

Baseball:

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state, and Ramsden was second-team.

Having four players make all-state was a “pretty big deal,” the head coach said.

Nave played a key role on the team, not only as a staff ace along with Evans, but also at the plate.

“He pitched really well for us. He kept the ball down in the zone which we’ve been working on forever,” Mark Ramsden said. “That is probably the biggest asset for Flynn as a pitcher is he threw a lot of strikes. He kept the ball down in the zone and he had a nice little curveball to add to that. He had strikeouts and he got a lot of groundballs. That’s a winning combination for us.”

Ramsden said Nave, who is set to attend Oregon Institute of Technology, has the skills to contend at the college level.

“He should take the next step. He should try it,” the coach said.

Evans, the other staff ace, played a key role on the mound and in centerfield, and as Wallowa Valley’s leadoff hitter.

“Trace really, I think, stepped it up this year,” Ramsden said. “He kind of had to be a leader. He always had something to say after the game. I don’t think he ever picked on anybody, he was encouraging to the other players. He’s a good athlete. I

just feel like he gave it 100% when he was in centerfield. We felt really good when he was in centerfield. He could cover a lot of ground.”

Evans is competing in the state wrestling tournament in Sweet Home on June 25-26.

Zeb Ramsden was a quiet leader on the field and a stalwart behind the plate, Mark Ramsden said. He also said his son excelled at working with the pitchers.

“He just did not let any passed balls go. I think he really did well handling our pitchers,” Mark Ramsden said, adding he had endurance behind the plate. “(Before him), we didn’t have a catcher that could last two games (in a double-header). Zeb had no problem catching two games. That was huge for us. He had the endurance to catch two games every series we played.”

“There was probably no better at blocking pitches in the dirt. ... His blocking was top notch.”

Ramsden is playing in Saturday’s 8-man all-star game in La Grande.

Salim’s flexibility, not just this year, but throughout his career, was an asset to the Eagles.

“He started all four years, and he’s been a utility man from the start. We always found a spot for him. He played in the outfield, played in the infield.

“David is an even-keel type of individual. No highs. No lows. You know what you got from David. He had the hardest job moving around like that.”

Volleyball:

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nifer Teeter, 25-20, 25-18, 25-21, in a match Johnston ended with a kill, and fell to “Team Lind” coached by Marji Lind of Powder Valley, 27-25, 25-11, 25-22.

That 2019 contest against the Buckaroos was the last time either had played in over a year, so there were some cobwebs that needed to be shaken off.

Young said, though, it didn’t take long to find a rhythm — even though the seven athletes on the squad had just one practice Friday night before the two matches Saturday.

“Pretty sore this morning, hard to get back out on the court,” she said. “But the dynamics were still there.

It was getting the speed (down), and that kind of thing was a little rusty.”

Johnston acknowledged the power she was accustomed to playing with was somewhat lacking.

“Strength for hitting and blocking (were not there), and I was out of shape,” she said.

Still, she was excited to have the opportunity to take part with her old teammate.

“It meant a lot. It made me super excited, because I got to play with Ashlyn one more game,” Johnston said. “It was amazing. We knew how we run our rotations and stuff, and she knew how I liked my sets. It was super easy to go along with her.”

Johnston bounced back from a shoulder popping out that she suffered during the final match against Team Lind.

“Belle (Blair) went up for a hit, and I went to block, and it took my arm with it,” she said.

She was back the next set, which Young said was par for the course for Johnston.

“It’s happened a lot, throughout basketball and volleyball, but she’s always come back,” Young said. “You can always rely on her to come back even though it happens.”

Young commented on how quickly the team, which also featured Mary Davidson and Jordyn Caldwell of St. Paul, Tyanna Norton of Vale, and Hallie SkunkCap and Kaiden Raif of Burns, meshed.

“We’ve been together for what, eight hours total, and it’s like we’ve been together for a whole season,” she said.

As for playing with two athletes in Davidson and

Caldwell who were on the team that defeated Wallowa back in the 2019 playoffs?

