

Dawgs going after state slow pitch softball title

The 2A/3A tournament is Friday and Saturday in Yakima

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Everything the Hermiston Bulldogs have done this season has helped them get to this point.

The Bulldogs (16-2) will play in the 2A/3A state slow pitch softball tournament this weekend, with winning a state title the ultimate goal.

“It takes so much to get there,” Hermiston coach Kate Greenough said, as her team took off for a run Monday afternoon. “We have played some competitive teams from the Yakima Valley and Chawana. It’s a really good test for the kids. People are excited about what we are doing.”

Hermiston will open state play against Prairie at noon Friday at Gateway Sports Complex in Yakima, Washington.

The eight-team bracket will feature first-round and semifinal games Friday, along with two consolation games. The champion-



The Hermiston Bulldogs earned a top seed to state after winning the 3A/2A MCC/GSL/GNL district tournament on Saturday in Spokane.

Photo courtesy of Kate Greenough

ship game is scheduled for 2 p.m. Saturday.

Hermiston advanced to state with a pair of wins Saturday at the 3A/2A MCC/GSL/GNL district tournament in Spokane, Washington.

“We won district, and that was a lot of fun,” Greenough said.

The Bulldogs defeated Rogers 10-6 in the semifinals, then eked out a 10-9 victory over Mt. Spokane in the championship game.

“In the first game, Grace

(Studer) hit a home run and we went up 5-0 to start,” Greenough said. “In the second game, the kids put the ball in play as much as they could. The kids had to play defense. They (Mt. Spokane) played with us the whole time.”

The Bulldogs have 10 players off the fast pitch team that qualified for the 3A state tournament, including Studer, Bailee Noland, Sam Atilano and Janelle Almaguer.

The Bulldogs, who have won 14 consecutive games, also have gotten good contributions from freshmen Macey Tovar (second base) and Hailey South (shortstop).

“It’s a really cool group of kids,” Greenough said. “This sport gives them a chance for a common goal, and do something they might not have before.”

Abby Findley has done a good portion of the pitching this fall, while Noland is at first base, Studer at third, Almaguer is the rover, and Atilano plays in the outfield.

The Bulldogs have been productive offensively, scoring an average of 13.8 runs a game. Noland has seven home runs this season, while Studer has five and Almaguer two. Tovar has four triples, and the team has hit a couple dozen doubles.

“It’s fun to see the different groups of kids come together,” Greenough said. “They are pretty relaxed. I have 16 kids who show up every day and love to play.”

Eagles take flight over Bucks

Hood River Valley defeats Pendleton 6-0 for the second time this season

By BRETT KANE
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Bucks may have braved the cold, but couldn’t withstand Hood River Valley in their Intermountain Conference rematch.

On a Tuesday evening that dipped into freezing temperatures, the Pendleton girls soccer team suffered a 6-0 home shutout against the Hood River Valley Eagles for the second time this season. The loss fell on senior night and the Bucks’ final home appearance of the regular season.

“The cold made it difficult to run out there,” Pendleton senior defender Ashlynn Madril said. “We’re a very young team, but we’ve improved greatly from where we were in the early games of the season. We can connect passes and move without the ball. We have a great keeper. It made for a great senior season.”

Eagles junior forward Vanesa Preciado had a shot on goal in the third minute before making contact with the net at 33:55 to put her team out front early. Sophomore midfielder True Becker scored another Hood River goal before that same minute was up.

Bucks sophomore goalkeeper Lindsey Pasena-Little Sky fended off another goal attempt from Preciado in the 16th minute, and another from Becker in the 24th. It wasn’t until there were 15 minutes left in the half that Hood River was able to slip a third goal past Little Sky for a 3-0 advantage at the buzzer.

“The cold was a bit distracting,” Little Sky said. “(Hood River Valley) is a good team. They played together as a team and kept their intensity up all the way through.”

Pendleton sophomore forward Reilly Lovercheck had two shots on goal in the



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

Pendleton’s Kelsey Lovercheck (3) attempts to take the ball from Hood River Valley’s Abby McCormack (11). The Hood River Valley Eagles defeated the Pendleton Buckaroos 6-0 on Tuesday evening at Pendleton High School.

first 15 minutes of the final half, but Preciado scored her second goal at 28:51 to leave the Bucks down 4-0.

Eagles junior midfielder Magali Amezcua sent a goal rolling toward Little Sky, who dove for the save as the ball slipped just out of her grasp and into the net.

Little Sky would halt two more goal attempts from Amezcua before the

timer ran out, but the Hood River midfielder finally evaded her defense and returned to sink the Eagles’ final goal of the night with just 19 seconds left to play.

“We ended with the same score (against Hood River tonight), but I think we played a lot better this time,” Lovercheck said. “We controlled the game for the first 10 minutes.”

The match was the final home appearance of Madril, midfielder Anna LeGore, and junior exchange student Josefina Karlsburg for the regular season.

The shutout was the third in a row for the No. 2 Eagles (7-5, 7-1 IMC). The fifth-ranked Bucks (2-10, 2-6 IMC) will finish off the regular season on Thursday with a match against the league’s No. 1 Ridgeview Ravens.

SPORTS SHORTS

Athlete compensation comes front and center for NCAA

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP College Sports Writer

A key NCAA task force is expected to provide an update on whether it would be feasible to allow athletes to profit from their names, images and likenesses while still preserving amateurism rules for the nation’s largest governing body for college athletics.

Ohio State athletic direc-

tor Gene Smith and Big East Conference Commissioner Val Ackerman are leading the working group, which will present a progress report to the NCAA Board of Governors at Emory University in Atlanta this week.

It is an important early step in a process that could take months or even years to work its way through the NCAA various layers.

NCAA rules have long barred players from hiring agents and the association has steadfastly refused to allow players to be paid by their schools, with some exceptions. A California law set to take effect in 2023 would prevent athletes from losing their scholarships or being kicked off their teams for signing endorsement deals. Other states could put laws in place earlier than that.



AP Photo/Keith Srakocic, File

In this March 14, 2012, file photo, a player runs across the NCAA logo during practice at the NCAA tournament college basketball in Pittsburgh.