

ROCKETS: Pierce leads with 27 points

Continued from 1B

The Rockets came out against the Bulldogs on Saturday with a lightning-quick and efficient offense and smothering defense. The home team led 16-2 at the end of the first quarter and 32-8 at halftime and it seemed like the win was already wrapped up.

But with spirit week festivities at halftime, the Rockets did not get a true halftime break and chance to talk and game plan for the second half. And Smidt believes that non-break led to the sluggish play in the third and early fourth quarters, where Culver found a groove and outscored the Rockets 23-9 over the first 10 minutes to get within 10 points at 41-31.

However, that 10-point cushion finally gave the Rockets the wake up call and they flipped the switch back on and cruised to the victory.

"I wasn't able to talk to half of my team and get them re-focused for the second," Smidt said. "But we came out and responded to the attack in the fourth, rebounded and played defense and hit our shots."

Pierce had a fantastic performance for the Rockets, scoring 27 points and grabbing 12 rebounds, though double-doubles have become a norm for him.

Thieme followed Pierce with 15 points and seven rebounds, and his line might have been better had he not dealt with foul trouble for parts of the first and second halves. And Lankford and Weinke combined for nine points to continue the seniors' string of solid output.

"It means a lot for them to play for something," Smidt said. "They all have a lot of pride in their community and in their school and they are out here showing that pride



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Levi Thieme (23), of Pilot Rock, goes up for a shot during Saturday's game in Pilot Rock against Culver.

when they step on the floor and give all their effort, and that's impressive."

The Rockets have only three games left in league play starting with Weston-McEwen at home on Feb. 3 and two straight on the road at Heppner and Stanfield on Feb. 9 and 10. At least two wins will clinch the CBC regular season title and a spot in the district title game, and the Rockets' confidence is sky-high.

"We're feeling confident about going on," Thieme said. "Our goal is to win

league and win state, and I think we have the potential to do it. We just need to keep playing how we are and play as a team and take it done game at a time."

| | | | | | | |
|------------|----|----|----|----|---|----|
| CHS | 2 | 6 | 17 | 10 | — | 35 |
| PR | 16 | 16 | 5 | 17 | — | 54 |

CULVER — W. Basl 12, M. Kruger 11, D. Gutierrez 4, E. Gutierrez 2.
PILOT ROCK — B. Pierce 27, L. Thieme 15, R. Lankford 5, C. Weinke 4, L. Weinke 3.
3-pointers — CHS 3, PR 2. Free throws — CHS 4-6, PR 14-19. Fouls — CHS 12, PR 6.

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PREPS: Hermiston wins Farm-City title

Continued from 1B

win over Mitchell/Spray on Saturday night.

The Knights (3-16 overall, 3-6 BSL) will aim to make it two straight wins on Tuesday when they host Arlington.

BOYS BASKETBALL

HEPPNER 48, STANFIELD 43 — At Stanfield, the Heppner Mustangs grabbed 20 offensive rebounds to help their big second half surge to steal a victory from the Stanfield Tigers on Saturday night.

The Tigers (8-13 overall, 1-4 CBC) led 23-15 at halftime and 41-33 after three quarters, but the Mustangs' work on the offensive glass led to a 15-2 advantage in the fourth quarter to earn the win. Trent Smith led the Mustangs (9-7, 4-1) with 17 points and Kevin Smith added 11.

Eduardo Nunez led the Tigers with 13 points and Brody Woods added 11.

POWDER VALLEY

63, NIXYA AWII 49 — At North Powder, the Nixyaawii Golden Eagles' nine game win streak and unbeaten mark in the Old Oregon League came to an end with a loss to Powder Valley on Saturday night.

Mick Schimmel and Deven Barkley led the Eagles (16-3 overall, 9-1 OOL) with 13 points apiece. Hunter Davis led the Badgers (14-4, 9-1) with 19 points.

DUFUR 61, IONE 53

At Ione, the Dufur Rangers handed the host Cardinals their fifth consecutive defeat by a 61-53 score on Saturday evening.

The Cardinals' (4-15 overall, 2-7 BSL) aim to snap the streak on Tuesday while hosting Mitchell/Spray.

CONDON/WHEELER

82, MITCHELL/SPRAY 28 — At Condon, the Condon/Wheeler Knights picked up their seventh league victory of the year with a beatdown of Mitchell/Spray on Saturday.