“I enjoyed playing with them,” Johnston said. “They’re competitive but they love to support us, and if we do something wrong, they pick us up. They don’t put us down like most players do.”

Both agreed a high point of the day was earning a win in their opening match, though Young added that for many seniors, getting to have that final match is a highlight.

Playing that match meant putting on the uniform again. Weird? Sure. But for Young, it also signified that, truly, the volleyball career was over after Saturday.

“It was heartbreaking, knowing there was nothing going on past this,” she said, “but it was nice to put it on one more time.”

Rodeo:

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(and) sponsorship. We’re funded without having to charge anybody admission.”

That means no cost to see McKay and the roughly 17 other bronc riders, the 12-16 bull riders, and the 7-10 wild horse racing teams.

McKay, whose score of 76.5 won the event in 2019, has arguably the best — and most unlikely — story of any of the competitors.

He and five siblings — three initially, and three later on — were adopted out of Haiti by Joe and Joyce McKay in the early 1990s.

My adoptive parents couldn’t have kids, so they were kind of looking around, looking to adopt. They had a close friend that mentioned something about you could adopt kids out of Haiti,” Gabe McKay said. “They prayed on it. They adopted my brother and I and my sister. About two years later, they brought my three other siblings to the state, so they

adopted twice.

“They were running a ranch. They brought us out there, raised us as their own and gave us a good life — a chance at life.”

Gabe McKay ranches with his family in Juntura, and also competes as a saddle bronc rider in the PRCA, ICA and NPRA circuits. His brother, Levi, also rides saddle bronc, but will be competing in Meridian, Idaho, this weekend.

The two often compete together, both continuing a tradition of sorts in the sport

as their father and relatives competed. They plan to get to about 30-40 rodeos this year.

“My dad did it, my cousins did it and it went down the family line,” McKay said. “My first horse I got on, I really liked it. You either like it or you won’t.”

He knows, too, the challenge to repeat as champion will be stiff, but he is up for it.

“Those guys are going to be gunning for it, but I’m not going to give it over easily,” he said.

Tokyo:

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He had a platelet-rich plasma injection done on his Achilles tendon to help heal some damage from wear-and-tear. For a while after he wasn’t running, and instead spent more time working on an elliptical or

swimming. He added the year was “needed.”

Now? “I’ve never felt more like myself, and never felt more confident,” he said.

And while he may be an underdog, he is optimistic of his chances to run for a spot in Tokyo.

“My coaches, myself and my family believe that is a possibility,” he said.

Roundup:

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Joseph girls end with two losses

The Joseph girls basketball team dropped its final two games of the 2021 season, falling to Crane, 61-27, Wednesday, June 16, in a game played in Enterprise, and then Thursday dropping a home contest to Powder Valley, 39-36. Stats were not provided.

Joseph wrapped up the season with a final record of 7-4 overall.

Evans, Ferguson qualify for state

Enterprise’s Trace Evans went 3-1 to take third place at 152 pounds in the 2A/1A Special District 4 tournament Thursday, June 17, in Culver.

Evans needed just 21 seconds to pin Tyler Boor of Heppner in his first match, but dropped a 5-2 decision in the semifinals to Wyatt Corwin of

Culver. He recovered to win two matches by technical fall, defeating Isaiah Lemmon of Echo 17-1, and Gen Wintersteen of Elgin 18-1.

Tegan Evans took fifth, dropping a pair of matches but defeating Crane’s Ty Taylor by fall in the fifth-place match. He also had a win by forfeit.

For Joseph, Kale Ferguson took third despite wrestling just one match. He lost in the 195 semifinals to Christian Mattson-McKenzie of Culver

by a 21-5 tech fall, and had three other byes.

Andy Miranda pinned Heppner’s Zane Fisher to take fifth at 126 and finish 1-2, and Adrian Cabrera was sixth at 170.

As a team, Enterprise placed 10th and Joseph took 12th.

Evans and Ferguson qualified for the 2A/1A Oregon Wrestling Association state tournament, which takes place Friday and Saturday in Sweet Home.

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