

HEPPNER

Boomers stall Mustangs

Toledo runs clock, holds off Heppner in fourth quarter

By MATT ENTRUP
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Toledo Boomers completely abandoned their offense in the fourth quarter, but still managed to pull away from the Heppner Mustangs for a 49-41 win in the 2A boys basketball state semifinals on Friday night at Pendleton Convention Center.

Holding a three-point lead entering the final stanza, the Boomers attempted only one field goal over the last eight minutes.

The attempt didn't even register in the statistics, though, as Toledo's David Ammons was fouled going to the rim and converted one of two free throws to push the lead to 38-33 with 6:26 to play.

From there the Boomers didn't even think about shooting, passing up open lanes to the rim at every opportunity. "If you've seen us throughout the year we're run and gun," said first-year Toledo coach Eddie Townsend. "We're really a carbon copy of (finals opponent) Irrigon, but since the summer I knew there was going to be games where (stalling) was a good tactic. "If we have three-point lead, and you can burn two minutes then that's like a 10-point or a 12-point lead, so we've worked on it in summer and during the season, and it's something we can go to. Some people weren't very happy with it, they came to see something more, but Irrigon wins by 60, we win by whatever, we're in the same game."

Heppner didn't force Toledo's hand, and didn't start fouling until 4:22 remained on the clock. "At first I was OK with it," Heppner coach Jeremy Rosenbalm said. "For the first couple minutes I wanted to let my guys take a break, but we did what we thought was best. We didn't want to foul any earlier, obviously they shot free throws extremely well down the stretch. We didn't want to extend the game any longer than we did."

Heppner started the fourth quarter 0-for-5 from the field, and didn't add points to their tally until Logan Grieb sank a short jumper at the 1:00 mark. That brought the score to 43-35, and after two made bonus shots by Toldeo's Isaiah Marchant, Jesse Corbin hit a three-pointer with 48 seconds left that made it 45-38.

But that was as close as Heppner would come, and Marchant and Ammons each converted free throws to ice the win. Toledo was 12 for 14 from the charity stripe in the fourth quarter, and Marchant finished with a game-high 22 points while Ammons added a double-double with 13 points, 12 rebounds. "We did get some stops in the fourth quarter but we missed a lot of easy ones (shots)," Rosenbalm said. "We didn't shoot the ball well from the free-throw line and we missed a lot of easy ones down low that we normally capitalize on. "It was kind of disappointing because I felt like it was at our fingertips and it could have gone a little differently. But the kids fought and that's all I can ask for. We gave it everything we've got, just give credit to Toledo, they made a few more plays down the stretch than we did."

Heppner had pulled within one point in the third quarter thanks in part to an energy infusion from guard C.J. Kindle, who missed much of the first half in foul trouble. "At halftime I told him,



Heppner's Patrick Collins (15) blocks Kyle Otis (44), of Toledo, during Friday's semifinal OSAA 2A Boys State Championships game at the Pendleton Convention Center.

"Once we get a defensive stop we need to get out and run, and we did that and got ourselves right back in it," Rosenbalm said of Kindle, who finished with seven points, three assists. "Moose is extremely athletic, he's quick and he does push the ball well, and if we could get out and run I thought it would work well for us."

Kindle got the Mustangs moving and Patrick Collins was often on the other end of his passes as he scored nine of his team-high 11 points in the third quarter. His inside bucket with 2:10 left in the third pulled Heppner within 30-29, and the teams traded buckets the rest of the quarter to head into the fourth at 36-33.

Heppner led 12-9 after one quarter, but quick baskets by Kyle Otis and Ryan Otis gave the Boomers the lead for good. The win advances Toledo into the state championship for the second time in school history, the last was in 1985 when they were runner-up. There they'll face defending state champion Irrigon, which beat them 76-73 in double overtime on Jan. 3 — also on a neutral court — and is making its third-

straight finals appearance. "I have nothing but utmost respect for (Irrigon)," Townsend said. "I think it's going to be a game people are going to want to come and see."

Heppner will get the chance to go out on a win as well, and faces Regis at 3:15 p.m. in the third-place game. It's the farthest a Heppner boys basketball team has ever advanced in the state tournament. "I told them they have a great opportunity to go out there and bring that third place trophy to Heppner," Rosenbalm said. "They're disappointed, but there's no reason for them to hang their head. They need to be proud, they just fought and battled with a great basketball team, and I told them when they leave the locker room their mind needs to be off that one and on to what we need to do (Saturday) afternoon against Regis."

