

Dawgs win close one

Boys: Hermiston beats Sunnyside, 75-71
By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

If there was an ugly Christmas sweater award for a poorly played basketball game, the Hermiston boys would have taken the top prize Saturday night.

But at least they won the contest.

The Bulldogs (8-1 overall) needed a last-second 3-pointer by Ryne Andreason to send the game into overtime, and the 6-foot-3 senior added eight points in the extra session as Hermiston eked out a 75-71 non-league win over Sunnyside at the Dawg House.

“I felt like we were wearing ugly Christmas sweaters there for a while,” Hermiston coach Casey Arstein said. “We didn’t have the best start, but it’s nice to get a win going into the break.”

Andreason finished with a game-high 29 points, while Cesar Ortiz added 23, including three 3-pointers.

“We were pretty tired from Hanford (on Friday), but we came out on top,” Ortiz said. “We have a lot to work on. Richland is up next, and they are pretty good.”

Trailing the entire game since leading 2-0, Hermiston took a 52-50 lead with 35 seconds left in the third quarter on a basket by Andrew James, and Ortiz drained a 3-pointer from the top of the key for a 55-50 lead.

James scored nine of his 15 points in the third, and Ortiz also had nine as the Bulldogs went on a 24-11 run to get back in the game.

A bucket by Jordan Ramirez to open the fourth quarter



Hermiston's Adrian Mendez (34) goes to the hoop as Alexis Espinosa of Sunnyside defends during Saturday's game at the Dawg House.

extended Hermiston’s lead to 57-50, but the Grizzlies were relentless.

Sunnyside (2-7) went on an 8-1 run to tie the score at 58-58, then jumped out to a 64-58 lead on a basket by Alex Lopez with 1:03 left in regulation.

Ramirez hit the front end of a one-and-one, and Andreason followed with a pair of free throws to pull the Bulldogs within 64-61 with 28 seconds left.

Hermiston then pressured the Grizzlies when they inbounded the ball, and got a 10-second violation called against Sunnyside to get possession of the ball.

Andreason drained a 3 from

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Heppner rolls in win over Stanfield

By BRETT KANE
East Oregonian

The Mustang improved to 2-0 in Blue Mountain league play after defeating Stanfield on the road 56-37 on Saturday.

“It’s always nice to get a league win, especially on someone else’s home floor,” said Heppner coach Jeremy Rosenbalm. “Our goal was to go into Christmas break 2-0 in the league.”

Heppner sprinted out to a 9-0 lead in the first quarter and kept the Tigers away from the net for more than 4 minutes until Stanfield juniors Mario Sanchez and Rene Sanchez combined for four straight points.

Senior Elias Esquivel scored another basket with 1:30 left in the quarter, but Heppner sank two more of their own for a 14-6 lead at the buzzer.

Sanchez hit a 3-pointer to open the second quarter as the Tigers steadily chipped away at the deficit. When Stanfield was down 20-17, junior Rafael Orozco missed a 3-pointer that could have tied it up. The Mustangs got five straight points for a 25-20 halftime lead.

Esquivel kept the Tigers alive with a 3-pointer with 4:40 left to play in the third, tying the game at 30-30.

But Heppner senior Hunter Nichols scored two treys, two at the line, and two from the field to broaden their lead.

“We got in our groove in the second half,” said Nichols, a 5-foot-8 point guard. “We moved and shot the ball well, and played better on both sides.”

Esquivel and Sanchez had a six-point streak early in the fourth quarter, but Heppner recorded 10 more points to secure their league win.

“This was the best second half we’ve had all season,” Rosenbalm said. “We locked down our defense and knocked down some big shots.”

Senior Tyler Carter led the Mustangs with 15 points, and Nichols had 14. Esquivel sunk 17 for the Tigers.

Heppner (2-0, 7-5) will compete in the Irrigon Invite on Thursday, Dec. 27. Stanfield (1-1, 4-8) will host Weston-McEwen on Friday, Jan. 4.

