

Snowboard Team wins State Championship

ALISON FIELDHOUSE

During the State Competition from March 9 to March 12 at Mt. Hood Meadows, the Snowboard Team won the Sato Cup by placing first in two events, halfpipe and slopestyle. The team chose riders that they wanted to be scored for each event. Nick McMillen, Drake Edwards, Andrew Brown, Josh Gertlar and Kyle Holmes, seniors, Kevin Holmes and Adam Kays, sophomores, and Michael Foushee, freshman, competed in halfpipe. There were two slopestyle teams. The first consisted of McMillen, Kevin, Kays and Foushee and the second had Holmes, Gertlar, Chip Jameson, Edwards, Trevor Harris, senior, and Joonas Lemetyinen, junior.

"I think I was the happiest person in the world when we won State," Kevin said. "We all made a plan to win the cup since the beginning of the year, so we worked really hard."

State consisted of three days

Debutantes dance to fourth place at State Tournament

SEAN PEBLER

The Dance Team earned a fourth place finish at the State Tournament at the Memorial Coliseum on March 14-15. With less than four points separating the top four finishers, the Lions were edged out by Parkrose, Canby and Clackamas, respectively.

The debutantes advanced to the State Tournament on March 5 after placing first in its meet at Parkrose High School. The team was able to place in the top two in all its regular meets



Photo courtesy of Angie Sharpe
Mackenzie Johnson and Hailey Zaayer, juniors, surround teammate Alexis McKinley, junior, in a competition at Parkrose High School on Feb. 19. The Debutantes won first place, beating out league rivals Clackamas and Canby.

this season, and did so in the company of tough competitors, according to head coach Amanda Wilcox.

"So far, our biggest competition has been Parkrose, Clackamas and Canby," Wilcox said. "We all four have been running neck-and-neck."

of competition. Each league sends the riders that have done the best in each specific event. Events at State included the banked slalom, boardercross, slopestyle and half-pipe.

"For me, my toughest competitions will be halfpipe and slopestyle," Harris, senior, said. "This year, the bar has been set high."

The Snowboarding Team started the season with expectations for



Photo by John Gertlar
Trevor Harris, senior, completes a nose grab at the Feb. 20 slopestyle competition at Mt. Hood Meadows. The team won the Sato Cup at State by placing first in slopestyle and halfpipe on March 9-12.

better athletes, maintaining a positive attitude, and having a great experience according to head coach Graham Peterson.

As the season progressed, their

On Feb. 19, the debutantes displayed one of its strongest performances of the season according to Wilcox, placing first out of 12 other teams at Parkrose High School. They edged out league rivals Clackamas and Canby with a score of 84.56.

"I feel like this year has been a lot of hard work and commitment but very rewarding. The outcome has been well worth it!" Alyssa Bridgman, senior captain, said.

With the season reaching a conclusion, Wilcox hoped her dancers performed at their highest level possible

at the State meet, but doesn't believe that scores always reflect effort.

"I will be proud as long as the team gives 100 percent at State, and holds nothing back," Wilcox said. "Our goal is never just a placement, but to give our very best performance."

expectations did not change.

At State, the team hoped to excel in events they were strong in as well as those they were not.

"Our team is strong in all events; where we face tougher competition is in slopestyle and boardercross," Peterson said. "I was confident that if the team continued to bring the level of commitment they'd shown so far to State, we would do

Boys Basketball Team takes sixth in State

JENNIFER SITTON

If someone had said a month ago that the Boys' Basketball Team was going to take sixth in State, most people probably wouldn't have believed them. The team went 5-4 in preseason, took fourth in league and finished the season with a losing record, but when it mattered the most, the team united to win three key playoff games to send them to the State Tournament at the Rose Garden.

The Lions lost their first game at the tournament to North Medford, 54-64, moving them to the losers side of the bracket. However, they bounced back to beat South Medford 68-60 the following morning. On the final day of the season, the Lions fell to Lincoln 70-78, earning them sixth place in State, an incredible feat for a team that was ranked 21st in the OSAA power rankings at the end of the season.

