

State: McBeth missed three months of training



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Bailie Hartford (right) attempts to pass a runner during the Mid-Willamette Conference Championships.

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This season has been as much about trying to get back into running shape as it has thinking about state, McBeth said.

"We knew that there was a lot of catching up to do compared to where she has been in the past," Central coach Eli Cirino said. "She was very patient and did not try to push too hard too early."

Entering Oct. 21's race, McBeth and Hartford knew it'd be a challenge to book a return trip to state.

"We're both a little tore up, I'm not going to lie," McBeth said. "We both came in knowing we'd have to give it our all if we wanted to be where we wanted and not be too disappointed with our times."

The runners took opposite approaches. Hartford

Just short

• Central's girls cross-country team placed fourth in the team standings. The Panthers finished four points behind third place. The top three squads advanced to the state meet.

• Jamie Smith (16th, 21 minutes, 9:09 seconds), Annie Taylor (23rd, 21:40.72), Beatriz Trujillo (24th, 21:41.68), Diana Nye (38th, 22:47.28) and Bethanie Altamirano (39th, 23:01.0) rounded out the Panthers' varsity runners.

went out with the lead pack. "I knew who I wanted to run with," she said. "At the beginning, I put myself up with them and tried to keep their pace."

McBeth tried a different strategy.

"I tried to start out a little slow and started with the (main) pack," McBeth said. "Then, I knew I had to break out of it. It was easy to know who was in front of me and who was behind me."

Both runners executed their strategies to perfection,

Cirino said.

"I felt like both Bailie and Abby ran very intelligent races," Cirino said. "The goal was to run a controlled race and to qualify. We knew if they ran within themselves, they would be right where they wanted."

As McBeth and Hartford prepare for the state meet on Saturday, they aren't worried about how they'll finish. Instead, they're ready to soak in the moment.

"I go to state for the experience," Hartford said. "It's

fun to see all these girls who have the same passion as you and are just as passionate about it as you."

Cirino said he hopes that experience is something they'll enjoy for a long time.

"My hope for them both is to focus on running their best and to have a great and memorable experience," Cirino said. "They are competitors and will be ready to race. I hope that they are relaxed enough to appreciate what they have accomplished as runners and to soak it in for more than 20 minutes."

For McBeth, qualifying for state is nothing new, but this year, it means more than it ever has.

"Of all the years, this year is probably the most special to me," McBeth said. "I just want to have fun (at state)."

DALLAS FOOTBALL

Dallas sees a return to form

By Lukas Eggen

The Itemizer-Observer

LEBANON — Dallas' football team rushed for 316 yards and four touchdowns as the Dragons cruised to a 35-7 victory over Lebanon on Friday.

Since losing to Corvallis 35-0, the Dragons have outscored its last two opponents by a combined score of 55-7.

For coach Tracy Jackson and his players — Dallas football was back. Since that loss to the Spartans, the Dragons have turned back to a run-first offense.

Hofferber

Senior running back Alex Hofferber rushed for 113 yards, while senior Tanner Earhart ran for 86 yards and a pair of touchdowns. Junior Caedmon Blair also rushed for two touchdowns.

Finishing drives helped "That's what we're used to," senior Mitchell Laizure said. "We've been that smash mouth football team. It feels good getting back to that."

On offense, Dallas' offensive line may be smaller than its opponents, but it's effective in paving the way on the ground.

"We're pulling guards and linemen so it's not a matter of having to beat a 280-pound guy straight up one-on-one," Jackson said. "We're blocking him at an angle, or double teaming him or kicking him out laterally. That's the kind of football I'm most familiar with and the kind of football I love."

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Finishing drives helped

Playoff push

• Dallas enters the final game of the regular season in a four-way tie for fourth place in the Mid-Willamette Conference.

• The Dragons will qualify for the state playoffs with a victory over Silverton on Friday AND a loss by Corvallis or Crescent Valley.

spark both the offensive and defensive units.

"It sucked," Laizure said. "Earlier this season, we'd get down to like the five and we couldn't punch it in. We'd get a penalty or a turnover and weren't fully focused yet."

The last two games, that hasn't been a problem.

Turning to the run game has also yielded another advantage: time of possession.

Against Lebanon, the Dragons went on a 10-minute drive to open the second half. After a roughing-the-kicker penalty, Dallas successfully recovered an onside kick. The result? Lebanon didn't touch the ball on offense during the third quarter.

Those time-consuming drives shortens the game and keeps the defense fresh. Early in the season, Dallas looked for the big play. Now, it's content to grind away one yard at a time.

"That's the kind of football we're trying to play," Jackson said. "It keeps our defense off the field so they're fresh when they get on. As long as we have the ball, they can't score. That's the way we look at it, keep getting first downs and moving the chains."

Once the defense enters the field, it's playing with an



Laizure

aggressive-ness and tenacity that was missing early in the year.

"We have a saying that if you're the last man to the football, you don't care," Laizure said. "That helps get all 11 guys looking to make the tackle."

With the victory, Dallas improved to 3-5 overall and 3-3 in Mid-Willamette Conference play. The victory moved the Dragons into a tie with Lebanon (5-3 overall), Silverton (4-4 overall) and Corvallis (3-5 overall) for fourth place in the league standings. South Albany, Central and Crescent Valley are tied for first with a 4-2 mark in league play.

