

BOYS HOOPS: Heppner, Nixyaawii host first-round games as well

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per game and allowed 49.4 per game, while Irrigon averaged 55.9 points per game and allowed 40.9 per game. Seeing those numbers, Thompson said the Knights can win if they stick to what they know.
“We’ve watched a lot of film and we’re prepared,” he said. “If we can play the best that the Irrigon Knights can play I think we’ll be fine.”
Tip-off for the Knights and Trojans is set for 5 p.m. at Irrigon.

LOST RIVER (15-10) at HEPPNER (20-3), 2 p.m. — Following Heppner’s district championship victory over Irrigon on Saturday, Mustangs coach Jeremy Rosenbalm said that the win was a big stepping stone to the teams’ ultimate goal of a state championship.
The Mustangs will look to take another step on Saturday with the first-round game against Lost River in the OSAA 2A state tournament.
“We’ve had a great week of practice so far,” Rosen-

balm said. “The guys are focused and know what they need to do on Saturday.”
On paper, the No. 14 seed Raiders are a lot like the teams the Mustangs have seen in the Columbia Basin Conference this season. Rosenbalm said the Raiders appear very athletic on film, and the teams’ offense revolves around three guards that like to penetrate the defense and attack the basket.
With that in mind, he says that the Mustangs won’t be making too many adjustments heading into the game.
“We’re not going to shy away from what we’ve been doing all year,” Rosenbalm said. “I’m sure we’ll have a few wrinkles here and there, but that’s about it.”
Heppner is also happy to have one more home game in its home gym and in front of its home fans.
“Our fans have been so great for us all season long,” Rosenbalm said. “We get such great support from the community here, and the boys love it. They worked hard all year to earn this seed so we’ll

enjoy every minute of it.”
So what will it take for the Mustangs to come out on top?
“We have to stop (Lost River’s) dribble-drive penetration to limit their offensive gameplan,” Rosenbalm said. “We also have to rebound well and limit them to just one shot per possession so we can get out and run and find our rhythm.”
The No. 3 seed Mustangs tip-off against the Raiders at 2 p.m. on Saturday in Heppner.

RIVERSIDE (11-13) at DAYTON (22-4), 7 p.m. — At Dayton, the Riverside Pirates face a tall task if they want to make a run in the 2016 postseason, as the Pirates drew in as the No. 16 seed and are set to face the No. 1 seed Dayton Pirates on Saturday night.
Riverside coach Clair Costello says that his team isn’t worried about the rankings and are ready to keep playing basketball.
“Practice has been really good,” he said, “the boys feel like they can compete and win.”
Dayton comes into the

game riding a six-game win streak and put up an average of 63.8 points per game this season, while allowing 49.2 points per game.
Costello said that Riverside is going to look to outrun Dayton in order to try and earn the win.
“We’re hoping we can keep the ball moving at a fast pace and get them tired,” he said. “They don’t like to substitute a lot, so hopefully we can attack them and get them in foul trouble to keep them on their heels.”
Dayton relies heavily on their five seniors, but Costello notes that the team has good athletes on the bench as well. However, Costello thinks that his team matches up well with the defending 3A state champions if they can utilize the inside game.
“We need to get some points from our post guys,” he said. “We know Eon (Castillo), Felipe (Olvera), and Noe (Madrigal) are going to score, but we need points inside to free those guys up.”

TRIAD (19-10) at NIXY-

AAWII (24-1), 6 p.m. — At Pendleton, the Nixyaawii Golden Eagles completed two of their season goals over the weekend after they won the Old Oregon League district title which locked up a home first-round game.
Nixyaawii coach Shane Rivera said that the team is ready to go on Saturday.
“We’re excited to be where we are,” he said. “We have eight seniors and they are hungry after last year’s second place finish, so we’re a pretty focused group right now.”
The No. 3 seed Golden Eagles have not had a lot of time to prepare for the opponent, the No. 14 seed Triad Timberwolves, as Triad won a play-in game on Wednesday night to advance to play the Golden Eagles. Rivera said that he has not had a chance to see any film on the Timberwolves, but is familiar with the team.
“We’ve faced them a bit in some summer sessions, so we know a little of what to expect,” he said. “But at this point, every team is good so we can only worry about

us, and I think if we play our game I think we can do well.”
Triad started the season at a mediocre 9-9 overall, but caught fire at the end of season to win 10 of its last 11 games to clinch a spot in the postseason. For the season, Triad averaged 57.7 points per game and allowed 44.4 points per game to lead them to a third place finish in the Mountain Valley League.
Nixyaawii was an offensive machine in the regular season, averaging 71.6 points per game and had the No. 2 scoring offense in all of Class 1A with 1,791 total points. On the defensive end, Nixyaawii allowed just 45.8 points per game.
But when the game is played, Rivera said that ball control will be the key for a Golden Eagles’ victory.
“We know we can score the ball, so keeping the turnovers low will be a huge factor,” he said.
The Golden Eagles and Timberwolves will tip-off at 6 p.m. at Blue Mountain Community College.

