

CENTRAL ROUNDUP

Boys pick up first win against Silverton

Itemizer-Observer staff report
SILVERTON — Central's boys basketball team defeated Silverton 45-36 on Friday to open Mid-Willamette Conference play. The Panthers also dropped a non-league game to Putnam 47-42 on Jan. 3.

"Our kids played a great game on Friday," coach Tim Kreta said. "They executed our game plan very well and were able to finish off the fourth quarter with poise. This was our first win against Silverton since joining the MWC. Our team de-



Barba
Against Silverton, Peter Mendazona scored 18 points, and Alec Barba added 16 points to lead Central.

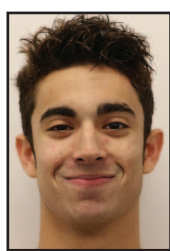
"Peter Mendazona and Alec Barba led the way of-

fense kept the game close down the stretch, and we were able to take advantage of some transition

to get to the rack and hitting a few outside shots, and we hit our free throws to finish the game," Kreta said. "Peter Mason kept our offense moving and found shooters to help keep their defense honest."

Central hosts undefeated South Albany Wednesday (today) at 7 p.m. and Crescent Valley Friday at 7 p.m.

GLADE PACES CENTRAL SWIM TEAM: Central junior Daniel Glade won the boys 200-yard freestyle during the Panthers' swim meet at Cres-



Glade
also won the 100 backstroke in 1:12.28.

Compton took first in the 100 freestyle in 1:00.20, and Ethan Davis won the 500 freestyle in 7:32.09.

On the girls side, Reann Kelley won the 100 freestyle in

1:23.44.

The Clemens Invitational, scheduled for Saturday, was canceled due to weather.

The Panthers competed at Lebanon Tuesday after press time.

Central will compete at Corvallis Tuesday at 4 p.m.

CENTRAL GIRLS LOSE LEAGUE-OPENER: Central's girls basketball team lost to Silverton 50-33 on Friday in the team's MWC opener.

"We played a good game, even though the score didn't reflect it," coach Julie McDonald said. "Silverton is a mature team with seven seniors who

are very disciplined both offensively and defensively. On the offensive end, we limited our turnovers to 11, but just didn't make our shots, and we gave up too many defensive rebounds for second-chance points."

The Panthers (3-5 overall) played at South Albany Tuesday after press time. Central travels to face Crescent Valley Friday at 7 p.m. before playing at Lebanon Tuesday at 7 p.m.

"We are improving every game and looking forward to seeing the growth by the end of the season," McDonald said.

WESTERN OREGON ROUNDUP

Omlid leads WOU to wins

Itemizer-Observer staff report
LACEY, Wash. — Western Oregon's men's basketball picked up a pair of conference wins, beating Seattle Pacific 76-74 on Thursday and Saint Martin's 80-67 on Saturday.

Tanner Omlid led the Wolves to the win over Seattle Pacific. Omlid had a career-high 34 points and recorded

seven rebounds, three blocks and two steals.

WOU never trailed in the second half. Ali Faruq-Bey scored 11 points in the second half, including a free throw that pushed WOU's lead to two with 16 seconds left in the game.

The Wolves rallied from a four-point halftime deficit against Saint Martin's.

Omlid scored 18 points and had three assists, three blocks, three steals and two rebounds. J.J. Chirnside recorded his

first collegiate double-double, adding 13 points and 11 rebounds.

Western Oregon (7-7 overall, 4-2 Great Northwest Athletic Conference) returns home to host Simon Fraser Thursday at 7 p.m. and Western Washington Saturday at 7 p.m.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL SPLITS HOME GAMES: Western Oregon's women's basketball team lost to Alaska Anchorage 105-62 on Thursday before defeating Alaska Fairbanks 72-67 on Saturday.

Jasmine Miller led WOU with 14 points and six rebounds against Alaska Anchorage, but the Seawolves led 32-13 after the first quarter and never looked back.

Against Alaska Fairbanks, the Wolves overcame a slow start that saw WOU trailing 20-4 after the first quarter. The Wolves responded by outscoring Alaska Fairbanks 26-9 in the second quarter.

Shelby Snook scored 23 points, including 15 in the fourth quarter. Sydney Azorr added 20 points.

