

WESTERN OREGON ROUNDUP

Wolves pass home tests

Men's basketball now in first place in conference standings

Itemizer-Observer staff report
MONMOUTH — Western Oregon's men's basketball team received a gut check against Northwest Nazarene and Central Washington last week.

The Wolves passed both tests.

WOU defeated Northwest Nazarene 66-59 on Thursday. Junior Andy Avgi scored a team-high 18 points, including a tip-in that gave the Wolves a 64-59 lead with 23 seconds left in the game.

"Thursday's win was gutsy," Western Oregon coach Brady Bergeson said. "They clamped down defensively on us and made everything hard in the second half, but we did take care of the ball. I just thought we were a little bit more detailed with our attack in the last four minutes of the game."

The Wolves trailed the Wildcats 74-68 on Saturday but WOU (13-3 overall, 5-1 Great Northwest Athletic Conference) scored the final



WOU guard Devon Alexander advances the ball against Central Washington on Saturday night.

10 points to earn the victory. Avgi scored 23 points, while Marwan Sarhan and Jordan Wiley added 10 points each.

"The quiet difference, to

me, was there was a stretch of eight or 10 minutes in the middle of the second half where we really dominated the boards," Bergeson said. "It didn't show up on the

scoreboard immediately, but we would have been down six or eight or nine points had we not done that."

Western Oregon hosts Saint Martin's Saturday at 7 p.m.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL DROPS TWO:

Western Oregon's women's basketball team dropped a pair of conference games last week at home. The Wolves lost to Alaska Anchorage 79-61 on Thursday before falling to Alaska Fairbanks 74-65 on Saturday. Jordan Mottershaw led the Wolves with 17 points against Alaska Anchorage, but the Seawolves used a 10-0 run in the second half to extend their lead to 66-48 with 7:06 left in the game. Freshman Sami Osborne recorded a double-double against the Nanooks on Saturday, scoring 14 points and grabbing 12 rebounds, but Western Oregon could not overcome a 19-point second-half deficit. Senior forward and leading scorer Dana Goularte missed both contests with an ankle injury. WOU plays at Western Washington on Thursday before facing Simon Fraser on Saturday.

Attitude: Barnes developing fast

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From Troy Trembly to Haylen Janesofsky and Chad Price, the Pirates aren't short on experience. It's easy for Barnes to open up scoring chances for his teammates.

"I try and get the ball to people who can score easier than I can," Barnes said.

But Lowry is on a mission to help show Barnes he can be as much of a scoring threat as his teammates.

"When he drives, he can take it to the hoop with ease when he wants to," Lowry said. "He's not the type of guy to say that 'I'm the best option on the team, get out of the way.' That's not how he is. But I hope he starts to do that a little in certain situations."

Barnes' development is as much about the future of the program as it is helping the team now.

Barnes will see his offensive looks increase this season. Coupled with his hustle plays, whether it be sprinting back to stop a fast break or diving to the floor to fight for a loose ball, Barnes can inspire his

teammates to play harder every time they step onto the court.

"He's one of the better athletes I've seen come through here, regardless of level," Lowry said. "His stuff doesn't always come up on the stat page."

Whether Barnes can break free of his conservative mentality remains to be seen.

But as the Pirates enter the thick of their Tri-River Conference season, Barnes' emergence could be an X-factor for the Pirates.

"He's going to be the leader," Lowry said. "He's not going to get in people's faces. But his teammates look at him and go 'I need to play like him.'"



Barnes

Torch: Brunner visits invitational each year

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Approximately 50 volunteers show up each year to help. They range from parents to children to alumni, doing jobs from keeping time to running match scores to the tournament table.

That willingness to help is something that sets the wrestling community apart, Brunner said.

"When you have a son that is a wrestler, you become a part of a very big family that can span several generations," Brunner said. "When you need something done, who do you call first? You call family. That is why Dallas has such great volunteers. Many of mine were with me from day one and I am so grate-

ful for them. They are what made this tournament so successful."

Even as her sons graduated from high school, Brunner kept her post as tournament director.

"It was kind of like orchestrating the annual family gathering," Brunner said.

