

IRRIGON

Knights bounced from postseason by Trojans

Kennedy halts Irrigon's trek for third title with first round win

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

With just two seconds left on the clock and his team down by three, Fredy Vera gathered the basketball and rose into a 3-point shot. The ball left his hand cleanly and traveled towards the basket with hundreds of eyeballs watching closely, only to have the shot clank off the front of the rim as the final buzzer sounded.

Boys Hoops

 **Kennedy**
48

 **Irrigon**
45



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Irrigon's Fredy Vera is consoled on the court after missing a game-tying three-point shot at the end of the Knights' 48-45 loss to Kennedy on Saturday in Irrigon.

The missed shot brought an end to Irrigon's season as the Kennedy Trojans jumped off the bench in excitement after earing a 48-45 victory in a 2A first-round playoff game.

Before the 3-pointer, Vera had missed two-straight free throws but out-ran the Kennedy (15-10) defense to gather the rebound and set-up the game-tying attempt. Vera — who had been a key player on the Knights' two state title teams — finished the game with a team-high 15 points and drew high-praise from coach Mitch Thompson after the game.

"That kid plays so hard and he left it all on the floor tonight," Thompson said. "He's just a tremendous kid and I'm excited for his future and it's a shame he doesn't get to go back to (the) Pendleton (Convention Center)."

Thompson said that the loss was especially hard to swallow with how prepared he felt his team was.

"We knew every single one of (Kennedy's) sets and knew everything they were going to do," he said, "it was just a matter of their physicality. We lost rebounds, we lost 50-50 balls, so it's a tough one."

The game was the definition of a tale of two halves, as the Knights controlled the game for most of the first half and Kennedy had the advantage in the second half.

Irrigon (17-8) started the game

on an 11-0 run as the Knights offensive and defensive quickness had Kennedy rattled early. The Trojans did not make its first field goal until the 3:30 mark when Brett Traeger put in a close lay-in to make it an 11-2 game.

The Trojans settled down as the quarter wore on, and by the 4:14 mark of the second quarter Kennedy had whittled down the deficit to 15-13 and later got closer at 17-16.

But after Kennedy got close, the Knights went on a 7-3 run over the final three-and-a-half minutes to close out the half with a 24-19 lead. Irrigon shot 9-25 (36 percent) from the floor in the half, while Kennedy shot 8-21 (38 percent).

At the half, Kennedy coach Karl Schmidtman said he gave his team a simple message on what to do in the second half.

"I didn't need to tell these guys much," he said. "I just said to keep grinding away and to believe in each other and it showed in the third quarter."

In the second half, Kennedy came out looking like a more determined squad working the ball into the posts and beating the Irrigon defense on drives to the hoop. The Trojans opened the quarter on a 9-1 run to grab their first lead of

the game at 26-25 when Bishop Mitchell scored a transition lay-in off of an Irrigon turnover.

The game took a big swing late in the third quarter when Irrigon's Hayden White was whistled for a technical foul for slapping the backboard while a Kennedy shot attempt was still in the air. The basket counted for the Trojans who tacked on two free throws for Traeger four a quick four-point swing to put Kennedy up 37-27.

Kennedy also earned the momentum by winning most of the battles in the quarter, earning second and sometimes third possessions by attacking the offensive glass and hustling after loose balls. The Trojans ended the third quarter outscoring Irrigon 18-5, but Thompson said he told his guys during the quarter break to just find and play in a rhythm.

They found that rhythm right as the third quarter began, as the Knights found a spark when Austin Rice hit back-to-back transition 3-pointers from the right corner to get back within two points at 37-35 and get the fans on their feet. Less than one minute later, Irrigon tied the game at 37-37 on a floater from Vera which brought a deafening cheer from the crowd.

Over the final 6:10, the two

teams traded the lead six times, with Kennedy grabbing the lead for good with 1:10 left in the game on a 3-pointer by Owen Seiler for the 46-45 advantage.

