

SWIMMING: State meet starts on Friday

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the Columbia River Conference championships, Hermiston knew who its top competition would be. "We knew at this meet it would be really close because (Pendleton was) bringing all of its swimmers and we were bringing all of ours," Barnard said.

Bulldogs coach Kevin Hamblin said he was doing the math in his head before the first event, which he also figured would make or break Hermiston's title hopes.

"Before the meet started I said our medley relay, we had two of them in there, I said, 'This is where we're going to win or lose the district meet.'"

Hermiston's two teams and Hood River Valley's one were the only teams entered in the race.

"I said, 'If we don't get DQ'd and get those second and third (place) points we're going to do just fine,'" Hamblin said.

The Bulldogs made it through the race and picked up 18 points that would indeed prove crucial as Hermiston was able to hold off Pendleton 93-91 at the end of the meet to claim its first-ever district championship.

"I was looking at the Pendleton guys and they had some fire in their eyes," said Hermiston senior relay swimmer Ryan Wiley. "Kevin (Hamblin) just kept telling us we've got to keep pushing. It's not about time necessarily, it's about passing the guy that you can see. And even the ones you can't see."

"We knew it was going to be close, but we didn't know quite how close," said Bulldogs junior Carson Wrathall, a relay and freestyle swimmer. "That was just crazy. We kind of all went crazy. We'd never won at districts, it was our first time, we didn't know what to do really."

The shimmer on their first district crown was still sparkling bright on Wednesday as they wrapped up practice at Blue Mountain Community College, but the Bulldogs had turned their focus to another fast-approaching first — a berth in the OSAA state championships beginning Friday at Mt. Hood Community College.

Barnard and Wrathall each qualified in three events. Along with making it in their individual strokes, they will be joined by senior Ean Buck and sophomore Seth Buck in swimming the relays at state. Wiley, junior Jose Roman, sophomore Alexis Perez and freshman Ivan Cardenas will be



The Pendleton High boys' relay team won the 200-yard freestyle relay and the 400 freestyle relay at the Columbia River Conference District Swim Meet in Hood River on February 11. From left: Jon Jennings, Shane Miltenberger, Rylan Headley, Avery Madril.



The Pendleton High girls' won the 200 freestyle relay at the CRC District Meet in Hood River on Feb. 11. From left: Landry Huth, Sam Schmitz, Oceane Schreier, Abby Williams.

their relay alternates. It is the first state meet for all of them.

Barnard enters with the highest seed at No. 10 in the 200-yard individual medley after winning districts in two minutes, 11.84 seconds.

"It's some tough competition this year, and I know that I can drop some time," said Barnard. "I could have dropped more time in finals at districts but I was really swimming just to get to state, and I really wanted to save some (energy) for my relays because I wanted to take some of these other guys with me to state."

Wrathall is seeded 11th in the 200 freestyle, and said his goals are to swim his hardest, soak up the atmosphere, and lay it all on the line in the relays. The Bulldogs are hoping to reach the finals in both the 200 and 400 freestyle relay, and figure they will need to shave several seconds from their 11th-seeded times in the preliminaries.

"We've got to drop five seconds to make it there (to the finals), and hopefully keep going from there," said Ean Buck, who will swim in both relays.

The Bulldogs figure that with a pared down event list at state, fresher swimmers will naturally mean quicker relay times, and Pendleton knows firsthand how quickly things can change in the relays.

"There was a couple years ago when our boys team went in as 10th and then we went into finals as first," said Buckaroos senior Jon Jennings, who qualified for state in four events. "So it's just whatever happens happens."

Jennings is making his fourth state finals, and as well as swimming for both of Pendleton's freestyle relays he's entered in the 50 and 100 freestyle.

He's the defending state champion in the 50 free, and is seeded second with a time of 21.56. Lebanon junior Casey McEuen won his district title in 20.97, and the two swimmers tied for the quickest seed time in the 100 with 47.87. Jennings was third in that event last season.

Also earning individual state berths for the Buckaroos boys were senior Shane Miltenberger in the 500 freestyle and junior Rylan Headley in the 100 backstroke.

Senior Avery Madril joins those three for the relays, and their alternates are juniors Matt Larsen and Nick Johnson.

Sam Schmitz made state in the 100 freestyle for the girls, and will also swim on Pendleton's 200 freestyle relay team, which are the only two events in which the Buckaroos qualified girls for state.

"It was actually a huge goal of mine," said the senior of her first individual state berth. "I competed in the 100 (free) last year and the girl that I competed against out-touched me (at districts).

"We're great friends and we'd been joking about it all season, and then I don't know, this year I came out of nowhere and I just had this huge surge of energy and dropped, I think like two seconds, and I saw that I won and I was so happy I just started crying."

