



Freeland leads HRV girls; team fourth at state swimming

By ADAM LAPIERRE
News staff writer

Dhani Freeland, Kylie Webb, and two Hood River Valley High School girls relay teams earned final appearances and podium finishes over the weekend at the OSAA 5A state swimming championships at Mt. Hood Community College. With these finishes earning team points toward overall titles, the HRV girls ended up fourth behind Bend (1st, 74 points), Summit (2nd, 72 points) and Mountain View (3rd, 42 points) and just ahead of Sandy (25 points) to round out the top five.



DHANI FREELAND

Friday to qualify for Saturday's finale.

Freeland, a junior, had the best individual results for the Eagles as she blazed her way through the 100 meter freestyle prelims to qualify for the top-six finals the following day, where she finished second in a time of 52.72, just off the pace of first-place finisher Maddy Kelly of Lebanon, who touched the wall at 52.46. Freeland also claimed third in the 100 backstroke with a mark of 59.76.

Webb, a senior, finished fourth in the 200 IM to earn a podium finish in her final meet as an Eagle.

Two of the three HRV girls relay teams also advanced past the pre-

lims and placed in the top five in the finals. The 400 freestyle relay team of Webb, Freeland, Courtney Castaneda and Caitlyn Fick posted a time of 3:44.99, good enough for third place (Summit was first in 3:34.70) and the 200 medley relay team of Freeland, Webb, Fick and Yasmeen Ziada finished fourth overall in 1:55.15 (Bend was first in 1:50.11).

Although the HRV boys put forth a commendable effort, none progressed past the first day of competition. The 200 medley relay team of David Walker, Stan Ocheskey, Carlos Galvez and Trey Schilling was eighth in the prelims and the same four comprised the 400 freestyle relay team, which finished 11th in the prelims but did not earn a top-six position for the finals.

HRV swimming at state championships

Girls team: 1st Bend (74), 2nd Summit (72), 3rd Mountain View (42), 4th Hood River (26), 5th Sandy (25)

100 freestyle: Dhani Freeland, 2nd, 52.72; 100 backstroke: Dhani Freeland, 3rd, 59.76; 400 freestyle relay: 3rd, 3:44.99, Kylie Webb, Courtney Castaneda, Caitlyn Fick and Dhani Freeland; 200 IM: Kylie Webb, 4th, 2:10.89; 200 medley relay: 4th, 1:55.15, Dhani Freeland, Kylie Webb, Yasmeen Ziada and Caitlyn Fick; 100 breaststroke prelims: Kylie Webb, 7th, 1:09.66; 500 freestyle prelims: Allison Burke, 9th, 5:42.39; 200 freestyle prelims: Allison Burke, 11th, 2:08.41; 200 freestyle relay prelims: 11th, 1:48.98, Caitlyn Fick, Allison Burke, Yasmeen Ziada

and Courtney Castaneda; 100 butterfly prelims: Yasmeen Ziada, 12th, 1:05.56

Boys:

200 medley relay prelim: 8th, 1:47.43, David Walker, Stan Ocheskey, Carlos Galvez, Trey Schilling; 50 freestyle prelim: Trey Schilling, 8th, 23.34; 100 freestyle prelims: Stan Ocheskey, 8th, 51.24; 200 freestyle relay prelims: 9th, 1:36.21, Trey Schilling, Andrew Rinella, Carlos Galvez and Stan Ocheskey; 100 backstroke prelims: David Walker, 9th, 58.75; 200 IM prelim: David Walker, 10th, 2:10.93; 400 freestyle relay prelims: 11th, 3:36.80, Trey Schilling, David Walker, Carlos Galvez and Stan Ocheskey; 100 butterfly prelims: Carlos Galvez, 12th, 58.27

Hawks 48, Huskies 47



Hawks win Big Sky

Horizon hosts second-round state playoff game Friday

By MIKE WEBER
For the News

The No. 1 ranked Horizon Christian Hawks boys basketball team won its fifth straight Big Sky Conference title with two district playoff wins over the weekend at Hermiston High School.

Horizon (14-0 Big Sky, 24-3 overall) won 58-23 Friday over the South Wasco County Redside (8-6, 13-12) to advance to Saturday's District 6 championship game against the No. 8 ranked Sherman Huskies (11-3 league, 19-5). In a rugged defensive-oriented battle, Horizon pulled out a 48-47 victory on Nick Andersen's game winning free-throw to capture its fifth straight district championship.

Horizon, guided by coach Darrin Lingel, will now host an OSAA 1A second round state playoff game Friday at 6 p.m. against a yet to be determined opponent. As district champions, Horizon earned a bye in the 16-team first round playoff bracket, which included eight games on Tuesday. If the Hawks win Friday, they'll qualify for the state tournament March 4-7 at Baker High School for a fifth consecutive year and they would play a 1:30 p.m. quarterfinal contest on March 4.

NICK ANDERSEN had a team-high 15 points in Saturday's win over Sherman.