One downfall for Irrigon was its inability make shots throughout the second half. The Knights made just 5-15 (33 percent) field goals in the half missing numerous shots from close proximity to the basket, as well as missing nine free throw attempts — including four in a row near the end of the game.

Kennedy was led in scoring by Traeger with 17 points, Seiler and forward Jacob Lopez each added nine points. The Trojans now advance to the quarterfinals of the 2A bracket.

Thompson, who coached his last game for the Knights on Saturday, said that he thinks the program is set up to be successful with the amount of young players coming back.

"I think so, it just comes down to hard work for those guys over the summer and to keep trusting the system," he said.

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|--------------------|----|----|----|----|---|----|
| KHS (15-10) | 6 | 13 | 18 | 11 | — | 48 |
| IHS (17-8) | 13 | 11 | 5 | 16 | — | 45 |

KENNEDY — B. Traeger 17, J. Lopez 9, O. Seiler 9, B. Mitchell 6, R. Carley 2, J. Suing, T. Schmidt.
IRRIGON — F. Vera 15, A. Rice 9, H. White 8, X. Rambo 8, D. Vera 5, O. Vera.
3-pointers — KHS 4, IHS 5. Free throws — KHS 6-15, IHS 11-20. Fouls — KHS 15, IHS 16. Technicals — H. White (IHS)

MISSION

Eagles soar back into final bracket

Nixyaawii heats up in second half to pull away from Triad

By MATT ENTRUP
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — It took Nixyaawii's shooters an entire half to get warmed up, but it hardly mattered as the Golden Eagles found plenty of scoring opportunities Saturday against Triad.

Nixyaawii never trailed and convincingly punched its ticket back to the state quarterfinals with a 56-38 win at Blue Mountain Community College's Mosby Court.

Playing in an unfamiliar setting, the Golden Eagles started the game attacking the rim while occasionally testing the limits of their accuracy to nudge ahead 10-8 after one quarter.

Neither team seemed to be able to dial in from outside early and Ira Ashley's 12-foot jump shot in the second quarter was the longest field goal of the game going into halftime.

"Early in the game it's kind of just that jitters," said Ashley, who led Nixyaawii with 16 points. "It's a playoff game — you win you're going to state, you lose and you're done. It's kind of just throwing all that out the window, and then once you're focused on the game you can start hitting shots."

The Golden Eagles had no reason to panic, because they were winning the battle inside as Chandler Case and Damon Kipp made it tough for the Timberwolves to find any open routes to the rim.

Case had two blocks before heading to the bench with his second foul midway through the first quarter, and Kipp came off the bench to lead Nixyaawii with six points at halftime.

Kipp scored the final four points of a 6-0 run that put the lead at 22-12 headed into the locker rooms. "Good defense is what got us here and we were just looking to do that against Triad," Kipp said. "We came out and got it done and executed as far as I'm concerned."

"They scored 12 points, so I credit our defense pretty much," said Nixyaawii coach Shane Rivera of the first half. "I thought we got a lot of good looks. Everything we got in the first half for the most part were still good looks. Whether or not they went down, eventually I figured they were going to start to fall."

Nixyaawii was clearly determined to get its outside game going in the third quarter, but continued to rely on layups until Fredy Campos popped the cork on a run of five-straight three-pointers to close out the frame.

"He sparked the flame," Ashley said. "Just keep shooting and it will fall, that's the mentality that we have going into the game."

Campos took a kick-out from Ashley and rattled in the game's first triple with 4:38 left in the third. Ashley then hit three straight to get the capacity crowd worked into a frenzy before Hunter Melton capped the run with a swish from the corner to make it 41-21 after three quarters.

Ashley gave Nixyaawii its largest lead of the game at 48-24 with 6:21 to play in the fourth when cut to the rim and scored off a pass from Melton.

Campos added 10 points for Nixyaawii, Melton finished with nine and Kipp had eight.