TOLEDO 49, HEPPNER 41
HHS (19-6) 12 5 16 8 — 41
THS (24-4) 9 15 12 13 — 49
HEPPNER — Patrick Collins 11, C. Kindle 7, W. Putman 6, R. Cutsforth 6, L. Grieb 5, J. Corbin 3, C. Hedman 3, K. Murray, 17-43 FG
TOLEDO — Isaiah Marchant 22, D. Ammons 13, J. Cross 8, K. Otis 4, R. Otis 2, T. Stam, C. Rodda, K. Rhymer, 15-37 FG
3-point field goals — HHS 5-18, THS 3-9. Free throws — HHS 2-8, THS 16-18. Fouls — HHS 15, THS 7. Fouled out — none. Technical fouls — none.

at 55 percent (72 of 131) in 2011, and Irrigon enters the final game shooting 55.8 percent (48 of 86). But Rice said it's the 32.2 percent they're limiting opponents to that really gets the team going. "We're not really focused on how many points we score. We never really talk about offense," he said. "In the locker room it's defense, defense, defense."

Blake Minten led Regis with 12 points, but was limited to two after halftime. So far, the Knights have easily been the most well-rounded team in the final bracket. And while they may not be a perfect team, Regis coach Tony Miller said it will take near-flawless performance to stop them.

"They're just an amazing team on both sides of the ball and you've got to come and play nearly a perfect game," he said. "In order to (beat them) a team is going to have to make a solid commitment to defense. A team's got to be ready to stop five players, and if a team can figure that out, good for them but tonight we obviously we couldn't. ... They're just a machine."

Irrigon faces the winner of No. 3 Heppner and No. 2 Toledo in the championship game at 8:30 p.m. today at Pendleton Convention Center. Regis faces the loser in the third-place game at 3:15 p.m.

IRRIGON 74, REGIS 43
RHS (21-7) 10 13 9 11 — 43
IHS (26-1) 21 23 19 11 — 74
REGIS — Blake Minten 12, W. Kuddell 8, B. Woodcock 6, B. Piets 4, S. Nieslanik 4, G. Brown 3, A. Guzman 2, J. Woodcock 2, A. Rice 7, H. White 7, R. Reynolds 2, N. Verley, O. Romero, 26-43 FG, 14-43 FG
IRRIGON — Anthony Landeros 15, Z. Rice 14, A. Romero 12, F. Vera 9, A. Timpy 8, A. Rice 7, H. White 7, R. Reynolds 2, N. Verley, O. Romero, 26-43 FG
3-point field goals — RHS 5-15, IHS 11-21. Free throws — RHS 10-14, IHS 11-15. Fouls — RHS 13, IHS 15. Fouled out — none. Technical fouls — none.



Irrigon's Ryan Reynolds goes for a rebound contested by Regis' Blake Minten in the Knights' 74-43 win against the Rams on Friday in Pendleton.

IRRIGON: Knights take more pride in D

Continued from 1B

tended their lead to 44-23 by halftime.

Reigning 2A Player of the Year Adrian Romero scored nine of his 12 points in the second quarter, but subs A.J. Timpy and Hayden White combined for seven points in the frame and Austin Rice nailed a three-pointer at the buzzer that brought the crowd to its feet headed into the break.

Both sophomores, Rice didn't even get into the quarterfinals win, and White didn't attempt a shot. They combined to go 5-for-5 from the field Friday and each finished with seven points. "That was great because it showed we have a lot of depth," Zach Rice said. "Sometimes we don't always have to use it, and sometimes I think people mistake that as they're not able to play."

Rice's comments extended to junior Nate Verley as well, who despite not taking a shot put in 17 minutes of strong defense to help limit Regis to 32.6-percent shooting a day after the Rams had connected at a 44.4-percent clip to edge Oakridge 80-78 in double overtime.

"Those players work really hard at practice every day," Thompson said. "They're ready to go. It's a long season and you need everybody. "We wouldn't put them out there with the wolves if they didn't have a little bit of wolf in them."

