

Hermiston wins double dual home meet

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

For the first time in five years, Kennewick High School is able to put a full lineup on the mat for a dual.

It didn't much matter against Hermiston, which won nine of 14 matches to hand the Lions a 54-27 Mid-Columbia Conference loss Thursday night at the Dawg House.

The Bulldogs made a clean sweep of the double dual, beating Richland 69-8, a match in which Hermiston took advantage of seven forfeits.

"It keeps things in perspective," Hermiston coach Kyle Larson said of the matches. "We know who is tough. We are just trying to put guys in position to do their best."

That was Jordan Franklin. The 138-pound junior won both of his matches on the mat.

Against Richland, he recorded a technical fall (21-5) over Taylor Coleman, then pinned Blake Brooks of Kennewick in 4 minutes, 17 seconds.

"We try to leave the room a little bit better every day," Larson said. "We have a ton of work to do, and we are continuing to work on the fundamentals and the basics."

Against Richland, the Bombers forfeited 106 to 126, and in the upper weights from 195 to 285.

In the middle, the Bulldogs got pins from Gage Shipley (132), Chris Lomeli (145) and Blake Betz (182).

Richland's Patrick Workman earned a technical fall (18-3) over Trevor Wagner at 160, and the Bombers' other win came at 170, where Connor Gibbon defeated Ethan Teel 11-9, registering a takedown with 6 seconds left in the match.

The Lions put up more of a fight.

See Dawgs, Page B2



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Hermiston's Jordan Franklin throws Taylor Coleman of Richland to the mat during their 138-pound match during a Mid-Columbia Conference dual Thursday at the Dawg House. Franklin registered a 21-5 technical fall.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Avant Ortiz of Hermiston (right) wrestles Richland's Samuel Lemieux in a 152-pound match Thursday during a Mid-Columbia Conference dual at the Dawg House. Ortiz won by major decision 13-5.

PREP BASKETBALL

Rockets overcome Vikings at home

By BRETT KANE
East Oregonian

When it was anyone's game, a last-minute rally brought the Pilot Rock girls a home victory in a 43-38 nonleague matchup against Umatilla on Thursday.

The Rockets took control first when forward Ayana Aguilar and post Grace Austin combined for five points to break a 4-4 tie. Austin put in two more buckets and assisted Aguilar in another to close the first quarter, 18-8.

"We tend to play in spurts," said Rockets coach Dan Deist. "It was an awesome first quarter, but we started falling asleep for a while."

The Vikings chipped away at their deficit with five unanswered points, and a score on a turnover from guard Charlene Alvarez ended the half with Umatilla down 26-21.

The Vikings finally overpowered the Rockets in quarter three, when guard Patricia Burres hit a 3-pointer to take over the lead, 28-26. The Rockets were held to only one point for the quarter when guard Breann Baleztena scored at the line.

Umatilla extended their lead with six straight points to close the third quarter, 34-27.

But Pilot Rock caught their second wind in the fourth quarter, outscoring the Vikings 16-4 and keeping them away from the basket for 6 1/2 minutes.

The Rockets opened the quarter with six consecutive points. Baleztena put her team back in front with two 3-pointers in 20 seconds.

"Breann got hot in the fourth," Deist said. "She's a great shooter. It was a great

See Rockets, Page B2

2A teams enter new conference

By BRETT KANE
East Oregonian

With league play tipping off next week at the 2A level, a group of local teams is about to find out how they'll fare in a new conference.

Last year, the Pilot Rock boys dominated the Columbia Basin Conference, going 8-0 and claiming the league title. Heppner followed with a 6-2 record.

This year, the Rockets and Mustangs, along with Weston-McEwen and Stanfield, will move to the Blue Mountain Conference, which swaps Culver for Union, Grant Union, and Enterprise.

"Unfortunately, Culver was always near the bottom of the (CBC) standings," Rockets coach Eric Smidt said. "We're going to pick up some toughness in the new league, and going over the mountains in the winter to play other teams will be difficult."

Pilot Rock has had a slow start to their season, standing at 0-4 in nonleague play. They start league Dec. 21, hosting Stanfield.

"Our inexperience is showing. We need to work on our young mistakes," Smidt said. "Even most of our seniors didn't play much in high school. We don't

See Hoops, Page B2

Pendleton football team earns OSAA academic honor

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

The Pendleton football team received the top OSAA Academic All-State Award at the 5A level with a 3.41 GPA.

The Bucks, who advanced to the state semifinals and finished the season with a 10-2 record, were followed by No. 2 Wilson at 3.22.

"I'm extremely proud of the kids," Pendleton coach Erik Davis said. "It shows that the kids are doing the right things. As a coach, you talk about academics coming first, and our kids have proved over time that they are high character kids."

Each member of the winning team receives a commemorative decal and a certificate. The school receives a plaque in honor of its team.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton running back Aiden Peterson dives through the La Salle line on a two-point conversion in the Bucks' 62-14 win against the Falcons on Oct. 5 in Pendleton.

Also earning top honors was Mac-Hi/Griswold at the 4A level with a 3.32 GPA.

At the 3A level, Umatilla was fifth (3.33), and Pilot Rock/Nixyaawii (3.15) ranked sixth at the 1A level.

In volleyball, Irrigon ranked at the top of the 3A division with a 3.91 GPA. The Knights made their first trip to the state tournament in the fall.

Pendleton ranked fifth (3.75) in the 5A division, while Weston-McEwen (3.64) was seventh among 2A schools, and Mac-Hi (3.68) eighth at the 4A level.

In girls soccer, Pendleton (3.64) ranked 10th among 5A schools.

In boys cross country, Griswold (3.36) ranked 10th at the 2A/1A level, while Heppner/lone (3.73) was 10th in the girls 3A/2A/1A division.

SPORTS SHORTS

Austria's Max Franz speeds down the course on Thursday.

Austrian skier Franz leads Val Gardena downhill training

SELVA DI VAL GARDENA, Italy (AP) — Already the winner of two World Cup races this season, Austrian skier Max Franz showed he's the man to beat by leading the final training session on Thursday for the Val Gardena downhill.

Franz finished 0.66 seconds ahead of three-time Val Gardena winner Steven Nyman and 0.86 ahead of Swiss rival Beat Feuz, who won the last downhill in Beaver Creek, Colorado.

Franz won this race two years ago and has also posted two other podium results in Val Gardena

— one in super-G and one in downhill.

A super-G race is scheduled for the Saslong course on Friday followed by the downhill Sunday. The circuit then moves to nearby Alta Badia for a giant slalom and a parallel giant slalom Sunday and Monday, respectively.

Franz was second in Wednesday's opening training, which was led by Travis Ganong of the United States.

Ganong placed sixth Thursday.



AP Photo/Alessandro Trovati