

Capping the season

Baker, Powder Valley set to host 32-team Class 1A state tournament

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**
The Observer

BAKER CITY — In what has been a tumultuous indoor sports season, Class 1A basketball teams will still get a proper post-season experience this year.

Baker High School and Powder Valley High School athletic departments will welcome 16 boys teams and 16 girls teams for the Class 1A state tournament from Monday, June 21, through Thursday, June 24. The double-elimination tournament will be hosted at both schools and run simultaneously in the early rounds, leading up to a champion being crowned.

“My approach has been, I want to do the best I can for my seniors and my families because they’re missing these opportunities,” said Baker School District Athletic Director Buell Gonzales.

The start of the 2021 indoor sports season was delayed several times and the season has been a challenge with spring sports and events going on at the same time.

Baker will host games throughout all four



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian, File
Nixyaawii's Dakota Sams (11) drives toward the basket during the second half against La Grande on Tuesday, June 1, 2021. Nixyaawii heads into the 2021 Class 1A state boys basketball tournament as the No. 1 overall seed.

days of the tournament, including the championship matchups. Powder Valley will hold contests through the semifinals, with some games running simultaneously in the school's secondary and main gymnasiums.

“Everything is coming together really well and I’ve been impressed by everyone’s efforts so far,” said Powder Valley Athletic Director Brad Dunten.

The 1A boys and girls teams will each compete in a 16-team, double elimination bracket. The tournament will not be an official 1A state tournament, according to the Oregon School Activities Association, but the Baker and

Powder Valley athletics directors are aiming to conduct the tournament like any other season.

The brackets are slated to include the two top teams from each Class 1A conference, but opt-outs and summer commitments play a role in which teams can attend. The Crane girls basketball team is the reigning champion on the girls side, while Damascus Christian won in 2020 on the boys side.

Powder Valley will compete on the girls side as the No. 3 seed, while the boys team is still waiting on end-of-season results. Allen Bingham's girls squad will tip-off against Elkton at 7 p.m. June 21 at

Baker High School.

June 21 games will entail a mix of boys and girls games across the three available courts. Boys teams will then play games at Baker on June 22 and at Powder Valley on June 23. Likewise, girls teams will play at Powder Valley on June 22 and at Baker on June 23.

The championship games on June 24 will be at Baker High School with the girls set for 5:30 p.m. and the boys tip-off scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

Both schools will hold attendance to 50% capacity for the games, and masks will be required for spectators unless vaccinated for COVID-19.

Little League teams to vie for District 3 title

34 teams will play in 6-day tournament in Baker City

By **COREY KIRK**
Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — A total of 34 Little League baseball and softball teams from across Eastern Oregon will gather in Baker City Saturday, June 19, through June 24 for the District 3 tournament.

Games will be played at the Baker Sports Complex and at Wade Williams Elks Memorial Park for teams in seven divisions:

- Baseball: ages 8-10, 9-11, 10-12 and juniors
- Softball: ages 8-10, 10-12 and juniors

There will be squads competing from Baker City, Harney County, Hermiston, La Grande, Milton-Freewater, Pendleton, Wallowa Valley, Grant County, Pilot Rock and Columbia.

Baker Little League was scheduled to host the 2020 district tournament, but those plans were derailed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

That gave Baker Little League officials more time to prepare for the event.

“We’ve known about the tournament for a couple of years now,” Baker Little League President Jason McClaughry said.

This is the first major tournament Baker City has hosted since the 2018 state

TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

More information is available at the Baker Little League Facebook page, including a link to full tournament coverage at <https://tourneymachine.com/R92074>.

softball event.

“The planning of course starts at the Baker Little League level. As the host we have to plan concessions, we have to plan out field maintenance, who is going to do the score keeping as far as scorebooks and scoreboards,” McClaughry said. “Any training that we’ve done to do those things, hosting the umpires, finding accommodations for them. Just kind of the basic supplies that go into hosting an event, whether it’s trash cans to trash bags, spoons, forks, baseball equipment to chalk, to lining fields, there’s a lot of little details that go into it.”

McClaughry said volunteers are crucial for putting on the tournament, with parents and community members contributing.

“Without the community, it doesn’t happen,” McClaughry said. “Without all the volunteers that we have spending many hours, the local season doesn’t happen. When we have a week-long tournament, where we are going to have that variety of teams with multiple games happening at two venues, it’s going to take a lot of people.”

