short, 40-37, in a first-round 2A playoff game.

The Outlaws led at the end of

the first, second and third quarters — including 33-32 after the third — but a 3-pointer by Mirtha Lopez put the Dragons ahead. Enterprise drew within one and had possession with a chance at the lead, but couldn’t pull back in front.

“We just couldn’t buy the break we needed to happen to finish,” head coach Mike Crawford said. “We were there, literally, in the last 30 seconds.”

Ashlyn Gray scored 11 points to lead the Outlaws and Gracie Niezen added eight.

“It was a terrific year. Monroe was the champ of that league. It was a great season for us. This one didn’t go our way,” Crawford said of the season, which ends at 17-7 overall. “We played really well tonight, just kind of a bummer it didn’t happen.”

CRAWFORD

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program to four state championships in a five-year span from 1999-2003.

Beyond the court

Over and above what his teams have achieved on the hardwood in the last three decades, it’s the relationships he builds with his players that stick with them.

“He’s a pretty dedicated coach, not only on the court but off the court,” said Tricia Otten, who played for Enterprise from 2005-09 and now is an assistant coach. “He does a good job of paying attention to the girls’ needs and (guiding) them (in) the full roundedness of life.”

That was particularly true for Otten, who said Crawford filled the role of the father figure she didn’t have and was there when she was in need.

“I lost a brother when I was a senior, (and Crawford) held me together for the better part of my senior year,” she said. “Just building that relationship with him my freshman, sophomore year since I was starting for him, he was always somebody I could go talk to whenever about basketball or life.”

Stein has seen much of the same, and perhaps more so than most who are tied to the program. Not only was she a vital cog to the team during the 90s, but she has coached with Crawford the last 14 years.

“He’s there for them every way he can be,” she said. “He’s there in their career and involved after their career. He doesn’t just care about how you perform on the court. He cares about the individual. He’s one of those people who see the positive in people all the time. If people get down on the program or on a player, he backs them up.”

She also witnessed his caring nature firsthand during her career when she missed the last part of her senior season and the playoffs with an injury.

“He was my right hand through all that,” she said.

The same then as now

Many coaches may change over the course of a career, especially one that spans three decades.

Yet athletes who played for Crawford in his early years

said they see a lot of the same now as they did then.

“Even back in the fall of ‘89, he was similar,” Farwell said. “He’s a student of basketball, loves watching film, has always been that way.”

Several of Crawford’s former players said he has always been caring and able to maintain poise.

“One of his greatest attributes is he seems to keep a level head,” said Chelsie Gray, who played for the ‘96 title team, and that has played a part in the trust he fosters in his teams. “He’s got a good relationship with the girls. That’s carried through the years. He cares about them. The girls want to play hard.”

The coach said where he is different now than in 1990 is perhaps obvious after 758 games — experience.

“For everything that happens, I’ve been there already,” he said. “Every time you go overtime, every time you’re in a nail-biter game (or) you’re making decisions on inbounds plays ... I’ve been there on all of that. I’ve got stories where we won, stories where we didn’t, the difference between them. I’m a full library now.”

He’s also had the aid of his wife, Tammy, through it all.

She is a “really strong woman,” Gray said. “His wife is phenomenal.”

Stein agreed.

“A shoutout to Tammy for backing him up for 30-plus years. It definitely takes two, and she’s very supportive.”

Crawford said his wife has “been through all the battles” with him during his time on the sideline.

“You cannot be successful coach while you’re married if you don’t have the support of your spouse,” he said.

A new generation

Farwell and Gray both have a unique perspective in that they played for Crawford and now have daughters playing for him.

Farwell was there for the first win the program had under Crawford when she was a junior. Her daughter, Claire — a junior this season — was there for the 500th.

“I was his point guard, and now to see (Claire) out there being his point guard is a lot of fun,” Lisa Farwell said. “I’m really glad she had the opportunity to play for him. There’s a lot of good ones out

there, but I’m glad she gets to play for Mike Crawford.”

For her, it also goes beyond the basketball court.

“He cares about my girl as a person, as a student, supports her during volleyball (and) softball,” she said. “That’s what I want.”

Gray has two daughters on the team — Ashlyn, a senior, and Jada, a sophomore — and her older daughter, Riley, who graduated in 2018 also played for Crawford.

