

HHS GIRLS: Thomas leads with 17 points

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well, as Hermiston (6-7) has rebounded well after a hitting a rough patch in early December.

"Everybody is well aware of our struggles through that middle part of the preseason," Rodriguez said, "and I think we've corrected some of those. But we're still a long way where we want to be, but it's just nice to keep building momentum and that's huge for us right now."

West Valley gave Hermiston a fight early on, hanging with Hermiston basket-for-basket and held a 10-9 lead over the Bulldogs at the end of the first quarter. The Bulldogs took the lead at 11-10 in the second quarter and held the advantage for the rest of the half, but West Valley used its full-court pressure defense to force a flurry of Hermiston turnovers to get back into

the game in the third quarter. Overall, Hermiston had 21 turnovers with many forced by the full court press, though Rodriguez said the miscues are not a concern moving forward.

"Normally we're pretty good against the press but I just think once we got tired we got lackadaisical and we think that nobody will be behind us sometimes," he said. "Our girls have to understand that teams are going to press us and we have to take advantage of that on the other side."

But in the end, Hermiston was able to regain its composure and pull away for the win, which is a sight that Rodriguez was very pleased to see.

"Our girls, that killer mentality is finally coming back after it was lost at the beginning of the year," he said. "The middle of the year we probably would've lost this game because we

had no leader to step up and go get the ball and now we have several girls stepping up into that role, which is big for us going into league play because we're going to be in some dog fights and we have to have somebody that's going to calm things down."

Hermiston saw its best success with its half-court offense and being able to attack the basket. As a team, the Bulldogs shot 22-32 from inside the 3-point line for a staggering 68 percent clip. Leading the way was sophomore forward Jordan Thomas with 17 points, while Rileigh Andreason scored 12 points and Maddy Juul 11 points.

Thomas' outburst gave Bulldogs a glimpse at the potential that has been waiting to ooze out of her 6-foot-3 frame.

"I've told her since she was a freshman that she has the potential to be unstoppable

inside and it just takes the mentality and she's finally realizing it," Rodriguez said. "The biggest thing for me is she doesn't make me change our defensive scheme. Sometimes with taller girls coaches have to go to a zone, but she's worked so hard on her footwork and her speed that she can switch off to a guard on the perimeter and that definitely makes our life easier."

Hermiston now prepares for the start of league play at home against The Dalles next Friday.

"We have to get ready for a really tough league that's really kind of up-in-the-air as of right now," Rodriguez said.

WV	10	10	18	13	-	51
HHS	9	17	16	19	-	61

WEST VALLEY — E. Teske 11, N. Rasmussen 11, K. Gasseling 7, N. Nagle 7, S. Curtis 6, K. Kruger 4, L. Fetzer 3.
HERMISTON — J. Thomas 17, R. Andreason 12, M. Juul 11, K. Padilla 8, J. Romero 5, H. Meyers 4, S. Gilbert 3.
3-pointers — WV 4, HHS 3. Free throws — WV 6-8, HHS 7-21. Fouls — WV 18, HHS 10.



Rileigh Andreason (12), of Hermiston, passes to a teammate during Saturday's game against West Valley in Hermiston.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney

HHS BOYS: Hermiston shoots 6 of 11 in 4th quarter



Andrew James, of Hermiston, goes up for a shot during Saturday's game against La Grande.

Continued from 1B

like him," Arstein said, "though he definitely still has some strides to make, as everyone does, but he just has an extra step of quickness than most of the other guys on the floor. It'll be a tough matchup for teams going forward especially in the man-to-man because he's so quick."

It was La Grande that got the first burst out of the gates, taking a quick 5-0 lead on Hermiston as La Grande's speed and length seemed to surprise the Bulldogs. However, Hermiston gathered themselves and soon found its stride outscoring La Grande 17-6 the rest of the quarter, helped by three big 3-pointers by sophomore guard Andrew James, who ended the game with 14 points.

