

Nixyaawii girls team rolls past Wallowa

Chieftain staff

MISSION — Saturday, Jan. 15, was rough for the Wallowa girls basketball team.

The Cougars were already down 12 at halftime to Nixyaawii, but the Golden Eagles poured in 52 second-half points on their way to a 78-32 home win.

The Cougars got off to a slow start, but were still in striking distance at the break, down 26-14. But Nixyaawii hit seven second-half 3-pointers and shot around 70% after the break, Wallowa head coach Greg Oveson said.

“They scored 10 points in 40 seconds at one time. I have been in about four or five of these types of games as a coach,” Oveson said. “Not much you can do about it. Hopefully our girls are strong enough to forget this one and get back to work.”

Sophie Moeller led the Cougars in scoring with 14 points, and Zoe Hermens added five points.

Wallowa (8-6 overall, 2-2 Old Oregon League) visits Griswold Jan. 22.

The Wallowa boys game at Nixyaawii was canceled. A reschedule date has not yet been set. The Cougar boys visit Griswold on Jan. 22.

The Wallowa boys and girls home game against Powder Valley Jan. 21 has been canceled.

Evans wins five matches and takes third at Orofino

Chieftain staff

OROFINO, Idaho — Tegan Evans continued a strong run of recent success on the mat at the Maniac Wrestling Tournament in Orofino, Idaho, on Jan. 14 and 15, going 5-2 to take third place and lead Enterprise to a ninth-place finish. Joseph, meanwhile, took 10th.

The tournament consisted almost entirely of Idaho schools except for the Outlaws, Eagles and Clarkston, Washington.

Evans, wrestling at 145 pounds, opened with a 14-2 major decision over M-D’s Ethan Sprague, and pinned Kelton Allman of St. Maries. His third match was a loss by fall to Potlatch’s Avery Palmer. After a win by forfeit, he pinned Avery Riggs of McCall-Donnelly and Connor Gomez of St. Maries, and dropped his final match to Diego Deaton of Moscow.

Also taking third for Enterprise was Gunnar McDowell, going 2-2 at 220. After a loss by fall to Andrew Alvarez of M-D, he pinned Grangeville’s Levi Stowell and earned a 9-0 major decision over Finnigan Moon of M-D. He dropped a fourth match by forfeit.

Pearce Schnetzky (138) won his first match over Anson Hanes-Miller of Orofino by fall, then dropped his last six matches, with the closest a match a loss to M-D’s Ethen Roberts by a 6-4 sudden victory.

Alex Albanez (132) dropped his first match by fall to Clarkston’s Geovanny Alba, won by fall over Lewiston’s Michael Jenko, then dropped five more matches — one by fall, and four by injury forfeit.

Cody Fent also had a day impacted by forfeits. He opened at

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Outlaws take down Bobcats

Enterprise girls play a complete game, topple Union to earn key BMC win

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — The Enterprise girls basketball team has admittedly struggled much of the season to put together four solid quarters of basketball.

Saturday, Jan. 15, the Outlaws finally did, and registered their biggest win in nearly two years, fending off Union, 47-39, in a key Blue Mountain Conference showdown in Enterprise.

“I think we came out a lot stronger in the second half (than in other games),” senior Jada Gray said. “We played a lot smarter, and we played more as a team.”

The win was the first for Enterprise over the Bobcats in nearly three years and proved to the Outlaws they have the capability to win the type of games that have gotten away from them this year — one where a second-half lapse has cost them a victory. The most recent example of that was just five days earlier, when Enterprise squandered an 11-point halftime lead and had just eight points after the break in a 41-34 loss to Stanfield on Jan. 10, but a similar fate



Ronald Bond/Wallowa County Chieftain
The Enterprise girls basketball team celebrates following its 47-39 home win over Union Saturday, Jan. 15, 2022.

doomed them in an earlier contest against Union.

“This was a game where, this team is ranked top 10, and we’re not,” head coach Mike Crawford said. “We’re the underdog.”

Crawford said he preached to his team the importance of coming out strong to start the second half, which is exactly what the Outlaws did.

“We have been working really hard to finish the game, and the

third quarter, the first three minutes, is really important,” senior Rilyn Kirkland said.

Kirkland drained a corner 3-pointer 30 seconds into the third for a 29-25 lead, and about two minutes later, Madi Wigen scored inside to extend the lead to six at 31-25.

