

CENTRAL BOYS BASKETBALL

Panthers dropped in first round by Crater



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Central's Peter Mason dishes a pass against Eagle Point.

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

BEND — Central's boys basketball team wasn't going down without a fight. The 13th-ranked Panthers were on the road facing the fourth-seeded Summit Storm on Saturday in the first round of the state playoffs.

After trailing by nine in the first quarter, the Panthers tried to close the gap, including rallying to within two in the fourth quarter after a pair of 3-pointers from Andrew Barry. Each time, Summit did just enough to hold on for a 53-47 win.

"It was a great game and the kids played extremely hard," coach Tim Kreta said. "We didn't get the start we were hoping for, but they kept fighting. ... That's a really good team that we played. We were in a position to finish out the game, but missed a couple of shots. We were aggressive on

All-league basketball

- Central senior Alec Barba was named first-team all-Mid-Willamette Conference. Senior Peter Mason, sophomore Brendan Lesmeister, senior Andrew Barry and junior Peter Mendazona earned honorable mentions.

- Dallas senior Jason Richey was named second team all-MWC. Senior Aaron White received an honorable mention.

defense, but couldn't quite match that aggressiveness on the offensive side, and I think we settled for jump shots a bit in the second half."

Summit provided some matchup issues early on, with several tall post players making life difficult for the Panthers.

"We needed to make some defensive adjustments because they were so big," Kreta said. "They had guys who are 6-foot-4 and 6-foot-5. We had to increase the ball pressure to give Andrew Barry and Brendan Lesmeister any time in the paint."

Senior Alec Barba scored a team-high 15 points against the Storm.

Central advanced to the

first round by defeating Eagle Point 65-50 in the play-in round on Feb. 28. The victory allowed the Panthers, which lost 54-49 to Woodburn on senior night on Feb. 24, to give players a chance to give its seniors one final win at home.

"It's big, especially after the way we finished the previous two games at home," senior Peter Mason said. "To win the last game we'll play (at home) it means a lot to us."

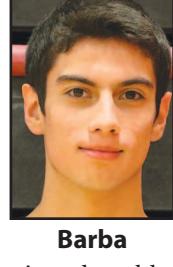
Central will see several key contributors graduate, including Barba, Mason, Will Cable and Barry, but Kreta hopes that the experience returning players gained will help fill the void.

"Our seniors are going to

be hard to replace," Kreta said. "But you hope that the younger kids seeing the older kids play and experiencing the ebbs and flows will be able to take this and grow from it. We'll have guys like Peter Mendazona. Lesmeister had a great breakout year. Isaiah Abraham is a great, defensive guy. We'll have some building to do, but we'll have kids who have been in this spot before."

The Panthers finished the season with a 13-12 record overall.

"I'm proud of the way the kids have battled," Kreta said. "I think everything happens for a reason. The kids went out and did everything we asked them to do. I don't regret anything we've done, and I don't think our kids do either."



Barba

Wolves: WOU hosts Simon Fraser on Saturday

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As a freshman, Cadwallader appeared in 10 of 57 games. By her junior season, she had 22 appearances, including 10 starts and led the team in ERA (2.53) and was second in strikeouts (65).

The key to her success goes beyond natural ability.

"I want to have a relationship with my catcher," Cadwallader said. "We want to be thinking the same thing when we face a batter — that we want to throw this pitch or we want to hit

this location. Afterward, we'll talk about how we felt things went that inning."

That kind of trust and connection can take time to build, but it is paying off.

"I don't focus as much as the other team," Cadwallader said. "I'm just focused on us (me and my catcher). When I focus on the batter, I can get in my own head. I just make each batter like it's a practice situation and I relax myself."

But the Wolves' biggest strength so far has been its offense.

At the plate, WOU is batting .324 as a team and has outscored opponents by nearly double (100 to 56).

Kelsie Gardner leads the team in hits (25). Four different players (Destiny Kuehl, Ashlee Lynch, Emma Alfonso and Zoe Clark) have hit three home runs.

"Offensively, we're pretty strong," Sargent said. "We have some kids who can hit well and we have some new kids who are proving that they can play at this level. That's probably our

greatest strength right now."

Lynch, a senior, may be ready to have her best year at WOU. She hit .310 with nine home runs in 45 games as a junior. She's batting .412 with three homers — including a grand slam — in 12 games this year.

"I just think about doing my job at the plate," Lynch said. "Maybe that's to try and get an RBI or advancing a baserunner. I'm not thinking, oh I am going to hit double or a triple or a

home run."