La Grande made a run at the start of the second quarter, a 9-1 push to eventually re-take a lead at 20-18. But the lead lasted all of 35 seconds as Hermiston sophomore Cesar Ortiz nailed a 3-pointer to put Hermiston back on top 21-20 and the Bulldogs did not relinquish that lead until late in the third quarter.

The Bulldogs offense fell a

little stale in that third quarter as La Grande's defense picked up the pressure, resulting in some easy buckets for the Tigers to propel them into a 44-43 lead at the end of three. Arstein said the message in the huddle between quarters was simple: just play smart.

"I just said we need to get smart defensive stops," he said. "We're going to miss shots, and that's OK, but we were giving up transition buckets, tipped rebounds and our defensive mistakes added up in the third and we needed to clean it up."

And the talk worked, as Hermiston shot 6-11 from the floor in the quarter and outscored La Grande 19-10 to pull away for the victory. Zack Jacobs led La Grande with 15 points, while Kaden Green Chandler finished with 11 and Andrew Peasley had 10.

Hermiston next heads to The Dalles next Friday to begin Columbia River Conference play.

LG	11	17	16	10	-	54
HHS	17	16	10	19	-	62

LA GRANDE — Z. Jacobs 15, K. Green-Chandler 11, A. Peasley 10, GT Blackman 7, G. Hanson 6, E. Siltanen 5.
HERMISTON — X. Rambo 23, A. James 14, J. Ramirez 8, C. Ortiz 6, H. Wallis 5, T. McCullough 4, K. Moss 2.
3-pointers — LG 3, HHS 7. Free throws — LG 5-13, HHS 13-20. Fouls — LG 18, HHS 14.

ROBINSON:

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Robinson maintained that in the first event of the day Saturday, as he won the 60-meter hurdles in a personal-best 8.87 seconds. Robinson's time beat his old best by more than half a second, and gave him a lead of over 400 points going into the pole vault.

The pole vault ended Robinson's attempt at the heptathlon last year, but Robinson showed not signs of trouble this year, finishing with a clearance of 11-07.75 (3.55m).

The pole vault did snap Robinson's streak of winning every event, but he still finished second, and only gave up 163 points on his lead to Eric Durrant, who won the event with a clearance of 13-07.25 (4.15m).

Robinson led comfortably going into the 1,000 meters, as a result, but the junior still won the event for good measure. Robinson finished in 2:53.76, close to nine seconds faster than his nearest competitor.

Robinson's point total moves him to sixth all-time in the indoor heptathlon at Portland State, with only one full heptathlon under his belt. Additionally, Robinson beat the previous Big Sky-leading mark with his score, moving ahead of Montana's Brendan Thurber-Blaser, who entered the weekend with the Big Sky lead off his score of 4,858 at the Candy Cane Invitational at the beginning of December.

Robinson and the Vikings return to the Jacksons Indoor Track next week, as they compete at the Bronco Invitational next Saturday.

OREGON CLASSIC: Chester, Wells go undefeated to lead Mac-Hi Pioneers

Continued from 1B

Hermiston (11-7) beat Mountain View 43-22 in the championship dual after having opened the pool round by beating the Cougars 48-18.

In the finals, Mountain View was still in it late when Luke Schulz edged Joey Gutierrez 9-6 in the 182-pound bout to trim Hermiston's lead to 28-22.

The Bulldogs would take the final three matches, though, and erased any doubt of the outcome with back-to-back pins by John-Henry Line and Bevan at 195 and 220, then a 3-1 win by Beau Blake at 285.

The loss was Gutierrez's only of the tournament as both he and Blake went 6-1, as did Julio Leiva (170). Line was 5-1, and Wade Kirkpatrick (145) and Ruben Madrigal each went 5-2. Gage Shipley (113) and Jesus Rodriguez (126) were both 4-3, and Sean Stewart (195) went 1-0.

Hermiston beat Bend 65-6 in the quarterfinals, and then had its toughest dual of the tournament with a 35-33 win over Dallas in the semifinals.

