

ON THE SLATE

**Tuesday, Feb. 15**  
**PREP BOYS BASKETBALL**  
 Pine Eagle at Wallowa, 5 p.m.  
**PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL**  
 Cove at Joseph, 6 p.m.

**Thursday, Feb. 17**  
**PREP BOYS BASKETBALL**  
 Cove, Imbler, Joseph, Powder Valley, Wallowa at Old Oregon League Tournament, Baker High School, TBA  
**PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL**  
 La Grande vs. McLoughlin/Ontario, TBA  
 Cove, Elgin, Imbler, Joseph, Powder Valley, Wallowa at Old Oregon League Tournament, Baker High School, TBA

**Friday, Feb. 18**  
**COLLEGE MEN'S BASKETBALL**  
 Eastern Oregon at Multnomah, 7:30 p.m.  
**COLLEGE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL**  
 Eastern Oregon at Multnomah, 5:30 p.m.  
**COLLEGE MEN'S WRESTLING**  
 Eastern Oregon at Cascade Collegiate Conference Championships, Havre, Montana, TBA

**PREP BOYS BASKETBALL**  
 Union vs. Stanfield, Pendleton Convention Center, 1 p.m.  
 Cove, Elgin, Imbler, Joseph, Powder Valley, Wallowa at Old Oregon League Tournament, Baker High School, TBA  
**PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL**  
 Enterprise vs. Stanfield, Pendleton Convention Center, 2:45 p.m.  
 Cove, Elgin, Imbler, Joseph, Powder Valley, Wallowa at Old Oregon League Tournament, Baker High School, TBA

**Saturday, Feb. 19**  
**COLLEGE MEN'S BASKETBALL**  
 Eastern Oregon at Warner Pacific, 5 p.m.  
**COLLEGE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL**  
 Eastern Oregon at Warner Pacific, 3 p.m.  
**COLLEGE MEN'S WRESTLING**  
 Eastern Oregon at Cascade Collegiate Conference Championships, Havre, Montana, TBA  
**COLLEGE BASEBALL**  
 Eastern Oregon at Western Oregon, noon  
 Eastern Oregon at Western Oregon, 3 p.m.  
**COLLEGE WOMEN'S LACROSSE**  
 Willamette at Eastern Oregon, 1 p.m.  
**PREP BOYS BASKETBALL**  
 Cove, Elgin, Imbler, Joseph, Powder Valley, Wallowa at Old Oregon League Tournament, Baker High School, TBA  
**PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL**  
 Union vs. Stanfield/Enterprise, Pendleton Convention Center, 7:45 p.m.  
 Cove, Elgin, Imbler, Joseph, Powder Valley, Wallowa at Old Oregon League Tournament, Baker High School, TBA  
**PREP WRESTLING**  
 Union, Elgin, Imbler, Joseph, Wallowa, Enterprise at OSAA 1A/2A Special District 4, Adrian High School, TBA  
**PREP SWIMMING**  
 La Grande, Cove at 1A/2A/3A/4A State Championships, Tualatin, High School, 4:30 p.m.

PREP NEWS & NOTES



Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group

North Powder's Reese Dixon (13) goes in for a shot against Cove at Powder Valley High School on Friday, Feb. 11, 2022. The Badgers beat Cove 76-50 to conclude the regular Old Oregon League season as the top team.

# Badgers red hot heading into postseason

By DAVIS CARBAUGH  
 The Observer

**N**ORTH POWDER — Just one game away from perfection, the Powder Valley boys basketball team wrapped up its regular season as one of the strongest teams the program has seen. Heading into postseason play, the Badgers are hoping that a 12-game winning streak will spur the team toward playoff success. Powder Valley wrapped up its regular season 20-1 overall and 9-0 in league play.

"They're fast and they like to run. It's one of the top teams I've had for a long time," Powder Valley head coach Kyle Dixon said.

Powder Valley's strength has been its versatility, with a slew of upperclassmen capable of leading the team in production on any given night.

At the core of its success is the inside-out duo of Reece Dixon and Kaden Krieger. Cole Martin, Kaiden Dalke, Case Olson and Clay Martin have rounded out a deep group for the Badgers.

In a win over Old Oregon League No. 2 seed Nixyaawii on Saturday, Jan. 29, Krieger took advantage of a mismatch in the paint and went off for 24 points — the center has often found success against opposing teams' interior defenders this year. In the team's finale against Cove, Clay Martin stepped up for 20 points while Reece Dixon totaled 15. Going up against efficient center Patrick Frisch, the Badgers managed to shift its offensive production through other means — Powder

Valley has been far from one-dimensional this season.

"I've told them all year that if you have a bad game, we have guys that can step in and fill spots," the coach said. "It's nice to have six or seven guys that can have a good game."

Powder Valley has cruised past many opponents, but also faced close finishes. Kyle Dixon credits a 69-68 victory on the road over 4A opponent Baker on Feb. 5 as a big momentum boost this season — Reece Dixon hit a game-winning three-pointer as the clock wound down.