“Just to play in the same community has been so awesome, (with) the familiarity with the coach. He knew how I played and that’s how I encouraged my girls,” Chelsie Gray said. “I appreciate him supporting my kids and bringing out the best in them. He’s had three of my girls and they all love basketball.”

Ashlyn Gray noted that since her mom also played for Crawford, she knows more about how her coach sees the game.

“She understands how he is and what the game is like through his eyes,” Ashlyn Gray said. “It’s cool to play under the same coach and the fact he’s had so much experience.”

Ashlyn Gray said Crawford is not only motivational but knows how to drive each individual on the team.

“Crawford is able to see when people are having problems or in their own head,” she said. “He knows how to talk you through it and get you back into the game. He sees somebody down, and he’ll help them out of it.”

Claire Farwell called it a “blast” to play for the same coach as her mom, and she said the two often joke about the differences in the seasons when they played.

“It’s kinda crazy to think that he coached my mom, and he has mentioned that he does see similarities between the two of us,” she said. “Crawford can remember everything about almost every game since he coached my mom the first time, and hearing those stories have been really encouraging to push us as a team.”

500 and beyond

Getting the 500th victory was a challenge. Enterprise was off offensively — the Outlaws scored just eight points in the first half — against a team in Heppner that it had blown a late lead against in the prior meeting.

Ashlyn Gray admitted the team felt pressure, because the players knew the 500th was on the horizon.

“We made a big deal of it,” she said. “That game was

super stressful. It was one of those games you feel like you’re not going to be able to pull off.”

The Outlaws rallied in the fourth quarter to force overtime at 33-33, then made the key shots late to earn the victory, which set off tears of joy throughout the Pendleton Convention Center.

“After the game, it was very emotional. There’s no other way I would’ve wanted to win the game for Crawford,” Claire Farwell said, alluding to that prior loss to Heppner. “Everybody was crying and cheering, and we all took an extra minute in the huddle just to let the win sink in.”

EHS fans following the win also held up signs commemorating the 500th victory.

“That last game for the 500th they had to fight so hard. It was just an exciting experience,” Chelsie Gray said. “Crawford was emotional. I got emotional.”

Crawford himself actually called the victory a relief. He said the players felt pressure to get it despite his attempts to diffuse the stress.

Stein, who has been around for several of the milestones, said although Crawford tried to downplay it as it approached, the win was a major achievement.

“I played for 100, I’ve

coached with him for 300, 400 and 500,” she said. “Celebrations have gotten bigger and bigger.”

She knew, though, that it meant a lot to Crawford.

“It was important to him. You get to that point in your career, he deserves every one of those wins. I’m proud of what he’s accomplished.”

It’s one he won’t forget anytime soon, either, saying: “This overtime game against Heppner last weekend will stick with me forever.”

How many more wins there will be in Crawford’s career remains to be seen. He said he considered at one point wrapping up his coaching career once he got to 500, but he also said he’s received a “new boost of energy” from the fact that his son, Kyle, is now coaching the boys program.

For now, he said, he’ll be on the sidelines again next year “and probably the year after that.”

Whenever the longtime coach does hang up the whistle, he will do so on a legacy-leaving career that has been a blessing — for himself and numerous others — and given him a lifetime of memories.

“I’ve had some incredible experiences (and) I’m sure I got some more coming,” he said.

Know the Signs of Stroke

Honoring National Heart Month—Supporting Stroke Awareness

There’s treatment if you act FAST!!

F	A	S	T
FACE DROOPING	ARM WEAKNESS	SPEECH	TIME TO CALL 9-1-1
DOES ONE SIDE OF THE FACE DROOP OR IS IT NUMB?	IS ONE ARM WEAK OR NUMB?	IS SPEECH SLURRED?	DOES ONE SIDE OF THE FACE DROOP OR IS IT NUMB?
Ask the person to smile. Is the person’s smile uneven?	Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?	Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence, like “The sky is blue.”	Ask the person to smile. Is the person’s smile uneven?

Call 9-1-1! Time is critical when a stroke occurs. Time lost is brain lost.

Join us at one of our Stroke Education Seminars on Tuesday, March 3:

Grande Ronde Hospital: 10 AM—12 PM -or- La Grande Fire Department: 2 PM—4 PM

Visit grh.org/actFAST for full event details.

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