That match saw the Bulldogs trailing 33-23 with only two matches to wrestle when Treve Earhart beat Line 7-1 at 195.

Bevan gave the Bulldogs six points with a pin over Bryce Jordan in 1:44 in the next match, then Blake secured the win with six more when he pinned Ashton Brecht 3:28 into their 285-pound match.

Also earning wins over Dallas wrestlers were Tuia with a 23-8 technical fall, Hendon with a 10-4 decision, Wyse with a pin (3:27), and Gutierrez with a 11-7 decision.

Hermiston's other wins in the pool round were 40-36 over Sweet Home, 67-10 over McMinnville and 71-10 over Phoenix.

PENDLETON — The Buckaroos went 2-2 in their pool with wins over Bend, 43-28, and West Albany,

43-31, but lost all three of its matches once reaching the bracketed portion.

Pendleton's losses in the pool round were to Dallas, 45-24, and Roseburg, 71-3. The Bucks lost to Redmond 36-32 in their first match Saturday, then lost to Crater, 55-12, and Thurston 46-27.

Pendleton was only trailing Thurston 28-27 following a forfeit at 182 pounds, but took pins at the next three weights to seal their fate. In its other narrow loss Pendleton scored pins in the last two matches after Redmond secured victory with a pin by Bunker Parrish at 195 to make it 36-20.

Senior Morgan Holcomb led the Bucks on the weekend going 6-1 at 152 and 160 pounds, Alex Rendon (132) was 5-1, Jeff Kovach was 5-2 at 145 and 138, Scott Chambers was 4-3 at 160 and 170, Trevor Ulicni (285) went 3-2 and Blake Davis (126) was 3-4.

MAC-HI — The Pioneers got wins over Crater's JV,

42-39, Irrigon, 45-35, Burns, 48-36, Mazama, 36-33, and lost to Willamina/Falls City, 49-24. Mac-Hi placed sixth in the 4A/3A consolation bracket.

Riley Chester (145, 152 pounds) and Spencer Wells (220) went 5-0, Zach Chrisman (126, 132) and Kaden Kilburg (160) each went 4-1, Jesse Jones (106, 113) and Donnie Clark (285) were 3-2, Brandy Chaney (195) was 2-0 and Joshua Torres (195) went 2-1.

In its match against Irrigon, Mac-Hi fell behind 35-27 when Reece Sheller and Brady Harrington earned pins at 170 and 182 pounds, respectively.

But Chaney and Wells responded with back-to-back pins both came at the 3:51 mark to get back into the lead

at 39-35, and Clark finished off the win with a pin in 3:45 in the heavyweight match.

RIVERSIDE — The Pirates won their first two duals but then lost their last three to tie for eighth place.

Riverside's wins were over Burns, 55-24, and Glide, 40-34. Its losses were to North Marion, 51-27, Creswell, 44-33, and Dayton, 54-27.

Aristotle Rockwell led the Pirates going 5-0 at 132 and 138 pounds, and Jacob Harris went 1-0 at 132. Going 3-2 were Abraham Silva (113), Andrew Barker (120), Ivan Escobedo (160) and Ruben Villa (285).

IRRIGON — The Knights went 0-5 with losses to Crater JV, 42-36, Willamina, 60-18, Mac-Hi, 45-35, Harrisburg,

51-24, and Glide 66-9.

Jose Romero led Irrigon going 4-1 at 138 pounds, Fabian Miranda-Wells (152) was 3-2, and Tucker McAllister (220, 195) and Luke Meyers (285) were each 3-3.

HEPPNER — The Mustangs placed sixth at the 2A/1A level with their only win coming 36-12 over Elgin.

Heppner lost to Lowell, 72-12, Redmond JV, 36-33, Neah-Kah-Nie, 48-27, Myrtle Point, 42-36, and Monroe, 27-21.

Senior Cord Flynn (195, 220) went 5-1 to lead the team, and Jacob Wallace (170, 160) matched him in wins going 5-2. Leo Waite (126, 132) was 4-2 and Charles Cason (145, 152) was 3-2.

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