

Girls Class 2A State Tournament

No. 5 Faith Bible knocks off No. 4 Grant Union in thriller

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The No. 5 Faith Bible Falcons had been in control for most of the second half, until they found themselves trailing the No. 4 Grant Union Prospectors 47-44 with just over two minutes left in their Class 2A quarterfinal game on Thursday at Pendleton High School.

That’s when head coach Eddie Kirkpatrick called a timeout, knowing he just needed to settle his team down.

“I think we just lost focus there for a little bit when we got down,” Kirkpatrick said. “We’re kind of a veteran and younger team mixed together, so some of them started freaking out thinking they had to go win the game with three minutes left. But once we were able to call a timeout, they were able to settle down and put it together.”

Whatever it was that Kirkpatrick said to his team, it worked for the Falcons. Faith Bible outscored Grant Union 9-2 over the final 2:15, including going 7-of-10 from the free throw line, to squeeze out a 53-49 victory and secure a spot in the Class 2A semifinals on Friday.

“It feels amazing,” Kirkpatrick said. “This is stuff we’ve been talking about for years and to be here is unreal.”

Izzy Steerman was named Player of the Game for the Falcons (26-2) as she had a game-high 19 points. Twins Katie and Sarah Fajer were dominant inside for the Falcons, too, combining for 24 points, 22 rebounds and six blocked shots.

For the Prospectors (21-4), Kaylee Wright led with 16 points and Mariah Moulton had 11



Faith Bible’s Sarah Fajer tips the ball away from Grant Union’s Whitney McClellan in the Prospectors’ 53-49 loss to the Falcons on Thursday in Pendleton.

points.

Faith Bible led 27-19 at half-time and led by as much as nine

at 34-25 with 3:38 left in the third quarter. Grant Union then made a run and tied the game at 40-40 and

2A Quarterfinals

#5 Faith Bible
53

#4 Grant Union
49

then took its first lead since early in the second quarter at 45-43 with 4:20 left on a jumper by Wright.

But Grant Union missed its last 10 shots and had three turnovers in the final 2:15 to let the Falcons steal the victory.

The teams also had to endure an extra long halftime break, as inclement weather outside sprung a small leak in the PHS gym’s roof that was discovered as volunteers were sweeping the floor. The start of the second half was delayed approximately 25 minutes for the issue to be fixed.

Faith Bible will play No. 1 Kennedy at the Pendleton Convention Center at 1:30 p.m. in the state semifinals. Grant Union will play No. 8 Heppner in consolation at the Convention Center at 9 a.m.

NO. 2 MONROE 74, NO. 7 GOLD BEACH 31 — The defending state champion Monroe Dragons made quick work of their quarterfinal game on Thursday, thumping the No. 7 Gold Beach Panthers 74-31 at Pendleton High School.

The Dragons (25-3) opened the game on a 10-0 run and led 26-5 at the end of the first quarter and cruised through the remaining three quarters for the win. Peyton Greene had a game-high 21 points to go with six rebounds and four steals for the Dragons. Also scoring in double figures were Kyndal Martin with 14 and six assists, Kalley Martin with

12 points and nine rebounds, and Madison Ballard with 11 points.

Brianna Seuser-Smith led Gold Beach (18-7) with 11 points on 5-of-10 shooting. The Panthers were making their first appearance at the Class 2A state tournament since dropping from Class 3A in the 2010-11 season.

The Dragons will play No. 6 St. Paul on Friday at 3:15 p.m. in the semifinals at Pendleton Convention Center. Gold Beach faces No. 3 Oakland in the consolation bracket at 10:45 a.m. at the Convention Center, as well.

NO. 6 ST. PAUL 39, NO. 3 OAKLAND 36 — Erin Counts nailed a pair of clutch free throws with only 16 seconds left to help her No. 6 St. Paul Buckaroos knock off the No. 3 Oakland Oakers 39-36 in the Class 2A quarterfinal on Thursday night at Pendleton High School.

The Buckaroos (23-5) trailed 18-17 at halftime and trailed 20-17 early in the third quarter before battling back. They took a 21-20 lead with 5:28 left in the third and never trailed for the remainder of the game and was only tied once with Oakland (26-3), 29-29, with 5:49 left in the fourth.

Emma Connor had a big game for the Buckaroos with 13 points and 13 rebounds and Logan Robinson added 10 points and five boards.

Hadley Brooksby led the Oakers with a game-high 20 points and Grace Witten chipped in seven points and seven rebounds.