Schmitz will make her second state meet in the relay along with senior Oceane Schreier, junior Abby Williams and sophomore Landry Huth. Seniors Brooke Lapp, MaKayla Lee and Olivia Broker are their alternates.

Like the boys' relay teams, the Bucks girls have been working hard on their turns and starts in an effort to reach the final heat.

"We know we're seeded 10th and you have to get to sixth to get to the finals," Huth said, "but we know that it's only a couple of seconds."

"We're just going to try as hard as we can," Schmitz said. "This is my last meet and I'm just going to give it everything I've got."

The 5A state meet will begin at 9 a.m. on Friday with preliminary heats. Finals will begin on Saturday at 8:15 a.m.

Hermiston state qualifiers

BOYS
(Event, seed, name, district finals time)
200 freestyle — 12, C. Wrathall, 1:55.69.
200 individual medley — 10, R. Barnard, 2:11.84.
200 freestyle relay — 11, C. Wrathall, S. Buck, E. Buck, R. Barnard (J. Roman, A. Perez, R. Wiley, I. Cardenas), 1:37.97
400 freestyle relay — 11, C. Wrathall, E. Buck, S. Buck, R. Barnard (J. Roman, A. Perez, R. Wiley, I. Cardenas), 3:38.72

Pendleton state qualifiers

BOYS
(Event, seed, name, district finals time)
50 freestyle — 2, J. Jennings, 47.87
100 freestyle — 2, J. Jennings, 47.87
500 freestyle — 12, S. Miltenberger, 5:22.78
200 freestyle relay — 8, A. Madril, R. Headley, S. Miltenberger, J. Jennings (M. Larsen, N. Johnson), 1:37.25
100 backstroke — 12, R. Headley, 1:05.56
400 freestyle relay — 9, A. Madril, R. Headley, S. Miltenberger, J. Jennings (M. Larsen, N. Johnson), 3:36.03
GIRLS
100 freestyle — 12, S. Schmitz, 58.94
200 freestyle relay — 10, O. Schreier, A. Williams, L. Huth, S. Schmitz (B. Lapp, M. Lee, O. Broker), 1:50.84

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BLAZERS:

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and McCollum had 18. The Trail Blazers cut the lead to single digits in the third quarter, but never got closer than seven.

"I just could never get it going," Lillard said. "I felt like even when I got looks that I know I should make, it felt like the ball was rolling around the rim and rattling in and out."

"We're in a tough place. I don't think we've ever been in this position. Even in my rookie year, we were at least playing good basketball. ... You got two options: You can either run from it or take this break and go rest up and do whatever we need to do and come back and man up. ... Period. That's what needs to happen."

The Jazz led 40-37 at half-time despite continuing their shooting woes from the previous game. Utah shot a season-low 33 percent from the field in a loss to the Clippers on Monday.

Fortunately for the Jazz, their top-ranked defense held the Blazers to 32.5 percent shooting from the floor in the first 24 minutes. A 12-0 first-quarter run gave Utah a 10-point lead that it extended to 14 midway through the second quarter after a three-point play from Hill.

The Trail Blazers closed the half on an 11-0 stretch, including seven straight from McCollum.

"I didn't think we necessarily played that well offensively, but we were competing and at least kept it close until the (Jazz) 3-pointers came," Trail Blazers coach Terry Stotts said.

TIP-INS

Trail Blazers: Al-Farouq Aminu did not play due to a left knee sprain. ... Evan Turner missed his third straight game due to a right hand injury. ... Lillard has made a 3-pointer in a career-high 36 consecutive games, the third-longest streak in the NBA this season.

DEBUT

Center Jusuf Nurkic made his debut with the Blazers after being traded from Denver on Jan. 29. The Nuggets sent Nurkic and a 2017 first-round pick for Mason Plumlee, a 2018 second-round pick and cash considerations.

Nurkic scored 13 points and had seven rebounds in 21 minutes off the bench.

UP NEXT

Trail Blazers: travel to face the Orlando Magic and newly acquired Terrence Ross on Feb. 23.

IWAKUMA: Declined invite to World Baseball Classic to focus on Mariners

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Hernandez lose some velocity and miss a few starts due to injury.

Iwakuma got to Arizona several days before the spring training report date to get a jump on preparation for this season.

Iwakuma made 33 starts and fell an inning short of 200 in 2016. A couple of months shy of turning 36 years old, he's eager to show he can still be counted on as often.

"Kuma takes his offseason as serious as anybody. I think he wants to show people that

he can carry that workload," Mariners manager Scott Servais said. "It's hard for him, especially where he's at in his career. We got probably more out of him than we expected, which is great. We certainly needed it, and he wants to back it up again this year."