EOU hosts high school all-star volleyball game

A dozen athletes from Union, Wallowa counties to compete

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The area’s elite volleyball players are coming together in La Grande for a final showcase.

Nine Union County volleyball players will compete at the annual all-star game hosted by the Eastern Oregon University volleyball team on Saturday, June 19. In addition, Wallowa High School will send three players to the all-star event.

Powder Valley is coming off a perfect 14-0 season and will send three athletes to the game. Outside hitters Belle Blair and Keanna Bingham were selected to the all-star roster, while Brooke Allen was chosen as a setter.

The Badgers finished with an undefeated record on the year, but were unable to compete in an official postseason because OSAA did not schedule a state tournament due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In a

2A/1A culminating tournament, Powder Valley edged out Union in the final round by a score of 3-0.

The Bobcats will send right-side hitter Ahnica Shoemaker to compete in the all-star game. Shoemaker contributed to Union’s 13-2 record during the 2021 season.

Imbler and Powder Valley have the most athletes in attendance amongst Union County schools with three players participating. The Panthers selected to compete are outside hitter Erin Coston, setter Rylee Deal and libero Anika McDonald. Imbler finished the 2021 season with a 5-3 record, going 4-1 in 1A Old Oregon League competition.

“They’re very deserving, and they’ve been a huge part of our volleyball program all four years of their volleyball careers, especially with how athletics played out this year,” Imbler head coach Jennifer Teeter said.

Presley Justice and Anna Green will be in attendance for La Grande, a duo that helped lead the

Tigers to an 8-5 record in the 2021 season. Justice plays setter and right-side hitter while Green plays outside hitter and middle blocker.

Green will be competing in track and field at Lane Community College and Justice will be playing volleyball at Kentucky Christian University.

“I’m really proud of both of those two,” La Grande head coach Melinda Becker-Bisenius said. “This year was a really challenging year and they really persevered.”

For Wallowa, setter Ashlyn Young joins hitters ShannaRae Tillery and Jamie Johnston on the all-star roster. The Cougars concluded the 2021 season with a 6-5 record.

Young and Johnston are 2020 graduates of WHS.

EOU head volleyball coach Kaki McLean-Morehead is hosting the all-star event at Quinn Coliseum on the university’s campus in La Grande. The players will be divided into teams and compete in exhibition games. The teams will be decided prior to the contest, which is set to begin at 10 a.m.

ON THE SLATE

Schedule subject to change

SATURDAY, JUNE 19

Prep boys basketball
Joseph at Grant Union, 3 p.m.
Prep girls basketball
Powder Valley at Grant Union, 1:30 p.m.

MONDAY, JUNE 21

Prep boys basketball
Class 2A state tournament, Eastern Oregon University
Union vs. TBD, Time TBA
Class 1A state tournament, Baker City
Joseph or Powder Valley vs. Umpqua Valley Christian, North Douglas or Days Creek, 5:15 p.m.
Prep girls basketball
Class 2A state tournament, Eastern Oregon University
Union vs. TBD, Time TBA

Class 1A state tournament, Baker City
Elkton vs. Powder Valley, 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, JUNE 22

Prep boys basketball
Class 4A state tournament, Site TBA
La Grande vs. TBD, TBA
Class 1A state tournament, Baker City: Teams and Times TBD
Prep girls basketball
Class 4A state tournament, Site TBA
La Grande vs. TBD, TBA
Class 2A state tournament, Eastern Oregon University
Union vs. TBD, Time TBA
Class 1A state tournament, Baker City: Powder Valley vs. TBD, TBA

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23

Prep boys basketball
Class 2A state tournament, Eastern

Oregon University
Union vs. TBD, Time TBA
Class 1A state tournament, Baker City:
Teams and Times TBD
Prep girls basketball
Class 2A state tournament, Eastern Oregon University
Union vs. TBD, Time TBA
Class 1A state tournament, Baker City
Powder Valley vs. TBD, TBA

THURSDAY, JUNE 24

Prep boys basketball
Class 1A state tournament, Baker City
Teams and Times TBD
Prep girls basketball
Class 1A state tournament, Baker City
Powder Valley vs. TBD, TBA

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