

SPORTS

MOUNTAIN HIGH BRONCS & BULLS

Gabe McKay highlights rodeo field

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Two years ago was Gabe McKay's first run at Mountain High Broncs & Bulls. It was a profitable day, as the saddle bronc rider from Juntura won the ranch bronc riding during the 2019 event.

McKay is back for an encore performance when Broncs &

Bulls returns to the Wallowa County Fairgrounds on Saturday, June 26, after a year's hiatus due to the pandemic.

"I'd heard about it in the prior years, but I'm drawn to the rodeo because it's got good money added, and it's just a fun time being able to get on a good horse," McKay said. "I like that area up there. It's beautiful up there this time of year. It's a fun time."

The rodeo, now in its 16th year, has three main events packed into the afternoon — three rounds each of bull riding, wild horse racing and ranch bronc riding. Rodeo announcer Lee Daggett also said there will be about 25 mutton busters, a handful of wild pony racers — wild horse racing, but for youths on smaller animals — a drill team featuring members from the Lewiston Roundup, and

\$20 the hard way for youth — a spin off of \$100 the hard way, but again on a smaller animal. The day wraps up after the rodeo with what Daggett called bull poker. The event, which starts at 3 p.m., is free to the public.

"The big thing is it's free admission," Daggett said. "We've had huge community support

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Joseph opens state tournament with a win

Chieftain staff

NORTH POWDER — Mason Ferre had a game to remember Monday, June 21, in the first game of the 1A boys state basketball tournament.

The Joseph senior scored 39 points, including 26 points in the second half, as the Eagles rallied from a 14-point deficit to take down Siletz Valley, 61-41, to reach the quarterfinals.

"I was just really proud of my team to not fold or hold their heads (down) when they got down bad," head coach Olan Fulfer said.

The Eagles trailed 16-7 after one, and the lead grew to 21-7 before Siletz settled for a 23-18 lead at the half.

The second half was all Joseph, led by Ferre. He hit four 3-pointers and had 16 points in the third quarter alone, pushing the Eagles ahead after three, 42-36. A 19-5 fourth quarter, with Ferre adding 10 more points, turned the lead into a blowout.

"They couldn't guard him," Fulfer said of Ferre, who finished with eight 3-pointers on the night.

James Burney added seven points for Joseph.

The Eagles (11-2 overall) faced Nixyaawii at 8 p.m. Tuesday, and plays Wednesday and Thursday. Games are in Baker City and North Powder.

Eagles fall at home to Badgers

The Eagles' final regular-season home game was a struggle as Joseph lost to Powder Valley, 59-47, on June 17.

The Eagles led by four at half-time, but the Badgers took a 42-40 lead after three quarters and outscored Joseph 17-7 in the final quarter to pull away.

Mason Ferre scored a team-high 21 points for the Eagles, including 13 in the first half. Chase Murray added 18 points.

Joseph stops Crane

A day earlier, the Eagles locked down Crane defensively to grab a 46-32 victory over the Mustangs June 16 in a game played in Enterprise.

Mason Ferre went off, scoring 25 points, including 14 in the second half. Chase Murray added eight points.

Outlaws end with a loss

The Enterprise boys basketball team ended its season with a home 52-43 loss to Crane on Wednesday, June 16.

David Salim led the Outlaws with 18 points, and Jackson Decker added 13 points.

Enterprise finished with a record of 3-8 overall.

Crane girls down Enterprise

Kelsie Siegner scored 22 points and was one of four Crane players in double figures as the Mustangs ended Enterprise's season Wednesday, June 16, by handing them a 68-35 loss.

Crane put the game away quickly, taking a 14-point lead after one quarter and extending it to 36-14 by halftime.

Enterprise, which finished with a record of 5-5 overall, was led by Asiya Salim, who poured in 16 points, including eight in a third quarter where the Outlaws scored more points (15) than they did the entire first half. Grace Collins added five points.

