

# Pack: Players hope their best days are yet to come



AARON YOST/for the Itemizer-Observer

Redshirt junior Andy Avgi scored a career-high 33 points against Seattle Pacific Saturday night.

## Continued from Page 12A

Bergeson may have stressed patience, but he found immediate success, posting two 18-win seasons in his first three years.

This season has been his best yet.

Western Oregon is off to its best start since the 1988-89 season, when it started 19-3. WOU is also ranked No. 20 by the National Association of Basketball Coaches, the program's first national ranking.

"There's no replacement for experience," Bergeson said. "I don't know if we're one of the most talented teams or least talented team in the conference. I know that we have toughness and experience and grit and we believe in ourselves."

The players see another reason for their success.

"That guy (coach Bergeson) is so intelligent," Alexander said. "I've never met a more intelligent guy in my life, to be honest. He draws up the perfect play and he trusts us to execute them. He knows what to do, we all just have to buy in."

That trust is why, despite

trailing Seattle Pacific by 10 in the second half, the Wolves didn't panic.

"He's hard on us, like any coach, but he's super smart," Avgi said. "He knows what plays to call, he knows who, how and when to substitute. He knows basically everything. He's our leader."

For all the accolades, Bergeson's biggest challenge may be keeping the team focused on a conference title.

"There's a level of mental toughness to be able to ignore the accolades in the present and know you haven't achieved your goals yet," Bergeson said. "That's where we are. We haven't earned anything yet and all our goals are still in front of us."

While WOU looks to continue its strong season, Bergeson isn't worried about records or milestones. He's continuing to do the things that he taught from the first day he arrived.

"We're not in a hurry to get anywhere," Bergeson said. "We just want to get a little better every day. That's the process."

## PREP WRESTLING ROUNDUP

# Central takes fourth at Monroe

Swinehart, Negrete win respective weight divisions

### Itemizer-Observer staff report

MONROE — The Central wrestling squad placed fourth out of 14 teams at the Monroe Invitational on Saturday.

Tanner Swinehart (170 pounds) and David Negrete (182) placed first to lead the Panthers, while Collin Swinehart (145) and Marlon Tuipulotu (285) took second.

The Panthers were without several wrestlers because of illness and injuries.

"It was not our best performance," Central coach

Van Holstad said. "In order to finish where we want, we have to wrestle well in both the championship and consolation rounds.

"As far as the guys in the finals, Collin Swinehart lost a tough one in overtime and Marlon Tuipulotu also lost a close one," Holstad continued. "Those are the matches we need to win in the district and state tournaments."

The Panthers opened the week with a 57-24 Mid-Willamette Conference dual

meet victory over Woodburn on Thursday. Central swept the 132-pound to 285-pound weight-class matches to earn the victory.

Central (3-3 MWC) travels to Crescent Valley for a league dual meet Wednesday (today) and competes at the Robert Paul Tournament in Sandy on Saturday.

**DALLAS CLINCHES LEAGUE DUAL TITLE:** The Dallas wrestling team cruised to a 61-12 Mid-Willamette Conference dual meet victory over South Albany on Jan. 28

to clinch the league's dual meet title. Ryan Bibler (106 pounds), Noah Sickles (113), Nolan Miller (120), Jordan Williams (126), Sammy Chung (132), Matt Hofenbredl (138), Tanner Earhart (145), Treve Earhart (152), Jeff Dunagan (160), Tyson Janssen (170), Mathew Thorsted (195) and Kyle Snyder (220) earned wins for the Dragons. Dallas (6-0 MWC) hosts Silverton Wednesday (today) at 6 p.m. to close out its league dual meet schedule before competing at the Mid-Valley Classic at South Albany Saturday at 10 a.m.

## CLASS 5A PREP SWIMMING

# Lebanon sweeps Panthers

Central, Dallas prepare for Mid-Willamette Conference Championships

### Itemizer-Observer staff report

LEBANON — With the regular season winding down, Lebanon's boys and girls swim teams swept Central on Jan. 27.

The Panthers' boys squad lost 107-60, while the girls fell 106-59.

Sophomore August Thornton won the 100-

yard freestyle (1 minute, 4.50 seconds) and freshman Daniel Glade placed first in the 500 freestyle (5:37.90) to lead the boys. Glade also finished second in the 100 backstroke (1:10.14).

Senior Nathan Glade won the 100 breaststroke in 1:05.98.

Catie Miller had a big day for the girls, placing first in the 50 freestyle (28.72) and 100 breaststroke (1:25.82). She was also part of the 200 freestyle relay team with Paris Orin, Sara Wright and Sabrina Cedillo, that placed first in 2:06.38.

Orin also placed second in the 100 backstroke

(1:24.48) to help lead the girls team.

Dallas had the week off. The Dragons hosted the Panthers Tuesday after press time in both schools' final regular season meet.

Both teams will compete at the Mid-Willamette Conference Championships Feb. 12 and 14 at Corvallis.

## PREP BOYS BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

# Dallas falls into three-way tie

Dragons face critical game against league's top squad

### Itemizer-Observer staff report

DALLAS — The Dallas boys fell into a three-way tie for fourth place in the Mid-Willamette Conference after dropping a pair of home games last week.



Minahan

The Dragons (7-8 overall, 3-3 MWC) lost to Crescent Valley 57-44 on Jan. 28 and Lebanon 48-41 on Friday.

Harrison Broadus scored a team-high 10 points against the Raiders, but Dallas was outscored 16-6 in the final quarter.

Everett Minahan scored 12 points and Hayden Broadus added 11 points as the Dragons rallied from a

16 point halftime deficit to pull to within eight against Lebanon entering the final period. Dallas could not close the gap, as the Warriors joined the Dragons and Corvallis at 3-3 in league play.

