

Sports

Country Christian boys stay calm and win 1A state championship over Nixyaawii

By Brian Addison
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The sixth ranked Nixyaawii Golden Eagles (22-7) entered the Oregon State 1A championship game as underdogs after an unlikely dismantling of the number one ranked Horizon Christian Hawks during semi-final play. Nexyaawii's tournament run fell short during the championship game however after coming up against a strong second half defensive effort from eventual champs Country Christian Cougars (29-1). The second-ranked Cougars took the title from the Golden Eagles by a final score of 61-53 in front of an enthusiastic audience packed to the rafters within Baker High School's Peacock Court, Saturday, March 7.

Nixyaawii took a 26-19 lead into the halftime locker room and were able to hold the lead until the end of the third period.

"During halftime I told the boys not to panic," said Cougars head coach Doug

Nofziger shortly after the victory. "I told them we needed to win the third quarter, which we did after cutting the lead to three of four. And then in the fourth I told them to just keep working. I told them to stay under control and not to panic and they did a great job of that."

The conditioning and superior size of the Cougars, as they pushed hard on defensive during the latter stages of the game, proved to be the difference. The defensive pressure began to wear on the competitors as Nixyaawii began to show signs of fatigue after coming up victorious through the bracket against higher ranked teams.

The beginning part of the fourth period was a back-and-forth battle until defensive clamp-down by the Cougars ended the hopes of the Golden Eagles.

The Country Christian Cougars were led by Luke Carter finishing with 20 points and Ben Grandle's clutch shooting adding 13 points.

Nixyaawii's Ira Ashley ended with 17 points and Freddy Campos contributed 12 in the loss.

First team all-state honors were awarded to unanimous selectees Ben Grandle of Country Christian and Mason Bloomster of Horizon Christian. Nixyaawii's Hunter Melton and Elijah Bevis, and Jordan Syphard of County Christian rounded out the first team.

Second team all-state honors were awarded to Nicco Bustamante of Hosanna Christian, Angel DeAnda of Siletz Valley, Zack Van Loon from Yoncalla, Jared Davis of Horizon Christian, and Avery Nofziger of Country Christian.

Crosshill Christian was awarded the Sportsmanship Award. Elkton was recognized for the Band award. The spirit/entertainment award was given to Nexyaawii after a rousing and colorful halftime cultural exhibit displayed during the halftime of the girls final.



Brian Addison / The Baker County Press

Nixyaawii Golden Eagle boys basketball team was supported by members of the Umatilla Confederated Tribes as they pounded out traditional drum beats.

Demascus Christian girls basketball finishes undefeated season with 1A state championship

By Brian Addison
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"A real gut-check," said Dave Wakefield, head coach for the Demascus Christian Eagles (30-0) girls basketball team, minutes after winning the 1A state basketball title at Baker High School's Peacock Court, March 7.

The Eagles take the title for the second time in three years after losing in the title game last year to Condon/Wheeler. That title game loss in March, 2014 was the last time the Eagles tasted defeat.

The competition has reason for concern considering the undefeated state champs boast only one Senior on a roster of five Freshman, three Sopho-

mores, and one Junior.

"For us to emerge from this season with a 30 and 0 record is just amazing with so many good teams out there," Wakefield said. "Country Christian played very well and they deserve a trophy too."

The Country Christian Cougars pushed the Eagles to their competitive limits during a back-and-forth finale to the 1A state tourney. Country Christian built a 18-7 lead after the first period of play behind a 10-point offensive explosion from Mollie Lewandowski.

The second period saw the Cougars pushing the lead to 11-points when the tide of momentum began to change. By halftime the Demascus Christian

offense began to flow bringing them to within one-point upon entering the halftime locker room.

First team all-state player Ana Wakefield led the Eagles to a one point lead going into the final stanza and then a back-and-forth latter stages battle ensued with Demascus Christian finally putting away the scrappy Cougars from Country Christian by a final score of 51-46.

Hannah Forrer,, Isabella Crowley, and Wakefield led the well-distributed offensive attack for Demascus Christian with 15 points each.

Country Christian was led by Lewandowski's 16 points.

All-state tournament first team honors were awarded



Brian Addison / The Baker County Press

Demascus Christian's Hannah Forrar contests a shot from Country Christian leading scorer Mollie Lewandowski during the state 1A basketball championship game.

to unanimous selection Hannah Forrar and Ana Wakefield from Demascus Christian, Matney Jamieson and Deana Harris of Condon/Wheeler, and

Quincy Pendergrass of Adrian. Girls second team honor went to Dani Baker and Bella Mast of North Douglas, Audrey Barden and Kennedy Nofziger of

Country Christian, and Laura Holcomb from Elkton. The girls from Elkton High School were awarded the Sportsmanship Award.

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