

# SPORTS

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## Warrenton qualifies three for state meet

Pior wins title at 132 pounds

By GARY HENLEY  
The Daily Astorian

The Warrenton wrestling team finished fifth in the team standings and qualified three wrestlers for the state meet, following two full days of action at Warrenton High School.

The Warriors hosted the District 1/3A tournament Friday and Saturday, with a field of seven teams competing.

Willamina/Falls City racked up 358.5 points to win the team championship, well ahead of second place Dayton (232). Taft was third with 225 points, followed by Rainier (184) and Warrenton (134).

The Warriors were in third place after Friday's rounds, and remained in third through the early part of Saturday's action.

"Fifth place did not tell the whole story," said Warrenton coach Corey Conant. "We ended up with 13 placers. We are in a tough league and we did not look afraid in any of our matches."

Three Warrenton wrestlers will head to Portland later this week,



Julien Whitsett grapples with an opponent.

Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

after qualifying in Saturday's finals.

The Warriors had one individual champion, as sophomore Nic Pior went 3-0 in the 132-pound weight class, which had just five wrestlers.

Pior won his first match on the

mat with a one-minute pin over Amity junior Cameron Weigart.

He followed with a 5-4 semifinal decision over Willamina freshman Spyre Nelson, then finished off his perfect weekend with a 7-6

decision against Willamina sophomore Bryce Mode in the championship match.

The first Warrior to qualify for state was Armin Rodriguez at 120 pounds. The junior had a first-

round bye, then pinned Dayton's Bryan Zuniga in 57 seconds.

Rodriguez lost a 12-6 decision to Willamina freshman Elias Scholten in the semifinals, but bounced back in consolation with a pin over freshman Kaden White of Taft.

In the third-place final, Rodriguez posted an 8-2 decision over Warrenton freshman teammate Austin Atwood.

And at 285, Warrenton sophomore Triston Scott had to wrestle four times to finish third in his class.

Scott had a 37-second pin over Clatskanie's Sterling Bruce to reach the semifinals, where Dayton's Blake Larsen pinned Scott in 34 seconds.

Scott rebounded in consolation with a fall over teammate Robert Berk, then pinned Rainier's Cameron Governale in 1:42 in the third-place match.

Warrenton picked up team points with two fourth-place finishers, including Atwood at 120 pounds and Parker Greenawald at 126.

Gio Martinez and Trevor Snider-Clark had back-to-back fifth-place showings at 152 and 160 pounds, respectively.

## BOYS HOOPS

### Seaside wins tiebreaker, as Gulls beat Banks

Entering the Cowapa League first-place tiebreaker game Saturday at Tillamook, the Seaside boys basketball team had a string of eight straight wins in postseason play.

And the Gulls were not about to ruin that mark.

Seaside made it nine straight playoff victories with a 51-42 win over Banks that puts the Gulls back into the No. 1 spot in the state rankings, and broke the tie at the top of the Cowapa League standings.

The Gulls will not play again until March 1, unless Valley Catholic upsets Banks on Monday. In that case, the Gulls would host the Valiants on Tuesday. If Banks wins, there would be no second league playoff meeting between the Braves and Gulls.

For now, Banks and Seaside are on a collision course for the state championship game, March 9 in Forest Grove.

Just two days after the Braves scored a 54-53 upset over Seaside, the Gulls returned the favor in Saturday's win.

Seaside never trailed in the league playoff, although the Braves rallied from a 37-27 deficit to start the fourth period, and pulled to within 37-35 midway through the quarter.

Seaside answered with 3-pointers from Beau Johnson and Ryan Hague, and the Gulls made six straight free throws in the final minute to secure the win.

Hague led Seaside with 12 points, while the team of Johnson & Johnson (Beau and Brayden) combined for 22, 11 points apiece.

Brayden hit a 3-pointer to end the first quarter, and made another to start the second.

Each Johnson added another 3-pointer in the second quarter, giving Seaside a commanding 28-16 halftime lead.

### Valiants' win spells end to Astoria season

After a fairly close quarter-and-a-half, Valley Catholic threw a half-court trap on the Astoria Fishermen, and the Valiants pulled away with a 23-4 run on their way to a 58-20 win in a Cowapa League boys basketball playoff Saturday.

Davis Johnson led a trio of Valley Catholic players in double figures with 15, followed by Daniel Pruitt and Isaac Flemmer with 10 apiece. Ian Hunt had five points for Astoria.

"We knew it was going to be a tough year, the league being what it is," said Astoria coach Kevin Goin. After Seaside and Banks, "Valley Catholic is as good as any team in the state," as the Cowapa League seeks to send a team (or teams) to the state championship for the fifth year in a row.

"We'll have three starters back and some

guards coming in, so I like where we're at and I'm excited for next year," Goin said.

### Rainier gets defensive in win over Warrenton

With just one win in their final seven games, it was a rough finish to the 2018-19 season for the Warrenton boys basketball team.

Still, despite their 50-24 loss Saturday night at Rainier, the Warriors finished with a winning record (13-12) and ranked 20th out of 35 teams at the 3A level.