Meanwhile, the Enterprise defense stifled Union on the opposite end as the Bobcats didn’t score for the first 5:17 of the sec-

ond half. What Union was able to do offensively in the second half was severely limited, and even when the Bobcats did draw close down the stretch, Enterprise had an answer.

Kaelyn Shoemaker’s field goal at 2:43 in the third to end the scoring drought was answered by Wigen on the other end. Audrey

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Ronald Bond/Wallowa County Chieftain
Enterprise’s Spencer Decker attempts a layup against Union Saturday, Jan. 15, 2022.

Enterprise rally falls short

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — The Enterprise boys basketball team looked like it was about to get run out of the building in its Saturday, Jan. 15, home matchup against Union.

The Outlaws, though, shook off the slow start and an early double-digit deficit to rally and hang with the Bobcats before falling in a Blue Mountain Conference matchup, 46-36.

“The last two games we’ve done a great job of getting back into the game,” head coach Kyle Crawford said. “We just need to figure out how to finish on top. It definitely feels like we’re on the cusp of pulling it off. As a team we’re really starting to work together and recognize everyone’s worth. Our rebounds are up, our offense is becoming more efficient, and our defense continues to improve, which has us more excited than ever to get back out there and compete.”

Union scored the first seven points of the contest and ended the first quarter on a 7-0 run to take a 16-3 lead after one.

But Enterprise rallied on multiple occasions to get back in the

game, and did so almost immediately. Spencer Decker, Maclane Melville and Caden Fent all hit 3-pointers during a second-quarter opening 11-0 run to quickly get within two at 16-14. The teams traded points before Union went on a 9-2 run, capped by a Tee Ledbetter jumper, to go ahead 27-18 late in the second before Enterprise got within 27-20 at the half.

The Bobcats again threatened to pull away early in the third as they opened up a 31-20 lead, but the Outlaws staged yet another rally — this time an 8-0 run. Gideon Gray hit a jumper and had two free throws to cut the margin to seven. Dylan Jennings then drove for a layup, and Jackson Decker converted a layup to make it a three-point game with 3:03 remaining in the third. After Union scored, another Decker layup brought Enterprise within 33-30 after three quarters.

Ledbetter and Jackson Decker exchanged field goals early in the fourth, and Enterprise had several opportunities to get even closer than three before Union put the game out of reach with a 7-0 run, going up 42-32 on Bo Ledbetter’s 3-pointer with 3:35 to play. The Outlaws got no closer than eight

the rest of the way. Gray and Jackson Decker each had eight points for the Outlaws, and Spencer Decker had seven points.

Tee Ledbetter led all scorers with 26 points for Union.

Enterprise (2-12 overall, 0-4 BMC) visits Heppner on Jan. 21 and Stanfield on Jan. 22. Its Jan. 18 game against Pilot Rock was canceled.

Friday, Jan. 14

Weston-McEwen 63, Enterprise 48: On Jan. 14, Enterprise was in a similar situation, falling behind early and closing in on Weston-McEwen before the TigerScots took control and wrapped up a 63-48 victory.

The Outlaws trailed 13-4 after one quarter, but found a rhythm and scored 16 points in the second to pull within 26-20 at the break.

The TigerScots doubled the lead to 12 after three quarters at 48-36, netting 22 points in the quarter, and added on in the fourth for the win.

Gideon Gray was the leading scorer for the Outlaws with 16 points, including 11 in the second half. Chase Duncan added eight points and both Jackson Decker and Caden Fent had seven points.



Ronald Bond/Wallowa County Chieftain
Joseph’s Cooper Nave lines up a free throw Saturday, Jan. 15, 2022, in Imbler.

Joseph girls slip by Imbler

Chieftain staff

IMBLER — The Joseph girls basketball team spent most of their Saturday, Jan. 15, contest at Imbler trying to rally.

But every time the Eagles closed in, or evened the score as they did several times in the second half, the Panthers responded to regain the lead.

That trend finally changed in the fourth quarter, when the Eagles took the lead for good with 4:31 to play and held on for a 32-29 victory over the Panthers in an Old Oregon League contest in Imbler.

“I thought our girls fought hard to fight back from the early deficit,” head coach Lance Homan said.

Twice in the third quarter, Joseph — which trailed 19-15 at halftime — tied the score, at 19-19 and at 23-23.

Both times, Imbler scored, and was able to go into the fourth ahead 25-23 before regaining the four-point margin after a field goal by Paiten Braseth.

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