

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2022

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A8

Pendleton's Corbett is getting her shot at state

Olivia Corbett heads to 5A state tennis tournament

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Olivia Corbett was in the seventh grade when she begged her mom Liz for a hot pink tennis racket. She was only two years into her tennis career, but no matter where she was on the courts, you could find her.

Corbett has since upgraded her racket a couple of times since she gave up the pink one after her freshman year, but now it's her game that draws you to her matches, not her racket.

The Pendleton senior will play in her first 5A state tournament after winning the Intermountain Conference district singles title May 12 in Redmond.

"I'm really excited," Corbett said. "I'm seeded third in state, which is cool, especially not being able to compete at district last year or the year before. I went as a freshman, but that's the only district experience I had."

The 5A state tournament will be Saturday and Sunday, May 20-21, at the Portland Tennis Center. The championship matches will be Saturday at the Tualatin Hills Tennis Center in Beaverton.

It's the first state tournament since 2019 because of

the coronavirus pandemic.

Corbett (13-3) will open play at 8 a.m. Friday against Andrea Khieu of Silverton.

"The goal is to go out and play my game," Corbett said. "If you play nervous, you aren't going to play your best tennis. It's an exciting thing to make it in the first place. I'm going to enjoy it and be happy with the results."

Corbett is the first district champion Pendleton coach Rocky Dillenburg has had in his 18 years at the helm. He has had plenty of players go to state, just not as district champs.

"I have never had a player or doubles team win district," Dillenburg said. "Over that 18 years, we have been in different conferences, playing against really good kids. It will be a good adventure for her. She's seeded third, which is a nice honor. She's a good player. She hits the ball well and plays within herself. If she plays the way she can, she should do pretty well."

Corbett, who was seeded third at district, won her title with a 6-1, 6-0 victory over Naya Lewis of Redmond. She also beat No. 2-ranked Chloe Scherner of Redmond 7-5, 1-6, 10-8.

Corbett and her teammates have had a tough go of things trying to prepare for matches this spring with the ever-changing weather, but the North East Tennis Center, which has indoor courts, has been accommodating when needed.



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian, File

Pendleton's Olivia Corbett returns the ball while playing Kylee Rost, of Ridgeview, on May 4, 2022. She plays in her first 5A state tournament Saturday and Sunday, May 20-21, at the Portland Tennis Center.

"It's just two courts, but we are honestly so lucky to have that facility," Corbett said.

Tennis was not her first sport

Corbett grew up playing basketball and soccer, and she played on the Bucks basketball team that finished third in the IMC this year.

"I got into tennis in the fifth grade with a junior tennis program that Rocky

put on with the high schoolers," Corbett said. "I decided I wanted to give it a shot, and I really liked it. I wasn't able to play competitively until the seventh grade."

She upgraded her racket her sophomore year, then again a few months later.

"I started doing lessons with Marcus James (in Pendleton) and he suggested I go with a racket with a heavier head," Corbett said. "The

first day, my wrist was absolutely killing me. I hit with a lot more power now."

Opponents also have to be wary of her forehand and serve.

"My goal is to use my weapons as often as possible," she said. "If I make the right choice I won't be sprinting around trying to get to my forehand. My serve is good, but throughout the match they tend to get used to your serve and it isn't as big a weapon."

Corbett's dad, Robb Corbett, Pendleton city manager, played a little tennis in high school, and every once in a while the family members grab their rackets and play a few sets.

"I love doing that," Olivia Corbett said.

Corbett's parents will be part of her fan bases at state, along with two of her teammates, Annie Bostwick and Milee Smith.

"Rocky is letting them come along to keep me company and cheer me on," Corbett said. "It will be great."

Corbett plans on attending Blue Mountain Community College in the fall. The school does not have a tennis team, but she's looking into

playing as many summer tournaments as she can.

4A/3A/2A/1A State Tournament

Trinidad Mendoza, who made it to the semifinals of the Special District 4 tournament before finishing fourth, will compete in singles for Riverside. He will face Cameron Getz of Oregon Episcopal in the first round Friday morning at Oregon State University.

In doubles, Ulises Armenta and Lynkin McLeod will represent Umatilla after finishing third at district. They will face Peyton Tyler and Jack Kiefer of Marist Catholic in the first round.

In the girls tournament, Jacquelyn Albert of Weston-McEwen will open play against No. 2 seed Patricia Dougherty of Klamath Union.

Albert advanced to state after finishing second at the district tournament to Laken Herrera of Ontario.

In girls doubles, Riverside's Marta Barajas and Italia Rodriguez will take on Natalee Federico and Kenna Coleman of Cascade.

Barajas and Rodriguez finished third at district, beating Maya Smith and Olivia Jacoby of Baker 6-3, 7-5.

ON THE SLATE

Schedule subject to change

THURSDAY, MAY 19

Track and field

1A state championships, Hayward Field, Eugene, TBD
2A state championships, Hayward Field, Eugene, TBD
3A state championships, Hayward Field, Eugene, TBD

FRIDAY, MAY 20

Prep baseball

Pendleton at La Grande, 4 p.m.

Prep softball

La Grande at Pendleton, 4:30 p.m.

Tennis

Pendleton at 5A state tournament, Portland Tennis Center, 8 a.m.

Umatilla, Weston-McEwen, Riverside at 4A/3A/2A/1A state tournament, Oregon State University, Corvallis, 8 a.m.

Track and field

Hermiston at District 8 Championships, Spokane, TBD
Pendleton at 5A state meet, Hayward Field, Eugene, TBD
1A state championships, Hayward Field, Eugene, TBD
2A state championships, Hayward Field, Eugene, TBD
3A state championships, Hayward Field, Eugene, TBD
4A state championships, Hayward Field, Eugene, TBD
5A state championships, Hayward Field, Eugene, TBD

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