But Jackson isn't worried about playoff scenarios.

"We could win and still not make it," Jackson said. "We need to focus on playing well enough to beat Silverton and we can finish with honor."

That doesn't mean players haven't thought of the possibility, but Laizure said they're focused on one thing.

"It would be sweet to make the playoffs, but if we don't get the job done, there's not even a chance. Our focus is on beating Silverton," Laizure said.

Dallas plays at Silverton on Friday. The Dragons will advance to the state playoffs with a win over Silverton and a loss by either Crescent Valley or Corvallis. Corvallis hosts South Albany while Crescent Valley plays at Lebanon.

PERRYDALE FOOTBALL

Perrydale improves to 7-0

Itemizer-Observer staff report

PERRYDALE — Junior Keenan Bailey rushed for 253 yards and three touchdowns as Perrydale defeated Sherman 52-20 on Friday.

With the victory, the Pirates improved to 5-0 in Special District 4 play and 7-0 overall and clinched at least a share of the league title.

C.J. Marsters rushed for



Bailey

While the Pirates remained undefeated, Gubrud said this isn't the end of their

168 yards and a touchdown, while Hayden Janesofsky ran for 52 yards and two.

pursuit to improve.

A win in the team's final regular season game will give the Pirates the outright league title.

"We've accomplished the first of many aspirations we have for the season," Gubrud said. "I'm looking for better ball security and fewer penalties."

The Pirates host Arlington Friday at 5 p.m.

FALLS CITY ROUNDUP

Football aims for playoff run

Itemizer-Observer staff report

FALLS CITY — Falls City is a game away from earning a trip to the state playoffs.

The Mountaineers defeated Alsea 62-6 on Friday in the team's regular season finale thanks in part to strong performances from Zach Weems, who rushed for 159 yards and four touchdowns and Jeremy Labrado, who ran for two touchdowns and



Weems

threw for one. Now the Mountaineers get set for a league playoff game at North Douglas 52-14 earlier this

season. The winner advances to the 1A state playoffs. The loser is eliminated.

VOLLEYBALL FALLS AT LEAGUE TOURNAMENT: Falls City's volleyball squad saw its season come to a close after a 25-16, 25-20, 25-10 loss to Willamette Valley Christian at the Casco League Tournament on Saturday. The Mountaineers finished the 2015 season with a 6-10 record overall and 6-8 mark in league play.

DALLAS ROUNDUP

Girls soccer preps for play-in

Itemizer-Observer staff report

DALLAS — Dallas junior Emmalee Jones wasn't used to being the "go-to" player.

"I've never been one of the key players," Jones said.

That's all changed during the 2015 season.

"I got more playing time this year and I'm finding ways to actually help the team, whereas in the past, I've relied on everybody else."

Jones, a midfielder, has become a constant presence on the field during a season that's seen multiple injuries force a number of lineup changes.

"She's the epitome of what our entire team is," Dallas coach Kirk Myrold said. "The girls have had to take on different roles and learn new responsibilities. I have trust in what she can do and know she's going to give it her all no matter what she's doing for you."

Myrold hopes Jones leads the Dragons to postseason success. Dallas hosted South Albany Tuesday after press time in its final regular season match. The Dragons already clinched a spot in the OSAA Class 5A play-in round and entered Tuesday's match in fourth place in the Mid-Willamette Conference.

A victory on Tuesday meant a home match in the

Play-in

• Dallas' girls soccer team will compete in the play-in round on Saturday.



Stuhr

The Dallas boys cross-country team saw its bid to qualify for the state cross-country meet fall short, finishing

fourth at the Mid-Willamette Conference Championships on Oct. 21. The Dragons finished with 109 points, five behind Crescent Valley. The top three teams advanced to state. Freshman Trevor Cross and senior Justin Huxel led the Dragons, finishing in 18th and 19th overall in 17 minutes, 26.69 seconds and 17:26.94, respectively. Seniors Cody Tilgner (22nd, 17:27.65), T.J. Cross (23rd, 17:27.98) and Isaiah Letney (27th, 17:31.21) rounded out Dallas' top-five finishers.

The Dragons' girls team finished sixth. Senior Elizabeth Sutton led the girls in 14th place with a time of 21:06.30. Seniors Angie Sletten (27th, 22:01.36), Annela Bloomstrom (29th, 22:07.03), Alyssa Miller (32nd, 22:09.92) and freshman Peyton Fast (37th, 22:45.95) rounded out the Dragons' scorers.

BOYS SOCCER ENDS SEASON: Dallas' boys soccer team dropped a pair of league matches, falling to Silverton 3-0 on Oct. 20 before losing to Corvallis 7-1 on Friday. The Dragons (10-10-2 overall, 0-6 MWC) played at South Albany Tuesday after press time in the team's final match of the season.



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Central quarterback Peter Mendazona warms up before the start of the second half of the Panthers' 36-30 win over Corvallis on Friday night.

less on the season, but Hedrick said the Panthers aren't taking anything for granted.

"We see Woodburn as a team who has shown improvement from week to week," Hedrick said. "...

Our team knows we cannot take a step backwards and therefore a letdown is not an option. We must take the needed steps to show improvement as we prepare for postseason play."