The Knights' (13-6 overall, 7-2 BSL) 82 points marked a season-high and the second time scoring at least 80 this season, with the other time being 81 against Weston-McEwen on Dec. 30.

COVE 62, HELIX 31

At Helix, the Cove Leopards snapped a four-game losing streak as they doubled up the host Helix Grizzlies on Saturday night.

The Grizzlies (3-17 overall, 2-8 OOL) next play on Friday at Powder Valley.

JOSEPH 56, ECHO 39

At Echo, the Cougars fell back to .500 in Old Oregon League play with a loss at home to Joseph on Saturday.

Echo (8-13 overall, 5-5 OOL) next plays at Nixyaawii on Tuesday at 7 p.m.

WRESTLING

FARM-CITY TOURNAMENT — At Hermiston, the host Hermiston Bulldogs had four individual champions and 16 placers as they captured the team title of the Farm-City tournament on Saturday at the Dawg House.

The Bulldogs finished in first place with 269 points, holding off the Dallas Dragons who finished in second place with 266 points. The Riverside Pirates (100) finished in sixth and the Irrigon Knights (96) were seventh.

For Hermiston, Ruben Madrigal was the first winner of the day at 113 pounds, where he defeated Baker's Johnny Niehaus by a 19-15 decision. Then, Adrian Tuia won at 145 pounds with a 14-5 major decision over

Eagle's (ID) Luke Chapman, Joey Gutierrez won at 195 pounds with a pin in 44 seconds over Irrigon's Brady Harrington, and Beau Blake won a 3-2 decision at 285 over Dallas' Ashton Brecht.

The remaining Bulldogs to reach the medal stand were Adrian Delgado (2nd, 106 pounds), Isaac Lambert (4th, 113), Gage Shipley (5th, 120), Sam Marsengill (6th, 120), Shawn Pourier (6th, 126), Daymian Rivera (4th, 145), Daniel Faateete (4th, 160), Zach Kirkpatrick (2nd, 170), Jake Palmer (2nd, 182), Moises Avila (5th, 182), Sean Stewart (3rd, 220), and Garrett Hills (4th, 285).

Riverside finished the day with eight of its 11 wrestlers earning spots on the podium. The best finishes for the Pirates came with Fernando Ortega (106 pounds), Abraham Silva (113) and Christian Reyes (132) all earning third place.

The rest of the Pirate placers were Andrew Barker (4th, 120 pounds), Ethan Snyder (5th, 138), Jose Puerta (5th, 145), Allan Gutierrez (5th, 220), and Michael Carroll (6th, 285).

Irrigon finished the day with seven of its nine wrestlers on the podium, with Harrington's runner-up at 195 leading the way. The remaining placers were Roberto Ayala (4th, 152), Josue Aguilera (5th, 160), Alex Walls (3rd, 170), Christian Michaels (5th, 170), Kevin Ortega (5th, 195), and Kaleb Kendrick (3rd, 285).

PINE EAGLE INVITATIONAL — At Halfway, the Heppner Mustangs put together a seventh place finish with 52 points at the Pine Eagle Invitational on Saturday.

Leo Waite won first place at 126 pounds. Trevor Antonucci came close to the title at 120, but settled for second.

SPEED: Averaging 22.6 points per game this year

Continued from 1B

Speed has increased his scoring each season, from 121 points as a sophomore (5.0 per game), to 220 as a sophomore (10.0 per game) and to 321 as a junior (12.8 per game) and to 429 through 19 games as a senior (22.6 per game).

As a senior, Speed's scoring efforts have increased greatly, almost out of necessity, after the TigerScots lost all-state players Shaw Broncheau and Ethan Reger to graduation, as well as a few other departures from last year's state playoff team. Speed has scored 429 points through 19 games so far for a 22.6 per-game average.

"I just looked at this year as an opportunity to prove people wrong and show people that we can still play," Speed said of his senior-year outburst, "and I wanted to show that I was

still one of the best players in the league. But none of it is possible without the teammates I have this year. We're a tight-knit group and it's been a fun experience."

He has also earned a pair of all-league second team selections and undoubtedly a first team selection this year.

"He's had the chance to play with pretty good players," Pickard said of Speed, "and I think that's made him a better player. This year we had some kids move out of the district and a lot has been expected of Brett and he's stepped up."