"It was a great run at the end of the season that got us to the tournament," Eric Viuhkola, head coach, said. "I was also really proud of how the team responded after the

Girls Basketball Team falls to number two Clackamas in second round of State playoffs

JENNIFER SITTON

The Girls' Basketball Team saw its season come to an end in the second round of playoffs, when it fell to the Clackamas Cavaliers for the fourth time this season. The contest between the two Three Rivers League teams was debated by many.

"At first I wasn't bummed that we were matched up against them," Glen Lee, head coach, said. "But now that it's over and had time to review everything, maybe playing another team might have been better for us."

The team had confidence going into the game after having taken Clackamas to the wire in its final league meeting two weeks earlier, but the Cavaliers returned with a vengeance, starting off the first quarter of the playoff game with a 17-0 lead. The Lions played the team even the rest of the game, but couldn't overcome the early deficit.

"With the exception of the first quarter I thought we matched them point-for-point.

great."

The whole season was geared towards state, according to Peterson. The team usually practiced Wednesday nights at Meadows. Members also spent weekends doing recreational boarding with friends.

"Each practice and each competition helps develop the skills that our riders will need to bring to state," Peterson said. During the Slopestyle

first loss, coming back and beating one of the best teams



Photo by Tracey Sitton
Keith Baggetta, senior, hits a shot in the face of a Redmond defender at WLHS on March 1. The Lions defeated the Redmond Panthers 84-60 in their play-in game, earning a first-round State playoff berth against David Douglas.

in the state in South Medford."

The team overcame tough

competition on Feb. 20, there were six boys who placed in the top 10. Holmes, with a score of 179 won first place. For the girls, Estey came in third with 77 points and Kylie Steele, senior, took fourth place with 22.

"In my mind, I believe we did exceptionally well," Peterson said. "One could see the riders pushing themselves to the max."

odds to beat the Lake Oswego Lakers in the second round of the playoffs, which earned them a spot in the Elite Eight and the opportunity to play at the Rose Garden. After losing to the Lakers three times in league play, the Lions didn't lose hope that they could win the one game that counted. With solid defense, support from the crowd and free-throws, the Lions won the game 63-51.

With a fourth place Three Rivers League finish, the team benefited from the OSAA's new playoff format, which allowed it an opportunity to make it into the 32 team playoff bracket through play-in games.

"I definitely like the RPI system because I feel like it's more fair. It's not perfect, but it's better than what it was," Viuhkola said. "The highest seeds are winning, which is what they expected to happen."

In their play-in game, the Lions took on the sixth place team from the Special District 1, the Redmond Panthers.

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Down 17 was too much to come back from in a closeout game," Lee said. "If we could have only made a few of our lay-ups and two footers in that first quarter it might have been a different outcome."

West Linn lost 35-55 to end their season. However, three days earlier, the Lions took on a storied program in the Central Catholic Rams. The Rams, who lost their league title for the first time in years, traveled to West Linn for the first round playoff game. After a slow first half on both ends, the Lions outscored Central Catholic in both the third and fourth quarters, leading them to a 49-45 win.

"The second half we came out with a lot more energy and ran more," Brittany Smith, freshman, said. "It felt fantastic to get the win."

Smith's sentiments were echoed by Lee.

"I was pleased with how our team followed the game plan on guarding their talented lineup," Lee said. "We also did a nice job closing things out by hitting our free throws by

shooting 83 percent."

The team finished league play with a record of 8-7, which earned third place. However, the team's barely-winning record and third place finish are deceptive, as the TRL was arguably the strongest league in the state this year, with two top-tier teams in Clackamas and Oregon City, according to Lee.

"I was very pleased with our efforts in league," Lee said. "Playing each team three times was a grind, but we got through it."

Regardless of how the team finished, Lee and the players feel that this was a special team with incredible chemistry.

"I loved this team. They all got along, enjoyed each other's company and played hard," Lee said. "This team was unselfish and represented the Lion Program well. I was very proud of their accomplishments and growth."

"We're a really close and unified team," Smith said. "We all love each other and that's what made us so successful this year."