

## State:

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younger girls stepped up. They just knew that they had to do their job, and they did."

In the Eastern Oregon XC Championships on Oct. 22 in Pendleton, the Outlaws again took the top spot, this time winning the Super Champs fast heat over La Grande and Heppner. In the Champs race, La Grande edged Wallowa Valley by a single point despite Camdyn Weer taking the top spot.

Hurley was a constant atop the leaderboard for the Outlaws, as she took top honors on the team in all seven races this fall. However, the Outlaws had multiple runners in the mix during various races, giving Moody a good problem to have in years to come — depth. Indeed, the team had almost an entirely different top five from week to week.

Hurley, Freyja Hostetter, Annie Miller, Harguess and Opal McDonald were the top five in the opener at Catherine Creek. A week later, Hurley, Miller, Camdyn and Lilly Weer, and Harvey were the headliners for the Outlaws. At Stanfield, it was Hurley, Miller, Hellinger, McDonald and Chloe Hatch. In both Baker and Heppner, Hurley, Lilly Weer, Miller, Hellinger and Harguess paved the



Maria Weer/Contributed Photo

**Jonah Lyman took eighth place for the Wallowa Valley middle school cross-country team, which took fourth place overall at the state meet Sunday, Oct. 31, 2021, in Monmouth.**

way, and at the Eastern Oregon Championships, the team leaders were Hurley, Lilly Weer, Harvey, Miller and Harguess.

At one point in the season, more than half the team's runners — 10 out of the 19 — placed in the top five in the fast heat.

Another major component to the Outlaw success that also shows their depth was pack running — how closely runners are finishing to each other. One way to measure this is in the time between Wallowa Valley's first and fifth runners. Only once in seven races was that gap more than a minute. Twice it was less than 30 seconds, and twice more it was

under 50 seconds.

"It's a heck of a bunch of girls. I could probably divide them (into two teams) and try to get them as equal as I could and they would beat each other five times each in 10 races," Moody said.

The future is very bright for this group of athletes at both the middle school and high school level. Close to half of the 19 runners will be moving up to the high school level next fall, adding depth to a team that graduates just one senior.

"We're only losing one girl in the high school, and it'll definitely make the other girls work harder," Moody said.

While he noted the jump

from the 1.8-mile middle school race to the 3.1-mile high school race can be a challenge for some runners, he believes that, given time to make the adjustment, more trophies could be on the horizon for this group.

"They're capable of winning a state championship or two," Moody said.

That is, he noted, if they maintain cohesiveness over the next few years.

"If you keep this group together, there's going to be some doors opening for you basically," he said, "and you got the nucleus of a great team, but you have to stay together."

### Boys take fourth at state

The Wallowa Valley boys took fourth at the state meet, capping a season that saw them win four out of seven meets and, like the girls, has them in good position for the future.

Jonah Lyman led the way all season, and did so, too, at the state meet. He won three races overall, and at state placed seventh with a time of 9:58.60. He was the only runner in the top 50 for the Outlaws. Next up was Kooper Grover, who came in 64th in 11:07.20. Colton Keffer was 72nd in 11:13.10. Emmett Flynn was 94th in a time of 11:35.00, and George McDonald was 105th in 11:43.90.

Wallowa Valley finished with 127 points for the fourth-place finish.

## Duncan:

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Enterprise, and was an anchor at linebacker for Enterprise.

He was joined on the first-team defense by defensive end Cody Fent and interior lineman John Howard.

"Our team was way better than it has been in the past years — it was mostly (because of) our defense," Duncan said. "... We had a bunch more players come out this year than normal. That's what helped us."

Three additional players, meanwhile, were part of the first-team offense, led by running back Gideon Gray. Caden Fent was honored as a first-team offensive end, and Nevin Goldsmith was a first-team offensive guard.

The final first-team honor went to Tyler Knapp, who was tapped as first-team kicker.

Enterprise loaded up on sec-

ond-team awards, as well. Jackson Decker earned two second-team nods, on offense as a quarterback, and on defense as a defensive back. Goldsmith was a second-team defensive end, Knapp was a second-team defensive back and Gray was a second-team linebacker and second-team punter.

Cody Fent was honorable mention at center, and Caden Fent was honorable mention at linebacker.

Paul Stangel rounded out the final Enterprise award as manager of the year.

"I want to congratulate the whole team. We did amazing this year," Duncan added.

For Wallowa, five athletes earned SD2-East honors.

Ty Prince paved the way for the Cougars on both offense and defense, and as a result was named both a second-team offensive lineman and defensive lineman. Jesse Duncan garnered a spot on the second team as a linebacker, and Lucas Hulse was



Ronald Bond/Wallowa County Chieftain

**Enterprise's Chase Duncan tries to track down a Crane player during the season-opening game of the season. Duncan was named 1A Special District 2-West defensive player of the year.**

named to the second team as a tight end.

Lute Ramsden was named honorable mention at quarter-

back despite missing the last half of the season due to a leg injury, and Jose Mendez was named honorable mention at punter.