Western Oregon opens league play by hosting Simon Fraser Saturday at noon and Western Washington Sunday at noon.

WOU was picked to finish second in the pre-season coaches poll behind Central Washington.

"Our conference is going to be really good from top to bottom this year," Sargent said. "That's what we try and talk to them about all the time. It doesn't matter who you're playing. Do your job, and if the other

team ends up beating you, the better team won that day. We can't take days off."

While a path to a GNAC title will be difficult, the Wolves are confident they have the pieces in place to rise above.

"We just have to get each of our jobs done," Lynch said. "Once we do that, I think we'll be fine. We have a good team this year. We're excited to start conference and excited to see what this team can do. (The seniors) are ready to go out with a bang."

WESTERN OREGON ROUNDUP

Wolves season ends in conference title game

Itemizer-Observer staff report

LACEY, Wash. — Western Oregon's men's basketball team's run for a second-straight Great Northwest Athletic Conference tournament championship fell just short after a 71-69 loss to top-seeded Western Washington in the championship game on Saturday.

Demetrius Trammel scored a career-high 33 points to lead the Wolves.

Western Oregon led 67-63 with 2:31 left in the game, but a 7-0 run by Western Washington proved to be the difference.

WOU had a final chance to win, but a 3-pointer from Malik Leaks clanged off the rim.

Western Oregon advanced to the championship game by defeating Montana State Billings 72-61 on Thursday and outlasting Alaska Anchorage 91-84 in triple overtime on Friday.

Tanner Omlid scored 22 points and grabbed 10 rebounds against Alaska Anchorage, and Ali Faruq-Bey added 19 points and seven assists.

Western Oregon ended the season with an 18-13 record overall.

BASEBALL OPENS LEAGUE PLAY WITH WINS: Western Oregon's baseball team opened GNAC play with a pair of wins over Montana State Billings 9-4 and 3-2 on Saturday. Nyles Nygaard and Jay Leverett each had two hits and three RBIs in the first game of the double-header as pitcher Brady Miller threw six innings recording nine strikeouts.

Pitcher Elias Bedolla earned the win in game two after throwing for four scoreless innings with three strikeouts.

WOU defeated Montana State Billings 8-7 on Monday.

Western Oregon will play at Concordia for a pair of double-headers on Saturday and Sunday. The Wolves will host Corban on March 15 at 2 p.m.

Itemizer-Observer staff report

MILWAUKIE — Central's girls basketball team faced top-ranked La Salle in the first round of the state playoffs on Saturday.

The Panthers kept it close, trailing 7-6 after the first quarter, but La Salle pulled away for a 59-35 victory.

"The girls competed and hustled for 32 minutes," coach Julie McDonald said. "I think the girls learned that we need to be more aggressive taking shots and getting to the basket."

Central advanced to the first round by defeating Thurston 45-41 in the play-in round on March 1.

Freshman Meagan Mendazona was named first team all-Mid-Willamette Conference.

Elizabeth Chavez, Lexy Barba and Katelyn Trevino earned honorable mentions.

The Panthers appear set up for future success. Central will only lose one player

on its varsity roster to graduation.

"We played in a lot of games that came down to last minute game situations," McDonald said. "You don't get that experience in practice. The girls learned a lot from those moments and will have a couple more years to put them to use. Any time you can play in postseason it's a great experience. Playing at a higher and faster speed is always a benefit."

Central finished the season with a 12-12 record overall and an 8-6 mark in league play.

"We've already set a few goals for next season," McDonald said. "The goals are higher than we set this year and if we work hard and as a team, I believe we can reach them."

CENTRAL GIRLS BASKETBALL

Central falls to top-seeded La Salle



Chavez

LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer
Central freshman Meagan Mendazona goes up for a shot against Thurston on March 1.

Pirates: Perrydale takes third for the first time

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That gave the team's seniors one last thing to smile about after a historic season.

"The best part of it all for me is to end on a win," Janesofsky said. "If we lose, the seniors are all down after the game. Winning is

one thing only three teams can experience in the post-season. We were fortunate enough to work our butts off and get that victory. I'm glad we were able to make Perrydale history and end on a good note."

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AARON YOST/for the Itemizer-Observer
Perrydale's boys basketball team celebrates after taking third at the OSAA 1A state basketball championships.AARON YOST/for the Itemizer-Observer
Perrydale's Cooper Butler (left) and Haylen Janesofsky attempt to block a shot against Jordan Valley on Saturday.