

SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22
Baseball: Central at Corvallis, 4:30 p.m. Woodburn at Dallas, 4:30 p.m. Waldport at Perrydale, 4:30 p.m.
Boys tennis: Woodburn at Dallas, 4 p.m.
Girls tennis: Dallas at Woodburn, 4 p.m.
Softball: South Albany at Central, 4:30 p.m. Dallas at Crescent Valley, 4:30 p.m. Waldport at Perrydale, 4:30 p.m.
Track and field: Central at Woodburn, 3:45 p.m. Falls City at Sherwood, 4 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 23
Boys tennis: South Albany at Central, 4 p.m. Corvallis at Dallas, 4 p.m.
Girls tennis: Central at South Albany, 4 p.m. Dallas at Corvallis, 4 p.m.
Softball: Perrydale at Sheridan, 4:30 p.m.
Track and field: Dallas vs. Silverton (at Kennedy High School), 4:15 p.m. Perrydale at Jim Barks/Grizzly Bear Open, 2 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 24
Baseball: Corvallis at Central, 4:30 p.m. Dallas at Woodburn, 4:30 p.m. Perrydale at Amity, 4:30 p.m.
Boys tennis: Sandy at Dallas, 4 p.m.
Softball: Crescent Valley at Central, 4:30 p.m. Dallas at Corvallis, 4:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 25
Baseball: Western Oregon at Saint Martin's (DH), 1 p.m.
Softball: Western Oregon at Central Washington (DH), 1 p.m.
Track and field: Western Oregon at Willamette Invitational, TBA.

SUNDAY, MARCH 26
Baseball: Western Oregon at Saint Martin's (DH), noon.
Softball: Western Oregon at Saint Martin's (DH), noon.

MONDAY, MARCH 27
Baseball: Dallas vs. Philomath (at Newport), 9:30 a.m. Dallas vs. Siuslaw/Mapleton (at Newport), 2:30 p.m.
Softball: Central at Newport, 9 a.m. Central vs. Banks (at Newport), 1 p.m. Dallas vs. Mountain View (at North Medford), 2 p.m. Dallas vs. Henley (at North Medford), 6 p.m.

TUESDAY, MARCH 28
Baseball: Dallas vs. Sweet Home (at Newport), 9:30 a.m.
Softball: Central vs. Pleasant Hill (at Newport), 1 p.m. Central vs. Taft (at Newport), 3 p.m. Dallas vs. Sprague (at North Medford), 4 p.m. Dallas vs. Grants Pass (at North Medford), 6 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29
Baseball: Lewis-Clark State at Western Oregon, 2 p.m.
Track and field: Falls City, Perrydale at Canby All-Comers, noon.

Schedules Subject to Change

QUICK HITS

Cross Creek men's club results

DALLAS — Cross Creek's men's club results for March 14:
Low gross/low net
Gross: 1 (tie), Greg Fisher and Lee Taylor, 43; 3, Bill Karjala, 44.
Net: 1, Judson Baker, 36; 2, Lynn Hurt, 37; 3, Vern Smith, 38; 4 (tie), Ed Johnson, Bob Hughes and Darrel Smedstad, 39.

Pirates compete at Estacada

ESTACADA — Perrydale's track and field team competed at the Estacada Small School Invite on Saturday.
Joshua Crawford led the boys with a sixth-place finish in the 300-meter hurdles (51.77 seconds). Amity Deters took fifth in the girls 300 hurdles (55.52) and sixth in the long jump (13 feet, 5½ inches).
For more results: www.polkio.com.

2016-17 ITEMIZER-OBSERVER ALL-REGION GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR



Stepping Up

Mendazona carves out leading role for Panthers

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

INDEPENDENCE — Early in the season, coach Julie McDonald spoke with the Central's girls basketball team about defining roles.
Guard Meagan Mendazona was ready to earn a leading role despite being a freshman.
“I've always been a leader on my teams and I'm willing to step up if I am able,” she said.
On some teams, seeing a freshman carve out a key role could be troublesome.
Not so for the Panthers.
“Even though I'm a freshman, my teammates respected me,” she said. “It allowed me to improve and do what I could to help the team.”
Mendazona led or was second in nearly all statistical categories for the Panthers, helping Central to a third-place finish in the Mid-Willamette Conference and a trip to the state playoffs.
Her 12.7 points and 7.2 rebounds per game were a result of a rare combination of offensive skills and a willingness to fight for rebounds in the paint. Her leadership made her the *Itemizer-Observer's* girls basketball Player of the Year.

In Mendazona's world, basketball is king.
See MENDAZONA, Page 11A

Spring is here



Junior pitcher Jaret Stewart throws against South Eugene on Thursday afternoon.
The Dragons lost 10-9 to South Eugene in the team's season-opener. Dallas also lost to Gladstone 9-6 on Friday.
The Dragons were scheduled to play at Woodburn Tuesday after press time. Dallas hosts Woodburn Wednesday (today) at 4:30 p.m. before playing at Woodburn on Friday, weather permitting.
The Dragons will compete at the Newport Spring Break Tournament on Monday and Tuesday. Dallas will return home to host Lebanon on April 4.
LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

CENTRAL TENNIS

Huerte ready to serve up success

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

Tennis time

- Central's girls tennis team lost to Dallas 6-2 on Thursday afternoon in the team's season-opener.
- Diana Huerte defeated Makayli Laizure 6-1, 6-3 and Olivia Teague defeated Kinzi Boer 8-6, 6-2 to earn the Panthers two victories.
- Central played Woodburn Tuesday after press time. The Panthers travel to South Albany Thursday at 4 p.m. The Panthers will be off from league matches during spring break.

DALLAS — Central junior Diana Huerte knew she possessed the skills and the knowledge — but she still had to take a deep breath before her season-opening tennis match on Thursday.
“I was nervous,” she said. “But I received some advice from one of my friends before the match that the nerves are only in your head.”
Once Huerte stepped onto the court, all those nerves faded away.
“Everything came back to me,” Huerte said. “My forehand, my serve, I remembered everything I was taught, and I thought I did pretty well.”
Huerte defeated Dallas' Makayli Laizure 6-1, 6-3 — a solid start to what she hopes

is an exceptional spring.
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Huerte had been exclusively a volleyball player through middle school. She had rarely picked up a tennis racket let alone thought about playing on a team.
That changed her freshman year when teammate Olivia Teague convinced her that trying tennis could be fun, and the two agreed to play doubles together.
They figured it would take them time to get comfortable, but success came quickly.

The duo made varsity, and Huerte played doubles again as a sophomore on varsity.
It was after the 2016 season that Central coach Dave Eble talked with Huerte about her tennis future.
“He told me I was pretty good and could possibly try playing club (tennis),” Huerte said.
She now plays club tennis at Salem Tennis and Swim Club throughout the year — and discovered a love and desire for breaking out on her own.
See HUERTE, Page 11A



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer
Central junior Diana Huerte earned a 6-1, 6-3 win over Dallas' Makayli Laizure on Thursday afternoon.