

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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## Bucks are in for a battle against No. 2 Falcons

By BRETT KANE  
East Oregonian

MILWAUKIE — Both Pendleton and La Salle Prep will hit the field on Friday night with big wins fresh under their belts.

The 5A Special District 1's top-ranked Bucks (4-1, 3-0 IMC) shut out Milwaukie 47-0 last week, and are ready to continue forth in league play. The Falcons (2-2, 2-0 IMC) escaped with a 54-46 win at Hood River Valley, earning themselves the No. 2 spot

in the conference standings.

"They're coming off a really good win," Pendleton coach Erik Davis said of La Salle Prep. "We're expecting a shootout. They're a great football team."

The Bucks, who have proven to be unbeatable in district action so far this season, will hit the road to challenge the Falcons in an effort to maintain a spotless league record.

Pendleton, now onto the latter half of the regular season, is vying for its second consecutive playoff berth. The Falcons haven't made

a playoff appearance since 2012, where they fell in the quarterfinals. La Salle Prep's last state title came in 2011, where they defeated Siu-slaw 45-40 at Hillsboro Stadium.

"This is one of the biggest games in the league," Davis said. "We're both going for that district title."

The Bucks haven't dropped a game since the season opener at La Grande, and are averaging 40.8 points a game.

"(La Salle's) offense is one of the toughest in the league," Davis said. "We're going to have

to put points on the board early."

Although the Bucks are expecting a fight, the shutout over Milwaukie last week has instilled them with the confidence needed to take on such a pivotal game in the season.

"It was a good win for us," Davis said of the team's showing at Milwaukie. "The kids went out and executed well in the first half. They took care of business. They're coming into their own. They're recognizing that they can perform well at the varsity level. They have

a good focus and a good attitude."

The Bucks and Falcons previously met at the Round-Up Arena in the final stretch of the regular season last year, where Pendleton took down a massive 62-14 win. This year, the game is coming to the Falcons' field in Milwaukie.

"The kids want that conference title first and foremost," Davis said. "Any time you get off the bus after a four- to five-hour trip, it can be hard, but our kids travel well."

The district's top two teams are set to duke it out 7 p.m. on Friday.

## BUCKS SWEEP TIGERS

Zoe Jones has 17 kills to highlight 'Dig Pink' night

By BRETT KANE  
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Bucks and Tigers had already clashed once before this season, where it was Pendleton's volleyball team that made off with the five-set win. In Tuesday's rematch, the Bucks swept in three.

In a nonleague contest at Warberg Court, the Bucks cruised to 25-12 and 25-14 wins to claim the first two sets from the 4A Greater Oregon League's top-ranked La Grande Tigers, but were forced to rally to complete the sweep with a 26-24 third-set victory.

The home win highlighted the Bucks' "Dig Pink" night, which was held in support of cancer awareness.

"We didn't play our game in the first two sets," La Grande coach Melinda Becker-Bisenius said. "We came out and stayed in it in game three, but it was the little things that got us. We need to learn how to finish a game."

The Intermountain Conference's fourth-ranked Bucks asserted dominance right away as they allowed just one point against their eight before the Tigers called the first of two timeouts



Staff photo by Kathy Aney  
Sauren Garton (5), of Pendleton, hits the ball as La Grande's Josie Reagan attempts to block during Tuesday's nonleague game at Warberg Court.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney  
Pendleton volleyball players exult after winning a point during Tuesday's nonleague game against La Grande at Warberg Court.

## Dawgs make quick work of Falcons

Grace Vertrees has 12 kills as Hermiston sweeps Hanford

By ANNIE FOWLER  
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The Hanford Falcons will be seeing Grace Vertrees in their nightmares.

The Hermiston sophomore had eight kills in the first set, and 12 for the match, as the Bulldogs made quick work of the Falcons 25-12, 25-14, 25-4 on Tuesday night in Mid-Columbia Conference play.

"This will give us confidence we actually earned," said Vertrees, who hit .435 on the night. "We had that vibe and that quick fluid motion. This is a special group."

Kendall Dowdy had 29 assists, six digs and three kills for Hermiston, which improved to 3-5 in MCC play.

"Winning at home, we hadn't done that yet this season," Bulldogs coach Amy Dyck said. "Playing our style of volleyball, and proving to ourselves that we can do it. We took care of the ball behind the service line, and limited our unforced errors."

The Falcons came out in the



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan  
Hermiston's Grace Vertrees (4) blocks a Hanford hit to score a point for the Bulldogs. The Bulldogs defeated the Falcons in three sets at Hermiston High School on Tuesday night.

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### PREP ROUNDUP

## Golden Eagles down Grizzlies in 4

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Tied a set a piece and down 20-14 in the third set to Helix, Nixyaawii needed a run from Allyson Maddern at the service line.

The junior delivered, rattling off eight in a row and adding to her stellar performance of 14 aces on the night.

Nixyaawii took the set, and eventually the match, beating Helix in four sets 25-13, 15-25, 26-24, 25-18.

Eagles coach Jeremy Maddern said the only lost set came when Nixyaawii served just around 50% on its attempts.

"They did a nice job of recovering," Maddern said of his team. "They were mentally tougher today."

Nixyaawii (2-10, 1-7) hosts Elgin on Thursday, while Helix (3-15, 2-7) returns home to host Joseph on Saturday.

### Volleyball

**IONE/ARLINGTON 3, MITCHELL/SPRAY 0** — Ione/Arlington showed up more prepared, coach Teren Humphrey said, sweeping Mitchell/Spray 25-15, 25-13, 25-16.

Emma Rietmann led the Cardinals with five kills and Eva Martin added 14 assists. Tresslyn McCurry and Megan Doherty combined for 10 aces in the win.

Ione/Arlington (7-6, 4-4) goes for its third straight Big Sky win in a row at home against Dufur on Thursday.

**IRRIGON 3, RIVERSIDE 0** — Irrigon took care of Riverside on the road, sweeping the Pirates 25-4, 25-15, 25-13 in the Eastern Oregon League.

Pirates coach Marie Cain said her squad struggled to return Irrigon's hard service attempts in the loss.

Lily Rockwell led Riverside with 13 digs.

Irrigon (12-10, 3-3) finishes the regular season with a four-match homestead that begins on Thursday against Umatilla. Riverside (4-15, 2-5) doesn't play again until next Friday at home versus Vale.

**MCCLOUGHLIN 3, UMATILLA 0** — McLoughlin swept Umatilla 25-17, 25-21, 25-23 in a nonleague match.

Emma Leber and Abby Richwine shared the load for Mac-Hi, both tallying five kills each. Sydney Dibble had 16 digs while Jaycee Deal had 15.

The win has Pioneers coach Lucy Deal excited about the team's progress.

"I continue to see these girls grow and it is so fun to be a part of this program and watch them develop into a team that plays together," she said.

Mac-Hi (5-11, 0-3) returns to Greater Oregon League play at home against Ontario on Saturday. Umatilla (0-16, 0-6) plays at Irrigon in the Eastern Oregon League on Thursday.

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