

Peters brothers enjoy lone season together

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — They had an opportunity to run together during the 2A state track meet in Union. The younger brother even handed the baton to the elder during the 4x100-meter relay that day.

One would think that would be the icing on the cake in a track season — especially in a pandemic-riddled year.

Yet that wasn't the highlight of the 2021 track season for Enterprise's Peters brothers — senior Jericho and freshman Ransom.

Rather, the top moment for both was when each set a personal best in the same heat in a race in Milton-Freewater in May — the 100-meter dash.

Jericho ran a time of 11.24 seconds — one that topped his dad's family-best time of 11.3 in the event — and Ransom turned in a time of 11.72. Jericho won the race that day, with Ransom placing fourth.

"Having that competition to drive us both was a lot of fun, and definitely the highlight for me," Jericho said.

"I was so happy," Ransom added. "I never imagined I could run an 11 my freshman year."

That's not to say the race at state May 22 in Union wasn't memorable.

The duo ran the first two legs to help Enterprise place fourth in the race that day. It was part of an effort that led to the Outlaws taking third overall in the state meet.

"For me it was really



Enterprise's Jericho Peters, left, takes off after receiving the baton from his brother, Ransom Peters, during the 4x100 relay at the 2A state track meet in Union on Saturday, May 22, 2021. Running together in the state track meet was one of the highlights of the season for Jericho, a senior, and Ransom, a freshman.

Ronald Bond/Wallowa County Chieftain

great," Jericho said. "I have always enjoyed being able to compete with Ransom. We did it in football this year. I've always pictured Ransom handing the baton off to me. Being able to do that at state was something very special to me. I'll never forget it."

Both started competing in track in seventh grade, and are part of a track-run-

ning family. Their father, Justin, older sister, Hero, and younger sister, Mercy, all are runners. And their mom, Kara, while not a trackster, played basketball and softball.

"We've definitely got some athletic blood in our family history," Jericho said.

The older brother, who is a three-sport athlete, tried

track after realizing the speed he had on the football field.

He quickly learned the sprints would be his forte, and having that knowledge early was a plus.

"It was very handy to have it figured out by then," he said. "I knew what I needed to work on."

Ransom followed in his older siblings' foot-

steps when it came to track, though he played soccer and baseball before ultimately trading those in for track spikes.

"My seventh grade year I did track and realized I am way better than that," he said. "Because Jericho was a sprinter and my sister, Hero, was a sprinter. I felt like sprinting was my goal for track."

The COVID-19 pandemic has obviously limited many athletes, but the Peters brothers were able to work together, and Jericho teaching Ransom the ropes was rewarding for both.

"He's been helping me with my strides," the younger brother said. "He's always had a shorter one. He's also helped me with my blocks a bit. And then coach (Dan) Moody helped me with that. They are also helping me run on my toes. (Jericho) was training me in areas like that."

With that help, Ransom was able to make strides in the sport more quickly than Jericho.

"It was fun to be able to see him improve in those areas much faster than I did," Jericho said.

The concern of if there would be a spring season after the rash of COVID-related cancellations, postponements and other changes, was on both brothers' minds during the school year.

They both felt amazed that it did, indeed, take place, and that they got to share in several memorable moments in the shortened season.

"I do think it is amazing both of us were able to compete this year," Jericho said. "Going into my senior year, I didn't think it was going to happen. I didn't think I would get this opportunity."

Added Ransom: "It's exciting for me to think I just ran my (freshman) year despite COVID, I got to play in track (and) I got to hand off to him."

Enterprise's Mike Crawford receives Section 8 COY honor

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — A major accolade has come the way of Mike Crawford.

Next Sunday, June 6, the longtime Enterprise girls basketball coach will be given his award for being named the 2021 National Federation of State High School Associations Section 8 Coach of the Year for girls basketball, which in essence pegs him as the top girls hoops coach in the Northwest, and one of the best in the county.

"You stop to think about it, Mike was chosen as the best of the best from six Northwest states," Oregon Athletic Coaches Association Executive Director Rob Younger said.

Crawford, along with 12 other Section 8 award winners, five state award winners and two national winners, will be honored at an awards banquet Sunday evening at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande.

Crawford was nominated last fall as the state coach of the year for girls basketball, which pit him up against other coaches from Section 8 states. That includes Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Alaska, Montana and Wyoming.

"The fact that it was a recognition from other coaches that got it started,

it's humbling," Crawford said. "It's a longevity thing. I got my 500th win. That's kind of rarefied stuff. It's 'How do you have a concept or a feeling for what that means when it is about you?'"

Younger said Crawford was nominated, in part, because of his lengthy and

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— Mike Crawford, Enterprise girls basketball coach

successful career at EHS. "The federation awards, a big part of it is their longevity, their commitment to their school and their community," Younger said. "Mike is being recognized for his many years of outstanding service to the Enterprise community in basketball."

Crawford, a staple of Northeast Oregon hoops, has racked up more than 500 career wins with the Outlaws during a career that has spanned three decades. He picked up his 500th win when Enterprise

defeated Heppner in overtime, 40-38, during a Blue Mountain Conference district tournament contest on Feb. 22, 2020.

A major factor in the success Crawford and Enterprise have had over the years is due to his players.

"I've been incredibly blessed to be at one school and have the people around me in that entire time to be able to accomplish the fears we have done together," he said.

Younger said the award winners won't speak Sunday, but Crawford said if he were allowed to, he would share how humbled he was to be considered.

"Think of all the people that are in that category. To be the Section 8 winner puts me into where there are eight people who are vying for the National Coach of the Year. And to be in that finalist section — it is humbling," he said. "I don't have perspective for the whole country. I know that it's not typical these days of coaches to be in the mix (that long)...I've been coaching for over 40 years, and (still) feel like I'm young and can do it. I just really appreciate the acknowledgement. I don't know it's quite as deserving, but others thought so."

"How do you express in words to say how incredible that is?"



East Oregonian, File

Enterprise coach Mike Crawford and his players react while watching the final moments of the team's Blue Mountain District tournament overtime win against Heppner on Saturday at the Pendleton Convention Center. Enterprise beat the Mustangs 40-38, notching third place and Crawford's 500th win.



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