

CENTRAL ROUNDUP

Girls basketball loses league games

Itemizer-Observer staff report
INDEPENDENCE — With a trip to the play-in round locked up, Central's girls basketball team hopes to end the regular season on a high note.

The Panthers, which played Silverton Tuesday after press time, suffered a pair of losses last week, falling to Crescent Valley 55-49 on Feb. 9 and Lebanon 45-42 on Friday.

Friday's loss saw Central lose a second-half lead as the Warriors frustrated the Panthers offensive attack.

"They made us impatient in the half court," coach Julie McDonald said. "They were pressing us. We were beating it, but we missed a lot of little shots. We have to be able to make those. They out-rebounded us, they wanted it more than us, and they scored more points than us."

Freshman guard Elizabeth Chavez scored a team-high 13 points against Lebanon.

The Panthers end the regular season at Corvallis on Tuesday and at Woodburn on Feb. 26. Central entered the week in third place in the Mid-Willamette Conference standings, but McDonald hopes her team rounds into peak form headed into



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Central sophomore post Krista Omlid goes up for a shot against Lebanon on Friday night.

the postseason. "Even when there is pressure, we have to stay within our offense," McDonald

said. "We're working on our tempo. We are able to beat the press; it's what we do after we break the press that

we have to get figured out."

BOYS BASKETBALL NEARS POSTSEASON BERTH: The Panthers are on the verge of clinching a spot in the play-in round. Central defeated Crescent Valley 49-30 on Feb. 10 and Lebanon 57-47 on Friday to improve to 5-6 in league play and into a three-way tie with South Albany for fourth place.

Central holds a two-game lead over Crescent Valley and Dallas with three games remaining. The top six teams in the league advance to the postseason.

"The kids have done a fantastic job," coach Tim Kreta said. "They executed our game plan and stuck to what we wanted to do."

The Panthers play at Silverton on Wednesday (today) before hosting Corvallis on Feb. 24 and Woodburn on Feb. 26 to close out the regular season.

CENTRAL SWIM SEASON COMES TO AN END: Central's swim season came to end at the MWC district meet on Friday and Saturday. The Panthers fell short of seeing any swimmers qualify for the state swim meet. Sophomore Daniel Glade narrowly missed on qualifying for state in the boys 100-yard freestyle, placing second with a time of 53.08 seconds. Glade (23.88 seconds) and senior Wyatt Rochefort (24.92) placed third and fourth respectively, in the boys 50-yard freestyle.

DALLAS ROUNDUP

Boys basketball falls to last in conference

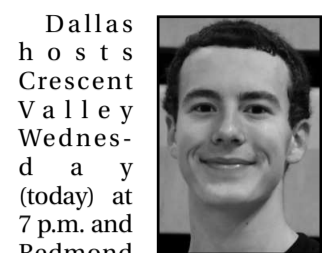
Itemizer-Observer staff report

DALLAS — A pair of Mid-Willamette Conference losses has pushed Dallas boys basketball season to the brink. The Dragons lost to South Albany 58-52 on Feb. 10 and Corvallis 71-54 on Friday.

Dallas has now lost five games in a row and eight of its last nine.

The Dragons are tied with Crescent Valley for seventh in the league standings — two games behind South Albany, Woodburn and Central for sixth. The top six teams advance to the postseason.

"(The league standings) definitely does come into our minds," senior guard Everett Minahan said. "But at the end of the day, it comes down to playing the game."



Minahan

Dallas hosts Crescent Valley Wednesday (today) at 7 p.m. and Redmond Friday at 7 p.m. The Dragons end the regular season at Lebanon on Feb. 24 and at Silverton at Feb. 26.

GIRLS BASKETBALL SPLITS LEAGUE GAMES: Dallas' girls basketball team defeated South Albany 48-27 on Feb. 9 before falling to Corvallis 46-43 on Friday. The Dragons (11-10 overall, 6-5 MWC) clinched a spot to the play-in round. Dallas played Crescent Valley Tuesday after press time. The Dragons end the regular season at home against Lebanon Tuesday at 7 p.m. and against Silverton on Feb. 26.

Finish: Swinehart has final chance

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Joseph began to wrestle. Tanner and Collin soon followed.

Collin began competing at tournaments in sixth grade.

Once he got to high school, he realized the level of intensity was unlike anything he had experienced.

"The thing that's different is it really sucks practicing," Swinehart said. "You get the crap beat out of you every day. You have to remember your goals. If you don't have goals, you'll fade away and drop out because you're getting beat up."

In the past, losses have negatively affected him. This year, he's worked to remember why he started wrestling in the first place.

"I read a sports psychology book and it talks about your confidence and how big of an effect it can have on you," Swinehart said. "You can't let losing get into your mind. I try and remember that I'm here to have fun. That's why you do it."

Swinehart's dedication through the years has paid

off as he's become one of the Panthers' best.

"Collin is one of the toughest, hardest working wrestlers that we have, and it shows in this season and his career at Central," Panthers coach Van Holstad said.

Swinehart is one of several Central wrestlers who could be a major factor at districts.

Junior Marlon Tuipulotu (285 pounds) and Sam Crow (195) as well as a host of others will be expected to contend for a state berth.

"We are excited as we approach the tournament," Holstad said. "Several of the wrestlers are wrestling very well at the end of the season. It is important for us to be peaking at just the right time, not only for this week, but for the state tournament, too."

It was just a year ago that Collin's older brother Tanner went undefeated to end his high school career with a state championship.

Collin wants to have a similarly happy ending.

"It would mean a lot," he said. "It's what I've been working for."