WOU (6-7 overall, 2-4 GNAC) faced Concordia Tuesday after press time. The Wolves play at Montana State

Billings Saturday at 4:15 p.m.

WILLIAMS UP FOR AWARD: Former Western Oregon wide receiver Tyrell Williams is a nominee for the 10th annual VIZIO Top Value Performer trophy. The award is given to the NFL player who's on-field performance most exceeds the value of their contract.

Williams, a receiver with the San Diego Chargers, had 69 catches for 1,059 yards and seven touchdowns during the 2016 season. He has a base salary of \$525,000.

The other nominees are running back Jay Ajayi of the Miami Dolphins, running back Spencer Ware of the Kansas City Chiefs, wide receiver Michael Thomas of the New Orleans Saints, and running back Latavius Murray of the Oakland Raiders.

The Top Value performer is decided by fan votes.

Voting is open through Monday at 11:59 p.m.

To vote, visit www.vizio.com/TVP.



Williams
Thomas of the New Orleans Saints, and running back Latavius Murray of the Oakland Raiders.

DALLAS ROUNDUP

Boys basketball opens league play with win

Itemizer-Observer staff report

DALLAS — Dallas' boys basketball team opened Mid-Willamette Conference play with a 59-55 win over Lebanon on Thursday. The Dragons lost to Hermiston 54-51 in overtime on Friday.

Jason Richey led Dallas against the Warriors with 20 points. Aaron White added 13 points, and the Dragons went 15 for 17 from the free-throw line in the fourth quarter to hold off Lebanon.

Richey scored a team-high 14 points against Hermiston. Jake Ronco and Carter Weissensee scored seven points each.

"I like how we battled in both games," coach Trent Schwartz said. "It's always nice to get conference wins, and this year is just going to be a donnybrook each night, as I believe there is great parity in the MWC this season. Against Hermiston ... I think our kids were able to make the necessary defensive adjustments and tighten up the team defense from the second quarter on to put us in a position to have a chance to win the game. I'm hoping the experience will help us down the road in ultimately prevailing. I like how we responded from being down 10 in the first half at one point to taking a one-point lead into the half."

Dallas plays at Crescent Valley Wednesday (today) at 7 p.m. and at Corvallis Friday at 7 p.m. before hosting Silverton on Jan. 18 at 7 p.m.

"This week we'll be tested



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer
Jake Collins goes up for a lay up against Lebanon on Thursday. Collins scored nine points during the Dragons' 59-55 victory over the Warriors.

by a very athletic Crescent Valley squad, and a very physical and inside-oriented Corvallis squad on the road," Schwartz said.

WRESTLING GOES 3-0 AT LEAGUE DUALS: Dallas' wrestling team defeated Corvallis, Lebanon and Silverton in league duals on Thursday. Jacob Jones (126 pounds) went 3-0 during the duals to help

lead the Dragons. Sophomore PJ Holgate picked up wins against Silverton and Lebanon.

Dallas' home tournament, the Brunner Invitational, was canceled due to weather conditions. The Dragons host South Albany Wednesday (today) at 6 p.m. before competing at the Oregon Classic on Friday and Saturday in Redmond.

Foster: Made state as a freshman last year

guys, they are winning their matches, but they give up because they get tired. You have to work through it."

Foster now knows whether he'll wrestle at 126 or 132 when it comes time for districts, but no matter

what weight class he's in, Foster is ready to use his experience to bring the pain to his opponents.

"It makes me feel good when I can go out there, shake someone's hand and then beat them up," Foster

said. "I love getting my hand raised and knowing that everything I am working for is paying off."

Dragons: Have won four straight

Continued from Page 10A

Senior Stefani Tallon said during the first few games, players tried to do too much by themselves.

Brautigam believed the team was close to putting it all together. The key was not getting frustrated before that happened.

"We had some adapting to do and made a few changes here and there," Brautigam said. "We faced some challenges, but that's what basketball is all about. There wasn't any finger-pointing, and our kids bought in and have been on a roll since then."

What a roll it's been.

Since losing to Churchill, Dallas has won six of its last seven games, including four in a row. This stretch included a fifth-place finish at the Nike Interstate Shootout Dec. 27-30.