The matchup pit two 500-win coaches against each other: Mike Crawford of Enterprise and Stub Travis of Crane.

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RUNNING FOR TOKYO

Former EHS standout David Ribich to compete for spot in Olympic Games

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — David Ribich is set to make a run for the 2021 Olympics.

The former Enterprise High School and Western Oregon University standout will compete at the U.S. Olympic Trials inside Eugene's Hayward Field, vying to earn one of three spots in the men's 1,500-meter run to the Summer Olympic Games, which start next month in Tokyo.

The trials started June 18 and run through June 27. Ribich takes to the track for the first time Thursday, June 24 in the first round of the 1,500.

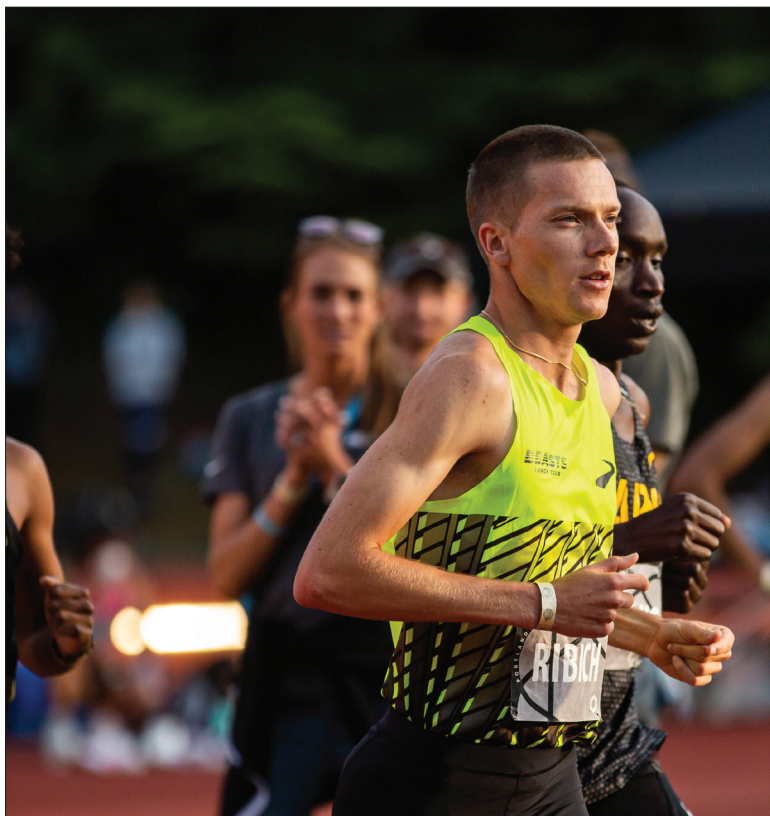
Competing in the trials has been a lifelong goal for Ribich, and he knows garnering one of those coveted top three spots will be a challenge.

"It's going to be one of the hardest teams to make for Tokyo," he said, speaking of a field that includes Matthew Centrowitz, the reigning Olympic champion in the 1,500. "Going into that race, it'll be a tall order."

Ribich enters the trials as an underdog, and as such, feels no pressure.

"I approach it just like that," he said of the dark horse role. "Try not to make it a bigger deal than it is. ... Taking it one moment at a time and letting myself be present in that race is what it's about."

He is ranked 28th out of 30



Jenny Reinhardt/Contributed Photo

David Ribich, shown competing at the Portland Track Festival in May, runs his first race in the Olympic Trials at Eugene's Hayward Field on Thursday, June 24, 2021.

competitors in the 1,500 with a qualifying time of 3:37.44. He said, though, that time was from June 2019, and that since, he has been keeping up with some of the top-seeded runners in the race, including his Brooks Beasts Track Club teammate Henry Wynne.

"I've been working closely with him the last four months," Ribich said of Wynne.

