

Panthers: Altamirano wins 200-, 400-meter races

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Coaches convinced her to give the high jump a shot — despite her struggling with the event as a freshman.

“I wanted to focus on triple jump because last season wasn’t a great season for me in the high jump,” Henke said. “Coaches pushed me to do high jump, too.”

Turns out that was a good call.

Henke won a district title in the high jump with a mark of 5 feet, 1 inch.

“I was really nervous, but I love districts,” Henke said. “Watching all the girls compete on Friday, I kept thinking, ‘I’m ready.’ On Saturday, it was all about not overthinking, because if you do, you’re not going to perform at your best.”

The mark was a new personal record for Henke. As a reward, Henke is headed to state for the first time.

The full scope of her accomplishment hasn’t set in yet, but she’s excited to see what will happen.

“I keep thinking about



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Sophia Henke won the girls high jump on Saturday.

what that means because it’s completely new to me,” Henke said. “I think it’s a really neat opportunity, and I want to thank my coaches

for helping me. It’s crazy.”

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Moments after junior Bethanie Altamirano won the girls 200-meter run



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Bethanie Altamirano won the 200- and 400-meter runs.

(26.49 seconds), there were tears in her eyes. Despite also winning the 400 (59.78) earlier that day, Altamirano

figured the 200 would be out of reach.

“I did not expect to win,” she said. “I thought I was

going to get second (in the 200). I think I need to have confidence with myself, but I had a huge smile on my face. It was crazy.”

Now, Altamirano is headed back to Eugene.

“It’s just as exciting,” she said. “It feels like it’s new and like I’ve never done this before.”

But Altamirano has been there before and has her sights set on competing for a state title, especially in the 400. Her biggest hurdle has little to do with her abilities.

“I need to be more confident with myself,” she said. “Last year at state, I thought there’s no way I can beat all these girls. I need to work on that.”

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Burgett qualified for state in the 400, placing second in the 400 (51.57). Mason took second in the long jump (21-1¾). The boys 4 x 400 relay team of Hutchinson, Josh Dickson, Zach Meyer and Burgett placed second (3:29.10). Jaydon Aydelotte earned a wild card berth in the 110 hurdles.

PREP TRACK AND FIELD

Falls City heads to state in four events

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

CLASS 1A TRACK AND FIELD STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Falls City qualifiers: BOYS — 4 x 100-meter relay (Jeremy Labrado, Nathan Kempfer, Charlie Gilson, Austin Burgess, seeded 12th); Jeremy Labrado, jr., long jump (seeded 12th). **GIRLS** — 4 x 100-meter relay (Amara Houghtaling, Natalie Batie, Brittney Potts, Madelyn Hendrickson, seeded seventh); Jaime Shaw, soph., triple jump (seeded eighth).

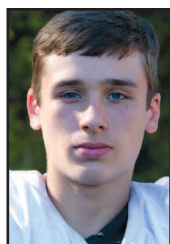
Simmons said. “Well, the proof is in the pudding.”

The relay team took first at the Special District 1 district championships on Saturday, finishing with a time of 54.85 seconds.

The boys 4 x 100 relay

team of Jeremy Labrado, Nathan Kempfer, Charlie Gilson and Austin Burgess placed second (47.73).

“I always felt we had the right lineups,” Simmons said. “The biggest issue was getting the time to work to-



Labrado

gether as a team.”

Labrado also qualified for state in the triple jump with a leap of 36 feet, 10½ inches

and Jaime Shaw earned a trip to state after taking second in the girls triple jump (31-4).

“For both Jeremy and Jaime the reason for their personal success is obviously their natural athletic abilities and also how much time they put into mastering their craft,” Simmons said.



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Amara Houghtaling helped the girls 4 x 100-meter relay team qualify for state.

PREP BASEBALL

Panthers draw Marist Catholic in play-in game

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

INDEPENDENCE — Central’s baseball team hopes a strong end to the regular season leads to success in the postseason. The Panthers entered the week winners of five of its last six games and will host Marist Catholic in a state play-in game Friday at 4:30 p.m.

“We have played very well the last three weeks, especially offensively,” coach Reed Rainey said. “We are playing with a lot of confidence and spirit right now.”

Pitching and defense had always been a strength, but the offense is beginning to catch up, Rainey said.

That makes the Panthers a dangerous, complete team

entering the postseason.

Marist Catholic has had an up-and-down season and enters with a 13-13 record overall, but does boast a win over Crater, ranked second in the state by the OSAA.

“Marist is a good team that plays all three phases of the game well,” Rainey said. “They play in a very competitive conference, so they will be well seasoned and have experience against good

teams. This will be a very tough game.”

The winner advances to the first round of the state playoffs on May 24.

“If we continue to swing the bats well, we will be a tough team for anyone to play,” Rainey said. “I’m very proud of the kids. They’ve worked hard and deserve this. The community support has been outstanding as well.”

STATE PLAY-IN GAME

What: Marist Catholic (13-13 overall, 9-12 Midwestern League, sixth place) vs. Central (16-8 overall, 13-8 Mid-Willamette Conference, third place).

When: Friday, 4:30 p.m.

Where: Central High School.

Admission: Adults, \$6; students \$4.

What’s at stake: The winner advances to the first round of the state playoffs on May 24. The loser is eliminated.

PREP SOFTBALL

Central to host Churchill in state play-in round

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

INDEPENDENCE — Central’s softball team will host Churchill in the state play-in round on Friday.

The Panthers finished league play with an 11-4 record, finishing in fourth.

Central won its final league games against Corvallis 6-2 and 18-4 on May 10.

The Panthers lost to Dallas 14-4 on May 9.

Churchill finished 10-14 overall and 8-10 in Midwestern League play, taking fifth in the league standings.

The winner will advance to the first round of the state playoffs on May 24.



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Central lost to Dallas 14-4 on May 9 before defeating Corvallis 6-2 and 18-4 on May 10.

Giving Their All



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Dallas’ Molly Peffley attempts to return a shot during the Mid-Willamette Conference District Tennis Championships on Thursday. The Dragons’ boys and girls tennis teams competed in Corvallis. “They played tough and we had several make it into the second day of the tournament, which is a huge accomplishment,” girls coach Julie Hertel said. Dallas’ teams did not have anyone advance to state.

Returning a Shot



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Central’s Hassan Eltelbany returns a shot at the Mid-Willamette Conference District tennis championships on Thursday. The Panthers’ boys and girls teams competed in Corvallis. “All of us wish it wasn’t over so soon,” boys coach Patty Youngren said. “But many returning players looked great on the court!” Neither team had any player advance to state.