St. Paul now plays No. 2 Monroe in the semifinal on Friday at 3:15 p.m. at the Pendleton Convention Center. Oakland plays Gold Beach at 10:45 a.m. at the Convention Center in the consolation bracket.

Boys Class 2A State Tournament

No. 11 Vernonia upsets league rival No. 3 Knappa in quarterfinals

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — League rivals Knappa and Vernonia met for the third time this season on Thursday evening, except this time a little more was on the line than just a league win or loss.

Both were playing for a spot in the state semifinals.

No. 3 Knappa had beaten No. 11 Vernonia each of the previous two times, but Thursday’s game saw a different result. Vernonia’s Gunnar Harral sank a buzzer-beater from in close with an assist from Clay Sullivan to upset Knappa 52-50 in the Class 2A quarterfinal at the Pendleton Convention Center.

Knappa (23-5) controlled the game for the first three quarters and lead by as much as 12 points. However, in the fourth quarter it was Vernonia (20-8) that earned the momentum.

Vernonia took its first lead of the game 39-37 with 6:07 left on a three-point play by Jakob Handegard, and never trailed the rest of the way, though Knappa tied the game at 50-50 with nine seconds left. That set up Harral’s game-winner.

Sullivan led Vernonia with a game-high 31 points with five rebounds and four assists. He was 10-of-18 shooting and nailed six 3-pointers in the game.

Timber Engblom led

2A Quarterfinals

#11 Vernonia
52

#3 Knappa
50

Knappa with 22 points and Joe Ramvick had seven points and seven rebounds.

Vernonia, the 2016 state champion, will play Columbia Christian on Friday at 8:15 p.m. in the semifinal at the Pendleton Convention Center. Knappa plays Kennedy on Friday at 10:45 a.m. at Pendleton High School in the consolation bracket.

NO. 1 WESTERN MENNONITE 60, NO. 8 GRANT UNION 38 — Led by Payton Richardson and Johnny Williams, No. 1 Western Mennonite sailed through the first round of the playoffs with a 60-38 win over No. 8 Grant Union.

Up by just three points after the first quarter, the Pioneers (24-3 overall) used a 21-3 second quarter run to command control of the game. Western Mennonite was on a 15-0 run before the Prospectors (18-6) banked a 3-pointer for their only points of the quarter.

In the second half, the teams had the same scoring output mirroring each others 13-point third and 11-point fourth quarters.

The Pioneers shot 40.6



Knappa’s Timber Engblom (21) puts up a shot as Jakob Handegard (4), of Vernonia, defends during Thursday’s Class 2A OSAA quarterfinal game at the Pendleton Convention Center. Vernonia won 52-50.

percent from the field and 60 percent from the free-throw line, while the Prospectors only made 1 of their 12 attempts from the charity stripe.

Grant Union finished 30 percent from the field but

found some solace behind the arc, knocking down 28 percent of its attempts.

The Pioneers will play No. 5 Oakland in the semifinals on Friday at 6:30 p.m. at the Pendleton Convention Center. The Prospectors

will continue play in the consolation bracket at 9 a.m. Saturday against Toledo at Pendleton High School.

NO. 5 OAKLAND 51, NO. 4 TOLEDO 44 — It was a back-and-forth affair when No. 5 Oakland faced No. 4 Toledo at the Pendleton Convention Center, but ultimately it was Oakland that came out on top, 51-44.

At first, the Oakland Oakers took an early lead and were ahead 13-12 after the opening quarter. The Toledo Boomers knotted the score at 23 points apiece with seconds left in the second quarter after Jaydn Spangler hit a 3-pointer and Oakland’s Sean Winn missed his attempt at a three on the ensuing play.

The Boomers (20-6 overall) hit two more three’s in the third to claim their first lead of the game, but the Oakers (24-3) quickly got over their third-quarter hump and closed out the game with 19 points in the fourth.

Leading Oakland’s efforts was Cameron Benzel, who finished with a double-double (12 points and 12 rebounds). Nic Freeman recorded 10 points and three other Oakers each notched six points.

For Toledo, Jaydn Spangler had a game-best 15-point night and Conner Marchant followed with 13 points.

The Oakers move into the semifinals where they will take on No. 1 Western Mennonite at 6:30 p.m. Friday. Toledo goes to consolation and will play Grant Union on Friday at 9 a.m. at Pendleton High School.

NO. 2 COLUMBIA CHRISTIAN 58, NO. 10 KENNEDY 45 — Three Columbia Christian Knights scored in double figures on Thursday as they defeated Kennedy 58-45 in a Class 2A quarterfinal game at the Pendleton Convention Center.

