

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Savage towers above competition

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Senior volleyball player Tristin Savage towers above her teammates.

But she didn't always have all the pieces necessary to turn into a dominating presence on the court.

"We used to call her baby giraffe," Dallas coach Shana Lavier said with a smile. "She was all arms and legs and somewhat uncoordinated when she was a younger player."

That is no longer the case as Savage has become a player opponents dread dealing with.

"Now we call her the Great Wall of T," Lavier said.

The biggest changes in Savage's game came after she focused solely on volleyball. Before, she was a multi-sport athlete.

The senior played on a traveling club team during the offseason, giving her a chance to play against some of the region's top players on a consistent basis.

"It was crazy different," Savage said. "The speed of the game was so much quicker."

The experience forced Savage to play more aggressively.

"I think I'm a lot more excited," she said. "I bring more energy back to the team than I did before, and



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer file

Dallas senior Tristin Savage has grown into a dominating presence on the volleyball court.

I'm more confident in myself."

That confidence has shown up in a big way on the court. Each of the last four matches, Lavier said Savage has recorded 15 or more kills and has become a consistent server.

"She's stronger physically and mentally," Lavier said. "She's a dominant player. Teams are threatened by

her. Not only does she change their offense, it's a huge momentum swing to have a middle blocker like Tristin."

As the Dragons approach the end of league play, players hope individual success evolves into team-wide success.

The Dragons entered the week 8-9 overall and 4-6 in Mid-Willamette Conference

play — tied for sixth. The top six teams in the league advance to the postseason.

The league season has been uneven. For every win, including victories over Central and Crescent Valley, there have been missed opportunities, including a five-set loss to co-league leader Lebanon.

"I think mentally we are doing pretty well," Savage said. "I think we hold each other accountable, but in order to take that next step, we need to do that a little better. We need to push each other to excel. It's all mental. When we're focused and mentally together as a team, we win. When we let it slip, we lose."

The key is finding the mental toughness in the midst of a battle, Lavier said.

"They become undisciplined," Lavier said. "They will sporadically flail an arm out and panic. We are just trying to work on staying composed and taking care of the frantic."

The Dragons play at Central Wednesday (today) at 6 p.m. Dallas will compete at the Seaside Tournament on Saturday before hosting Woodburn Tuesday at 6 p.m.

"We just need to believe in ourselves," Savage said. "If we think about our fundamentals, keep each other accountable and have fun doing it, we can beat anybody."



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer file

Cooper Butler has helped lead Perrydale's football team.

Pirates

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With a cast of largely new players, the season has been uneven.

But that hasn't stopped players from enjoying the ride.

"I'm happy because I'm on this team," Avila said. "The wins and losses don't matter as much. These are kids I grew up with. Experience-wise, I don't think anything can replace this."

Butler and Avila in particular know that this season is focused on getting younger players ready to break out in

the future.

That means sacrificing for long-term success that the seniors won't be around to see, but that's OK with them.

"It's weird because you go from junior year looking up to the seniors to people looking up to you now," Avila said. "But we want to leave a mark on the school in a good way."

Perrydale plays at Pilot Rock Thursday at 6 p.m.

"As long as we stay focused, we can make these last few games good ones," Butler said.

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Pirates win two

Itemizer-Observer staff report

PERRYDALE — Perrydale's volleyball team swept Willamette Valley Christian and C.S. Lewis to improve to 8-1 in Casco League play.

The Pirates defeated WVC 25-4, 25-18, 25-23 on Thursday and beat C.S. Lewis 25-3,

25-8, 25-9 on Monday.

Perrydale (20-4 overall, 9-1 Casco League) played C.S. Lewis Tuesday after press time.

The Pirates play at Crosshill Christian on Thursday and at Country Christian on Tuesday.

CENTRAL ROUNDUP

Boys soccer remains undefeated

Itemizer-Observer staff report

INDEPENDENCE — Central's boys soccer team remained undefeated after beating Silverton 5-0 on Oct. 3, South Albany 2-0 on Thursday and Crescent Valley 3-2 on Monday.

Brandon Lopez scored three goals against Silverton. Javier Puente, and Evan Hoover also scored.

Eduardo Gonzalez and Hoover scored against South Albany.

Lopez (two) and Sebast-

ian Diaz scored against the Raiders.

"Overall, we have been playing as a team and have been playing with our hearts and minds each game," coach Joe Orozco said.

The Panthers (9-0-1 over-

all, 3-0 Mid-Willamette Conference) host Lebanon Wednesday (today) at 4 p.m. before playing at Dallas Tuesday at 4 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL DOWNS LEBANON: Central's volleyball team went 3-0 in league play, defeating South Albany 25-15,



Omlid

25-15, 25-21 on Oct. 3, Crescent Valley 25-15, 29-27, 25-19 on Thursday and Lebanon 15-25, 26-24, 16-25, 25-21, 15-12 on

COMING GAME: Central's football team lost its Homecoming game to Crescent Valley 33-25 on Friday.

"You know going into the game it was going to be a big game with a lot of big plays," coach Shane Hedrick said. "I thought our kids battled very well and had us in a position to possibly win, but came up a little bit short."

Jesse Cable was Central's MVP. Peter Mendazona and Isaiah Abraham were named offensive MVPs; Marcos Cedillo was named Defensive MVP and Braden Fuszek was named Special Teams MVP.

The Panthers (3-3 overall, 1-2 MWC) host Lebanon Thursday at 7 p.m.

BOYS XC PLACES 12th: Central's boys cross-country team placed 12th at the Harrier Classic on Saturday. The girls team finished 13th.

Junior Jonathon Brown led the boys with a 38th-place finish in 17 minutes, 3.60 seconds. Senior Jaime Cantu finished 59th in 17:34.80.

Senior Baillie Hartford was the girls team's top finisher, taking 46th in 20:29.00. Diana Nye placed 82nd in 21:52.10.

Central will compete at Crescent Valley Wednesday (today) at 4 p.m.

Monday. Krista Omlid had 19 kills and 26 digs against the Warriors, who entered the match in a tie for first place in the league standings.

Sydney Nash had 34 assists, Annika Riddell recorded eight blocks and Elizabeth Chavez had six aces.

The Panthers (9-7 overall, 5-6 MWC) host Dallas Wednesday (today) at 6 p.m. and play at Corvallis Tuesday at 6 p.m.

GIRLS SOCCER FALLS: Central's girls soccer team dropped a trio of league matches.

The Panthers fell to Silverton 7-0 on Oct. 3, South Albany 5-1 on Thursday and Crescent Valley 10-0 on Monday.

Central (1-7 overall, 0-3 MWC) plays at Lebanon Wednesday (today) at 4 p.m. before hosting Dallas Tuesday at 6 p.m.

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