Triad's Alex Holland slashed to the hoop for most of his team-high 19 points and Michael Barrett added a breakaway dunk to his seven points that gave the Triad fans something to cheer for late in the game.

Nixyaawii, which was runner-up at last year's state tournament, will open this year's bracket against Hosanna Christian on Thursday at 6:30 p.m. in Baker City.

The Lions earned their berth by beating Monument/Dayville 67-64 in overtime on Saturday.

"We're going in with the same mindset we had last year," Ashley said of state. "Just get there, work hard and get a W."

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| THS (19-11) | 8 | 4 | 9 | 17 | — | 38 |
| NCS (25-1) | 10 | 12 | 19 | 15 | — | 56 |

TRIAD — A. Holland 19, E. Buita 7, M. Barrett 7, I. Franklin 2, D. Claybaugh 2, N. Patel 1, B. Bay, J. Holmfeld.
NIXYAAWII — I. Ashley 16, F. Campos 10, H. Melton 9, D. Kipp 8, J. Quaepts 6, C. Case 4, W. Oatman 2, L. Lewis 1, A. Corona.
3-pointers — THS 0, NCS 6. Free throws — THS 10-13, NCS 4-7. Fouls — THS 7, NCS 11. Technicals — D. Claybaugh (THS).

HEPPNER


Grieb nets 24 as Mustangs advance to quarterfinals


East Oregonian

The Heppner Mustangs fought off the Lost River Raiders in a physical battle on Saturday afternoon to advance to the 2A quarterfinals with a 64-49 victory.

Logan Grieb led the Mustangs with 24 points on 9-16 shooting and nailed three 3-pointers in more than 28 minutes of game action. Patrick Collins also added 16 points on 6-10 shooting while Weston Putman had 13 points on 4-6 shooting to round out the

Boys Hoops

 **Lost River**
49

 **Heppner**
64

double-digit scorers.

Andrew Taylor was the lone Raider to reach double figures as he finished with 22 points.

As a team, Heppner shot 23-46 (50 percent) from the floor, while Lost River was 21-52 (40 percent). But the Mustangs created some real

separation by out-shooting Lost River at the free throw line, where Heppner made 13-20 attempts while the Raiders made just 1-2 attempts.

The Mustangs also used its muscle in the rebounding battle again, earning a 33-17 advantage in rebounds — including a 13-2 advantage on the offensive glass.

Heppner held just a two point lead at the end of the first quarter and then led by five at halftime before gradually growing the lead in the second half. The third quarter saw the most offense as the two teams combined

for 44 points in the quarter.

With the win, Heppner advances to the 2A quarterfinals to play the No. 6 seed Bandon Tigers on Thursday night at the Pendleton Convention Center with tip-off scheduled for 6:30 p.m.

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|---------------------|----|----|----|----|---|----|
| LRHS (15-11) | 11 | 10 | 20 | 8 | — | 49 |
| HHS (21-3) | 13 | 13 | 24 | 14 | — | 64 |

LOST RIVER — A. Taylor 22, C. Hartman 7, A. Vera 6, C. Chavez 6, W. Moore 5, G. Cobian 3, T. Frisendahl, L. Orozco, C. McAuliffe.
HEPPNER — L. Grieb 24, P. Collins 16, W. Putman 13, C. J. Kinkle 9, K. Murray 1, K. Hedman 1, K. Clark.
3-pointers — LRHS 6, HHS 5. Free throws — LRHS 1-2, HHS 13-20. Fouls — LRHS 20, HHS 10. Fouled out — Chavez (LRHS).

BOARDMAN

Riverside boys ousted from 3A ranks by No. 1 Dayton

East Oregonian

DAYTON — The Riverside Pirates saw their season come to an end on Saturday as they fell to the No. 1 seeded Dayton Pirates 81-35 in a 3A first round playoff match-up.

