

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2021

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A9

## Championship weekend

### Stanfield boys among favorites at 2A/1A state track meet

By ANNIE FOWLER  
East Oregonian

UNION — With the Oregon School Activities Association not hosting state events this year, athletic directors and coaches throughout the state have worked together to make sure their athletes get an opportunity to compete at the state level.

Union High School athletic director Chris Dunlap will play host to the 2A/1A state track and field championships on Saturday, May 22, with help from area schools and volunteers. Athletes from 45 schools are expected.

“It’s as close to being an OSAA-sanctioned event without putting OSAA on the T-shirt,” Dunlap said. “Same standards, same rules. Nothing has changed, just athletic directors and coaches throughout the state putting it on.”

No event of this magnitude can be done alone. The Steens Running Camp is providing the medals and ribbons for the first-through eighth-place competitors, and the team trophies.

Reinke Irrigation and Old West Credit Union are taking care of the rest, such as the hospitality tent and any equipment needed to run the meet.

“We have the time and effort, and the right people in place to host,” Dunlap said. “It’s neat that a 2A school can host a state for the 2A schools. We are going to pull it off. The 2A athletic directors all communicated as soon as we started track season. We discussed sites that would be willing to host, and narrowed it down to Union County being able to host with our level (low).”

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) updated its mask requirements on Tuesday, strongly recommending, but no longer requiring, that masks be worn outdoors. This applies to participants and spectators.

With that news, Dunlap said they will be welcoming fans for the track meet. Admission will be free, but donations will be accepted on behalf of the Union track team.

### Eyes on the prize

Between Heppner, Pilot Rock, Stanfield/Echo and Weston-McEwen, there are dozens of athletes who will be on the prowl for state medals.

One race that will be hotly contested is the boys 4x400 meter relay.

Lost River has the top time coming in at 3 minutes, 41.33 seconds, while Heppner is second (3:42.05), Enterprise third (3:42.43), and Weston-McEwen fourth (3:42.45).

But it’s the battle between



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian, File

Stanfield’s Sisay Hurty and Heppner’s Trevor Nichols lead the pack of runners in the 1,500 meters at the River’s Edge Invitational in Umatilla on April 30, 2021. Sisay and Nichols finished first and second respectively with times of 4:22.18 and 4:22.44.



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian, File

Emily Lambert, of Pilot Rock, prepares to hurl the shot at the Pendleton Triad track meet on April 30, 2021. Lambert won the event with a throw of 35 feet, 10.5 inches.

Weston-McEwen and Heppner that’s intriguing.

The TigerScots, with Alex McIntyre, Cameron Reich, Colson Hall and Theo White have been going step-for-step with Heppner’s Joe Sherman, Brock Hisler, Trevor Nichols and Jayden Wilson.

Heppner beat W-M at the River’s Edge, the Mustang Meet and the 2A Blue Mountain Conference Championships, but the margin of victory has been by just a step or two.

W-M’s 4x100 relay team has the second-best time coming into the meet, and should have no problem finding itself on the podium.

Wilson also is one of the favorites in the open 400 and 200, while Nichols is ranked in the top four in the 800, 1,500 and the javelin. Conor Brosnan is ranked second in the discus, but the gold medal is within his reach.

For the Heppner girls, Madelyn Nichols is a threat in the 800 and 1,500, while Hannah Finch has podium potential in the 400 and triple jump, and Sydney Wilson in the shot put.

Pilot Rock’s Emily Lambert has a shot at a top two finish in the shot put and discus, while McKenna Bray and W-M’s Lily Lindsey are among the favorites in the high jump.

McIntyre is one of the top competitors in the 1,500 and 800, while Reich could find himself among the top long jumpers.

Stanfield’s Sam Kerns is a legitimate gold medal threat in the triple jump, long jump and high jump, as is

Sisay Hurty in the 1,500 and 3,000. Hurty won the state cross-country title last month.

The Tigers’ Anthony Keeney comes into the meet with the top throw in the shot put at 42-6, and is ranked sixth in the discus.

