



Track and field titles defended



Photos by Brett Requa

HRV'S Sebastian Barajas makes an attempt at the discus on Friday during the OSAA 5A State Championship Meet, while Jestena Mattson qualifies during the prelims of the 200-meter dash. Both successfully defended their titles: Barajas in discus; Mattson in the 100 and 200.

Barajas repeats as discus champ, Mattson wins 100 and 200; HRV fourth overall

By **BEN MITCHELL**
News staff writer

Going into last week's OSAA 5A Track and Field State Championships in Eugene, HRV thrower Sebastian Barajas and HRV sprinter Jestena Mattson were the athletes to beat, defending titles in the discus and in the 100-meter and 200-meter dashes, respectively.

But nobody could beat Mattson, nor Barajas in those events. For the second year in a row, Mattson won both the 100 and 200 and Barajas took the discus title for the third consecutive year, helping both the boys and girls teams to a fourth-place overall finish at Hayward Field at the University of Oregon campus.

It was the best combined finish the team has ever had, according to coach Donnie Herneisen. The girls team placed third in 1991 and second in 1993, but the boys team has never placed better than seventh. The best combo finish the teams ever had was seventh place back in 1994. This year, HRV had one of the more well-rounded teams at the meet.

"Hood River, along with Grant (6A) and Jesuit (6A), were the only schools in the 4A-5A-

6A divisions to place both boys and girls teams in the top four trophy places at state," Herneisen noted. "I think that says quite a bit about where our program was at this year."

The meet brought a fitting end to Mattson's career, an athlete whom Herneisen believed was "the most decorated track and field athlete to ever come through Hood River Valley High," claiming six individual state titles and three second-place finishes in her four years. The senior's time of 11.86 seconds in the 100 was the second-fastest time of any classification in an Oregon state championship dating back to at least 1990, according to Herneisen. To boot, her times in the 100 and 200 (24.51) were new school records and Mattson scored more points than any other 5A female athlete in the meet.

"She bettered her 100-meter and 200-meter — school records — and ran faster than all the girls in the other classifications, in both races," Herneisen said. "That's pretty amazing."

For Mattson, the only "disappointing thing" that happened was her 5 feet, 2 inch result in the high jump, which put her in sec-

HRV FINAL RESULTS	
Boys: 200 meters: Parker Irusta, 7th, 22.94. 1500 meters: Justin Crosswhite, 10th, 4:12.56. 3000 meters: Justin Crosswhite, 7th, 9:04.16; Quinn Fetkenhour, 11th; 9:26.76. 4x100 relay: Gabriel Campos-Davis, Tyrone Stintzi, Parker Kennedy, Irusta; 8th; 44.03. Shot put: Sebastian Barajas, 2nd 53-02.5. Discus: Barajas, 1st, 175-07. High jump: Stintzi, 3rd, 6-02. Pole vault: Kennedy, 3rd, 14-0; Patrick Crompton, 4th, 14-0. Long jump: Irusta, 5th, 20-04.	
Girls: 100 meters: Jestena Mattson, 1st, 11.86 (SR). 200 meters: Mattson, 1st, 24.51 (SR). 400 meters: Emily Viuhkola, 2nd, 57.32 (SR). 800 meters: Viuhkola, 2nd, 2:20.01. 1500 meters: Lauren Robinson, 12th, 5:05.75. 3000 meters: Robinson, 12th, 11:03.25. 4x400 meter relay: Mattson, Caitlyn Fick, Audrey Marble, Viuhkola; 5th; 4:05.28. High jump: Mattson, 2nd, 5-02.	

ond. The winning jump of 5-04 was three inches below Mattson's best jump this year.

"She was heavily favored, but that happened on Friday, when nobody was really competing well," Herneisen explained. "And if getting second place felt like a disaster, that's a pretty good weekend."

Another key contributor for the girls was senior Emily Viuhkola, who took second in the 400, setting a school record with her time of 57.32. Just an hour later, Viuhkola entered only her fourth 800-meter race ever and set a

personal best with a time of 2:20.01, which was good for second. An hour after that, Viuhkola anchored the 4x400 relay, running with Mattson, freshman Audrey Marble, and senior Caitlyn Fick, who guided the team to a surprise fifth-place finish with a time of 4:05.28.

"Viuhkola had a dream season and I couldn't be more proud of her," Herneisen said.

On the boys' side, Barajas took second in

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Hawks end breakout season with historic finish at state meet

Salvador Ramirez takes the 1500, Hannah Kempf wins triple jump for school's first-ever individual state titles



Photos by Brett Requa

SALVADOR RAMIREZ (bib No. 921) clasps his hands in thanks after winning the 1500. At right Hannah Kempf makes an attempt at the triple jump.



Hannah Kempf and Salvador Ramirez inked their names into the Horizon Christian School history book Friday, when they won the school's first individual state championships — in any sport.