"He's a great kid and a great player. I can't say enough good things about him, not just on the court but off it, too."

Speed has at least four more games to add to his career total, starting with a home contest with Heppner on Friday night.

Local slate

| PREP BOYS BASKETBALL | | | | |
|----------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Tuesday | Echo at Nixyaawii, 7 p.m. | Pendleton at Hermiston, 7:30 p.m. | Touchet (WA) at Mac-Hi, 7:30 p.m. | Mitchell/Spray at Ione, 7:30 p.m. |
| Friday | Arlington at Condon/Wheeler, 7:30 p.m. | Stanfield at Culver, 6 p.m. | Hood River at Pendleton, 7 p.m. | Hermiston at The Dalles, 7 p.m. |
| Saturday | Condon/Wheeler at Sherman, 7 p.m. | Irrigon at Burns, 7:30 p.m. | Umatilla at Nyssa, 7:30 p.m. | Riverside at Vale, 7:30 p.m. |
| Wednesday | Heppner at Weston-McEwen, 7:30 p.m. | Irrigon at Burns, 6 p.m. | Dufur at Arlington, 7:30 p.m. | Heli at Powder Valley, 7:30 p.m. |

| PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Tuesday | Pendleton at Hermiston, 5:45 p.m. | Touchet (WA) at Mac-Hi, 6 p.m. | Mitchell/Spray at Ione, 6 p.m. | Arlington at Condon/Wheeler, 6 p.m. |
| Friday | Echo at Nixyaawii, 6 p.m. | Stanfield at Culver, 4:30 p.m. | Irrigon at Burns, 6 p.m. | Umatilla at Nyssa, 6 p.m. |
| Saturday | Riverside at Vale, 6 p.m. | Heppner at Weston-McEwen, 6 p.m. | Ione at Horizon Christian, 6 p.m. | Dufur at Arlington, 6 p.m. |
| Wednesday | Sherman at Condon/Wheeler, 7 p.m. | Helix at Powder Valley, 6 p.m. | The Dalles at Hermiston, 7 p.m. | Pendleton at Hood River, 7 p.m. |

| PREP WRESTLING | | | | |
|------------------|---|-----------------------------------|------------------|---|
| Wednesday | Hermiston at Pendleton, 7 p.m. | La Grande at Mac-Hi | Saturday | Riverside, Irrigon, Echo at District Tournament (Boardman), 10 a.m. |
| Friday | Heppner at District Tour. (Joseph), 10 a.m. | MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL | Wednesday | Treasure Valley at BMCC, 8 p.m. |
| Friday | Northwest at EOU, 7:30 p.m. | WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL | Wednesday | Treasure Valley at BMCC, 6 p.m. |
| Friday | Northwest at EOU, 5:30 p.m. | COLLEGE WRESTLING | Saturday | EOU (women) at Southern Oregon, 6 p.m. |
| | | | Saturday | EOU (men) at Southern Oregon, 7 p.m. |

SCOREBOARD

| NBA | | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|------------|-----------|
| Eastern Conference | W | L | Pct | GB |
| Boston | 36 | 15 | .706 | — |
| Toronto | 33 | 15 | .688 | 1 1/2 |
| Philadelphia | 24 | 23 | .511 | 10 |
| New York | 22 | 28 | .440 | 13 1/2 |
| Brooklyn | 18 | 32 | .360 | 17 1/2 |
| Western Conference | W | L | Pct | GB |
| Cleveland | 29 | 19 | .604 | — |
| Milwaukee | 27 | 22 | .551 | 2 1/2 |
| Indiana | 28 | 23 | .549 | 2 1/2 |
| Detroit | 22 | 26 | .458 | 7 |
| Chicago | 18 | 32 | .360 | 12 |
| NCAA Men's Basketball | W | L | Pct | GB |
| Houston | 35 | 13 | .729 | — |
| San Antonio | 33 | 19 | .635 | 4 |
| New Orleans | 27 | 22 | .551 | 8 1/2 |
| Memphis | 18 | 31 | .367 | 17 1/2 |
| Dallas | 16 | 35 | .313 | 20 1/2 |
| NCAA Women's Basketball | W | L | Pct | GB |
| Golden State | 40 | 10 | .800 | — |
| L.A. Clippers | 25 | 24 | .510 | 14 1/2 |

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