

## SPORTS

# Eagles hang with top competitors, take third

By RONALD BOND  
Wallowa County Chieftain

LA GRANDE — The Joseph boys were within striking distance of contending for the 1A state championship Saturday, May 22, at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande, before a strong effort by Powder Valley in the final two races and a win by Damascus Christian in the 4x400-meter relay sent them past the Eagles.

Joseph finished as a team with 52 points to take third, trailing only Damascus, who had 56 points, and Powder Valley, which won the 1A title with 64.5 points.

“They (did) a great job,” head coach John Roberts said. “Good job all the way though. I think just about all of them PR’d in all of their races, and the two girls did, too. It was a



Davis Carbaugh/The Observer

Joseph’s Kale Ferguson, right, shown competing in the boys 200, won the 1A state title in the discus and took second in the javelin Saturday, May 22, 2021, in La Grande.

great 1A meet.”

A strong day in the field, led by Kale Ferguson, put the Eagles in

position to compete for the state crown. The sophomore, wrapping up his first season of high school

track after the pandemic canceled the 2020 year, set a personal best in winning the discus with a throw of 134 feet, 8 inches, and also reached a PR in the javelin at 150-feet-8, which was good for second. In both events, he set a new PR by more than 13 feet.

Ferguson said he didn’t expect to make it onto the podium in the discus, let alone win it.

“For discus, I got there, and when I was looking at everyone that was throwing, I thought ‘Wow, I don’t belong here. These guys are huge,’” he said. “... When I got up onto the platform where you throw, I just prayed for strength to guide my throw, and each time I threw it went farther and farther. The last one, it came out perfectly.”

He said it still hasn’t set in that he won.

“Just hearing the words ‘state champion’ is a little — I can’t explain it, it’s weird,” he said. “I didn’t expect I would make it to state at the beginning of the season. I’m kind of realizing that I have the abilities to do stuff like that.”

It was also a good day for senior Justin Rogers and junior Reece Nelson. Rogers came in second in the boys 400 in a PR time of 52.77 seconds — just 0.35 behind winner Conley Martin from Adrian — and was fourth in the 800 in 2:06.64. Nelson, meanwhile, placed second in the high jump at 6 feet even.

“He was happy with it,” Roberts said of Rogers. “He put a lot of speed into that 400, and it took a lot out of it to come back and run that 800. He was happy with it, and

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Ronald Bond/Wallowa County Chieftain

Enterprise junior Zac Knapp won 2A state championships in both the boys 3,000, which he is shown competing in here, and in the 1,500, on Saturday, May 22, 2021, at the 2A state meet in Union. Knapp helped the Outlaw boys to a third-place finish.

# Knapp wins twice as Enterprise boys place third

By RONALD BOND  
Wallowa County Chieftain

UNION — Zac Knapp put together what appeared to be an almost effortless performance Saturday, May 22, in Union.

The Enterprise junior eased to victory in two races, and his big day helped the Outlaw boys track and field team take third at the 2A state meet at Union High School.

Knapp, who just a few weeks earlier helped the Wallowa Valley cross-country team to a state title, set a personal best and came within a fraction of a second of setting a school record in the 1,500-meter run with a time of 4:10.88, about 0.4 seconds behind the best mark at EHS. Later, he immediately broke to the front of the pack in the 3,000 and glided to an easy win in a time of 9:19.91. While about 10 seconds shy of his personal best in the race, the run was enough to win by more than 23 seconds.

“(The) 1,500 going in I was really nervous. There were a lot of really, really great racers in that,” Knapp said. “I just thought, ‘Give it my all. I’ve got one shot at this.’ State was taken away last year from me. I just took it by the neck and did the best that I could. And then the 3,000, the same thing. I was like, ‘I got one chance at this.’ I’ve worked so hard, putting in hours extra, and this is what it all comes down to — ‘Do I have the strength to hold that lead and get first?’ And



Ronald Bond/Wallowa County Chieftain

Enterprise’s Ransom Peters hands the baton to his brother, Jericho Peters, during the boys 4x100-meter relay on Saturday, May 22, 2021, at the 2A state track meet in Union. The relay team finished in fourth place.

thankfully, I did.”

His points were a major portion of a big day for the EHS boys, who finished with 49 points and placed behind only state champion East Linn Christian (67 points) and runner-up Grant Union (53).

“I think the team effort was great,” senior Jericho Peters said. “For my last senior year,

I really appreciate everyone. Everyone was giving it their hardest, going 100% every event. It was really fun to watch. Glad to be here; glad it happened.”

Peters had a strong effort in his final prep track meet. The EHS senior sprinter ran the second leg on the 4x100 and 4x400 relay, both of which took fourth with respective times of 47.16 seconds and 3:41.39. In his leg of the 4x400, he moved the team from middle of the pack to the lead before it finished fourth.

“Coming around that corner on my leg, I knew it was my last 400. I said, ‘I gotta go hard.’ That’s exactly what I did,” he said. “I ran the hardest I’ve ever run, ran my best 400, a 53 split.”

Individually, Peters placed fourth in the 200 in 23.46 seconds and was fifth in the 100 in 11.56.

Lute Ramsden ran the anchor leg on both relay races, and individually placed third in the 400 with a personal best time of 52.56.

Ransom Peters and Zander Walker were the other two legs of the fourth-place 4x100 team, while Knapp and Gideon Gray ran first and third on the 4x400 team.

Roan Flynn came in sixth in the 300 hurdles for Enterprise in 46.14, and in eighth in the 3,000 was Brenden Moore in a time of 45.67.

Head coach Dan Moody said he was pleased with the effort given the short season.

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## PREP BASEBALL

# Eagles plate 13 runs in wild fifth to take third

By RONALD BOND  
Wallowa County Chieftain

CORVALLIS — In one unforgettable inning, the Wallowa Valley offense woke up and the Eagles baseball team was catapulted from the cusp of a run-rule defeat to a wild victory and a third-place finish.

The Eagles scored 13 runs in the fifth inning to turn what was on the verge of being a Rainier rout into a 14-11 victory Saturday, May 22, in the third-place game of the 3A culminating week championship series at Crescent Valley High School in Corvallis.

The Eagles (13-3 overall) were on the ropes when they came to bat in the fifth, already trailing 11-0, and needed two runs just to extend the game past the fifth inning.

Instead, they completely flipped the game around, recording numerous hits, sending 18 batters to the plate and taking advantage of at least four Rainier errors.

“They just kept scoring every inning, and we weren’t, so morale got down,” head coach Mark Ramsden said. “A dropped fly ball kept us alive with two outs.”

Ramsden credited the bench for helping turn morale around.

“I think what turned things around really was our bench was always encouraging. The guys on the bench never gave up,” he said. “The bench has always been loud and encouraging, and this is the game that it paid off.”

An error and walk opened the bottom of the fifth, and Evans followed with a two-run double to get the Eagles on the board. Chase Homan’s first hit drove in Evans to make it 11-3. After another error, Nave doubled in two to make it 11-5, then scored on a David Salim squeeze bunt. A walk, error and an out later, Maclane Melville’s RBI single chiseled the lead even smaller. It was now just 11-7.

Evans struck again, knocking in two more runs with a single, then scoring on an error to cut the margin to a single run. Homan, who had singled, scored on a double steal to tie the score. Nave and Salim followed with RBI single — Nave’s for a 12-11 lead and Salim’s for a two-run margin — to complete the stunning turnaround. The Eagles batted around twice in the inning.

Homan added an insurance run

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