Servais said Iwakuma was disappointed in the start against Oakland with the season on the line. Servais said fatigue might have been a factor.

"But he really carried us. Especially when Felix went down and we were struggling to get consistent

innings out of our starters. He was our most consistent guy," Servais said.

An All-Star in 2013 with a no-hitter to his credit, Iwakuma is in his sixth season as a Mariner. He's won consistently, with double-digit wins in three seasons. His win total and innings total last season were career highs.

"I was able to pitch 33 games, a full season, and I'm very happy for that. That's what you want to do as a starter," Iwakuma said through interpreter Antony Suzuki. "I look forward to doing that again this year.

Sixteens wins is great, I look forward to winning more than that this year. I don't have a goal yet, but just staying healthy for an entire season and helping the team and contributing, that's all I think about right now."

Iwakuma said he didn't think much about whether fatigue was a factor in him going 2-5 from Aug. 18 to the end of last season. He did open the season 0-3 in April.

"That's another thing I have to work on, having a good September and finishing strong," he said.

Iwakuma feels healthy as camp begins, with pitchers

and catchers set for their first workout on Wednesday. He spurned another chance to pitch for Japan in the World Baseball Classic — he represented his country in 2009 — to focus on his goal of making all of his starts for the Mariners in 2017.

And this year, he's confident the Mariners can make the postseason for the first time since 2001.

"Very happy. Very excited about this team," he said.

NOTES: Mariners pitchers committed 11 throwing errors last season, Servais pointed out, and he installed a new drill taken

from a college football practice he observed. Pitchers fielded comebacks and threw into a net with a target on it. "The numbers back up that we've got to get better there," Servais said. ... Newly acquired LHP Drew Smyly could pitch for Team USA in the World Baseball Classic next month, but not until the second round if it advances. "We've got to get him ready for our season, that's the No. 1 thing," Servais said. "He does want to pitch for Team USA, I certainly respect that and understand that, but he'll be available based on when the second round comes up."

SCOREBOARD

Local Slate

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL	
Today	Echo vs. Wallowa (at Baker High School), TBA
	Helix vs. Joseph (at Baker High School), 8:15 p.m.
Friday	Irrigon at Umatilla, 6 p.m.
	Nixyaawii vs. Helix/Joseph winner (at Baker High School), 2:15 p.m.
	Powder Valley vs. Echo/Wallowa winner (at Baker High School), 8:15 p.m.
	Pendleton at The Dalles, 7 p.m.
	Hood River at Hermiston, 7 p.m.
	Arlington at Sherman (at Madras HS), 7:30 p.m.
	Heppner vs. Weston-McEwen (at Pendleton Convention Center), 7:45 p.m.
PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL	
Today	Joseph vs. Helix (at Baker High School), 6:30 p.m.
	Echo vs. Cove (at Baker High School), 1 p.m.
Friday	Powder Valley vs. Joseph/Helix winner (at Baker High School), 1 p.m.
	Weston-McEwen vs. Culver (CBC District Tournament, at Pendleton Convention Center), 6 p.m.
	Nixyaawii vs. Echo/Cove winner (at Baker High School), 6:30 p.m.
	Hermiston at Hood River, 7 p.m.
	The Dalles at Pendleton, 7 p.m.
PREP WRESTLING	
Friday	Heppner/lone at 2A/1A District Tournament (at Hermiston, Armand Larive Middle School), 10 a.m.
Saturday	Riverside, Irrigon, Echo/Stamfield at 3A District Tournament (at Nyssa), 10 a.m.
PREP SWIMMING	
Friday	Pendleton, Hermiston at state championships (Mt. Hood C.C., Gesham), 9 a.m.
Saturday	Pendleton, Hermiston at state championships (Mt. Hood C.C., Gesham), 8:15 a.m.
COLLEGE MEN'S BASKETBALL	
Today	Eastern Oregon at College of Idaho, 6:30 p.m.
Saturday	Blue Mountain at Walla Walla, 4 p.m.