After shooting 51.2 percent from the field against Burns, Irrigon is on pace to break the modern-era record for shooting percentage in a tour with a similar performance in the championship. Central Linn set the record

NIXYAAWII: Melton goes off for Eagles

Continued from 1B

The Golden Eagles scored the first three times down court, capping a 7-0 start with a Fredy Campos 3-pointer. An Ira Ashley old-fashioned three-point play helped push the lead to 12-2 and Nixyaawii ended the first period with a strong lead.

The Golden Eagles offense just got better. After holding a 28-15 halftime edge, Nixyaawii made 11-of-20 second half field goals to put to bed any thought of a Horizon Christian rally. The win marks the fifth in six games at Baker High School.

"It also feels like after playing districts there the team is starting to get more comfortable in that gym which is leading to better shooting as tournament progresses," Rivera said.

Junior Hunter Melton blew up the stat sheet. He finished with 20 points, six steals, five assists and four rebounds. Elijah Bevis and Ti-yapo Farrow chipped in with 12 and 11 points respectively.

Tip for Saturday's state final between Nixyaawii and Country Christian is set for 8:30 p.m.

NIXYAAWII 65, HORIZON CHRISTIAN 47
NIX 12 16 16 21 — 65
HC 6 9 13 19 — 47
NIXYAAWII — T. Farrow 11, I. Ashley 9, Hunter Melton 20, F. Campos 8, E. Bevis 12, A. Cronoa 2, D. Kipp 0, H. McKay 3, L. Lewis 0, C. Case 0.
HORIZON CHRISTIAN — Jared Davis 14, W. Johnston 1, M. Bloomster 13, R. Aldrich 3, N. Anderson 13, Z. Walker 0, L. Holste 0, R. Hicks 3, J. Bryan 0.
3-point field goals — NIX 5, HC 4. Free throws — NIX 18-31, HC 9-21. Fouls — NIX 20, HC 23. Fouled out — F. Campos 20, M. Bloomster (HC).

BUCKS: Pendleton hoping to mix business with pleasure

Continued from 1B

ical team we've played," Smith said.

While the Spartans made Persinger's life difficult in the paint, Lasswell bombed in three after three in the second half. His perimeter barrage earned Corvallis a six-point lead midway through the third quarter and forced the Bucks to scrap the 2-3 zone and move to man-to-man defense.

Corvallis led by two baskets with 5:11 left, but Persinger scored back-to-back buckets, including an and-one putback of a prior miss to give PHS its first lead in over 12 minutes at 55-54 with 4:08 remaining.

Lasswell drained his final triple the next time down and then Buckaroo defense dug in to close out the quarter's for the remainder. "We just kept telling ourselves 'we can't lose, we're not going to lose,'" Persinger said.

Gaining entrance to the state's final site is ahead of schedule of where Broadus thought the program would be in his first year. "I didn't expect it to happen this quick," he said. "I expected to come in and we'd be about

.500. It usually takes two or three years to get going. The kids have really gotten better."

Persinger scored 15 points and grabbed 10 rebounds. James Bratt added 11 points. Quinn filled the stat sheet with eight points, six rebounds and six assists.

Lasswell finished with 20 points in the loss for the Spartans. As the nine-seed in the bracket, the Bucks draw the tough task of ousting top-seed Mountain View in their first game at Gill Coliseum. The Cougars have been the classification's top team for over two months.

"I told the kids we're going to have fun, we're going to make memories, but it's a business trip," Broadus said.

The Bucks and Mountain View will play in Corvallis at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

PENDLETON 63, CORVALLIS 57
COR 11 13 22 11 — 57
PEN 14 14 16 19 — 63
CORVALLIS — JD Lasswell 20, B. Rodgers 3, I. Kulonis 0, N. Humphreys 10, Z. Zalesky 2, Z. Humphreys 8, J. Davis 4, K. Simmons 2, Q. Kile 4, J. Schmidt 7.
PENDLETON — S. Green 7, M. Freeman 0, Q. Cockburn 5, K. Quinn 8, T. Hancock 0, W. Persinger 15, Caden Smith 17, J. Bratt 11, L. Winterton 0.
3-point field goals — COR 7, PEN 3. Free throws — COR 4-8, PEN 18-22. Fouls — COR 19, PEN 12. Fouled out — Q. Kile (COR).



Irrigon's Fredy Vera drives on Regis' Brendon Woodcock in the Knights' 74-43 win against the Rams on Friday in Pendleton.