

Senior night sweep completes perfect league season for Horizon boys

By MIKE WEBER
For the News

The powerhouse 1A No. 1 ranked Horizon Christian School boys basketball team steamrolled two more opponents over the weekend to conclude its Big Sky Conference schedule with a perfect 14-0 record.

Horizon (22-3 overall) won 79-42 over the Mitchell-Spray Loggers (5-9 Big Sky, 9-13) on the road Friday at Spray High School, and on Senior Night Saturday at home the Hawks had another dominating performance in a 70-46 victory over the South Wasco County Red-sides (8-6, 12-10).

Saturday marked the 15th time this season Horizon has won by 20 or more points and was the eighth time the Hawks scored 70 or more points. Horizon has the No. 2 ranked offense at 62.64 points a game.

The four-time defending Big Sky Conference champion Hawks, guided by coach Darrin Lingel and assistant Mike Totaro, extended their conference win streak to 47 games. The impressive streak includes regular season and district playoff games combined over the last four years. Horizon's last loss to a Big Sky opponent was 65-59 to the Sherman Huskies on Feb. 10, 2012. Horizon will be focusing on extending that streak when it plays in the Big Sky District Tournament Feb. 20-21 at Hermiston High School.

"The kids played very well in our final regular season game," said Lingel. "All the seniors played well and we're getting into a good routine now with our team both offensively and defensively. We're on a roll and we've got lots of momentum going, so we're feeling good as we get ready for the district playoffs. We focus on one game at a time. We're excited about districts and having a chance to win it for a fifth straight year, so that should be fun. If we take care of business there, then we'll have one more playoff game at home."

On Friday, the senior starting trio of Jared Davis (16 points, nine assists), Mason Bloomster (19 pts., 13 rebounds) and RJ Hicks (14 pts., three steals) each

scored in double figures to help lead Horizon to the lopsided win over the Loggers. Hawk senior starters Wes Johnston (eight pts.) and Ryan Aldrich (eight pts.) also contributed to Horizon's impressive offensive attack, which marked their second highest point total this year.

Leading 16-10 after one quarter, the Hawks outscored the Loggers 23-13 in the second quarter to build a 39-23 halftime advantage. Horizon maintained its momentum in the second half, which included a dominating fourth quarter performance when they outscored Mitchell-Spray 20-3. Horizon was on target from the field in two-point field goals, while shooting 35-for-59 (59.3 percent).

Davis (16 pts., four assists), Johnston (11 pts.), Bloomster (15 pts., 15 rebs., six steals) and Aldrich (12 pts., four steals) scored in double figures to help lead the Hawks to victory against South Wasco. Horizon jumped in front 23-7 after one and outscored South Wasco in every quarter to maintain control of the game from start-to-finish in a dominating home win at the Hawks Nest.

"I think we came into our final home game with a playoff mentality and it feels pretty good to have the momentum of a long winning streak," said Aldrich. "We definitely feel like we're ready to play well at districts. It's very satisfying to know that we're having another very good season. It was an awesome and fun experience with Senior Night and it was a very emotional feeling as well. I think we can always get better, but I think we played one of our best games tonight (versus South Wasco)."

Prior to the contest, Horizon's seniors (Davis, Bloomster, Aldrich, Johnston, Hicks, Nick Andersen, Tristan Gillis, Shawn Wang and Nick Zerkel) were honored in a special Senior Night ceremony with each player accompanied by their parents and midcourt.

"Senior Night was fun and it was hard to believe that it was our last regular season game," said Bloomster, who played on the Hawks 2012 state title team

along with Davis and Aldrich. "Hopefully, we'll have one more home game in the playoffs. We came together and had a real good performance with everyone doing their job. We finished the regular season really well. I think if we continue playing up to our maximum potential, then I don't think any team can stop us from our goal of winning the state championship. Our six seniors have been playing together since we were in seventh grade and we're all very familiar with each other. We've been looking forward to this season for a long time."

If Horizon wins the district championship, the team will host an OSAA/U.S. Bank/Les Schwab Tires second round state playoff contest Feb. 27. If they win that contest, Horizon would advance to the state tournament quarterfinals Mar. 4-7 at Baker High School for a fifth consecutive year. The Hawks are seeking to win the state title for the first time since 2012.

Horizon girls

The Horizon girls basketball team kept their hopes alive for chance to reach the Big Sky District Tournament for the first time since 2012 after winning 34-24 Friday over the Mitchell-Spray Loggers (2-12 Big Sky, 7-16 overall) at Spray High School.

The Hawks (3-11 Big Sky, 6-19) needed another win in their final regular season home game on Senior Night Saturday versus the South Wasco County Red-sides (5-9, 7-16) to stay alive in the playoff race. The Lady Hawks got off to a good start when senior Hannah Lingel sank a free throw to help Horizon take a 7-4 lead after one quarter. The Red-sides took control from that point on though, outscoring the Hawks 48-22 over the final three quarters in pulling away for a 52-29 win.

The three Hawk seniors (Lingel, Trista Hicks, Hannah Kempf) were honored in a special Senior Night presentation. They each received flowers and were accompanied by their parents at midcourt prior to the last game of their career at the Hawks Nest.



Len Hickman is back

Team of the Week
Len Hickman: +183 (837)
Clifford Beat: +107 (707)
Lela Smith: +106 (706)
Gordon Sim: +103 (760)
Spencer Johnisee: +100 (742)

Last week we had some remarkable league action on the friendly boards at Hood River's Orchard Lanes, and when the dust settled a truly eclectic mix of bowlers who shot the most over their averages ended up making our coveted Team of the Week. This particular lineup is particularly special because it's comprised of three new faces who have never made it before.