“Just off the top of my head, I think the boys will do extremely well,” Tigers coach Eric Jensen said. “They are going to sneak up on quite a few people. We have three super talented boys — Sisay, Anthony and Sam — who can score pretty high in seven events.”

For the Stanfield/Echo girls, their 4x400 relay team of Charlei Harwood, Jayden Bertsch, Emily Hancock and Jacque Kerns ranks No. 1 with a time of 4:32.54.

Bertsch, a freshman, also has a good shot at placing in the 100 and 200, as do Hancock and Kerns in the 400, and Zora Gehrke in the 3,000.

Jensen believes his boys team has a shot at a top four finish, with East Linn Christian, Enterprise, Bandon and Grant Union also among the top teams.

For the girls, Jensen said Regis, Faith Bible, Lakeview and Gervais are among the favorites.

### 5A Invitational

The Pendleton boys are coming off the program’s first Intermountain Conference title since 1979.

While there is no state meet, the Bucks will compete in the 5A Invitational on May 21-22 at Wilsonville High School.

“It’s not a state meet, and

it’s not run the same way,” Pendleton coach Larry Brizendine said. “It is what it is with COVID. I’m glad the kids have somewhere to go. It’s just as not fun as going to Hayward Field.”

Teams paid an entry fee per athlete, with the money going toward purchasing medals and trophies for the athletes and teams.

Between the boys and girls, the Bucks are taking nine athletes.

“If we would have done a regular state meet, I think we would have had close to 30 athletes going,” Pendleton coach Larry Brizendine said. “We are taking what we can get.”

The running events will begin on May 21 at 5 p.m. and finish that night. Field events are at 10 a.m. on May 22. There will be no relay races and team points will be awarded to the top eight 4x100 and 4x400 times in the 5A state rankings.

At present time, despite the new mask mandates, there will be no spectators allowed.

“The kids can go in and warm up, but at event time, it’s the athletes and one coach,” Brizendine said. “Once they are done with their event, they have to leave. The kids can’t even be there to support their teammates.”

The Pendleton boys have Zaanan Bane competing on both days in the 110 hurdles and the long jump and triple jump.

Bane is ranked third in both jumps, and ninth in the hurdles.

Sam Jennings goes into the meet with the top javelin throw in Oregon this spring at 198-11. He will have some stiff competition from Austin Strawn of Eagle Point (191-7), Roman Fritz of North Bend (184-10) and Michael Goodman of Hood River (181-3).

For the girls, Kendall Bonzani and Reilly Lovercheck have an opportunity to find themselves on the podium for 300 hurdles, while Lovercheck has an outside chance in the 100 hurdles.

Bonzani, Reilly Lovercheck and Kelsey Lovercheck are all in the 400 meters, with a chance to place.

### EOU FOOTBALL



Kathleen Brown/Eastern Oregon University Athletics, File

Eastern Oregon University quarterback Kai Quinn scrambles during a play on March 20, 2021, while playing at home in La Grande against Carroll College. Quinn, a Pendleton High graduate who helped lead the Mountaineers to a 3-1 overall record during the altered spring season, was recognized with Frontier Conference Offensive Player of the Year honors.

## Mountaineers land just outside top 20 in final poll

### Eastern Oregon caps successful season with No. 21 ranking

East Oregonian

LA GRANDE — The Eastern Oregon University football team has plenty on which to build next year.

After finishing with a 3-1 overall record and a share of the Frontier Conference title, a first for the program, the Mountaineers had a strong showing in the final edition of the Football First-Down PlayBook Top-25 Poll.

Eastern came in at No. 21 — and finished less than 10 points from squeezing into the top 20. The Mountaineers finished with 84 points, just behind No. 20 Roosevelt, which tallied 90 points.

EOU wasn’t the only Frontier Conference team in the final Top 25. The College of Idaho finished the season at No. 18, while Carroll College rounded out the trio at No. 22.

Along with picking up a share of the conference crown, the Mountaineers also had multiple all-conference selections, including the offensive player of the year, the defensive player

of the year and coach of the year.

Pendleton graduate Kai Quinn was named the offensive player of the year, while Chase Van Wyck was tabbed the defensive player of the year and Head Coach Tim Camp was named the Frontier Conference Coach of the Year.

