

FOOTBALL

Ad hoc committee makes final recommendation to OSAA

Executive board to vote on football plan in early May

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

WILSONVILLE — The final recommendation of the Oregon School Activities Association football ad hoc committee has been made — and little, if anything, has been changed from previous proposals.

The committee met April 14, and released its final recommendation April 20. The OSAA executive board will vote on the proposal May 2.

The final proposal includes support for 1A six-man football — which has been a pilot program for the last four years — being able to play for an official OSAA state championship. Six-man, under the recommendation, will have an eight-team bracket, consisting of three teams from the

nine-team Special District 1, and five teams from Special District 2, which has 14 teams in it.

Joseph Charter School has been among the most dominant during the six-man pilot, having won a de-facto championship the first season of the six-man pilot and playing for a title in Year 2. It, along with Echo, Huntington, Pine Eagle and Prairie City/Burnt River, are the six-man schools based in the northeastern corner of the state.

Eight-man football will also see a shake-up at the playoff level, as the 26 schools slated to play at the larger 1A level will be placed into a 12-team bracket, a change from the 16-team format the schools have had for decades.

Four teams will automatically qualify from both SD1 and SD2, with four additional at-large slots being filled based on OSAA rankings.

Special District 2 has a large local flavor, as nine of the 14 schools — Cove,

Elgin, Enterprise, Imbler, Ione/Arlington, Pilot Rock, Powder Valley, Union and Wallowa — are based in either Union, Wallowa, Umatilla or Morrow counties.

1A8-Special District 2, in addition to the nine aforementioned schools includes Adrian, Crane, Dufur, Lyle/Wishram/Klickitat, and Sherman/Condon.

And 1A6-SD1 has Dayville/Monument, Harper, Wheeler County and South Wasco County, in addition to

the above-named schools.

The committee has completely done away with an idea it floated of banning schools who play down a classification from the post-season, according to a report from The Oregonian. Regionally, that keeps Enterprise, Riverside and Umatilla, as schools playing down, eligible for the postseason.

The proposal, if approved by the board, will go into effect this fall for the 2022-26 time block.

TRACK AND FIELD



Ronald Bond/Wallowa County Chieftain

Joseph's Reece Nelson competes in the long jump at the 1A/2A/3A Regional track meet Saturday, April 23, 2022, in La Grande.

Nelson's strong day pushes Joseph boys to second place

By RONALD BOND
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LA GRANDE — Reece Nelson had a big day Saturday, April 23, to help the Joseph track team to second place at the 1A/2A/3A regional track meet at Eastern Oregon University.

The senior set three personal bests as he won the high jump and long jump and took second in the triple jump. The effort helped the Eagle boys take second with 65 points, just one point behind meet winner Powder Valley.



Ronald Bond/Wallowa County Chieftain

Enterprise's Nevaeh James competes in the girls 100-meter run at the 1A/2A/3A Regional track meet Saturday, April 23, 2022, in La Grande.

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EHS track has strong effort at Athena

Chieftain staff

ATHENA — The Enterprise track and field team posted 20 top-four finishes — a dozen on the boys side and eight on the girls side — at the 2A Special District 5 preview meet Tuesday, April 19, in Athena.

The lone win April 19 came from Zac Knapp, who won a thriller in the boys 800-meter run. Knapp, who was aiming for the school record in the race, missed by fewer than three seconds, but had enough to hold off two fierce competitors in the race. His winning time of 2:01.13 edged Trevor Nichols of Heppner by 0.25 seconds, and was 1.25 seconds ahead of Alex McIntyre of Weston-McEwen.

Knapp only ran in the 800, but that didn't prevent the Outlaws from scoring well in the distance races. Weston Wolfe and Andrew Hurley went second and third in the 1,500 with respective times of 4:51.46 and 5:00.77, while Liam Wolfe was sixth in 5:20.01, and Tyler Knapp placed second in the 3,000 in 10:53.12.

Levi Ortsam and Ransom Peters were in on five of the top placings. Ortsam took second in the 200 in 24.90 seconds, and third in the 100 in 12.50 seconds. He was a tick ahead of Peters in the 100, as Peters took fourth in 12.55 seconds, and fourth in the 200 in 25.42 seconds. The two were also half of

the third-place 4x100 relay team, joining Cory Walker and Alex Nordtvedt to earn a time of 47.78.