The Warriors picked a bad night to score their season-low in points, as the Columbians held Warrenton's Dalton Knight scoreless, after the Warriors' senior came in averaging 18 points per game.

Rainier's Conner Rea led all scorers with 14 points, followed by teammates Easton Crape, Joey Tripp and Kenny Tripp, all with nine points each.

Ayden Stephens scored nine to lead Warrenton, which was outscored 27-11 over the second and third quarters.

### Knights top Knappa in league title game

Saturday night's Northwest League boys basketball game was shaping up to be a classic, with No. 1-ranked Columbia Christian holding a slim 21-19 lead over No. 5-ranked Knappa in the second quarter.

Yet in a matter of minutes, the Knights led 30-19, and pulled away from there for a 67-44 win over the Loggers, in the league's match for top seed to the state playoffs.

Knappa still secured a home state playoff game later this week, and likely another trip to Pendleton.

The Loggers will host Coquille in a Sweet 16 playoff contest at 6 p.m. Friday. Knappa has won its last five Sweet 16 home playoff games, all by large margins.

Meanwhile, it was Columbia Christian's third win of the season over Knappa, which lost the two league games, 55-47 and 75-55.

In Saturday's playoff, the Loggers "played pretty well in the first half," said Knappa coach Paul Isom. "Timber (Engblom) was able to get to the rim and we had a really good effort on the defensive end."

In the second half, however, "we went cold," he said, "and to Columbia's credit, they hit some tough shots. Elijah Munyan (a 6-foot-3 sophomore guard) played extremely well."

Knappa's record dropped to 19-8 overall, but "all in all, it was a successful regular season for us," Isom said. "Our goal at the start of the year was to get a home (playoff) to try to get to Pendleton, and we accomplished that."

—The Daily Astorian

## GIRLS HOOPS

### Seaside clips the Valiants, 38-35

After losing to Valley Catholic twice in the regular season, the Seaside girls basketball team showed how to take advantage of the league playoff system Saturday in Beaverton.

In the only game that mattered between the Valiants (12-13) and Lady Gulls (13-12), the Gulls won, 38-35, ending Valley Catholic's season, and sending Seaside on the regional play-in round.

The Gulls will play one more seeding game, Monday night, 5:30 p.m. at Astoria. Even with a loss, Seaside's RPI rating should be good enough for a spot in the regional play-in round later this week.

Seaside coach Mike Hawes called Saturday's contest, "a close game all the way, in which we seemed to keep a slim lead most of the way," before Valley Catholic forced a tie at 35-35 with a minute remaining.

Seaside's Emy Kiser made 1-of-2 free throws for a 36-35 lead, and Kiser was fouled again with eight seconds left and made both free throws.

Ruby Douglas led the Gulls with 15 points, eight in the fourth quarter. In addition, "we really turned the game to Lilli (Taylor) and just created off her," Hawes said, and Taylor responded with 11 points and 10 rebounds.

### Slifka's 34 points leads Banks past Astoria

One of the best players in 4A girls basketball was at her Player of the Year best Saturday afternoon in Tillamook.

Banks senior Aspen Slifka erupted for 34 points, leading the Braves to a 59-45 win over Astoria in the Cowapa League's top seed tie-breaker game, played at Tillamook High School.

The Braves led from start to finish, jumping out to a 6-0 lead and holding an 18-3 advantage after one quarter.

Coming off a 55-52 loss Feb. 5 at Astoria, in which the Braves were 11-of-25 from the free throw line, Banks finished 22-for-29 in Saturday's win, 14-for-16 in the first half.

Both teams were in foul trouble and the Fishermen had turnover troubles, but Slifka scored throughout the entire game.

She had 15 points in the first half, then highlighted the third quarter with three three-point plays, pushing a 30-18 lead to 41-23 midway through the quarter.

Hailey O'Brien scored 13 points and Kajsa Jackson added eight for Astoria, which will host Seaside in a Clatsop Clash league playoff, 5:30 p.m. Monday.

### Warrenton outlasts Willamina, 50-41

The fourth meeting of the year between Willamina and Warrenton did not go any better for the Bulldogs than the first three games.

Warrenton dominated the four-game series, winning all four, including Friday night's Coastal Range League girls basketball playoff game at Clatsop Community College, 50-41.

The Warriors (19-7) will host a state playoff next Saturday vs. Amity (16-10). Ranked seventh in the state, Warrenton can secure its first state tournament

appearance since 2010 with a win, and first since the tournament was moved to Coos Bay/North Bend.

Meanwhile, the Bulldogs — playing their third game of the season in Clatsop County — made Friday's game much closer than expected. Just 10 days earlier, the Warriors defeated Willamina, 72-37.

Yet Warrenton found itself holding a narrow 36-30 lead entering the fourth quarter.

"It's difficult to beat a team four times in one season," said Warrenton coach Robert Hoepfl. "So you have to tip your hat to (the Bulldogs). They're a good team, and they were playing for their season, so we knew it would be a close game."