Dallas plays at Silverton, which entered the week undefeated in league play Wednesday (today) before returning home to host Woodburn Friday at 7 p.m.

**CENTRAL DROPS KEY GAMES:** The Panthers spot atop in the Mid-Willamette Conference has disappeared. Central's boys basketball team dropped a pair of league games, falling to Silverton 57-48 in overtime on Jan. 28 and Corvallis 53-36 on Friday. Kaj Bansen scored 29 points against the Silver Foxes, but Central was outscored 28-8 over the fourth quarter and overtime period. Against the

Spartans, Corvallis' defense suffocated Central's offense as the Spartans pulled away for the win. "We didn't come to play on Friday," Panthers coach Tim Kreta said. Central dropped to 4-2 in MWC play, tied with Crescent Valley for second. The Panthers host Woodburn Wednesday (today) at 7 p.m. before playing at South Albany on Friday. Central hosts Dallas Tuesday at 7 p.m.

**FALLS CITY LOSING STREAK EXTENDS:** Falls City's boys basketball squad saw its losing streak extend to four after losing a pair of road games last week. The Mountaineers fell to Country Christian 65-21 on Jan. 27 before losing to C.S. Lewis Academy 49-34 on Friday. No details were provided. Falls City played Crosshill Christian Tuesday after press time and hosts Eddyville Charter for a non-league contest Thursday at 7:30 p.m. for the Mountaineers'

final home game of the season.

**PERRYDALE FALLS IN SHOWDOWN:** With a matchup against the Tri-River Conference's top team, the Pirates were overmatched, falling to Regis 59-20 on Monday.

"We ran into a better team (on Monday)," Perrydale coach Mike Lowry said. The Pirates earned a 62-52 win over Kennedy on Jan. 27 before falling to Central Linn 47-41 on Friday. Haylen Janesofsky scored a game-high 23 points, while Chad Price added 20 points against Kennedy. The Pirates host East Linn Christian Wednesday (today) and Western Mennonite on Friday at 7 p.m.

**JANESOFSKY** earned a 62-52 win over Kennedy on Jan. 27 before falling to Central Linn 47-41 on Friday. Haylen Janesofsky scored a game-high 23 points, while Chad Price added 20 points against Kennedy. The Pirates host East Linn Christian Wednesday (today) and Western Mennonite on Friday at 7 p.m.

## SPORTS BRIEFS

### WOU baseball picked second in GNAC

MONMOUTH — For the past 13 seasons, the Western Oregon baseball team has sat atop the Great Northwest Athletic Conference. The GNAC Preseason Coaches Poll sees that coming to an end, picking the Wolves to finish second behind Central Washington.

Western Oregon received 21 points and one of five first-place votes. Central Washington received 22 points and three first place votes. Saint Martin's received the other first place vote.

WOU finished 30-21 overall in 2014 and 22-10 in GNAC play.

### Western softball chosen as co-favorite

MONMOUTH — After winning its first ever Great Northwest Athletic Conference regular season and tournament titles, the Western Oregon softball team was picked as co-favorites to win the 2015 league title.

Western Oregon and Central Washington each received 28 points, followed by Western Washington and Saint Martin's with 27. WOU received three of seven first-place votes. Central Washington received one, Western Washington had two and Saint Martin's received one.

The Wolves open the 2015 season Friday at the NFCA Division II Leadoff Classic in Tucson, Ariz.

### Dallas native to retire from Clackamas

OREGON CITY — Longtime Clackamas Community College volleyball coach Kathie Woods announced her retirement from coaching on Jan. 27, effective after the current school year.

Woods, a Dallas native, has coached at Clackamas since the 1983-84 season, recording a 836-522 record.

Woods finished 37-13 overall in 2014 and led the Cougars to a fourth-place finish in the Northwest Athletic Conference.

She helped lead Clackamas Community College to its first NWAC volleyball championship in 1996, when the Cougars went 50-9 overall.

Woods received three NWAC Coach of the Year honors during her tenure. Her career wins are the most by an NWAC coach.

Woods will remain as coach until July 1, when Cougar alumna Sarah Hoeke will officially take over.

"Coaching volleyball at Clackamas has been the most fun and rewarding profession in the world to me," Woods said. "... This was a good time to take the next step. It just felt right. This current team was the team I chose to go out on. They are incredible."



Woods

## Going Up



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Central senior Josh Smith attempts to go for a layup against Corvallis' J.D. Laswell on Friday night. Smith scored four points as the Panthers struggled on offense, falling to the Spartans 53-36. The loss dropped Central to 4-2 in Mid-Willamette Conference play. The Panthers remain in a tie for second place in the league standings with Crescent Valley. Central hosts Woodburn Wednesday (today) at 7 p.m. The Panthers host Dallas Tuesday at 7 p.m. Central won the first meeting against the Dragons 57-55 on Jan. 16.

## Itemizer-Observer

# Athlete of the Week



**Emmi Collier**  
Western Oregon

Collier, a junior, had a throw of 43 feet, 3/4 inches in the shot put at the Husky Invite in Seattle on Saturday. Collier's mark missed the NCAA Division II provisional qualifying standard by a quarter inch. Collier's throw ranks second among Great Northwest Athletic Conference athletes this season. Collier was named the GNAC track and field Player of the Week for her efforts at the invite.



**Andy Avgi**  
Western Oregon

Avgi, a redshirt junior, willed Western Oregon's men's basketball team to a 94-84 double overtime victory over Seattle Pacific on Saturday. Avgi scored a career-high 33 points, including going 10 for 11 from the free-throw line, while dishing out five assists and recording four rebounds, three steals and two blocks, all without committing a single foul. He helped the nationally-ranked Wolves improve to 18-3 overall.

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.