



Photos by Ben Mitchell

HRV TRACK AND FIELD had a banner day Friday, with both the boys and girls teams handily taking first place in the Blossom Invitational in Hood River. Nice weather and good efforts produced a number of standout performances from Eagle athletes. At left, Jestena Mattson cruises to a win in the 100 meter dash; at right, Parker Irusta soars through the air on his way to a first-place finish in long jump.

HRV rolls opponents at Blossom Invite

Eagles boys and girls teams take first overall thanks to some stellar performances

By **BEN MITCHELL**
News staff writer

Like blossoms in the valley orchards this year, the athletes of Hood River Valley's track and field team are blooming early: posting top marks in the conference and the state, breaking school records, and winning meets in preparation for the district and state meets that are still about a month away.

It was no different on Friday at the Blossom Invitational in Hood River, back for the second time since its hiatus. Spurred on by sunny skies, calm winds (especially for Hood River), and unseasonably warm temperatures, the Eagles had one of their best efforts of the season, defending their home track and taking first overall in both boys and girls events.

"Friday's meet went really well for HRV," said coach Donnie Herneisen. "It's always nice when you can win an invitational meet, especially when you're winning at home. For many of our seniors, that's a great way to complete your last home competition. The weather definitely was a big factor in us putting up some season best marks."

The boys team had the highest score out of any team in the meet — boys or girls — putting up 148 points and several lengths out in front of the next-best team: Columbia River Conference (CRC) rival Pendleton, who scored 103. The girls team, with 138 points, also enjoyed a sizable lead over second-place finisher Estacada, who scored 109.5. CRC opponent Pendleton finished sixth with 83 points.

The highlights of the meet were many for the boys squad, but

junior Parker Kennedy may have had the flashiest performance on the reel, cresting 15 feet in the pole vault, good for a personal best, No. 1 in the CRC, No. 1 in 5A, and No. 2 in the entire state. Teammate Patrick Crompton got second in the event with a try of 13-6.

Kennedy also won the 110 meter hurdles with a time of 15.74 seconds, which was his best in the season and the fastest in the CRC, and placed third in the 200 with a time of 23.64.

Thrower standout Sebastian Barajas continues to be on top of his game, throwing 177-08 in the discus and 50-0.5 in the shot (HRV's Sam Fults close behind in second with a throw of 49-9.25), both good for first in the meet. Barajas is fourth out of all athletes in the state in the shot put, and in discus, nobody in the state of Oregon (in high school) has thrown farther than him this season.

Herneisen also praised the distance medley relay (DMR) team of Connor Truax, Parker Irusta, Jesse Wiley, and Justin Crosswhite who broke the school record in the event by 10 seconds with a combined time of 11:20.17. Irusta also placed first in the 200 (23.39) and long jump (20-6). Herneisen also complemented Ty Stintzi's efforts, setting PRs in both the 100 meters (11.65, 3rd) and high jump (6-0, 2nd).

"Overall, our boys team is really starting to demonstrate some depth across all events, especially with our younger guys," Herneisen said. "Our junior class boys are really the meat and

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Oregon Trail Rally returns to the Gorge this weekend

The third round of Rally America National Championship comes to the Gorge April 25-26, where rally car drivers will compete in the annual Oregon Trail Rally, held in Hood River and Wasco County.

Top drivers in several classes of competition vehicles will come from across the U.S. and the world to drive on what race organizers regard as some of the best rally roads in America.

The Oregon Trail Rally is known as one of the toughest tests for rally racing teams as they take on the challenging Northwest forestry roads. Sixty teams are expected to compete at this year's Oregon Trail Rally, making it the largest assembly of rally cars in the nation for this year's Rally America National Championship. The event is also the kick-off event for the Northwest Regional Rally Championship as over 32 local OR & WA teams vie for Championship honors.

For an eighth consecutive year, the Oregon Trail Rally will return to Columbia

River Gorge region. Oregon Trail Rally Chairman Doug Heredos is excited about returning to this scenic area of the state.