GIRLS HOOPS: Irrigon gets tough draw for first playoff game

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thinks the school’s recent softball success can be given credit for that.
“It’s new for them for basketball, but a lot of them are on the softball team and have been a part of those championships,” she said of back-to-back championships in 2014-15. “I think them having that experience in other sports is definitely helpful. I think they’re excited to be able to represent Mac-Hi and represent our community.”
Despite averaging 11.5 more points a game than the Pioneers, Garton said the Valiants pose a favorable match-up.
“They’ll be a good solid team, but somebody we can compete with,” she said.
Garton said the Valiants remind her of Greater Oregon League champion La Grande in some senses because they have good speed at the guard positions and try to run a lot of fast breaks, but the Valiants also like to slow it down and feed the ball inside to 5-foot-11 senior Molly Danielson.
Limiting those two aspects of the Valley Catholic offense should give the Pioneers a chance, Garton said. When on offense, Garton’s keys to victory were limiting turnovers and going hard to the basket throughout the game.

IRRIGON (11-12) at KENNEDY (21-3), 6 p.m. — At Mt. Angel, the No. 16 Irrigon Knights have no illusions as to what it’ll take to beat No. 1 Kennedy tonight in their first-ever state playoff game.
“We’re going to have to play our best game to get past a team like Kennedy,” said coach Mike Royer.
After taking the third seed into the district tournament, then winning it all, the Knights just may be up to the task.
“They’ve won four games in a row and the girls have started to play pretty well. It’s the best basketball that they’ve played all year,” Royer said. “(Kennedy will) probably overlook us, but I do think that we’re a much different team than we were a month ago. We’ve come together at the right time and the girls are just playing with confidence right now.”
Royer said there are two main players the Knights need to key on when playing defense — senior guard Lakin Susee and senior post Kenzie Ratliff.
Susee has been the team’s leading scorer and was the Tri-River Conference Player of the Year while Ratliff is a threat to score from anywhere in the Trojans’ offense.
When they have the ball, Royer said Irrigon needs to remain calm and focus on getting good shots off on each possession.
“They score off steals, they score in transition, and they’re trapping and reaching, slapping for the ball,” he said. “They will put a lot of pressure on us and that’s going to be the key, we have to be able to handle their pressure.”



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

In this Feb. 20, 2016 file photo, Lily Mills of Irrigon grabs a rebound during the district championship game against Weston-McEwen at the Pendleton Convention Center.
B L A N C H E T CATHOLIC (19-6) at UMATILLA (20-5), 6 p.m. — At Umatilla, due to a bracketing quirk, the No. 8 Vikings could be seen as an underdog when they host No. 9 Blanchet Catholic in the 3A first round.
The teams’ final OSAA rankings had the Cavaliers one spot ahead of the Vikings, but Umatilla’s league title made them the higher seed.
Vikings coach Scott Bow doesn’t think the Cavaliers will be able to match up well with his team, though.
“We’re a little bit opposites of teams,” he said. “They’re more guard oriented and we should have a good size advantage on them.”
“It fits right into all our sets and everything we do.”
Bow said no lead will be safe, though, and it’ll take a complete game to close out the Cavaliers.
“They’re just a quick scrappy team and they like to get after it for all 32 minutes,” he said.
The Cavaliers average 57.6 points a game, but allow 40.6. Umatilla averages 45.9 while allowing 33.
“If we play the game our style and execute our X’s and O’s ... and follow the basics that should be enough to win,” Bow said.
WESTON-MCEWEN (15-9) at LOST RIVER (22-5), 6 p.m. — At Merrill, Weston-McEwen coach Amber Doremus doesn’t see a lot of mismatches when she looks at the film on No. 7 Lost River.
“It looks like they might be a team built very much like us,” she said. “They have quick guards and like to run the floor. We’re excited about the match-up, we’ve got a good opportunity here.”
The No. 10 TigerScots were already in Klamath Falls and preparing to go through a late

practice Thursday night, and Doremus said the nine-hour bus ride shouldn’t be a factor by the time the teams tip off tonight in the 2A first round.
She said the key to bringing back a victory will be limiting turnovers.
“We just need to play our game and play together,” she said.
The TigerScots will also need to rebound well on the offensive glass to get extra looks against a Raiders defense that is allowing just 29.7 points on average.
Both teams are coming off losses in their last game. The Raiders lost to Monroe 33-27 in the Mountain View Conference championship and the TigerScots fell in overtime 46-43 to Irrigon in the Columbia Basin Conference title game at Pendleton Convention Center.
“They’ve moved on,” Doremus said. “I think they’re motivated to play better and hopefully get themselves in a position to play in Pendleton again.”