## Knapp:

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year on," Knapp said. "I was like, 'Everything has to come out today.' All the work I put in it comes down to today. ... To break the curse is a dream come true."

Only one other runner for Enterprise has won state — Krista Stangel won back-to-back titles for the girls program in 2004 and 2005.

Knapp's margin of victory in the championship race — he finished 36 seconds ahead of runner-up Wyatt Montgomery of La Pine — bests any margin from a runner in the championship in program history. Johnson won his title in 1998 by just two seconds. Ribich was

13 seconds ahead of the runner-up in 2013. Coughlan won his by just 3.5 seconds. Stangel was the closest, winning by 23 seconds in 2004, but the repeat effort was closer, as she won the 2005 race by just six seconds.

Frontrunning became a theme for Knapp, who not only won all eight of his races — he won them with ease. No racer all season managed to stay within 20 seconds of him. His first race of the year, in fact, was his closest, when he won the Catherine Creek Scamper in Union by a mere 23.9 seconds. Six of his races were won by more than 30 seconds. Three were by more than a minute, with his widest margin of victory a whopping 83.6 seconds at the Wallowa County Invitational.

He said after the state race his plan that day was the same

as every race — put it away early.

My tactic, just like always, you gotta kill (it) in the first mile. Don't even give it a chance," he said.

"I hit my first mile exactly what I was hoping for for a (personal record)."

In five races, including his last four, he broke the 16-minute mark. And he broke Ribich's old program record not just once, but twice. He first broke the record with a time of 15:24.9 in Stanfield, and at the district meet in John Day in October, shattered that with a time of 15:14.7.

Ribich said he knew that his school record was in trouble when Knapp stopped splitting time between soccer and cross-country, and focused solely on running.

"Zac Knapp is an inspiration to me, too," said Ribich, who was attending the state track meet to watch his former team. "I know the success he has in anything he does. ... He's an inspiration to me. Being able to root for him is easy to do."

Knapp said having Ribich in the crowd, spurring him on, provided a boost.

"It was pretty inspiring; I'm not going to lie," he said. "I don't hear a lot of people when I'm running, but I heard David clear as day."

Ribich spoke highly of not only the effort put forward by Knapp, but also by the team as it won a second-straight OSAA state title and third-straight unofficially.

"To put it simply," he said, "I think this was the best year for Enterprise cross-country ever."

## Frontier grocery stores ready for Thanksgiving despite supply chain woes

By ALEX WITTWER  
EO Media Group

JOHN DAY — Supply chain issues gripping the nation have led to shortages in everything from semiconductors to paper trays at school cafeterias, but Thanksgiving looks to be running smoothly and on time, according to grocery stores in rural Oregon cities.

"Turkey's on the table. We've got turkey already in our freezer," said Blaine Huffman, owner of Huffman's Select Market in Prairie City. "I'm sure there's going to be items we're going to be short on, but on the whole we're fine."

Grocery stores have had to adapt to a changing supply landscape that has seen shortages crop up in unexpected places.

"We don't know one load from the next what we're going to get — it changes every time," Huffman said. "The food supply chain is vulnerable, a lot of stuff is still sitting out in the ocean."

Huffman said he had some issues ordering premade pies for Thanksgiving, and the store was out of stock of those items. Supplies for homemade pies, however, were available.

Considering that smaller markets lack the same buying power as larger chains such as Safeway or Walmart, there was a cause for concern that residents in frontier towns, including John Day or Prairie City, might have to travel further to fill their shopping cart for the upcoming holiday. Grocery stores report that while ordering has been a challenge, the staples for a Thanksgiving feast have yet to cause any concerns.

"Before, I was able to buy pallets of certain things like condensed milk — when it comes to those really big staples, a lot of it is on an allocation that you can't buy big amounts like that because they wouldn't be able to service everybody," said Mike Shaffer, operations manager for Chester's Market in John Day. "As far as staples go, we're sitting pretty good."

Shaffer said he has had to order months in advance for key items, especially during Thanksgiving and similar holidays where supplies go fast as the holiday approaches and the deadline for putting the turkey in the oven looms.

For now, the store is well stocked for the upcoming feast, according to Shaffer.

"It was really easy to get what you needed before all this stuff happened and before — I call it a logistical nightmare, but you know all the logistic issues that everyone is experiencing — before that we'd have pretty big item counts, big ads so people could come in and get a good deal on whatever they need for dinner and stuff like that, so it has changed," Shaffer said. "If you commit to something like we did this year — if you have to reorder it, that's where you may run into an issue because everybody else is reordering, especially for the season."

Supply chain issues have cropped up from a myriad of pandemic-related minutiae, such as labor and raw material shortages — including dock workers and truck drivers — to low production yields and increased costs of goods as shipping costs skyrocket due to increases in fuel and container prices.

That means when orders finally arrive at grocery stores, the contents might be less than what was ordered, or the order itself would be delayed.

"It's hard to plan around, I'll put it to you that way," Shaffer said.

Those issues exacerbated an already vulnerable system. Still, the grocery stores remain optimistic about the upcoming holiday.

"It's not like it was last year," Huffman said. "I think it will be good. I think everything will be good."

  
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