Ben Gregg led the No. 2 Knights (28-1) with 17 points, 13 rebounds and six steals, while Elijah Munyan scored 16 points behind four 3-pointers. Isiah Mariscal added 11 points.

Emorej Lynk led the Trojans (16-14) with 17 points and 12 rebounds, and Bruce Beyer added 10 points and Rocco Carley had nine. Kennedy scored the first points of the game on a jumper by Carley at 6:37 for a 2-0 lead, but Munyan’s 3-pointer at 4:54 of the first gave the Knights a lead they wouldn’t relinquish.

The Knights will now play Friday at 8:15 p.m. against No. 11 Vernonia in the semifinals at Pendleton Convention Center. Kennedy will take on No. 3 Knappa at 10:45 a.m. in consolation at Pendleton High School.



Kennedy’s Sophia Carley draws contact from Heppner’s Sydney Wilson as Madison Combe (24) looks on in the Trojans’ 52-19 win on Thursday in Pendleton.

MUSTANGS: Play No. 3 Grant Union on Friday morning

Continued from 1B

“We came out and gave them a punch, they (Kennedy) punched back and for whatever reason we couldn’t get our offense going,” Heppner coach Kevin Wilson said. “But I’m definitely proud of the way the girls played, Kennedy’s just a good team.”

Wilson said he didn’t feel a sense of nerves from his team prior to the game, though it was the school’s first trip to the state tournament since 2013.

“I think we’ve already achieved more than people thought we would this season,” Wilson said. “I really just told the girls to go out and soak up the moment, enjoy the experience ... but today just wasn’t our day.”

Sydney Wilson, a freshman, led the Mustangs with six points, four rebounds and three steals. Sophie Grant and Jacee Currin each added three points for the Mustangs as well, while

Morgan Correa and Madison Combe led the team with five rebounds apiece.

“I’m very proud of all the girls,” Correa said. “We really made sure that no matter what happens we stick together, we stay a family and we have each other’s backs no matter what.”

And even though the Mustangs ended up on the wrong side of the scoreboard, the players were overwhelmed with support by Heppner fans at the game. The Mustangs’ blue-and-gold colors filled an entire section of bleachers in the gym and a large contingent of Heppner students made the one-hour trip up to the Round-Up city as well.

Correa said she and her teammates were thrilled to see the support from the community.

“It was amazing,” Correa said of the crowd. “We really put it out there when we played and everybody came through, amazingly. It was great to see

everybody here.”

Kennedy’s 6-foot center Sophia Carley and guard Kalyssa Kleinschmit scored 12 points apiece to lead the Trojans. Carley used her size to affect the Mustangs’ offense, and also thrived on offense with six offensive boards. For the game, Kennedy out-rebounded Heppner 37-24, including a 17-5 margin on the offensive glass.

Hannah Arritola added six points and eight rebounds for the Trojans. Kennedy will play No. 5 Faith Bible on Friday at 1:30 p.m. in the semifinals at the Pendleton Convention Center.

Heppner stays alive in the consolation bracket, where it gets an early wake-up call to take on No. 4 Grant Union at 9 a.m. at the Convention Center.

Grant Union fell into the consolation bracket following its 53-49 loss to No. 5 Faith Bible on Thursday.

The winner moves on to the

fourth place game, while the loser’s season will end. Wilson believes his team will be ready to go, despite the early-morning start time.

“I think it’s just rebounding from today and not taking it too hard,” he said, “understanding we’re privileged and lucky to be able to play another game tomorrow where a lot of teams are at home. I think the challenge will be that it’s early, but we’ll be ready to go whenever we can play basketball.”

“If it was 5 a.m., we’d be ready to go, too.”

HHS	7	4	0	8	—	19
KHS	14	13	12	13	—	52
HEPPNER — S. Wilson 6, S. Grant 3, J. Currin 3, J. Mahoney 2, J. McCullough 2, M. Combe 2, M. Correa 1, M. Nichols, M. Ashbeck, K. Gray, M. Mitchell, K. Silvia.						
KENNEDY — S. Carley 12, K. Kleinschmit 12, H. Arritola 6, E. Cantu 6, E. Suing 4, A. Frey 4, K. Brown 3, C. Traeger 2, M. Jaeger 2, K. Cantu 1, H. Garcia, I. Gomez, H. Arritola.						
3-pointers — HHS 0, KHS 0. Free throws — HHS 5-11, KHS 12-24. Fouls — HHS 13, KHS 12.						

Contact Eric at esinger@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0839. Follow him on Twitter @ByEricSinger.