

Bulldogs cap busy week with win

By COREY KIRK

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The Baker volleyball team capped a busy week on Saturday afternoon, Sept. 11, by avenging one of its two losses, sweeping McCall-Donnelly, Idaho, in the Baker gym.

The Vandals swept Baker in the teams' first meeting, on Aug. 28 at McCall.

The Bulldogs got their revenge despite playing on five straight days, including a day-long tournament on Friday in which Baker beat Grant Union to claim the championship.

Baker coach Ali Abrego said she was proud of the Bulldogs' collective effort during an unusually hectic week that pushed Baker's record to 7-2. The Bulldogs' only loss during the marathon week was to Weiser, Idaho, on Sept. 8.

"We have to think of the big picture after this week," Abrego said. "We have goals written up on the board, our first one was winning our tourney and we did that."



Corey Kirk/Baker City Herald

Baker volleyball players gather between points against McCall-Donnelly, Idaho, on Saturday, Sept. 11 in the Baker gym. Foreground, right to left, Ryann Paulsen, Sofia Hanson and Lacy Churchfield. Background, right to left, Taylor Dalton, Jozie Ramos and Rylee Elms.

After beating Adrian 25-17 and Irrigon 25-8 in single sets in the round-robin part of the tournament Friday, Baker advanced to pool play and beat Stanfield in two sets to move into the final match against Grant Union.

Baker won both sets against the Prospectors to claim the title.

About 24 hours later the Bulldogs were back on their home court to take on the Vandals.

Abrego said she noticed

that McCall-Donnelly showed a different look than in the Aug. 28 sweep.

"They changed a lot of what they did, they had a few different players on their court, and a few different rotations," Abrego said.

But she told the Bulldogs not to worry about that.

"It's not about what they are going to do to us, it's about what we are going to do to them," she said.

The Bulldogs were dominant during the first set, taking an early 6-0 lead and going on to win, 25-12.

"I love to win by doing things correctly," Abrego said. "If we have a seven-point lead, we make that an eleven-point lead. We get into a habit of starting off very slow, we win point for point with them up to point six, and those are the times you have to start 6-0 ... and telling the kids to play to your level and not to the opponent."

Abrego's words continued to resonate in the second set. Baker scored five straight points and went on to win, 25-14.

Baker junior Rylee Elms said those sorts of runs build the Bulldogs' confidence.

"It's important to get that down because, some points earlier in the season

we didn't kind of trust each other, this past week has been a big reflection of the trust that we are building together," Elms said.

The third set played out much as the first two. The Vandals kept the score close early, but Baker again pulled away, winning 25-15.

"It felt good to end the week with a victory, after a long week it was very satisfying," Elms said.

Abrego is confident that the Bulldogs are ready for Greater Oregon League play. Baker is slated to travel to Ontario to take on the Tigers Monday, Sept. 20 at 6:30 p.m. PDT, then return to Baker to host rival La Grande on Tuesday, Sept. 21 at 6:30 p.m.

"I love my kids, they give everything they have every day they come," Abrego said. "We had practice Monday, optional because of it being a holiday so they weren't required to be here, and 24 of them showed up," Abrego said. "They want to be here and they want to win."

Baker runners make it through the mud

Baker City Herald

UNION — Baker runners competed in the 44th-annual Catherine Creek Scamper on Friday, Sept. 10, with junior Thaddeus Pepera leading the Baker boys with a 14th place finish in the first varsity flight, and senior Emma Baeth placing fifth in the girls race.

The annual race near Catherine Creek State Park is known for its muddy section that leaves runners splashed with muck.

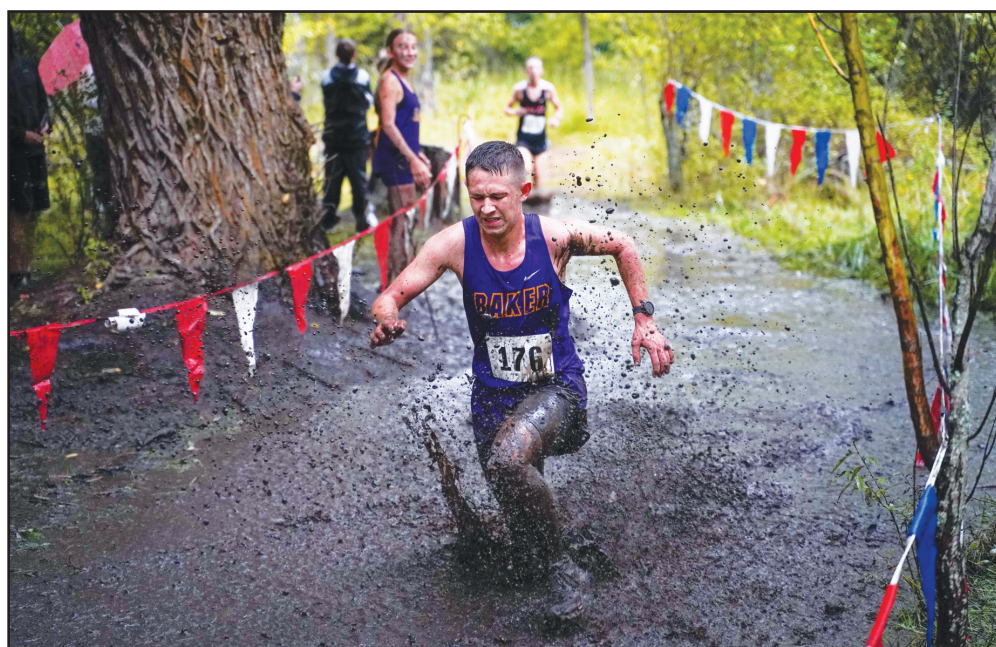
Pepera finished in 19:42. Baker's other boys finisher in the first flight was junior Jordan Mills, who placed 22nd in 20:47.4.

In the second varsity flight, Baker junior

Seth Mastrude finished 11th in a time of 21:17. Freshman Payton Waters was 12th at 21:33.8, junior River Clark 19th in 21:58.3, and sophomore Tanner Lucas 24th at 23:09.5.

On the girls side, Baeth finished in 22:56.7. Teammate and fellow senior Sydney Lamb placed 12th in 23:51, followed by freshman Sofia Kaaen in 13th at 23:55.6, sophomore Emma Timm in 24th at 25:11.5, and sophomore Paige Marlia in 44th at 27:40.9.

Complete individual and team results were not available by press time but will be published later.



Alex Wittwer/The (La Grande) Observer

Baker's Jordan Mills splashes through the infamous mud hole during the Catherine Creek Scamper cross-country race on Friday, Sept. 10.

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