PERRYDALE ROUNDUP

Boys basketball makes school history

Itemizer-Observer staff report

TURNER — Despite a 43-38 loss to Crosshill Christian, Perrydale officially made school history on Friday, becoming co-Casco League champs with Crosshill and C.S. Lewis and the first group to win a league title in football and basketball in the same year.

Just don't expect players to celebrate.

"It was hard to convince them we are still league champions," Pirates coach Mike Lowry said. "It seemed to look like they lost the league title. When they look back on it after the season, it will mean a lot to them."

For now, Perrydale has its sights set on a much bigger prize — a state title.

First up, though, is the Casco League Tournament.

Casco League Tournament

• Perrydale's boys and girls basketball teams will compete at the Casco League Tournament Friday and Saturday at Warner Pacific College. Both teams enter as the No. 2 seed.

• If the boys and girls teams win their first game, they gain an automatic berth to the state tournament. If either loses its first game, they will play in an elimination game on Saturday with the winner advancing to state.

The Pirates enter the tournament as the second seed and play third-seeded C.S. Lewis Friday at 7:30 p.m.

Perrydale and C.S. Lewis split the season series. C.S. Lewis won 36-31 on Dec. 10. The Pirates earned a 49-32 victory on Jan. 22.

"I think we need to have a sense of urgency from the start of the game," Lowry said. "It seems that we wait around a little too long and we wait for this to happen. If

this group starts fast and keeps that mentality through the game, then we can compete with anyone."

The winner clinches a spot to the state tournament and advances to the league title game against Crosshill on Saturday. The loser will play the winner of Willamette Valley Christian-Country Christian with a trip to state on the line.

"I expect the intensity of our group to reach a new

level," Lowry said. "These players still expect to win the district title and be the No. 1 seed to state."

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Perrydale's girls basketball squad defeated Columbia Christian 26-16 on Thursday and Crosshill Christian 26-21 on Friday to close out the regular season.

The Pirates enter the Casco League Tournament as the second seed and will face third-seeded Willamette Valley Christian Friday at 5:45 p.m. The winner earns a trip to state advances to the league title game against Country Christian on Saturday. The loser plays the winner of Falls City-Livingstone Adventist with a trip to state at stake.

Perrydale and Willamette Valley Christian split their season series. The Pirates won 27-23 on Dec. 14, while WVC earned a 33-29 win on Jan. 26.

State: Senior aims for new school record at state meet

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Ford earned a pair of wild card berths after placing second in the 200 freestyle (2:01.62) and fourth in the 500 (5:28.91).

"It was different than I expected," Ford said. "I was surprised with where I was. I did better than I thought I was going to do."

The junior is no stranger to state, having qualified in each of her three years. That didn't make the anticipation

— and nervousness — to see whether she had qualified any less.

"I was definitely all over that," Ford said. "As soon as I was off of work (on Sunday) I looked them up."

Now, Ford and Dressel hope their experience gives them an edge.

"I know how to go through this whole thing," Ford said. "I've been through it a ton. It helps with everything."

For Dressel, it's one last time to experience high school swimming — and one more chance to set a new personal — and school — record.

"I'm about two seconds off my season goal," Dressel said. "I'm happy to go to state and try and get my season goal times. It's just like any other race. You're racing people who are more in your time range which is a lot of fun. It's nice to do your best."

FALLS CITY GIRLS BASKETBALL

Girls basketball earns trip to Casco League tournament on Friday

Itemizer-Observer staff report

FALLS CITY — Falls City's girls basketball team clinched the fourth seed in the Casco League Tournament

after a 40-17 win over C.S. Lewis on Friday. Allison Kidd scored 14 points, while Brittany Varney scored eight points.

The Mountaineers play fifth-seeded Livingstone Adventist Friday in the first round of the Casco League Tournament.

The winner advances to play the loser of Perrydale/Willamette Valley Christian on Saturday with the winner advancing to the

state tournament. The loser's season comes to an end.

Falls City's boys basketball team's season came to an

end after a 45-22 win over Jewell on Feb. 9, a 56-41 loss to Livingstone Adventist on Thursday and a 38-26 loss to C.S. Lewis on Friday.

WOU: Omlid wasn't aware of how good WOU could be

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"The core group of us, the majority of us started our first year," Avgi said. "When you have that, you know you're going to be great when you get older and become veterans."

Avgi, the conference Player of the Year last season, grew into the team's go-to scorer as WOU saw on-court success quickly.

The No. 1 ranking is the latest in the list of accomplishments this group has been able to add to the Wolves since they arrived.

"It's another first for our core group being here," Avgi said. "Last year, we made the tournament and won our first GNAC Championship. We were ranked for the first time, now we made it all the way to No. 1."

Several new faces at WOU have stepped up in big ways, but not all of them knew the situation they were walking into.

The transfer

When redshirt sophomore Tanner Omlid decided to come home and play for Western Oregon, he wasn't aware of the Wolves' recent accomplishments.

Omlid was ready to attend the Oregon Institute of Technology, but WOU's coaching hire changed everything.

"I didn't know anything (about the team)," Omlid said. "I knew coach (Jim) Shaw. My parents told me he was a good coach."

He realized after the team's season-opening win over Point Loma that they had something special.

"I thought, 'Andy, he's going to be a good player,'" Omlid said, smiling. "I didn't know he was already an all-conference player. He's unreal. I've never played with anyone so good."

Omlid has provided a spark both starting and off the bench on offense and defense.

But personal and team success hasn't gone to his

head. For Omlid, the team's rise to No. 1 isn't the end-goal, it's a sign that they're closer to playing their best ball.

"We have to have the mindset that we need to prove it every day," Omlid said. "Practice is a lot harder, mentally. We're focusing more. I enjoy the ranking, but what really matters is that we win our last game."