"It was a really good game against Sherman," said Lingel, who is hoping to guide the Hawks to their second state championship. "They did some things defensively that took some things away from us, which really made it a tough challenge. Sherman made some second half adjustments and they switched their defense on almost every one of our offensive possessions in the second half. It was a good strategy, because we couldn't really get into any type of offensive rhythm, but the kids battled hard to help us be successful at the end of the game."

It was a seesaw contest versus Sherman, with seven tie scores and 18 lead changes. Sherman led 18-10 after one quarter. The resilient Hawks came back with a strong second, outscoring the Huskies 21-13 to forge a halftime deadlock

at 31-31. Horizon was clinging to a one point lead after three at 40-39 in the tight, high-intensity defensive battle.

"All our guys stepped up and played very well offensively and defensively, particularly Wes Johnston (five points), RJ Hicks (four pts.) and Andersen (season-high 15 pts.)," said Lingel. "Nick actually won the game for us by sinking the game-winning free throw."

With .06 seconds in the game, Andersen found himself on the line; he missed the first free-throw then, after a Sherman time-out, came through in the clutch to make the second.

Sherman senior guard Ryan Aldrich played a solid game with 11 points and six assists. Jared Davis had five points and Mason Bloomster scored seven points and had a team-high nine rebounds. The 48 points marked the lowest total scored in a game this year by the Hawks, who have the fifth ranked offense with an average of 61.9 points per game.

In a one-sided matchup versus South Wasco on Friday, Horizon dominated the contest from start-to-finish with one of their strongest defensive efforts this year. Horizon jumped in front



Photos by Jeremy Lanthorn

CELEBRATION: (Top) Jared Davis is hoisted in the air by his brother, Logan, on Saturday after Horizon defeated Sherman in a thrilling one-point victory to win the Big Sky title. Above, Mason Bloomster gets a rejection over a Sherman player as teammates Wes Johnston and Nick Andersen look on.

early with a 14-5 lead after one quarter and continued leading 21-15 at halftime.

The Hawks were phenomenal on offense and defense in the second half, while outscoring the Redside 15-3 in the third and 22-5 in the fourth to pull away for a lopsided victory. South Wasco's 23 points was the second lowest total allowed this

year by Horizon. The Hawks shot a sizzling 60.5 percent (23-for-38) in two-point field goals. Davis led Horizon with 21 points and Bloomster had a strong performance with his double-double of 15 points and 13 rebounds.

The two district playoff wins extended Horizon's Big Sky streak to 49 games com-

bined over the last four seasons. It marked Horizon's 18th consecutive win over Class 1A teams as they remained undefeated at the 1A level.

Friday's playoff game at the Hawks Nest will mark the final home game for seniors Davis, Bloomster, Johnston, Aldrich, Hicks and Andersen.

HRVST brings home state hardware

Hood River Valley Swimming Team members Marina Castaneda, Michelle Graves, Shea Kasenga and Thea Smith brought home a trove of medals over the weekend from the 10 and Under Oregon Swimming Championships in Corvallis.

The four posted personal best times in all but one swim and finished with top-five finishes in six of 12 total events swam. Highlighting the results is Shea Kasenga, who was third in the 50 breast stroke and fifth in the 100 breast stroke; times in

both were Age Group Regional qualifying times. Graves also posted two third place finishes while competing in a full-schedule of six events.

Results are as follows

Marina Castaneda (9): 50 breast, 4th (43.0); 100 breast, 5th (1:34.94); Michelle Graves (8): 50 breast, 3rd (48.07); 50 butterfly, 7th (42.39); 50 back 6th (43.0); 100 IM, 6th (1:32.40); 50 freestyle, 10th (37.22); 25 breast stroke, 3rd (22.49); Shea Kasenga (10): 50 breast stroke, 3rd (39.11); 100 breast stroke, 5th (1:26.27); Thea Smith (10): 200 freestyle, 9th (2:34.24); 100 freestyle, 14th (1:12.06)



Submitted photo.

HRVST AT STATE: Shea Kasenga, Michelle Graves, coach MJ Caswell, Marina Castaneda, Thea Smith.

Truax headed to U18 Nationals



Submitted photo

ELLE TRUAX will represent Hood River and the Cooper Spur Race Team at the U18 U.S. National Skiing Championships next month.

Hood River Valley High School senior and Cooper Spur Race Team alumni Elle Truax qualified for next month's U18 U.S. National Skiing Championships in Copper Mountain, Colo. Truax will be racing in the speed events of Super G and Downhill.

Truax's racing career began more than ten years ago at CSRT's Christmas Camp. She worked her way up through the USAA ranks with the help of the program and its committed coaches, parents and local businesses. She will be racing at Nationals with the Mount Bachelor Sports & Education Foundation (MBSEF) team and racing against the top 16- and 17-year-olds from across the country. Each year regional qualifier races are held to determine the top racers of each discipline and age division. The top from each region meet at Nationals to determine the best of the best.