The Badgers are ranked No. 2 in the OSAA 1A state rankings, just one spot behind undefeated Crane.

Powder Valley is set to enter the district tournament as the No. 1 seed. The Badges will await the winners of the opening rounds before knowing who their opponent will be.

"We just need to stay focused and practice hard," Kyle Dixon said. "You never know what's going to happen at districts. You just have to be ready to play."

**Union seniors lead the way**

**UNION** — The Union girls basketball has been on a hot streak to close out the season, leaning on its core of seniors. Not only has Union won eight straight to finish the regular season, but the Bobcats picked up crucial wins against league opponents Stanfield and Enterprise to clinch the No. 1 seed in the Blue Mountain Conference. Union finished the regular season 20-3 overall and 11-1 in league play.

Union's offense flows through senior guard Callie Glenn, who has regularly scored 20 or more points per night.

While Glenn is the key offensive piece for Union, the Bobcats remain multidimensional at the guard position. Senior Audrey Wells has helped create a one-two punch in the backcourt.

The senior, who is also a cross-country standout, adds speed and ball handling to the team's offense. Wells scored 15 points to help the team take down Weston-McEwen on Feb. 8 and hit a crucial game-winning layup to defeat Stanfield 32-31 on Feb. 4.

Wells and Glenn are joined by seniors Kaylin Nowak and Audrey Hill who add solid complementary scoring.

Union is set to play the winner of Stanfield and Enterprise at 7:45 p.m. at the Pendleton Convention Center on Feb. 19. The Bobcats are 2-0 against Stanfield and 1-1 against Enterprise.

**Frisch anchoring late run for young Cove team**

**COVE** — When the Cove boys basketball team started the season 1-4, things may have looked bleak. However, a young Cove roster has kicked up the pace late in the season behind the stellar play of junior center Patrick Frisch.

The center has commanded the paint for the Leopards and helped the team turn the season around. Cove flipped the switch after going 2-5 in non-league play — the Leopards rattled off a 8-4 record in Old Oregon League play and finished the season as

the No. 4 seed heading into the district tournament.

"The kids have bought into what we're doing and it's showed," Cove head coach Doug Wiggins said. "We saw a lot of growth, especially from our young kids."

According to Wiggins, late December was a turning point in the season for the Leopards, who started to kick things into gear. Cove's roster is composed of three juniors and seven underclassmen.

A large point of emphasis for Cove's coaching staff was getting younger players involved earlier in the year, in order to prepare them for league play. Since that point, Frisch has emerged as the team's go-to scoring option, while sophomore Wyatt Burgess and junior Terrell Davis have been consistent contributors at the guard position. Frisch has scored 20 or more points in most of Cove's league games this year, including a 20-point performance in a tough loss to top-seeded Powder Valley on Feb. 11 to close out the season. The Leopards won four out of their last five games of the regular season.

"For us, in non-league play we were playing a lot of our bench and trying to get them time and minutes so that when it came to league play we were ready to go," Wiggins said.

Cove is set to play the winner of Pine Eagle and Wallowa on Feb. 17 at Baker High School.

"I feel we're trending up and that we can play against the top-tier teams," Wiggins said. "I think we can play with the big teams if we play all four quarters."

SPORTS SHORT

## Oregon 2A football programs will start playing 9-man football

6-man football gets official OSAA championship

By NIK STRENG  
 The Oregonian

**PORTLAND** — Soon there will be a fourth type of football played among Oregon high schools, as the Oregon School Activities Association has officially adopted nine-man football in Class 2A.

The change to nine-man football for 2A schools brings an end

to the months-long discussion of the OSAA's Football Ad Hoc Committee as it looked over football programs at the state's smallest schools. The OSAA Executive Board met on Monday, Feb. 7, and voted to adopt the recommendations put forward by the ad hoc committee, which keeps 6A, 5A, 4A and 3A playing 11-man football, while 2A will move to the nine-man game and 1A remains at eight-man.

There remains the six-man option for the smaller 1A schools. The OSAA Executive Board

also voted to adopt the recommendation from the State Championship Committee, which will give six-man football an official state championship. Since its start, six-man schools have had an unofficial bowl-style championship game with the top team in each of the two leagues playing for the title.

Originally, the proposal for the football ad hoc committee included a complete revamp of 2A and 1A football, moving both 2A and 1A into a hybrid classification playing

nine-man football with two divisions (one for the bigger schools and one for the smaller schools) and the six-man league for the smaller 1A schools. This would have eliminated eight-man football from Oregon and was met with backlash from 1A coaches and administrators.

All changes will go into effect beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. The football ad hoc committee meets again on Feb. 16, and the next meeting of the OSAA Executive Board is on May 2.



The Observer, File

The Union High School football team competes on a dreary day in this undated photo. The OSAA Executive Board on Monday, Feb. 7, voted to adopt the recommendations put forward by the ad hoc committee to keep 6A, 5A, 4A and 3A schools playing 11-man football, while 2A will move to the nine-man game and 1A remains at eight-man.