"Each year we continue to grow and improve our event, making it a competitor and fan favorite while providing an economic benefit to the local community," he said. "We want to thank the residents and county

officials in Hood River and Wasco Counties for their continued support for our rally event."

After the Portland International Raceway stages on Friday, the event moves east towards Dufur on Saturday and the east side of Hood River County on Sunday, where teams will experience the much faster roads and then the very technical gravel sections. With 18 competition stages and over 115 miles of competition roads, the Oregon Trail Rally will test teams to the limit.

On Saturday, from 7-9 p.m., the Fourth Street in Hood River will be the backdrop for the Double Mountain Block Party with an outdoor beer garden, food and a live band.

With several hundred fans in the area to watch the competition stages that day, event organizers wanted to provide the public with the opportunity to "meet and greet" the national competitors and view their cars at the Double Mountain Brewery and Taproom.

Race organizers advise that there are no



Photo by Aaron Kathman

THE CAR of Subaru Rally Team USA members David Higgins (driver) and Craig Drew (co-driver) take a hairpin turn on Huskey Road south of Mosier on their way to winning last year's event.

"on-stage" viewing opportunities for spectators during the race this year in Hood River County; those who want to see the cars in action will be able to do so in Dufur on Saturday. However, Lot 1 at the Port of Hood River will be used as the event's service park all day Sunday, where spectators can come check out the cars and visit with the teams. Competition stages start at 10 a.m. on Saturday and 9 a.m. on Sunday. For more info, go to oregonrally.com.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Girls lax drops final nonleague game

After winning their previous two games, the HRV girls lax team lost to Westview in Hood River by a score of 13-5, in what was called "a frustrating game" by coach Andrew McElderry. "We definitely didn't give Westview the game they were hoping for, and we all agreed that we didn't play the game we are capable of playing," he said. Despite outshooting Westview, the Eagles couldn't connect on the majority of their 17 shots. Erin Mayer led the team in goals and ground balls, with two and six, respectively. Lydia McElderry led the team in assists along with Riley Bauer (2) and added a goal. Savanna Boersma and Lauren Trumbull rounded out scoring for HRV with a goal apiece. Goalie Ella Rand made eight saves on 18 shots (44 percent). After facing Lincoln on Tuesday, the Eagles play Grant in a 7:30 p.m. away game on Thursday.

HRMGA par 3 tournament results

The Hood River Men's Golf Association held a par 3 golf tournament at the Hood River Golf Course and Country Club on April 19. Tournament directors were Bud Harris and Doug Massingal. Almost every golfer won a prize or place money. The first-place winner was Denver Mason; there was a four-way tie for second. The individuals involved were Gary Sollman, Bill DeBorde, Tim Wingerd and Leonard Hickman. Sixth place was won by Jim Franks, while George Smith took home seventh. The tournament was an 18-hole event with golfers hitting from places that they had rarely seen. Most holes had a prize for KP and Long Putt. This ensured that everyone had a chance, even if they did not win the tournament. HRMGA wanted to thank all of the businesses that sponsored any part of the tournament. HRMGA will hold another tournament in May; interested individuals should check at the club house for times and dates for tournaments.

Boys tennis splits in Saturday matches

The HRV boys tennis team headed to the Oregon Episcopal School in Portland on Saturday, where they beat Philomath, 6-2, but lost to OES, 5-3. Against Philomath, HRV swept the singles matches. Scottie Ziegner handily won his sets, 6-1, 6-1, and the other matches went to three sets, including wins from Cooper Holzman (4-6, 6-4, 6-2), Cole Shepherd (6-2, 3-6, 6-3), and Alden Sova (6-7 [2], 6-0, 6-1). In doubles, Jorge Calderon and Hugo Sandoval won in the No. 3 slot (6-4, 6-2) and the No. 4 team of Jonathan Hale and Sawyer Bogard won their matches as well (6-3, 6-0). Against OES, Holzman won a nail-biter in No. 2 singles competition (6-4, 2-6, 6-2) and Sova won his match in the No. 4 spot (6-2, 6-3). The lone winner for HRV in doubles came from Hale and Bogard, who won a tight one in three sets (6-2, 4-6, 6-1). HRV has a busy week, this week, which after facing Wilson on Monday, faces Pendleton on Wednesday and head to the Sandy Tournament on Saturday.