The younger Knapp, the Wolfes and Hurley took fourth in the 4x400 in 4:16.53. Weston Wolfe added a fourth-place finish in the 300 hurdles in 46:98. Roan Flynn was seventh in the same race in 49:03, and was fourth in the long jump at 17 feet, 6-1/2 inches. And Nordtvedt took fifth in the 400 in 57.13, and eighth in the 200 in 26.67.

For the girls, Althea Komiskey, Maddie Nordtvedt, Lannie Stonebrink and Nevaeh James took second in the 4x100 relay in 54.82 to lead the EHS effort. James took third in both the 100 (14.00) and the 200

(29.20), and Sophia Espinoza added a third-place finish in the discus throw with a mark of 84-feet-10 1/4.

A handful of athletes took fourth — as Madison Wigen, Komiskey and Jada Gray all reached a mark of 4-feet-6 to tie for fourth in the high jump, and Gray took fourth in the 100 hurdles in 21.93.

Nordtvedt, Kendall Wigen and Alisha Melville went 5-6-7 in the 400 with times of 1:08.19, 1:09.59 and 1:10.61, respectively. And Stonebrink added an eighth-place finish in the 200 in 32.19.

The EHS boys took fourth as a team with 75 points, while the Outlaw girls were sixth with 37.2 points.

BASEBALL

Wallowa Valley splits with Irrigon

Chieftain staff

IRRIGON — The Wallowa Valley baseball team settled for a road split at Irrigon in Special District 5 action Friday, April 22, earning a 2-1 win in the opener before falling in the nightcap, 6-4.

The teams were scoreless in the opener until Spencer Decker's RBI groundout in the sixth put the Eagles ahead 1-0. Cody Fent added a needed insurance run in the seventh with an RBI groundout for a 2-0 lead. He also earned the win on the mound in relief, striking out five, and allow-

ing one unearned run on two hits in 2-2/3 innings. The Eagles won despite having just one hit in the game.

In the second game, the Knights jumped out to a 6-0 lead after three innings before Wallowa Valley rallied.

Jaxon Grover's two-run double and a Maclane Melville RBI single in the fifth made it 6-3. Gabe Nobles scored in the sixth to pull the Eagles closer, and Wallowa Valley had the tying runs on in the seventh, but fell short.

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SOFTBALL

Outlaws bury Irrigon

Chieftain staff

IRRIGON — It didn't take much for the Wallowa Valley softball team to get past Irrigon on Friday, April 22.

Both Liz Rowley and Aimee Meyers threw three-inning no-hitters — with Meyers' being a perfect game — and the Outlaws needed just six innings to get two wins, 16-0 and 15-0. Both games were over in three frames.

Rowley struck out eight of the 10 batters she faced, with just one getting on via a

hit by pitch. Meyers kept her slate flawless, striking out four batters and facing the minimum.

In the opener, Wallowa Valley plated nine first-inning runs to set the tone for the day. The Outlaws were up by 11 after two and put the 15-run mercy rule in by place with five more in the third. Rilyn Kirkland had five RBIs and finished 3-for-3 in the opener. Sydney Hopkins was also 3-for-3, and scored three times. Ten players had at least one hit and nine scored.

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GOLF

Homan takes second in Union

Chieftain staff

UNION — Wallowa/Joseph's Chase Homan fired an 81 to take second overall at the Buffalo Peak Invitational in Union Friday, April 22.

Homan carded two birdies on the day and shot a 39 on the front nine to put him in position for the strong day. Only Ontario Tyce Helmick, who had a 73, was better.

Owen Gorham also cracked 100, finishing with a score of 98, and Jonas McKee added a 119 for Wallowa/Joseph, which had just three golfers take part April 22.

Enterprise took second as

a team with a score of 413, trailing just Ontario, which shot 367. Dylan Jennings led the way with a score of 97, with Alex Albanez right behind him with a 99. Nathan Lamb was third on the team with a score of 106, Parker Siebe shot 111 and Caleb Sheahan rounded out the scoring with 113.

For the Enterprise girls, just three athletes scored: Jordyn Stonebrink turned in a round of 115, Ashlynn Greer posted a 143, and Kimber Stein shot a 159.

The girls team was on the course again April 26 in La Grande, and the full teams return to the course April 29 in John Day.



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