"We knew we had a tough one with (Dayton)," Riverside coach Clair Costello said. "They won it last year, and they're the real deal."

Dayton (23-4) jumped on Riverside early and often, outscoring them 25-3 in the first quarter and eventually expanding that deficit to 40-12 which the two teams would take into halftime. Costello said

that his team was overwhelmed by the No. 1 seed.


"We came out way too soft," he said. "It was a much different style of game than we were used to, much more physical."


Riverside (11-14) came out of the break with a different mindset and found some scoring in the third quarter with 16 points as the team stepped up its physicality, which Dayton did not like.

"We didn't back down in the second half, got more physical, and they (Dayton) tried to fight us on it," Costello said.

Eon Castillo led Riverside in

Boys Hoops

 **Riverside**
35

 **Dayton**
81

scoring with 10 points and added in five rebounds in the game. Castillo was the only Riverside scorer to reach double figures, as Felipe Olvera was the next highest scorer with seven points. Zach Bernards led Dayton with 33 points.

The loss brought the end of the road for Riverside's three seniors in Humberto Lopez, Felipe Olvera,

and Sergio Navarro, but Riverside returns numerous key contributors for next season which Costello said sets up for a good year.

"It's looking good for next year, a lot of our guys are juniors and sophomores," he said, "and at least they got to have a taste of the state tournament, which should help them come next year."

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| RHS (11-14) | 3 | 9 | 16 | 7 | — | 35 |
| DHS (23-4) | 25 | 15 | 20 | 21 | — | 81 |

RIVERSIDE — E. Castillo 10, F. Olvera 7, M. Hegar 6, N. Madrigal 4, R. Rosales 3, S. Navarro 3, F. Aparicio 2, A. Martinez, J. Carmora, J. Garcia, H. Lopez.
DAYTON — Z. Bernards 33, Z. Spink 13, J. Ashley 9, K. Blanco 6, T. Lewis 4, T. Ferguson 2, C. Capener 2.
3-pointers — RHS 3, DHS 8. Free throws — RHS 10-15, DHS 13-22. Fouls — RHS 22, DHS 15.

SCOREBOARD

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|--|---|
| Local Slate | Nixyaawii vs. TBD (at Baker High School), TBD Condon/Wheeler vs. TBD (at Baker High School), TBD |
| BOYS PREP BASKETBALL | |
| Wednesday | |
| 5A play-in: La Salle at Hermiston, 6 p.m. | |
| Thursday | |
| 1A Quarterfinals: Nixyaawii vs. Hosanna Christian (at Baker High School), 6:30 p.m. | |
| 2A Quarterfinals: Heppner vs. Bandon (at Pendleton Convention Center), 6:30 p.m. | |
| Friday | |
| Nixyaawii vs. TBD (at Baker High School), TBD | |
| Heppner vs. TBD (at Pendleton Convention Center), TBD | |
| Saturday | |
| 5A first round: TBD at Pendleton, TBD | |
| Nixyaawii vs. TBD (at Baker High School), TBD | |
| Heppner vs. TBD (at Pendleton Convention Center), TBD | |
| GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL | |
| Today | |
| 5A play-in: Pendleton at Liberty, 6:30 p.m. | |
| Wednesday | |
| 1A Quarterfinals: Nixyaawii vs. Adrian (at Baker High School), 3:15 p.m. | |
| 1A Quarterfinals: Condon/Wheeler vs. North Douglas (at Baker High School), 6:30 p.m. | |
| Thursday | |
| Nixyaawii vs. TBD (at Baker High School), TBD | |
| Condon/Wheeler vs. TBD (at Baker High School), TBD | |
| Friday | |
| 5A first round: TBD at Hermiston, TBD | |
| Nixyaawii vs. TBD (at Baker High School), TBD | |
| Condon/Wheeler vs. TBD (at Baker High School), TBD | |
| Saturday | |
| 5A first round: TBD at Baker High School, TBD | |
| Condon/Wheeler vs. TBD (at Baker High School), TBD | |