Girls

The Heppner girls fought through a first quarter deficit to take home their first league victory of the season, downing Stanfield 55-38 for a Saturday road win.

“This was the first complete game that we played as a team,” said Mustangs coach Robert Wilson. “Everyone played hard. Our

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Hermiston falls short against Sunnyside

Girls: Thomas leads with 23 points for the Bulldogs
By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

Sometimes, even your best is not enough.

Jordan Thomas scored 23 points and the Hermiston girls put forth one of their best efforts Saturday night, but Sunnyside held onto beat the Bulldogs 51-46 in a nonleague game at the Dawg House.

“Sunnyside is really good,” Hermiston coach Juan Rodriguez said. “I was pleased, to say the least. I was pleased with our defensive effort. That is the best we have played against a really good team.”

The 6-foot-4 Thomas scored 15 of her points in the first half as the Bulldogs (4-5 overall)

led 13-10 after the first quarter.

Sunnyside (7-1) came back with a 20-10 run in the second quarter to put a little space between itself and Hermiston.

The Grizzlies trailed 23-21 with 1:30 to play in the second quarter, then scored the final nine points for a 30-23 halftime lead.

“We lost to a good team, and other than that last minute of the second quarter, we controlled the game,” Rodriguez said. “We played our tempo. We had chances to win.”

Sunnyside led by as many as 10 points twice in the third quarter, getting six points from Brielle Newhouse.

In the fourth, the Bulldogs got 3-pointers from Jazlyn Romero and Jayden Ray to trim the Grizzlies’ lead to 47-43, and a free throw from Thomas cut the lead to three points.

Down 49-46, Thomas and Romero missed back-to-back shots off the glass with 25 seconds remaining. A turnover with 9 seconds left, and two free throws by Ashlee Maldonado with 5 seconds left on the clock, took away any hope of a win for the Bulldogs.

“It’s good way to end our mini season,” Rodriguez said. “It’s a good time to take a break. We have some tough games coming up after Christmas.”

Romero added 10 points for the Bulldogs, while Ray had seven.

Newhouse and Maldonado each had 14 points for the Grizzlies, while Cameron Rodriguez chipped in 12 points.

SUNNYSIDE 10 20 13 8 — 51
HERMISTON 13 10 11 12 — 46
Sunnyside — Weets 2, Newhouse 14, Ash.Maldonado 14, Garcia 9, Rodriguez 12.
Hermiston — Young 2, Ray 7, Stefanie 2, Dowdy 2, Romero 10, Thomas 23.



Hermiston's Jazlyn Romero (22) faces a Sunnyside defender during Saturday's game at the Dawg House.

SPORTS SHORTS

Seahawks clinch playoff berth, outlasting Chiefs 38-31

SEATTLE (AP) — Doubted before the season began, questioned even more after a 0-2 start, the Seattle Seahawks are back where they’ve spent most seasons since Pete Carroll arrived.

The Seahawks are in the playoffs and perhaps as the type of opponent no one would like to see in the postseason.

“You hear it. You hear the noise. You hear the 4-12 predictions, the 5-11 and that stuff motivates you,” Seattle

linebacker K.J. Wright said. “We kept believing.”

Seattle clinched its spot in the NFC playoffs after toppling Kansas City 38-31 on Sunday night, thanks to three touchdown passes from Russell Wilson and a pair of TD runs by Chris Carson.

Wilson got the better of Kansas City’s Patrick Mahomes and helped lead Seattle back to the postseason after missing the playoffs a year ago.

Seattle has now made the playoffs in seven of the nine seasons with Carroll in charge, and six of seven with Wilson at quarterback.

It was an unexpected accomplishment after Seattle overhauled its roster in the offseason. But the discovery of the best run game in the NFL, coupled with vets like Wilson, Bobby Wagner and Doug Baldwin, was enough for Seattle to navigate its way into the postseason.



AP Photo/Elaine Thompson