

Knudson, cross-country team, keep eye on the prize

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — When Dallas junior Orion Knudson joined the cross-country team as a sophomore, he wasn't exactly a distance runner.

"When I started a long run was about six to seven miles and I would complain about that," he said.

Prior to that, football was his sport of choice in the fall, but relentless recruiting by

runners caused him to cave in and join.

"Everyone was telling me how fun it was and it would get me into shape," Knudson said.

Thanks to football, Knudson was used to pushing his body to his physical limits, but running presented a different kind of challenge.

"It was a lot more mentally challenging," Knudson said. "I was surprised with just how much running I'd

Cross-country

- Dallas' cross-country squad competed at the Nike XC Invitational on Saturday in Portland.
- The Dragons will compete at the Harrier Classic Saturday at Bryant Park in Albany.
- Varsity races begin at 12:40 p.m.
- Dallas' boys team took second at the Mid-Willamette Conference preview meet in September. Trevor Cross placed third.

wind up doing. It's a lot of running."

These days, Knudson considers a long run around

11 miles, and the junior is a key part of Dallas' varsity group.

Knudson placed 20th at

the Mid-Willamette Conference Preview Meet on Sept. 20, one of four Dragon runners in the top 20, helping Dallas to a second-place finish in the team standings behind Crescent Valley.

"We looked at everyone else's times, see how much other teams have improved and how we have improved," Knudson said.

Along with Trevor Cross, Toby Ruston, Gavin Grass and Dillon Stuhr, Ryan Jones

and Daniel Gagner, the Dragons' varsity runners are focused on one thing.

"I feel like we can go to state this year," Ruston said.

Dallas will compete at the Harrier Classic on Saturday as runners begin a final push toward what they hope ends with a trip to state.

"We are looking at which runners (from our league) we want to pass and how we can go higher in the rankings," Knudson said.

FALLS CITY ROUNDUP

Volleyball loses two

Itemizer-Observer staff report
FALLS CITY — Falls City's volleyball squad lost a pair of league matches last week. The Mountaineers fell to Perrydale 25-14, 25-16, 25-14 on Sept. 16 and to Crosshill Christian 25-14, 25-8, 25-10 on Thursday.

Falls City (4-8 overall, 2-6 Casco League) played Livingstone Adventist Tuesday after press time.

The Mountaineers play at C.S. Lewis Thursday at 6 p.m. before hosting Willamette Valley Christian Tuesday at 6 p.m.

FOOTBALL WINS BY FORFEIT: Falls City's football team won its Homecoming game without having to step onto the field.

Alsea forfeited the game due to a lack of players.

The Mountaineers play at Horizon Christian Friday at 7 p.m. in a nonleague matchup.



The Dallas Booster Club kicked off its turf field project on Friday night.

LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Volleyball

Continued from Page 14A

"Krista is a great player," coach Claudine Mendazona said. "She leads with her talent on the court. The girls look to her to get points for us. She takes 70 percent of our sets. She's quiet, but focused on her play."

Omlid, who plans to play volleyball in college, sees the seeds of a great team in the Panthers.

Despite injuries and lineup changes, Central has found itself in competitive matches through much of league play, but came up just short in finding victories.

"We do have a great team dynamic," Omlid said. "It's about staying healthy and knowing your job. It's about knowing the players on the other side, where they like to serve, where they will hit, or which players will try and tip at you."

Chavez has also played an integral part for the Panthers.

Chavez has been a varsity volleyball player since her freshman season.

Now, as an upperclassman, Chavez has developed from quiet newcomer to a vocal leader.

"We talked to her about that," Mendazona

said. "We need her to step up and be a leader on the court, be vocal and be positive. She's a great kid and works her tail off. She can handle pressure and she might not be used to this role, but she'll grow into it."

It's taken some adjustment, but Chavez is embracing her role.

"I've worked on communicating more, motivating my teammates when they are down," Chavez said. "I'm getting there."

The Panthers entered the week in a tie for sixth place with South Albany. The top six teams advance to the postseason.

"I think keeping positive is important for us," Chavez said. "We realize we have room to grow, and it's about wanting to put in more work during practices."

Finding ways to close out matches remains elusive, but Mendazona believes the Panthers are close to cracking the code.

"We've been ahead in sets by seven or eight points and needed four more to win and couldn't hold onto that lead," Mendazona said. "... We have to come together and play with heart. We need to bring their passion back and show it on the court."

Turf

Continued from Page 14A

Fundraising efforts were already underway, but Friday marked the official beginning for the campaign.

Donations, large or small, are helpful, McNutt said.

There is also a bottle drive

ongoing.

Bottles can be dropped off to multiple locations, which can be found at www.boosters.dhsfieldofdreams.org/.

Blue bottle drop bags can be obtained by calling Clau-

dia Drill, 503-949-9368, Kathy Voves, 503-559-1676, or Stephanie Earhart, 503-999-1383.

For more information about the turf field project: www.boosters.dhsfieldofdreams.org.

PERRYDALE ROUNDUP

Volleyball sweeps Mountaineers

Itemizer-Observer staff report
FALLS CITY — Perrydale's volleyball team defeated Falls City and Livingstone Adventist in straight sets last week.

The Pirates downed the Mountaineers 25-14, 25-16, 25-14 on Sept. 26 before defeating Livingstone Adventist 25-2, 25-5, 25-13 on Thursday.

"We had a great match against Falls City," coach Denise Dickey said. "I feel

they are much improved since the last time we played them. My team is working on being consistent and our communication. I have changed my defense around with the hope of opening up some more offense. I am looking forward to some more matches to see if it pays off."

Perrydale also defeated Jewell 25-12, 25-13, 25-7 on Monday.

The Pirates play at Willamette Valley Christian Thursday at 6:15 p.m.

Perrydale plays at C.S. Lewis Monday at 6 p.m. before hosting C.S. Lewis Tuesday at 6 p.m.

PIRATES FALL TO DUFUR: Perrydale's football team lost to Dufur 58-22 on Friday.

The Pirates trailed 44-0 at the half. Statistics were not available as of press time. Perrydale plays at South Wasco County Friday at 7 p.m.

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