Along with being the conference players of the year, Van Wyck and Quinn earned AFCA All-American honors for the NAIA. Also garnering All-American honors was offensive lineman PJ Schubert. In all, EOU had a total of 15 All-Frontier Conference selections. Earning the honors on offense was Quinn, Schubert, Tanner Zenke and Luke Thomas. Making the second team on offense were Lesser, Isaiah Thomas and Patrick Collins.

On the defensive side, earning first-team recognition was Van Wyck, Zak Donato and Solo Taylor. Dakota Hibbs was the lone selection for EOU on the second-team list.

Zachary Cahill was a first-team selection at kicker and was a second-team selection at punter. Thomas was a first-team special team selection at both kick returner and punt returner.

### ON THE SLATE

#### THURSDAY, MAY 20

##### Prep baseball

2A/1A playoffs: Heppner vs. Umpqua Valley Christian, Bend High School, 4:30 p.m.

2A/1A playoffs: Pilot Rock vs. Toledo, at Portland Christian High School, 4 p.m. (loser out)

##### Prep boys basketball

Riverside at McLoughlin, 7:30 p.m.

Umatilla at Irrigon, 7:30 p.m.

##### Prep girls basketball

McLoughlin at Riverside, 6 p.m.

Umatilla at Irrigon, 6 p.m.

##### Prep wrestling

Walla Walla at Hermiston, 5 p.m.

##### Prep bowling

Hermiston at Kamiakin, 2 p.m.

##### College baseball

Walla Walla at Blue Mountain (2), 1 p.m.

#### FRIDAY, MAY 21

##### Prep boys basketball

Hermiston at Kennewick, 7 p.m.

Umatilla at Riverside, 7:30 p.m.

Weston-McEwen at Heppner, 7:30 p.m.

Echo at Sherman, 7:30 p.m.

Ione/Arlington at Dufur, 7:30 p.m.

##### Prep girls basketball

Kennewick at Hermiston, 7 p.m.

Stanfield at McLoughlin, 6 p.m.

Weston-McEwen at Heppner, 6 p.m.

Umatilla at Riverside, 6 p.m.

Echo at Sherman, 6 p.m.

Ione/Arlington at Dufur, 6 p.m.

##### Prep swimming

Hermiston at Richland, 4 p.m.

##### Prep track and field

Pendleton at 5A Invitational, Wilsonville, 5 p.m.

##### College men’s basketball

Blue Mountain at Walla Walla, 7:30 p.m.

##### College women’s basketball

Blue Mountain at Walla Walla, 5:30 p.m.

##### College volleyball

Walla Walla at Blue Mountain (2), 5 p.m.

### SPORTS SHORT

## Ducks earn No. 2 seed in Austin Regional

The Oregonian

EUGENE — Oregon is not a top 16 seed in the NCAA Tournament and instead is the No. 2 seed in the Austin Regional.

The Ducks (37-15) open NCAA Regional play against Texas A&M (38-12) at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, May 21, on ESPN3.com.

Oregon is the only team in the top 16 in RPI (11), adjusted RPI

(15) and in the top 10 of strength of schedule (9) not to get a top 16 seed and be hosting an NCAA Regional.

Texas State did not play a Pac-12 team this year and went 1-5 against top 25 teams, including two losses to No. 12 seed Texas (39-11), which faces Saint Francis (PA) (40-8) in the opening game of the double-elimination regional at 2 p.m. on May 21.

Oregon is 1-0 all-time against Texas State, with the only meeting

coming in 2005.

On the other side of the regional bracket is former Oregon coach Mike White and the Longhorns, who still have former Ducks Mary Iakopo, Lauren Burke and Shannon Rhodes on the roster.

Only Oregon outfielder Haley Cruse and utility infielder Shayne Bowden remain on the UO roster among players to have played for White.



Leon Neuschwander/For The Oregonian, File

No. 3 Oregon takes on No. 2 UCLA in the first game of a Pac-12 softball doubleheader at Jane Sanders Stadium on April 10, 2021.