"Bottom line, we got the win," he said. "I'm proud of the kids. We accomplished what we set out to do, which was get to state."

A rough night for the regular Warrenton scorers was saved by junior Melia Kapua, who knocked down three 3-pointers in the second half, including back-to-back triples in the fourth quarter that highlighted an 11-0 run to start the period.

"Melia had an amazing game," Hoepfl said. "She only hit one three all season, and she had three in the second half tonight."

Both teams finished in foul trouble, with two Willamina players fouling out, along with Warrenton's Kenzie Ramsey.

The fouls weren't too costly for the Warriors, since Willamina did not make a free throw until the fourth quarter, and finished 3-for-13.

Warrenton led by as much as 20-12 midway through the second quarter, but the Bulldogs rallied to within 21-19 at halftime.

A pair of 3-pointers by Ramsey, coupled with two baskets from Fernanda Alvarez, pushed Warrenton's lead to 31-21 to open the third quarter.

Willamina finished the quarter on a 9-5 run, before the Warriors put the game away with their 11-point run to start the fourth.

Alvarez and Ramsey scored 15 points apiece to lead Warrenton, while Claire Bussert and Kapua each had nine. Bussert also had six assists and five steals, and Alvarez had 12 rebounds.

### Wahkiakum ends Ilwaco win streak

The Ilwaco Lady Fishermen had not lost since Dec. 21, yet they saw their 12-game win streak come crashing down Saturday night, as Wahkiakum shocked No. 3-ranked Ilwaco 64-51 in a district 2B championship girls basketball game at W.F. West High School in Chehalis, Washington.

Ilwaco will still take part in the state tournament, Feb. 27-March 2 in Spokane.

Wahkiakum and Ilwaco split two playoff games last season, in which Ilwaco was ranked No. 1 entering the state tournament.

This year, the top-ranked Mules held a 28-25 halftime lead in Saturday's game, before Ilwaco rallied and took a brief lead in the fourth quarter.

Led by sophomore Paige Mace, Wahkiakum took over in the last four minutes of the game to escape with the win.

Mace hit five 3-pointers, and teammate Macie Elliott finished with 17 points. Ilwaco was led by Erika Glenn's 14 points.

—The Daily Astorian

## SCOREBOARD

### PREP SPORTS SCHEDULE

**TODAY**  
Girls basketball: Cowapa League seeding game, Seaside at Astoria, 5:30 p.m.

### BOYS BASKETBALL

**Seaside 51, Banks 42**  
BAN (42): Blake Gobel 11, Bunn 8, Cameron 6, Slifka 5, Klein 4, Hiestand 4, Evans 2, Exline 2.

SEA (51): Ryan Hague 12, Br.Johnson 11, Be.Johnson 11, Januik 7, Thompson 6, Westerholm 4, Meyer.

Banks 8 8 11 15—42  
Seaside 11 17 9 14—51

**Valley Catholic 58, Astoria 20**  
AST (20): Ian Hunt 5, Brockman 4, Marinovich 4, Altheide-Nielsen 3, Long 2, Ploghoff, Olsson, Stenblom, Matlock, Junes, Johnson.

VC (58): Davis Johnson 15, Pruitt 10, Flemmer 10, Boileau 8, Tetzloff 8, Howard 5, Eck 2, Napoli 2.

Astoria 3 4 3 10—20  
Valley C. 8 23 14 13—58

**Rainier 50, Warrenton 24**  
WAR (24): Ayden Stephens 9, Jackson 5, Morrow 4, Little 4, Green 2, Knight.

RAI (50): Conner Rea 14, Crape 9, J.Tripp 9, K.Tripp 9, Godfrey 4, Parnley 3, Keizur 2.

Warrenton 8 2 9 5—24  
Rainier 12 9 18 11—50

**GIRLS BASKETBALL**  
**Banks 59, Astoria 45**

AST (45): Hailey O'Brien 13, Jackson 8, Fausett 7, Helmersen 6, Hankwitz 5, Norris 3, Long 3.  
BAN (59): Aspen Slifka 34, Kind 7, Minervini 6, Nelson 5, Hailey 3, Belden 2, Her-

nandez 2.  
Astoria 3 14 9 19—45  
Banks 18 10 18 13—59

**Warrenton 50, Willamina 41**  
WIL (41): Kaya McLean 11, Grace France 11, Hughes 7, Ki.Rankin 6, Scranton 4, P.Shrabel 2.

WAR (50): Fernanda Alvarez 15, Kenzie Ramsey 15, Bussert 9, Kapua 9, M.Heyen 2, Miethe, Diego, Dejesus.

Willamina 10 9 11 11—41  
Warrenton 13 8 15 14—50

**Wahkiakum 64, Ilwaco 51**  
WAH (64): Paige Mace 19, Elliott 17, Merz 13, Leitz 6, Watkins 2, Curl 2, Ashe 5.

ILW (51): Erika Glenn 14, Gray 9, Kemmer 8, Bell 6, McMullen 6, Sheldon 6, Wheldon 2.

Wahkiakum 17 11 13 23—64  
Ilwaco 11 14 12 14—51