

SPORTS

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VOLLEYBALL

Astoria advances to state with win over Siuslaw

By **GARY HENLEY**
The Astorian

The Siuslaw volleyball team found out what happens when you have to play a highly-ranked Cowapa League team in the play-in round.

The Vikings did not stand much of a chance Tuesday night at the Brick House, where Astoria eliminated Siuslaw in quick fashion, 25-21, 25-16, 25-19.

Third-place finishers in their own league but ranked fifth in the state, the Lady Fishermen showed that they're ready to make a big run in the upcoming state tournament, Nov. 8-9 at Forest Grove High School.

But first, Astoria will host a first round state playoff contest Saturday, time and opponent to be announced.

The Vikings had their moments in Tuesday's match (a 5-1 lead in Game 1), but Astoria was never seriously threatened after the first set.

Siuslaw never led in Game 2 or 3, managing only a 1-1 tie in the second set, and 3-3 in the third.

Other than that, the Fishermen held the lead for the remainder of the match, which took just an hour and 10 minutes to complete.

And whenever the Vikings did reel off more than a few points in a row, Astoria went to their rally-stopper, junior Kelsey Fausett.

Tied 13-13 in Game 1, Fausett lined a kill down the center of the court to spark a Fishermen rally, helping Astoria outscore Siuslaw 8-1 to take a commanding lead.

Halle Helmersen and Skylar Sturtz added ace serves during the big run, and Julia Norris finished the deal, setting Taja Tuimato for a kill, then delivering an off-speed kill of her own at game point.

Astoria built a 10-2 advantage in the second set, but Siuslaw's 6-foot senior outside hitter, Mia Collins, led a rally that helped the Vikings close to within 11-9.

But Astoria turned on the Fausett again, as she posted kills off sets from Norris and Tuimato, which was followed by a pair of

spikes from Helmersen.

Another Fausett kill made it 21-12, and Norris set Fausett twice down the stretch for game-ending hits.

The Vikings were within 11-10 in the third set, but Fausett showed that she could be effective from the serve line as well.

Fausett took over and served up nine straight points for a 20-10 lead, with three aces during the run.

The Vikings made one last gasp and closed to within 21-17, but a kill by Kajsa Jackson and Tuimato's directional tap at match point capped Astoria's win.

Fausett led Astoria with eight kills, followed by Helmersen with

seven and Jackson with five kills to go with three blocks.

The early start was part of Astoria's slow start, said coach Jessie Todd.

"We tried to stay in a regular routine, but the early start, plus nerves were a part of it," she said. "In the post-season matches, you're always fighting a few nerves."

"But we played fairly smart tonight," Todd said. "We moved the ball well, and did OK against (Collins). She's a good player, and she's going to get her kills."

In other 4A play-in match action, Philomath finished Seaside's season with a three-game sweep over the Gulls, 25-20, 25-22, 25-17, at Philomath.

BOYS SOCCER

Seaside blanks Banks in league finale

Seaside tuned up for the post-season with an easy 5-0 win Tuesday at Banks in a Cowapa League boys soccer season finale.

The Gulls finish the season with a 6-1-1 league record, 10-3-1 overall. The Braves, ranked 32nd out of 33 teams at the 4A level, dropped to 1-11 overall.

Seaside advances to the state playoffs for the fourth straight season.

Stephen Snyder scored Seaside's first goal and freshman Ryan Varozza scored the second on a header off an assist from Westin Carter.

Carter made it 3-0, and Dodger Holmstedt was Seaside's fourth goal-scorer of the first half.

The Gulls played several junior varsity players in the second half, with Carter adding his second goal for the final score.

In girls soccer action at Broadway Field, Banks defeated Seaside, 1-0.

VOLLEYBALL

Willamina defeats Warrenton for No. 1 seed

The third time was the charm for the Willamina volleyball team.

Following a pair of five-set wins for Warrenton during the regular season, the Bulldogs finally found a winning combination against the Warriors, as they defeated Warrenton in four sets Tuesday night to earn the No. 1 seed to the state playoffs out of the Coastal Range League.

Willamina's 25-15, 25-19, 19-25, 25-17 win gives the league's top seed to the Bulldogs, while Warrenton — the regular season league champion — will still compete in the upcoming state playoffs.

The Warriors will play on the road at 5 p.m. Saturday at No. 1-ranked Santiam Christian. Willamina jumped Warrenton in the state rankings, rising to 17th while Warrenton dropped to No. 21.

— *The Astorian*

SCOREBOARD

PREP SPORTS SCHEDULE FRIDAY

Football — Portland Christian at Knappa, 7 p.m.; Nestucca at Warrenton, 7 p.m.; Willapa Valley at Ilwaco, 7 p.m.; Taholah at Naselle, 7 p.m.



A wide angle view from overhead at Astoria High School's new track.

Grand opening Saturday for Astoria's new track



The newly resurfaced track at Astoria High School complete with lane numbers.

The Astorian

Astoria School District is inviting all community members to a grand opening at 11 a.m. Saturday for Astoria High School's new track.

A junior track meet for children ages 4-12 will be held from 11:30 to 1 p.m. with a barbecue from 11:30 to 1 p.m. A United Way Walk-a-thon is happening from 11:15 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Astoria's track was recently resurfaced thanks to support from a November 2018 bond.

There will be a ceremonial ribbon cutting at the grand opening.

The barbecue will be hosted by members of the Astoria High School track team.

The walk-a-thon, part of a senior class project, was organized by Astoria seniors Leo Matthews and Michael Postlewait, in partnership with the United Way of Clatsop County.

Oregon women's basketball ranked 1st in AP poll

By **DOUG FEINBERG**
Associated Press

NEW YORK — When he took over in 2014, Kelly Graves set out to establish Oregon as one of the elite teams in women's college basketball.

Fresh off their first Final Four appearance, the Ducks are ranked

No. 1 in The Associated Press poll for the first time in school history.

Oregon, led by sensational guard Sabrina Ionescu, received 25 of the 28 first-place votes from the national media panel to grab the top spot in the preseason rankings released Wednesday.

"I think it validates our vision that we had going in here," Graves

told the Associated Press. "It validates the hard work from my staff that's been with me the whole journey. On this stage we had a better opportunity to be in position we now are."

No. 2 Baylor, the defending national champion, received the other three first-place votes. Stanford, Maryland and UConn round out the top five; the Huskies have been ranked in the top five for 239

consecutive weeks, since January 2007.

"That's nuts," Graves said of UConn's streak. "I think I'd be in my mid 70s by the time we reached that."

No. 6 Texas A&M has its best ranking since the Aggies were fifth on Dec. 29, 2014. Oregon State, South Carolina, Louisville and Mississippi State complete the top 10.

Graves knows no one tends to remember who was ranked first in October. He also feels his team, which was ranked third in the preseason last year, is mature enough to handle the pressures of being No. 1.

"I think it's really neat and we're adult enough and smart enough to handle this," he said. "We've kept our heads down and continued to work. Stay humbled and hungry."