

Grapplers to hit the big time at state

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa County showed the rest of its wrestling neighbors about the meaning of toughness after sending six of its toughest grapplers to Portland over the weekend of Feb. 22-23 to compete at the state championships.

The Enterprise Outlaws brought six wrestlers to the meet with four placing and two going to state. Trace Evans, wrestling at 138 pounds, wrestled his way to second place before meeting his match in a Culver wrestler.

Senior heavyweight, Klint Norton also gathered in the silver before being stopped by the state champion from Grant Union.

Coach Forrest Wilson said that the championship round at 138 pounds was the first loss for Evans at the 1A/2A level.

"We'll see what happens at state," Wilson said. "District is so much pressure."

Shane Lund blitzed his way to third place at 132 pounds and Drew Widener made his way to fifth place at 220 pounds.

"When you take six and place four, that's good," Wilson said.

The Joseph/Wallowa squad brought eight wrestlers to meet. Four are going to state.

Mighty Steven Beckman, apparently fully recovered from his elbow injury, landed on top of the heap, defeating all-comers with ease at 113 pounds. Beckman is going to state as the number one seed to try for his third consecutive state title.

"I'm pretty excited about how he's coming along," said coach Tim Kiesecker. "He's going to need it down there. He's wrestling well."

Sophomore Zeb Ramsden at 132 pounds surprised some when he walked away with the gold after defeating Shane Lund from the Outlaws squad and Anthony Hood from Culver for the title. Hood and Lund were seeded at first and second respectively for the meet while Ramsden was seeded third. He is now seeded third at state.

Coach Tim Kiesecker called it the highlight of the meet.

Austin Brockamp at 170 pounds and Jonah Staigle at 195 pounds both took home the silver and won a state berth themselves.

"The whole team wrestled outstanding, whether they placed or didn't," Kiesecker said.

The state championships will take place on Feb. 22-23 at the Moda Center in Portland.



Courtesy Photo

Another one bites the dust — Joseph Charter School wrestler Steven Beckman pins yet another 113 pound opponent on his way to a third district championship and a number-one-seed at state. Beckman will try for his third consecutive state championship in Portland on Feb. 22-23.



Shane Lund of Enterprise.



Zeb Ramsden of Joseph.



Ellen Morris Bishop

Joseph's Madelyn Nelson, 14, puts on the pressure with impressive defensive play.

Eagle girls and boys soar to state

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

Both the boys and girls Joseph Charter School basketball squads are on the highway to state after successful district play in Baker the past weekend. The top-ranked girls went 1-1 over the weekend, missing out on first place to Powder Valley, a team they had previously beaten twice. The boys went 2-1, only losing to fifth ranked Nixyaawii.

A last-seconds shot from Eagles player Chase Murray put his team over the top in a 35-34 heart-stopper over Imbler in the first round of the Old Oregon League District playoffs on Thursday, Feb. 14.

"It was a really ugly game," Coach Olan Fulfer said with a laugh. "I was shaking for awhile after the game."

The game, a mostly see-saw affair, saw Joseph with the lead in the first half while virtually coasting through the third quarter, eventually giving up the lead. Imbler led by seven points with only 3:40 remaining in the battle.

In the waning minutes,

Imbler had the ball while nursing a three-point lead. Tyler Homan forced a turnover capitalizing on a layup, narrowing the gap to one. With only a four seconds remaining, Murray scored a bucket after two failed attempts by teammates.

The ecstatic Eagles celebrated, apparently thinking the win was theirs. However, when the game resumed, Imbler got the ball to their sharpshooter, who was fouled on a three-point attempt.

Only a second remained in the game, and because the shot was from behind the paint, the Panthers player had three shots to tie and possibly even win the game. He missed all three shots, and the victory went to the Eagles.

Murray led the scoring with 14 points while Tyler Homan knocked in six and Trey Wandschneider and Kade Kilgore collected five points each. Mason Ferre had a particularly important three-pointer in the fourth quarter that put the Eagles to within four of the Panthers.

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Outlaws girls shoot the way to state while boys stay home

By Steve Tool
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The Enterprise Outlaws had a mixed weekend, Feb. 15-16, at the Blue Mountain Conference district play-offs in Pendleton. The girls, after suffering a surprise loss to Heppner in their opening game, set things right defeating Union two days later to ensure a shot at state.

The girls met Heppner on Friday, Feb. 15, emerging from the battle with a 41-33 loss. After splitting regular season games, Enterprise entered the tournament as the higher seed because of overall win percentage.

Coach Mike Crawford said it was a good game that got away from the ladies.

The girls shot just over 25 percent from the floor while shooting just 5 of 9 for free throws. Although Heppner didn't shoot much better, three-pointers made the difference.

None of the girls scored in double digits, but both Carsyn Miller and Shelby Moncrief scored eight points each with Miller the only player shooting above 50 percent from the floor. Ashlynn Gray and Karli Bedard added six points apiece with Gray snagging an amazing 13 rebounds, more than twice as many as any other Outlaw.

The battle against Union on Saturday was more to Crawford's liking as the girls prevailed 46-34. Still, Crawford said the game was much closer than the score indicates.

"It was a close game right until the middle of the fourth quarter, and that's when we stretched it out," he said. "We played a much better game than the day before."

"I believe it's difficult to beat a team three times in the season, but we did that," he said. "The funny thing is, Union beat Heppner twice, who later became the district champion. It shows we're pretty balanced."

The Outlaws ladies shot an impressive 41 percent



Staff photo by Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

Stanfield's Cody Griffin (2) goes up for a shot as Dylan Marr, of Enterprise, defends during Friday's Blue Mountain District playoff game at the Pendleton Convention Center.

from the floor with Moncrief's 17 points leading the way and Carsyn Miller donating 10 points to the cause. Gray and Bedard scored six points each. Lexie Gasset harvested 10 rebounds.

Because four of the teams in the Blue Mountain Conference are in the state play-offs, the schedule is set to avoid repeats of districts games in the first round. Crawford is happy about that, but he knows the ladies need to win.

"If we win, we're in the final eight. If we lose, we're done."

The lady Outlaws next play Portland Christian in Portland on Saturday, Feb. 23 in the first round of the state playoffs.

Outlaws boys:

The Enterprise boys season came to a sad end during their first and only game at district playoffs versus Stan-

field. The Outlaws came up on the short end of a 53-41 score at district playoffs in Pendleton on Friday, Feb. 15. Coach Larry Wells said the loss was a disappointing way to end the season.

However several players put up impressive stats that included double-scoring. Devin Greer nailed 14 points and Dylan Marr found his way to 13 through the hoop. Cason Kirkland scored eight, the only other Outlaws player to score more than five points.

The Outlaws racked up 23 turnovers through the contest with 12 in the first half. The 14 calls for traveling also didn't help matters. However, that was only one of the issues. According to Wells, the Outlaws kept up well through the first half.

"Our defense was good, but we couldn't get any scoring in the second half," he said. "Stanfield improved —

they just kept getting better every time we played them. I really thought we were going to beat them, because we were meeting them on a neutral court."

The coach noted it was a difficult season with point guard Riley Masters revisiting the concussion issues that cost so much court time last year as well. The squad also lost several players who were suspended for vaping.

"We had a lot of games we played well in, where we could have controlled our own destiny, but it didn't work out for the boys," he said. "We have a pretty good league, and we couldn't compete down the stretch."

For a note of consolation, both Greer and Marr were selected for second-team honors in the Blue Mountain Conference. The squad and fans will also receive the league's sportsmanship award.