

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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## Cross Country State Championships

# Cardenas claims another title

## Umatilla senior builds lead over second mile

Sam BARBEE  
East Oregonian

EUGENE — Fabian Cardenas rounded the final curve at Lane Community College with nothing but blue track in front of and behind him. After winning last fall's 3A/2A/1A state championship and last spring's 3,000-meter run, the Umatilla senior had just 200 meters between him and his third state championship and second straight cross country title.

No one would catch him. Cardenas pulled away from the field in the first mile and never looked back, clocking a time of 15 minutes 50 seconds to win by 25 seconds over Jefferson sophomore Hassan Ibrahim and 37 seconds better than Weston-McEwen's Hayden Scott.

"It's just like last year, it feels really good to win again," Cardenas said. "Especially because this year was a little tougher, it's a little windier than it was last year. This year there were a couple more guys up there with me, like Hassan. He was the only guy with me at 60 seconds, I knew he was gonna challenge me, at least for part of the race."

The course was wet and muddy in places, slowing down the times overall. That didn't affect the district champion Cardenas much, who ran his best time in three tries on the LCC course. During that first mile, Cardenas pulled away from the leading pack of Ibrahim, Scott and several others. But Cardenas' second mile split increased from the first, and the gap between he and Ibrahim and Scott just kept expanding. Cardenas had no trouble maintaining his pace with nobody on his tail.

"This year, I'm better at that because I've been running more mileage than I did last year," he said.

Cardenas is expecting to run collegiately, though he is yet to commit to a school.

"I'd like to thank my family for supporting me," Cardenas said, gold medal around his neck.



EO Media Group photo

Umatilla's Fabian Cardenas leads Jefferson's Hassan Ibrahim (588) and Weston-McEwen's Hayden Scott at the 2015 OSAA 3A/2A/1A State Cross Country Championships at Lane Community College in Eugene on Saturday. Cardenas finished first, Ibrahim was second and Scott was third.



Umatilla's Fabian Cardenas tops the podium at the 2015 OSAA 3A/2A/1A state cross country meet in Eugene. Weston-McEwen's Hayden Scott is third.

Contributed photo courtesy of Hayden Scott

"Sadly, they couldn't be here today, but they've been supporting me all season, they gave me what I need. And I'm thankful for that."

Scott, though, was excited about

his finish. In the first cross country season of his Weston-McEwen career, Scott finished second at the 3A/2A/1A Special District 5 race last week behind Cardenas again.

Scott set a personal record at the district meet at 16:24.7, and nearly eclipsed it with a 16:27 Saturday on the up-and-down wet LCC course. Scott was three seconds off

"It's just like last year, it feels really good to win again."

— Fabian Cardenas,

Back-to-back 3A/2A/1A boys cross country state champion after winning Saturday's finals meet at Lane Community College

Cardenas' blistering first mile split, then fell off to 34 seconds on the second mile.

"This is it for me, it's the peak of my high school experience," Scott said. "It's a such a great feeling to be third at state with guys I've been running with since my freshman year (at Hermiston)."

Union edged Catlin Gabel for the boys team title with 64 points to Catlin Gabel's 68, and Bandon was a distant third with 81. On the girls side for the 3A/2A/1A girls, Marissa Dobry and the St. Mary's Crusaders dominated. Dobry led from the gun, though had identical one-mile splits with Bandon's Sailor Hutton, Oregon Episcopal's Stephanie Finley and Catlin Gabel's Maya Rayle. Dobry began to pull away during the second mile, opening up a 19-second lead, the eventual margin of victory. She would power in to finish at 18:39. St. Mary's accrued 67 points led by Dobry, and Union finished a distant second with 83 points. Enterprise finished third with 97 points.

## CLASS 4A

Seaside and Siuslaw won the boys and girls team titles in the 4A meet, respectively, with each team also boasting their race's individual champion.

Seaside junior Bradley Rzewnicki won the boys' title by five seconds over Sisters senior Tony Hooks in 16:13.

Siuslaw junior Celie Mans won by 21 seconds over Henley senior Lexi Healy in 18:45.

Mac-Hi's girls team was 14th with 376 points and was led by senior Elise Griffith in 51st with a time of 22:12 — seven seconds and six places better than she finished as a junior.