"We're working together," senior Olivia Nelson said. "We're communicating together and talking it out. We're rebounding well without having a big team. It's a lot of effort, but you just have to work harder than the bigger people."

The Dragons showed energy and tenacity on defense after working on fundamentals such as rotating and boxing out for rebounds.

Dallas lacks a player taller than 5-foot-10, but the team finds other ways to gets stops.

"We have a lot of quickness," Tallon said.

On offense, Dallas' players possess a willingness to find the best shot, no matter who is taking it, Brautigam said.

During the interstate shootout, three different players led the Dragons in scoring throughout the team's four games.

"There's not one player we are looking to go to on offense," Brautigam said. "There's a lot of balance on our team."

The team's performance at the shootout may be an early turning point in the season.

"It's a lot of confidence to know that we could be in a tournament with some of the top teams in the state and be able to run with them and get a glimpse of what we can do," Tallon said.

The Dragons hope the momentum they've built carries into Mid-Willamette Conference play.

"We've got a chance early in league to build on that confidence, and confidence is everything in basketball," Brautigam said.

Pirates: Girls defeat Jewell

Continued from Page 10A

GIRLS BASKETBALL DEFEATS JEWELL: PERRYDALE — Perrydale's girls basketball team defeated Jewell 30-25 on Thursday. The Pirates opened the week by falling to Willamette Valley Christian 44-34 on Jan. 3.

Facing one of the Casco League's top teams, the Pirates fell behind 13-2, but battled back to within eight in the fourth quarter, coach Terry Newton said.

"Against Willamette, we

came out scared," Newton said. "But we competed and got back into the game."

Against Jewell, the Pirates opened by hitting four of their first five shots and led by double digits in the fourth quarter.

Perrydale played Livingstone Adventist Tuesday after press time. The Pirates host Oregon School for the Deaf Thursday at 5:30 p.m.; North Clackamas Christian Saturday at 4 p.m.; and Sherman Monday at 4 p.m.

FALLS CITY ROUNDUP

Girls win two

Itemizer-Observer staff report

FALLS CITY — Falls City's girls basketball team defeated Oregon School for the Deaf 33-17 on Jan. 3 and Livingstone Adventist 28-23 on Thursday. Amara Houghtaling scored 12 points against OSD. Emma Burgess added 10 points and seven rebounds.

Against Livingstone, Houghtaling scored 11 points and Sarah Mack added seven points. Falls City shot 27 free throws during the game. The boys defeated OSD

53-24 before falling to Livingstone Adventist 49-32. Austin Burgess had 20 points and 10 rebounds against OSD. Jeremy Labrado added 15 points and Zach Varney recorded 10 points and six rebounds. Labrado scored 13 points against Livingstone.

Falls City played Willamette Valley Christian Tuesday after press time. The Mountaineers host Crosshill Christian on Tuesday. The girls tip off at 5:30 p.m., and the boys game begins at 7 p.m.

Morales: Senior finds his rhythm

Continued from Page 10A

"I had a hard time with the rules," Morales said. "I didn't know what was legal or not."

Thanks to football and track, he already had an athletic base to build on.

As he gained more familiarity with what was allowed and what wasn't, he began to find his groove.

"After you get (the basics) and find a couple of moves, it starts becoming easier," Morales said. "You

find a rhythm and find your own strengths."

For Morales, that means letting his opponents show what kind of match they want to wrestle, and reacting accordingly.

"If he goes up top and looks for a shot, I know I have to up my defense," Morales said. "If he is a little more relaxed, I know I can maybe take a shot or two."

From there, he looks to work his way into his

strengths.

"I like to grapple and throw," Morales said.

The Panthers host Corvallis Wednesday (today) at 6 p.m. As weather has caused numerous tournaments to be canceled, these will be opportunities to face opponents and see where they are at.

"It seems like you're not getting your chance right now to see (how you compare)," Morales said. "All of a sudden, districts are coming

up and you're not sure what to expect, but we'll take every match and give it 100 percent."

Morales knows he has to make up for lost time if he wants to compete with the state's best wrestlers.

But he sees improvement every time and is ready to challenge.

"I'm still trying to find it right now," Morales said. "I'm doing better than last year. It gets better and better every time you wrestle."