

Champ: Swinehart takes 2nd at 145 pounds for Panthers

Continued from Page 10A
Senior Collin Swinehart fell just short of a state title, placing second at 145 pounds.

While Swinehart fell short of his goal, the senior's run to the state finals in back-to-back years served as a great accomplishment for his teammates to aspire to, Holstad said.

"There's not many guys who get to the state finals

once, let alone twice," Holstad said. "When I think back on his career, I won't think on that last match. I'll think about the whole breadth of his career. I've been taking him to tournaments since he was a little kid. I won't remember one match. There's a whole lot of good."

Juniors David Negrete (182) and Sam Crow (195) placed fourth to round out the Panthers' state placers.

Negrete placed fourth after losing his first two matches at state during his sophomore year.

"I was excited because I placed higher than I expected," Negrete said. "Last year, I didn't really try. I just gave up. This year, I didn't quit."

Crow came in with high expectations — and delivered on his goal.

"I was determined to get third or fourth," Crow said.

"Last season, I was hardly at any tournaments and I won as many matches as I lost. This year was good, I think."

In total, eight Central wrestlers competed at the state tournament. Holstad said each one was deserving of praise.

"All the guys battled with heart," Holstad said. "Sam and David, they wrestled well. They did Panther Nation proud."



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-ObsERVER

Central senior Collin Swinehart attempts to escape from an opponent during the state wrestling championships.

DALLAS GIRLS BASKETBALL

Dragons close out regular season with win, loss



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-ObsERVER file

Dallas guard Stefani Tallon's return has helped give the Dragons depth during the regular season.

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-ObsERVER

DALLAS — Dallas' girls basketball team hopes the third time's the charm in the play-in round.

The Dragons, which hosted a play-in game against Churchill Tuesday after press time, closed out the regular season with a 54-41 win over Lebanon on Feb. 23 and a 54-44 loss to Silverton on Friday to clinch fourth place in the Mid-Willamette Conference.

More importantly, for the first time all season, the Dragons have been completely healthy.

"We're starting to get back into the flow and getting used to each other again," coach David Brautigam said.

Online

Follow the *Itemizer-ObsERVER* on Twitter, check out the I-O's Facebook page and head to www.polkio.com for results from Tuesday's play-in game.

"You can see the difference in our scoring, in our energy and in the kids."

Regardless of how far Dallas advances, for one player, the chance to experience the postseason is one she won't take for granted.

Junior Stefani Tallon played a major role in the girls soccer team's success last fall. But a broken collarbone suffered during the team's play-in game against Springfield meant Tallon

missed out on the team's post-game celebration and the team's first round playoff game in soccer.

The injury also caused her to miss nearly the entire nonleague basketball season.

"It was so hard," Tallon said. "I was at all the practices. Watching the girls play every single day was really hard. Looking forward to coming back kept me going."

When she returned, the junior did all she could to make up for lost time.

"My shoulder was really weak," she said. "It was like the first day of tryouts for me. I was out of shape because I hadn't run in two months. I had to work hard to get back into the group,

getting to their level and matching that."

The winner of Dallas' play-in game advances to the first round of the state playoffs on Friday — a possibility that Tallon said would be the fulfillment of a longtime dream. Dallas has been in this position before, but each of the previous two times have resulted in losses.

"That's a big deal for us," Tallon said. "It would mean a lot to advance. I've been playing with these girls since I started playing basketball. To do something we've been dreaming about all these years would be good."

Check out the *Itemizer-ObsERVER*'s Facebook and follow @IOSports on Twitter for the Dragons' play-in game result.

DALLAS GIRLS WRESTLING

Sletten finishes second

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-ObsERVER

PORTLAND — Dallas senior Angie Sletten knew dropping down from 113 pounds to the 106-pound weight class in wrestling would be difficult.

But the benefits were too much to pass up.

"I thought I'd be stronger at 106 pounds," Sletten said.

That decision paid off, as Sletten placed second at state in the girls 106 pound class.

Sletten pinned McNary's Brooke Burrows in the semifinals before losing by decision to Sweet Home's Marissa Kurtz.

Sletten, a three-sport ath-



Sletten

lete, came a long way from her first days wrestling. The senior was a team captain for the second year in a row and proved she was just as dedicated as the guys.