We have simply run out of adjectives to describe our No. 1 star, Len Hickman. You know him, everybody knows him. Two weeks in a row now the famous Mr. Hickman has topped everybody at the lanes. Like the Energizer Bunny, he just keeps on rolling!

This time he rolled back the clock a few dozen years and, just like some of our young stars, scorched the sticks with a huge scratch 723 series in the high flying Wednesday evening Fraternal league. That stellar effort was a whopping 183 pins over his average! Len just about had a perfect game two weeks ago and last week he was knocking on the door of perfection once again.

He began the session with the first 10 strikes in a row but that eleventh one just

missed and he had to settle for a 288 game this time. Len is clearly the hottest bowler in town right now so who knows, maybe he'll get that perfect next week. This is his fourth appearance on the Team of the Week this season.

Clifford Beat punched the pins silly in the Thursday afternoon senior Lads & Lassies league, where he notched a mighty fine scratch 659 set that was 107 pins over his average, good enough to get the second slot on our vaunted big five. Clifford has been bowling well all season, tossing big scratch 200 games just about every week. This is the first time that he has ever made the Team of the Week, so this is definitely a feather in his cap. Nobody deserves to bask in the limelight more than Clifford, one of our reliable regulars who is with us every week, rain or shine.

The same goes for Lela Smith, who had the pins rocking and rolling in the Lads & Lassies. Another one of our loyal regulars, Lela had a beautiful 191 game and finished up 106 pins over her average for her series to take the third slot on our fab five. For many years now, Lela has been trekking from The Dalles to bowl league with us, so it's really special to see her make the Team of the Week, also for her first time ever!

Gordon Sim is one of our elite bowlers and he proved it once again in the rollicking Tuesday Nite Mixed league, where he tossed a beautiful and lofty scratch 742 set that was highlighted by a strike filled 270 game. Gordon finished up in the session 103 pins over his average. The super smooth right hander with the textbook style and high powered average earns the clean-up spot on our classy crew this week. This is Gordon's fourth appearance on the team of the week this season.

Anchoring this renowned crew is Spencer Johnisee, who had an outstanding outing in the Fraternal where he racked up a nice scratch 234 game and finished his series an even 100 pins over his average. Spencer is another relative newcomer to league bowling in Hood River, so this marks a milestone in his brief career on the maples as this is also his first appearance ever on the Team of the week!

Great bowling everybody!

WRESTLE

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a mental boost and motivates me even more to go out and win another state title."

At 106 pounds, Jones made it to the finals with a first-round bye, a hard-fought 7-6 win in the quarterfinals and a pin in the semifinals. He lost 11-2 in the finals to 5A No. 1 ranked Connor Duhn of Mt. View.

Shaner made it to the 120-pound finals with relative

ease. He won his first two matches by tech-fall (25-7 and 23-8) and won by fall in the semis. In the finals he lost 9-0 to Hermiston's Andy Wagner, last year's state runner-up and currently ranked 5A No. 2.

Manzo finished fourth after pinning his first two opponents in the first round, losing a tough 7-4 battle in the semi-finals, winning 19-6 in the consolation-semis (to secure a trip to state) and losing 4-0 in the third/fourth place match.

Also earning podium finishes were Jessica DeHart

(6th, 106), Dylan Peterson (6th, 126), James Estes (5th, 138), Ian Rand (5th, 160), Jesus Gordian (6th, 160) and Mark Reyes (5th, 195).

Team results

With 17 placers and seven champions, the defending 5A state champion Hermiston Bulldogs won the district team title with 347.5 points. Redmond was a relatively close second with 299 points, followed by Bend with 222.5, HRV with 200.5, Mountain View with 157.5, Summit with 113, Pendleton with 108 and The Dalles with 25.

SWIM

Continued from Page A7

land's 100 freestyle time of 53.50 and Burke's 500 freestyle time of 5:39.21 are both new CRC records.

Highlighting the boys results, Carlos Galvez, David Walker and Trey Schilling all earned individual titles and swam on the winning 200 medley relay team.

In addition to event winners (complete results page A7) qualifying for state, HRV earned three wild-card entries into the meet. The state's top two second-place district finishers in each event earn wild-card entries to state. Walker qualified in the 100 backstroke, Stan Ocheskey qualified in the 100 freestyle and the girls 200 freestyle relay team qualified.

"One of the biggest surprises of the meet came from Trey Schilling; he had an absolutely fantastic race," Ebbert said. Schilling posted a blazing 22.97 time to win the 50 freestyle event and bet-

ter his runner-up district time from last year by more than a full second. Freshman Yasmin Ziada also surprised the competition with a come-from-behind win in the 100 butterfly finals.

"She was in third place going into the final 50 (meters) and won the event in the last 25," Ebbert said. "That was a fantastic race for her. She beat her prelim time by about four seconds."

For several event winners who came as less of a surprise, the focus has been less on simply getting to state and more on how best to compete once they're there.

Last season's state meet brought eight HRV swim-

mers to MHCC, with the lineup of Freeland, Webb, Caitlyn Fick and Danielle Miller finishing third overall and runner up in the 200 medley relay and third in the 200 relay. Webb was also second in the 200 IM and third in the 100 breaststroke and Freeland finished fifth in the 100 and 200 freestyle events. For the HRV boys who made it to state, the appearance alone was a mission accomplished (none made it through the preliminary rounds).

"We're looking for top-three performances for those swimmers," Ebbert said. "For others, just the opportunity to compete at state is a success."

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