Oregon Gorge Freestyle Wrestling results

Saturday, was the Oregon Gorge Freestyle Wrestling Championships hosted at HRVHS. Wrestlers are put into brackets separated by weight and age, with 21 brackets at the tournament. Pictured below are: Back row: coach Juan Hernandez, Max Lane (2nd), coach Robert



Frasier, Jordan Jones (2nd), Justin Wilson (3rd), Dylan Castilla (3rd), Clay Bispham (1st). Front Row: Sarah Sul-lenger (1st), Joanne Endow (2nd), Jason Shaner (1st), Dylan Peterson (1st). Not pictured: Tristan Keely (2nd).

Softball drops both frames of doubleheader

HRV softball (7-9 overall, 0-2 CRC) did not get the start it was looking for in league competition, dropping both frames of a doubleheader at Pendleton on Saturday afternoon. The Eagles were shut out in the first game, while the Buckaroos put up nine runs. In the second game, HRV lost 15-2 after the mercy rule ended the contest in the top of the fifth inning. HRV was able to put up six hits in each game. Jenni Packer lead the Eagles with two hits in the first game, and Zoe Munn led with two in the second game, and also scored once and tallied an RBI. Jessica DeHart scored the other run for HRV and JoJo Karr had the team's other RBI. On the mound, Kaylin Winans had the loss in the first game and Hannah McNeerney was charged with the loss in the second. HRV had a chance for revenge against the Buckaroos during a Tuesday afternoon game in Hood River (results not available as of press time), and then will host a doubleheader against Hermiston (6-9 overall, 0-2 CRC) Saturday at noon.

Baseball team splits Pendleton doubleheader

The HRV baseball team (9-6 overall, 1-1 CRC) nearly came away with both wins of a doubleheader in Pendleton on Saturday, but succumbed to a late rally by the Buckaroos in the second game, to lose 9-8 after winning the first game 5-1. In the first game, Pendleton never led, thanks due in large part to Ryan Ward's stingy pitching, giving up a mere three hits and striking out 13 batters in seven innings. HRV had six hits in the game, all singles, led by Adam Cameron (2-2) and Dallas Buckley (2-4). Cameron and Ward each had an RBI and were joined by Patrick Harvey, who also scored for HRV. Kam Walker scored two runs, and Dallas Buckley and Chase Lariza rounded out scoring for the Eagles with one apiece. In the second game, HRV had an 8-5 lead in the bottom of the six when the Buckaroos erupted for four runs to take the lead, which HRV was ultimately unable to regain. Skyler Hunter led the team with hits (3) and runs (3) and Kellan Duffy led with three RBI and had a home run. Lariza, Walker, Duffy, Ward, and Willie Ishizaka all scored once for HRV. Harvey and Walker both pitched for HRV, collectively striking out eight batters and giving up as many hits. The Eagles have the same exact schedule next week as the softball team; see above sports brief entry for the schedule.



Photos by Mike Weber

OPENING DAY!

Little League opening day in the valley was this past Saturday, with opening ceremonies taking place at the HRVHS baseball field. At left, Forest Lawson bats during the Hit-A-Thon fundraiser; at center, Chuck Johnsee, who threw out the opening pitch; and at right, teams wave to the crowd while parading around the diamond. This year's group boasts 29 teams of 326 players, including four boys majors teams, according to Hood River Valley Little League Vice President Eric Foster. President Sean Spellecy and board members Nathan Duckwall and Nathan Stanton, along with numerous parents labored extra hard to make sure fields were in tip-top condition, Foster said. Other improvements include a new scoreboard and fence at the Odell fields, and new roofs and bleachers in Parkdale. Foster wanted to thank corporate sponsors Your Rental Center and Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital for helping making the new season a success.