"When you first join the team, you have to earn your spot," Sletten said. "It's not as easy as thinking I'm going to come out for wrestling. It's you're coming out for wrestling and we're going to push you as hard as you can to prove this is what you really want."

Sletten plans to wrestle in

college, and while there have been ups and downs during her wrestling career, she wouldn't change anything about her journey.

"There are days you'll go to the locker room and cry and feel defeated," Sletten said. "The next day, you'll see it's OK. Hard work pays off."

As Sletten prepares for what's next in her wrestling career, her time at Dallas has been one of the best choices she's ever made.

"There's nothing more rewarding than getting your hand raised," Sletten said. "It's one of the great experiences in life. There's nothing like wrestling. It challenges you in many different ways."

Dragons: Eight Dallas wrestlers place at state

Continued from Page 10A

Senior Ean Woodruff (138) also placed fourth. Noah Sickles (126), Cody Janssen (152), Treve Earhart (160) and Marcos Molina (220) finished fifth, while Dawson Barcroft (106) placed sixth.

Sickles placed despite having a torn meniscus. The Dragons' effort com-

pared to the district tournament, where Dallas saw its run of six-straight titles snapped, was night and day, Olliff said.

"It was fun to see the contrast between the district tournament and the state tournament for most wrestlers," Olliff said.

Dallas may not have had a

state champion in 2016, but Olliff said he was pleased with the effort each of his wrestlers showed to end the season.

"The trophy is shared by every state participant," Olliff said. "Every wrestler we took contributed at least one win. I'm proud of those boys and proud of that trophy."



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-ObsERVER

Dallas senior Marcos Molina finished fifth at 220 pounds at the OSAA State Wrestling Championships, helping Dallas to a fourth-place finish in the team standings.

DALLAS BOYS BASKETBALL

Dragons finish season 7-17

Itemizer-ObsERVER staff report
SILVERTON — Dallas' boys basketball team ended its season with a pair of league losses.

The Dragons fell to Lebanon 65-58 on Feb. 24 before losing to Silverton

59-50 on Friday.

Senior Everett Minahan scored a team-high 15 points against Silverton. Jason Richey added 11 points.

The Dragons finished the season with a 7-17 record

overall and a 3-11 mark in Mid-Willamette Conference play, finishing eighth in the team standings.

Dallas ended on a nine-game losing streak and dropped 12 of its final 13 games.

Panthers: Central has won five of its last seven games



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-ObsERVER

Central guard Peter Mason attempts to go up for a lay up during Central's 52-45 victory over Woodburn on Friday night. The Panthers clinched a home play-in game.

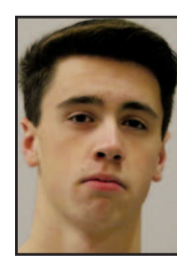
Continued from Page 10A

But the Panthers would not be denied. "There was no way we were going to lose," David Avila said.

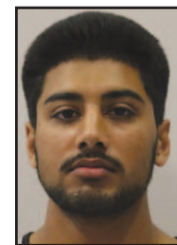
Thanks to a South Albany loss on Friday, Central moved into the top half of the league standings — a far cry from where the Panthers stood just weeks ago. Central started league play with a 1-6 mark and tied for last place.

"We're trying to write our own story," Kevin Cable said. "We want to write our story that we are a team that came back and can get to Gil Coliseum for the state quarterfinals, semifinals and finals."

The Panthers finished the regular season with a 10-13 record overall and a 6-8 mark in league play, winning five of their last seven games.



K. Cable



Bal

buying in when it wasn't easy. I'm proud of these guys."

Central now turns its attention toward the postseason, which begins with a game against Eagle Point,

the fifth-place finisher in the Midwestern League.

Eagle Point went 6-17 overall and 3-6 in league play. The Eagles lost eight of their last nine games. The winner advances to the first round on Saturday against a yet-to-be-determined opponent.

"Eagle Point is a very quick and explosive team," Kreta said. "In the game film I've seen of them, they will get up and run with the ball and finish strong toward the hoop or kick it out for a 3-pointer. They play in a tough league, and their record doesn't look to speak to who they are. ... They have moments like Silverton with their fast break, Woodburn with their pressure and Crescent Valley with some of their motion offense. We have our work cut out for us."