Sunday			
Walla Walla U. at Eastern Oregon, 3 p.m.			
COLLEGE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL			
Today	Eastern Oregon at College of Idaho, 4:30 p.m.		
Saturday	Blue Mountain at Walla Walla, 2 p.m.		
Sunday	Walla Walla U. at Eastern Oregon, 1 p.m.		
COLLEGE WRESTLING			
Saturday	Eastern Oregon at NAIA Western Regional (at Redding, Calif.), TBA		
COLLEGE SOFTBALL			
Friday	Eastern Oregon vs. William Jessup (at Redding, Calif.), 11 a.m.		
	Eastern Oregon at Simpson, 3 p.m.		
Saturday	Eastern Oregon vs. William Jessup (at Redding, Calif.), 9 a.m.		
	Eastern Oregon at Simpson, 11 a.m.		
Prep Standings			
BOYS BASKETBALL			
5A Columbia River Conference			
	Conf.	OvrRank	
Pendleton	6-0	11-4	10
Hermiston	4-2	14-6	11
Hood River	1-4	6-11	29
The Dalles	1-6	4-14	27
4A Greater Oregon League			
	Conf.	OvrRank	
La Grande	6-0	18-2	3
Ontario	4-2	10-8	14
Baker	2-4	9-15	25
Mac-Hi	0-6	6-14	34
3A Eastern Oregon League			
	Conf.	OvrRank	
Umatilla	8-2	16-7	10
Irrigon	7-3	15-7	13
Burns	6-4	14-10	23
Nyssa	5-5	8-13	22
Riverside	2-8	6-14	35
Vale	2-8	4-18	34
2A Columbia Basin Conference			
	Conf.	OvrRank	
Stanfield	8-0	18-1	1
Weston-McEwen	4-4	13-9	15
Heppner	4-4	12-6	12
Pilot Rock	4-4	11-10	18
Culver	0-8	1-18	38

1A Big Sky League		
	Conf.	OvrRank
Sherman	14-0	20-5
Dufur	12-2	17-3
Horizon Christian	7-6	15-10
Arlington	7-7	12-11
Condon/Wheeler	6-8	11-12
South Wasco	6-8	9-12
Ione	3-11	4-18
Mitchell/Spray	0-14	1-19
1A Old Oregon League		
	Conf.	OvrRank
Powder Valley	13-1	18-4
Nixyaawii	12-2	15-6
Joseph	11-3	17-5
Echo	7-7	8-15
Wallowa	5-9	5-17
Helix	4-10	6-15
Cove	4-10	6-16
Pine Eagle	0-14	1-20
GIRLS BASKETBALL		
5A Columbia River Conference		
	Conf.	OvrRank
Hermiston	5-1	11-9
Pendleton	5-1	9-7
The Dalles	2-5	7-10
Hood River	0-5	6-9
4A Greater Oregon League		
	Conf.	OvrRank
Baker	6-0	15-4
La Grande	4-2	11-9
Ontario	2-4	5-16
Mac-Hi	0-6	1-18
3A Eastern Oregon League		
	Conf.	OvrRank
Vale	8-2	18-4
Nyssa	7-3	17-7
Burns	6-4	14-9
Irrigon	5-5	12-10
Riverside	3-7	9-10
Umatilla	1-9	6-17
2A Columbia Basin Conference		
	Conf.	OvrRank
Pilot Rock	6-2	17-4
Weston-McEwen	6-2	15-7
Culver	5-3	13-7
Heppner	2-6	7-11
Stanfield	1-7	4-16
1A Big Sky League		
	Conf.	OvrRank
Horizon Christian	13-1	19-5
Arlington	13-1	18-5
South Wasco	9-5	12-9
Condon/Wheeler	8-6	11-12
Sherman	6-8	8-16
Dufur	4-10	6-14

1A Old Oregon League			
	Conf.	OvrRank	
Nixyaawii	14-0	21-0	
Powder Valley	12-2	18-4	
Joseph	9-5	15-6	
Echo	8-6	15-8	
Helix	5-9	12-25	
Cove	5-9	9-14	
Wallowa	3-11	3-19	
Pine Eagle	0-14	0-18	
Basketball			
NBA			
EASTERN CONFERENCE			
Atlantic Division			
	W	L	Pct
Boston	37	19	66.1
Toronto	33	24	57.9
New York	23	34	40.4
Philadelphia	21	35	37.5
Brooklyn	9	47	16.1
Southeast Division			
	W	L	Pct
Washington	33	21	61.1
Atlanta	32	24	57.1
Miami	25	32	43.9
Charlotte	24	32	42.9
Orlando	21	37	36.2
Central Division			
	W	L	Pct
Cleveland	29	27	51.8
Indiana	29	27	51.8
Chicago	27	29	48.2
Detroit	27	30	47.4
Milwaukee	25	30	45.5
WESTERN CONFERENCE			
Southwest Division			
	W	L	Pct
San Antonio	43	13	76.8
Houston	40	18	69.0
Memphis	34	24	58.6
New Orleans	23	34	40.4
Dallas	22	34	39.3
Northwest Division			
	W	L	Pct
Utah	35	22	61.4
Oklahoma City	32	25	56.1
Denver	25	31	44.6
Portland	23	33	41.1
Minnesota	22	35	