# Bulldog boys leave disappointed

## Hermiston finishes fifth in 5A finals

By SAM BARBEE  
East Oregonian

EUGENE — Expectations were high entering the 2015 cross country season for the Hermiston boys. The Bulldogs lost just one runner from last season's state bronze team, and seemed prime and ready to return to Hermiston as the top boys cross country team in the state.

The season didn't go their way, and neither did Saturday's 5A Oregon State Championships at LCC. Hermiston finished fifth as a

team with 142 points.

Summit took the team title after a very close race with Crater. The Comets had the first-, third- and fifth-place runners, though came up short to Summit who finished with the second-, sixth-, seventh-, eighth- and ninth-place runners. The only top-10 runner not from Summit or Crater was Bend's Caleb Hoffman, who finished fourth.

For Hermiston, Josiah Niederwerfer entered the track and the final 100 meters in ninth, but Summit's Jett Ballantyne and Marist's Jerik Embleton kicked past him to push him off the podium. The next Hermiston runner to come across was Donell Rome, who placed 25th in 16:57.

"We did come in expecting better performances from everyone, but during the race I passed some teammates and they just weren't feeling good," Niederwerfer said. "It's not our best. We didn't run like Hermiston at all."

Last year's stalwart, Hayden Earl, struggled all season with nagging issues that prevented him from duplicating his junior season results. He finished 31st in 17:06. Angel Castellanos finished 45th in 17:26 and Isaac Sanchez crossed in 17:32, good for 49th.

Pendleton's lone boys participant, Nolan Bylenga, started in the front pack but faded late. He said

See CROSS COUNTRY/4B



EO Media Group photo

Hermiston's Josiah Niederwerfer (852) charges uphill in the boys OSAA 5A Cross Country State Championship on Saturday at Lane Community College in Eugene. Niederwerfer finished 11th to lead Hermiston's boys to a fifth-place finish in the team standings.

## 3B: ROYALS BEAT METS IN FIVE



AP Photo/Matt Slocum

Kansas City Royals' Jarrod Dyson

## HERMISTON

# Hermiston boys soccer gets over play-in hurdle

## Bulldogs used strong defense to defeat Liberty on Saturday

By ERIC SINGER  
East Oregonian

On a gloomy Saturday afternoon in Eastern Oregon, the Hermiston Bulldogs' boys soccer team finally got over its postseason hump, defeating the Liberty Falcons 3-1 in an OSAA state play-in game.

In each of the last two years the Bulldogs lost in the play-in round, getting shut out both times. But the performance on Saturday was a big relief for Bulldogs coach Rich Harshberger.

"It was good, we needed to get this monkey off of our

back," he said after the game. "Definitely a cloud looming over us getting past the play-in round especially with last year. It was a big result for us."

On paper, the game appeared to be an easy win for Hermiston (11-2-2) as Liberty came in with just a 4-9-1 overall record and a No. 23 ranking in the OSAA. But the Falcons gave the Bulldogs all they could handle in the game.

"All credit to Liberty, they came out and pressed us and made it hard for us to play our game," said Harshberger. "But we got the result, which I'm ecstatic about, but we definitely need to calm it down



Liberty  
1



Hermiston  
3

and impose ourselves throughout the rest of the playoffs."

Liberty came out of the gates and immediately put pressure on the Bulldogs, and the Falcons had the Hermiston defense somewhat scattered. Hermiston goalkeeper Antonio Campos had to make several aggressive plays and stops to keep the game scoreless.

"With the formation it's always a bit risky, but my back four and the goalkeeper are outstanding, they've done a good job," said Harshberger. "The results we get and where we're at right now is really up to them."

Then about midway

through the first half, the Bulldogs began to find their groove on offense, and at the 34-minute mark Bernardo Arujo and Liberty goalkeeper Jacob Thompson collided wide left of the goal, resulting in a yellow card on Thompson and a penalty kick for Arujo.

Because of the yellow card, Thompson was removed from the game for the penalty kick, replaced by defender Roberto Salinas. Arujo took advantage of the PK, and drilled it past Salinas to give the Bulldogs an early 1-0 lead.

The goal swung some momentum in the Bulldogs' favor, as just seven minutes later the Bulldogs struck again on a close-range goal from

See SOCCER/4B