ELKTON (22-7) at CONDON/WHEELER (24-2), 6:30 p.m. — At Fossil, Condon/Wheeler coach Kevin Gramson said his No. 6 Knights will have to show up playing their best to hold off the No. 11 Elks in the 1A second round.
Elkton, which placed second in the Skyline League, likes to press on defense and push the tempo on offense, perhaps to help offset a lack of height in the posts.
Elkton’s tallest player is 5-foot-9 senior Angela Holcomb, but the Elks haven’t struggled to score points and come in averaging 53.3 a game.
“It will be a challenge for sure,” Gramson said. “I’m not thrilled with the match-up but this is the playoffs and you play who shows up.”
Condon/Wheeler has won its last 15 in a row and aver-

ages 47.3 points per game. The game will be played at Wheeler High School in Fossil, where the Knights are 4-0 this season.
SILETZ VALLEY (19-7) at NIXYAAWII (23-2), 7 p.m. — At Pendleton, Nixyaawii coach Jeremy Maddern likes the way his No. 4 Golden Eagles stack up against the No. 13 Warriors in the 1A second round, but sees one possible problem.
“They’ve got a really good point guard, number three Kaetlin (Bayya),” he said of the Siletz Valley senior. “She’s probably one of the better point guards we’ve seen all year, so we’re going to have to pay attention to her quite a bit.”
If the Golden Eagles can contain Bayya, Maddern said his team should be able to use an advantage in the posts to have their way with the Warriors, whose tallest player is 5-foot-9 senior Lexi Metcalf.

A fast start could also make things easy for Nixyaawii.
“I think getting off to a good start kind of like what we did at the district championship game, playing with a little bit more energy from the get-go,” he said of his key to victory. “If we can get out and get an early lead they’re not really built to come back and make big runs.”
The game will be played at Pendleton High School’s Warberg Court to more easily accommodate fans.

ARLINGTON (19-10) at COUNTRY CHRISTIAN (23-2), 7 p.m. — At Molalla, nothing short of their best game of the season will due if the No. 16 Arlington Honkers hope to advance past No. 1 Country Christian tonight.
The Cougars average 67.4 points a game, and have topped 60 points in 10 straight games — all wins. Arlington has topped 60 just once this season, in a 65-27 win over Sherman, and averages 42.9 points a game.

Saturday HELIX (18-9) at ROGUE VALLEY ADVENTIST (22-3), 7 p.m. — At Medford, Helix coach Kirk Flerchinger hasn’t been able to turn up much in the way of scouting reports for his No. 15 Grizzlies’ match-up with No. 2 Rogue Valley on Saturday.
“There’s not much that we know about them and there’s not much they know about us,” he said of the Mountain Valley League champions. “We’re just going to kind of look see what they bring and we’re going to come out and play our game and put a lot of pressure on the ball.”
Flerchinger hopes his posts can tip the scales in their favor, though, considering sophomore Rose Tovar is the Hawks’ tallest player at 5-foot-9.
The Hawks are a tough defensive team, though, and are coming off a 30-19 win over No. 9 Hosanna Christian in their conference title game.

BLAZERS:

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points in five consecutive games, equaling a team record set by Geoff Petrie in 1970-71, the franchise’s first season. But the Rockets consistently double-teamed him.
Houston’s last visit to Portland on Feb. 10 resulted in a 116-103 loss that prompted Houston coach J.B. Bickerstaff to call his team “broken.”
Maurice Harkless hit a 38-foot hurl at the buzzer to end the first quarter, putting Portland up 34-28. The Blazers stretched the lead to 57-39 on McCollum’s short jumper.
Portland was up 64-49 at the half, with Lillard at 12 points and McCollum at 11.

Howard, Harden and Patrick Beverley were in double figures on Houston’s side.
McCollum’s 3-pointer early in the third quarter stretched the lead to 72-51. But Jason Terry’s 3 for Houston closed the gap to 85-75 late in the period.
Harden hit consecutive 3-pointers that got the Rockets within 91-83, part of a run where he scored 14 straight points for the Rockets.
The Rockets were without center Clint Capela because of a sprained right foot that he hurt in practice on Wednesday.
TIP INS:
Rockets: Portland native Terrence Jones made his second appearance for the Rockets after a concussion sidelined him for five games.

Twenty Questions with Emma Logan

East Oregonian

East Oregonian: Favorite sports team?
Emma Logan: Golden State Warriors
Favorite athlete?
None in particular
Favorite memory as a Knight?
Winning the state championship with my sister
How many sports do you play?
Three — volleyball, basketball, and track & field
Favorite sport to play?
Basketball
Favorite music genre?
Country
Favorite movie?
Too many too pick a favorite
Favorite TV show?
None
Favorite food?
Steak and potatoes

Favorite candy bar?
Nature Valley peanut butter bar
Favorite family recipe?
Spaghetti
Gatorade or Powerade?
Gatorade
Favorite color?
Blue
Favorite subject in school?
Physical education
Dream job?
Physical therapist
Hobbies?
Playing basketball, and working on family ranch
Dogs or cats?
Dogs
Favorite thing to do on the family ranch?
Ride my horse
How many siblings?
Four — two brothers and two sisters
Who has been the biggest influence on your life?
My family

ATHLETE
OF THE WEEK

EMMA LOGAN
Condon/Wheeler Girls Basketball

Emma scored 31 points and grabbed 20 rebounds in the Big Sky League district semifinals, and then scored 30 points in the championship game to help lead Condon/Wheeler to its fourth-straight district championship on Saturday.



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