Wynne has the third-best qualifying time at 3:34.08, and Ribich said in training, "We're not separated by more than a few decimals." Centrowitz has the top qualify-

ing time at 3:32.81. His winning time in 2016 was 3:50.00.

Competitors will have to make it through two rounds of the race just to reach the 1,500 final. The semifinal race is June 25, and the final is June 27. Of the 30 initial runners, 24 will reach the semifinals, but the field will be cut in half to 12 for the final race.

"First round is pretty much stay clear of contact (with other runners)," he said, calling the semifinal race much more "cutthroat."

He also plans to adopt a game plan that allowed him to run a per-

ON TELEVISION

NBC and NBCSN are televising the Olympic Track and Field Trials. NBCSN has coverage scheduled from 6-9 p.m. Thursday, June 24, and 2-5 p.m. Friday. NBC's coverage is 6-8 p.m. Saturday and 4-5:30 Sunday.

Ribich races at 6:04 p.m. Thursday, at 4:05 p.m. Friday if he reaches the semifinals, and at 5:10 p.m. Sunday if he reaches the finals.

sonal best in the 5,000 at the Portland Track Festival last month and come within about a second of reaching the trials in that race.

"I've had race plans going into races, and more often than not I've failed them," he said. "My race plan (last month) was to run through the race and respond on instinct."

He said he won't be trailing any specific runners, but instead will be looking for a key moment in the race — maybe "an opening or gap that needs to be filled, or a moment where it's time for me to take the lead."

"If I can be on in that moment, I think I could have a pretty deadly maneuver to put myself in position," he said, saying he needs to be hunting for that opportunity.

Ribich said it is "tough to say" what impact the coronavirus pandemic had on his training. On one hand, he was reaching a spike in his training program where most athletes under his coach take off. On the other hand, the shutdown enabled him to focus on his health.

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BASEBALL

Four named to all-state team

Flynn Nave played in all-star game Tuesday in Keizer

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Four members of Wallowa Valley's third-place team were named to the 3A all-state baseball team, and one took part in an all-star game Tuesday, June 22, at Volcano Stadium in Keizer.

Flynn Nave, the Eagles' short-stop and pitcher, played in the all-star game. Trace Evans, Zeb Ramsden and David Salim all qualified, but have other events taking place that weekend, head coach Mark Ramsden said.

Nave, Evans and Salim all were named first-team all-

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VOLLEYBALL

Young, Johnston represent Wallowa in all-star match

By RONALD BOND
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LA GRANDE — Ashlyn Young and Jamie Johnston had worn the Wallowa volleyball uniform for the last time when their season — and their high school volleyball careers — ended with a loss to eventual champion St. Paul in the 1A playoffs in 2019.

Or so they thought. They had an unexpected opportunity to don the black and orange again Saturday, June 19, at the Oregon All-Star Match at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande.

"It was weird. My senior year, I thought it was the last time I was ever going to wear (a) Wallowa jersey again," Johnston said.

Johnston and Young, both 2020 graduates of Wallowa, were invited to be a part of the annual event partly due to the fact their chance to compete a year ago was wiped out by COVID-19.

"I was really excited, and really felt honored that they opened it back up," Young said.



Ronald Bond/Wallowa County Chieftain

Ashlyn Young (3) and Jamie Johnston (21), 2020 graduates of Wallowa High School, were given an opportunity to take part in the Oregon All-Star Volleyball Match Saturday, June 19, 2021, at Eastern Oregon University.

"Because I know I myself was really bummed out, and what I looked forward to at the end of my senior year since we didn't make it to the state championship was getting to come back and play in the all-star game. Them opening it back up gave me a chance to relive the sport I love the most —

it was really nice."

The two were part of "Team Hiller" coached by St. Paul head coach Lesli Hiller, which took second on the day and split its two matches. The team swept "Team Teeter" coached by Imbler's Jen-

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