Kempf, a multi-event track and field performer who was on Horizon's inaugural team four years ago, won the Class 1A triple jump at the OSAA state meet at historic Hayward Field in Eugene. It was a busy day for Kempf, who finished second in the 200 meters, third in the 100 high hurdles (17.42 seconds) and anchored the Hawk 4x400 relay team to eighth place. Kempf scored 24 of her team's 28 points, leading Horizon to ninth overall.

Ramirez, a junior, ran a personal best 4 minutes, 16.1 seconds to take the top spot in the 1500. He later finished fourth in the 800 in another personal best, 2:04.11, helping Horizon to eighth place as a team with 27 points.

Ramirez, who finished fifth in the 1500 at state as a sophomore, said he nixed his pre-race strategy of waiting until the final 200 to unleash his finishing kick.

"I was thinking, 'It's now or never,'" he said, as he heard the bell ring to mark the final lap.

Ramirez surged into the lead and quickly built a 12-meter margin as he rounded the corner with 300 meters remaining. St. Stephen's Academy's Brandt Bergeron, who later would win the 800, and Aaron Lane of Southwest Christian, responded to Ramirez's spurt, but they couldn't close the gap. Bergeron was second in 4:18.76 and Lane third in 4:19.98.

Kempf's win was equally as dramatic, as she went toe-to-toe

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St. Helens' pitching ends Eagles' season with a shutout in play-in game

By **MIKE WEBER**
For the News

The Hood River Valley Eagles faced the second-best defensive team along with one of the best pitchers in the state in a Class 5A softball play-in contest versus the St. Helens Lions. Despite having the role as underdog though in Friday's road matchup at St. Helens, the Eagles hung in there, played tough and had a chance for a possible upset win late in the game.

The No. 20-ranked Eagles (11-16) trailed the eighth-ranked Lions just 1-0 going into the bottom of the sixth inning. The Lions (18-8) came out roaring late in the contest and took control with a four-run rally to go up 5-0 after six.

It certainly proved to be just too much to overcome for the Eagles, as the game concluded in a 5-0 Lions victory, while bringing an end to the Eagle season. HRV was hoping to advance to the state playoffs for the fifth time in the last six years, but the Lions doused the Eagles' playoff hopes.

"They have probably one of the best pitchers in the state," said coach Eric Keller of St. Helens' Mariah Mulcahy. "We prepared as

well as we could, but we just couldn't string together some hits that we needed to. We had baserunners and opportunities to score in the first, second, fifth, and sixth innings. We had chances to score, but we just couldn't get any clutch hits."

The shutout was the eighth one for St. Helens this year. The Lions, the third place team from the tough Northwest Oregon Conference, have allowed just 57 runs (2.19 runs allowed average) scored this season.

It was a pitcher's duel for most of the game as HRV's Hannah McNerney was strong in the circle while she helped hold the Lions scoreless for the first two innings. St. Helens scored a run in the third, aided by an Eagle error, to go up 1-0. The Eagles were just unable to get anything going offensively against Mulcahy, who hurled a two-hitter and had a whopping total of 17 strikeouts.

Following a scoreless fourth, HRV actually

had a chance to tie and even take the lead with two fifth-inning baserunners. McNerney singled and Kaylin Winans drew a walk, but the Eagles were unable to get a clutch hit to drive the runners home as it remained a 1-0 Lion lead.

After holding the Lions scoreless in the bottom half of the fifth, HRV again had a chance. Kelsey Wells drew a walk and represented the potential

tying run in the top of the sixth, but she was left stranded as the Eagle offense was unfortunately stymied by Mulcahy. Winans (1-for-2) and McNerney (1-for-3) were the only Eagles to get a hit. The two Eagle hits was a season low for HRV.

St. Helens capitalized on Eagle mistakes (hit batter, two errors) in the bottom of the sixth inning to extend its lead to 5-0 to get the win. The Eagles again were unable to produce any offense in the top of the seventh at the conclusion of the game.

"I'm incredibly proud of the team," said Keller. "We battled through an incredible amount of adversity, such as minor injuries to a few players. The kids came to practice every day and they were ready to become a better team. Their talent and improvement was evident all season it was nice that we had some success this year."

McNerney, a freshman, had a solid performance in the pitching circle while allowing six hits and striking out two batters. The contest marked the final game of their HRV High School career for seniors Jessica DeHart, Taylor Shelton, Jenni Packer, JoJo Karr, Jessie Karr, Breanna Weekly and Wells.

"The seniors showed tremendous leadership and they brought this team together through their leadership ability by helping everyone play their best all year," said Keller. "We put ourselves in position every game to have a chance to win. We worked hard and improved all year and our goal was to reach the state tournament, but we just fell one game short."

'We prepared as well as we could, but we just couldn't string together some hits that we needed to.'

ERIC KELLER