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| G8: Game 3 winner vs. Game 4 winner, 6:30 p.m. | |
| Saturday | |
| G9: Game 5 winner vs. Game 6 winner, 9 a.m. | |
| G10: Game 7 loser vs. Game 8 loser, 1:30 p.m. | |
| G11: Game 7 winner vs. Game 8 winner, 6:30 p.m. | |
| NCAA | |
| Men's Top 25 Sunday's Games | |
| Seton Hall 90, No. 5 Xavier 81 | |
| No. 6 Michigan St. 88, Penn St. 57 | |
| Ohio State 68, No. 8 Iowa 64 | |
| No. 13 Oregon 86, Washington 73 | |
| Pittsburgh 76, No. 15 Duke 62 | |
| No. 24 SMU 74, Tulane 53 | |
| Monday's Games | |
| No. 1 Kansas 86, No. 23 Texas 56 | |
| No. 8 North Carolina 75, Syracuse 50 | |
| No. 21 Iowa St. 58, Oklahoma St. 50 | |
| Today's Games | |
| No. 22 Kentucky at Florida, 4 p.m. | |
| No. 4 Virginia at Clemson, 4 p.m. | |
| DePaul at No. 3 Villanova, 4 p.m. | |
| Georgia Tech at No. 11 Louisville, 5 p.m. | |
| No. 19 Baylor at No. 8 Oklahoma, 5 p.m. | |
| Wake Forest at No. 17 Duke, 5 p.m. | |
| No. 15 Purdue at Nebraska, 5 p.m. | |
| No. 20 Texas A&M at Auburn, 6 p.m. | |
| No. 12 Indiana at No. 16 Iowa, 6 p.m. | |
| NBA | |
| Sunday's Games | |
| Washington 113, Cleveland 99 | |
| Atlanta 87, Charlotte 76 | |
| Portland 111, Indiana 102 | |
| Detroit 114, Toronto 101 | |

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| Orlando 130, Philadelphia 116 | |
| Dallas 128, Minnesota 101 | |
| Miami 98, New York 81 | |
| Monday's Games | |
| Cleveland 100, Indiana 96 | |
| Washington 116, Philadelphia 108 | |
| Boston 100, Utah 95 | |
| Milwaukee 128, Houston 121 | |
| Memphis 103, Denver 96 | |
| Oklahoma City 131, Sacramento 116 | |
| L.A. Clippers 105, Brooklyn 95 | |
| Today's Games | |
| Phoenix at Charlotte, 4 p.m. | |
| Chicago at Miami, 4:30 p.m. | |
| Portland at New York, 4:30 p.m. | |
| Orlando at Dallas, 5:30 p.m. | |
| Atlanta at Golden State, 7:30 p.m. | |
| Brooklyn at L.A. Lakers, 7:30 p.m. | |
| Motorsports | |
| NASCAR Sprint Cup | |
| Folds of Honor QuikTrip 500 Top 10 (Sunday) | |
| At Atlanta Motor Speedway, Hampton, Ga. | |
| Lap length: 1.54 miles | |
| (Start position in parentheses) | |
| 1. (19) Jimmie Johnson, Chevrolet, 330 laps, 44 points. | |
| 2. (16) Dale Earnhardt Jr., Chevrolet, 330, 39. | |
| 3. (39) Kyle Busch, Toyota, 330, 39. | |
| 4. (1) Kurt Busch, Chevrolet, 330, 38. | |
| 5. (7) Carl Edwards, Toyota, 330, 37. | |
| 6. (6) Kevin Harvick, Chevrolet, 330, 37. | |
| 7. (9) Martin Truex Jr., Toyota, 330, 35. | |
| 8. (24) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 330, 33. | |
| 9. (17) Brad Keselowski, Ford, 330, 32. | |
| 10. (5) Ricky Stenhouse Jr., Ford, 330, 31. | |