One person you won't see attending to the running of the tournament is Dragons coach Tony Olliff — and that's a luxury he doesn't take for granted.

"If you talk with other wrestling coaches at other schools, they don't even get to coach when they host a tournament," Olliff said. "They are too busy running the tournament. ... It's a big process. I get to just coach."

Brunner served as a constant for two decades. But in 2013, Brunner stepped down from the role she had come to define.

New faces

Brunner's decision to leave her post wasn't easy, but it was time.

"When something you love starts to become work, it is time to let it go," Brunner said. "Our youngest son, Brett, had been out of high school for nine years and I found that I just didn't have the connections that I once did. But this tournament had become my baby. I wasn't willing to turn it over to just anyone. It had to be someone with a love of the sport and the organizational ability."

Bibler was the perfect choice, Brunner said.

Olliff renamed the event in Brunner's honor in 2013, just in time to celebrate her last year as tournament director.

Since then, Bibler, along with former wrestling coach Steve Martinelli, have made sure the invitational runs smoothly.

"If the greatest form of flattery is imitation, then Brunner should be quite flattered," Bibler said. "She had that tournament running like a fine-tuned machine. We just had to follow her instructions and it has continued to be a success."

For Brunner, the tournament continues to be a welcome treat,

and something she volunteers for each year. But she is happy to have passed the torch.

When Brunner began her post, she never dreamed of doing it for 20 years. Now that she's stepped down, Brunner's just happy to have made a positive impact.

"I'm so humbled to have this tournament recognized as the Brunner Invitational," she said. "Our family's involvement with wrestling was amazing. Anything that (husband) Gregg and I did was because of our love of the sport and of the wrestlers. There is no way to describe how it makes you feel when by doing something that you love, you are recognized in such an amazing way."

Peace: Cedillo no longer shy

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But Cedillo's doubts soon disappeared.

"I realized the swim community is free of judgment," Cedillo said.

She slowly became more familiar with the workouts and drills.

As she made new friends and teammates, her insecurities about her image started to fade.

It wasn't long until her confidence helped her transform outside of the pool as well.

"Slowly, I built confidence and noticed myself being bolder in other aspects of my life," Cedillo said. "Now, I'm not afraid to be in any social setting and I could even go as far to say I'm a social butterfly."

Now, the once shy swim-



Sabrina Cedillo warms up before Central's Mid-Willamette Conference dual meet against South Albany.

mer is the one out talking to others around the school to recruit for the team.

"I'm helping people who

are new and don't understand something," Cedillo said. "I got a couple swimmers to join this year. I tell

people swimming is something you can do if you want to better yourself."

Cedillo, who was part of Central's 200-yard medley relay that took second at the Clemens Invitational on Saturday, hopes to break through in the 500 freestyle and the 100 breaststroke this season.

Cedillo's competitive swimming future beyond high school remains up in the air.

But one thing won't change — the water's ability to make all of Cedillo's stresses fade away.

"In the water, I know that everything is OK and anything is possible," Cedillo said. "Swim practice just feels like an everyday therapy session to me. That is why I love it so much."

PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

Panthers ease by Aloha for win

Itemizer-Observer staff report

INDEPENDENCE — For two quarters, Central's girls basketball team looked like what coach Julie McDonald expects to see.

That was enough to defeat Aloha on Jan. 6.

The Panthers scored a combined 38 points in the second and fourth periods as Central earned a 58-39 win.

"We just need to work on putting four good quarters together," McDonald said. "The effort is there, we just need to be a little more patient."

Reba Hoffman scored a team-high 13 points, while Sai Tapasa scored 10 points and grabbed nine rebounds.

The Panthers (5-4 overall) opened Mid-Willamette Conference play against South Albany Tuesday after press time. Central hosts Dallas on Friday at 7 p.m.

DALLAS LOSES HEART-BREAKER: Dallas saw a late-game rally fall short, as it lost to Beaverton 51-49 on Jan. 6. Sarah

Zwicker scored a team-high 14 points. The Dragons (5-4 overall) hosted Woodburn Tuesday after press time. Dallas plays at Central on Friday at 7 p.m.

FALLS CITY WINS BIG: Falls City held C.S. Lewis' junior varsity team to one point in the second half, as the Mountaineers (3-10 overall) earned a 41-7 victory on Jan. 6. Tierra Reynolds and Brittany Varney scored eight points each to lead Falls City. The Mountaineers play at Livingstone Adventist on Thursday and Gaston on Friday before hosting Jewell Tuesday at 5:30 p.m.

PERRYDALE SPLITS LEAGUE GAMES: Perrydale split a pair of Tri-River Conference matchups, defeating Central Linn 51-37 on Jan. 6 before falling to Regis 42-32 on Friday. Cheyenne Locke scored 24 points against Central Linn to lead the Pirates. Telaney Newton scored a team-high 10 points against Regis. The Pirates played East Linn Christian Tuesday after press time. Perrydale travels to Western Mennonite on Friday and faces North Eugene's junior varsity team on Saturday.

COLLEGE NOTEBOOK

Omlid to miss rest of season

Itemizer-Observer staff report

Central High graduate Tanner Omlid is watching the remainder of the 2014-15 basketball season from the bench after suffering a knee injury on Nov. 25.

He was declared out for the season on Dec. 9.

Omlid played in five games for Army's basketball team before suffering a right knee injury. The 6-foot-3 sophomore averaged 6.6 points per game and had 11 steals.

Dallas High graduates Kaj Christensen (Class of 2014) and Jacob Rorem (Class of 2013) recently completed the 2014 football season on a successful note at College of the Redwoods in Eureka, Calif.

Both players started every game at defensive tackle for the Corsairs.

Christensen, a 6-foot, 260-pound freshman, finished the season with 36 tackles, 4½ sacks, 7½ tackles for a loss

and one fumble recovery. He was named to the All-Pacific-7 Conference first team for his play.

"The conference was loaded at the position from top to bottom, so it was great to see Kaj get in there," College of the Redwoods coach Taylor Breitzman said. "He didn't have stats that blew people away, but he was just so disruptive and difficult to block week in and week out that people took notice."

Rorem, a 6-1, 290-pound redshirt freshman, finished the season with 28 tackles, 1½ sacks and 5½ tackles for a loss.

Cody Jones of Dallas is a member of the 2014-15 wrestling team at Southern Oregon University in Ashland. Jones, a 2010 graduate of Dallas High School, is a redshirt junior for the Raiders. He has been competing at 174 pounds this season. Jones won three matches and reached the consolation semifinals at the Menlo College Invitational on Jan. 3 in Atherton, Calif., as the Raiders, who are ranked No. 2 nationally at the NAIA level, placed third

at the tournament.

Central High graduate Grant Hedrick recently completed the 2014 football season at Boise State. Hedrick helped the Broncos to a 38-30 win over Arizona in the Fiesta Bowl on Dec. 31.

Hedrick threw for 309 yards and a touchdown.

He finished his career with a 70.2 completion percentage, a program record.

He finished sixth in program history in completions (475), passing yards (5,656), attempts (677) and total offense (6,627 yards).

Information for College Notebook comes from college and university sports information departments. To submit an item or a tip for an upcoming College Notebook, send it via email to iosports@polkio.com or contact Sports Editor Lukas Eggen at 503-623-2373 or leggen@polkio.com.



Omlid



Hedrick

Itemizer-Observer

Athlete of the Week



Jolie-Rae Ford
Dallas High

Ford, a sophomore, recorded four first-place finishes against Blanchet Catholic on Jan. 6. Ford won the 200-yard individual medley in 2 minutes, 21.31 seconds, and the 100 freestyle (56.59). Ford was also part of the 200- and 400-freestyle relay teams, which took first with times of 2:01.17 and 4:31.18, respectively. Both times were personal records for the relay team of Ford, Elizabeth Dressel, Allura Eldridge and Paige Bowler.

To submit nominations for the Itemizer-Observer Athlete of the Week, contact Sports Editor Lukas Eggen at 503-623-2373 or leggen@polkio.com by 9 a.m. on Monday.