

**BAKER BOYS BASKETBALL**

# Bulldogs rout La Grande, take control in GOL race

BY JAYSON JACOBY

jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

The long-awaited showdown turned into a Baker blowout.

The Baker boys basketball team traveled to La Grande on Friday, Jan. 28, to take on the 10-1 Tigers with much at stake besides the longtime rivalry.

The winner would gain the inside track to the Greater Oregon League title, and move higher in the Class 4A rankings.

Both teams came in with six-game winning streaks.

La Grande's recent victories included a 62-56 win on Jan. 19 at Class 5A Pendleton, the last team to beat Baker, 84-66 on Dec. 21.

But what appeared on paper to be a toss up turned out quite differently in front of a raucous home crowd in the La Grande gym.

Isaiah Jones scored the first two baskets to give Baker a 4-0 lead, Hudson Spike's 3-pointer pushed the lead to 9-3, and the Bulldogs were never seriously threatened in the final three quarters of a dominating 67-41 win.

"That was one of the funnest games I've been a part of in my coaching and playing career," Baker coach Jebron Jones said on Sunday morning, Jan. 30. "I'm still getting text messages today from people about Friday's game. It was a great atmosphere."

Jones played college basketball at Eastern Oregon University.

After Jace Show's 3-pointer narrowed Baker's lead to 12-6 midway through the first quarter, the Bulldogs closed the quarter with an 8-2 run to lead 20-8.

In the second quarter, Baker's pressure defense — in particular a halfcourt trap — befuddled the Tigers, leading to multiple steals and layins.

The Bulldogs converted three straight steals into easy baskets midway through the quarter — two by Isaiah Jones — to push the lead to 35-14.

"We have a lot of athletes out there on the court with quick feet and hands, and as coaches it's our job to put them in the best position to succeed," Jebron Jones said. "La Grande got flustered, and they never really recovered from that. I think we came out playing really great defense."

Paul Hobson had another breakaway after a steal to give Baker a 42-20 lead with 1:12 left, and Diego Quintela capped the scoring with the



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

**Baker's Isaiah Jones goes to the basket against Fruitland on Thursday, Jan. 6, 2022, in the Baker gym.**

second of his three 3-pointers to give Baker a 45-20 lead.

The Bulldogs led 47-23 at halftime, and La Grande never mounted a serious rally in the final two quarters.

"That was the best first half we've played all year," Jebron Jones said.

La Grande made seven 3-pointers in the first half, but only one two-point field goal.

"They shoot a lot of 3's, and we knew that coming in," Jones said. "Only one or two out of those seven 3's in the first half were uncontested, and the rest we had a hand in their face, and they just made the shot."

Although seven 3-pointers in a half would normally cause serious concern for a coach, Jones said he had no complaints with Baker's defense in holding the Tigers to just 23 points in the first two quarters. "That was the best half of defense we've played all year long," he said.

With a 24-point lead at halftime, Jones said he emphasized to his team in the locker room that they needed to continue to play with energy and focus.

Although the second half

was relatively placid compared with the first — Baker scored 20 points, fewer than half its first-half output — the Bulldogs continued to stifle the Tigers, holding them to 18 points.

"Eighteen points is another great half of defense," he said. "It's kind of hard to play with a big lead like that, it's human nature. But I have nothing negative to say about how we played the entire game."

Isaiah Jones led a balanced Baker offense with 18 points, including 6-for-6 from the free throw line. Spike added 16, Quintela 11 and Hobson eight.

Jebron Jones said he told the team before the game that "it's OK to be nervous. I understand. But the rims are still 10 feet high and the court is still the same size. Hopefully that put them more at ease."

The win gives Baker sole possession of first place in the GOL standings at 3-0.

The Bulldogs also swapped places in the Class 4A rankings with La Grande, moving to sixth while the Tigers fell to eighth.

**BAKER (67)**

Logsdon 0 1-2 1, Harper 0 0-0 0, Gambleton 2 0-0 4, Quintela 4 0-0 11, Younger 1 1-2 3, Molina 0 0-0 0, Spike 7 0-0 16, Jones 6 6-6 18, Long 3 0-1 6, Hobson 3 1-3 8, Charbonneau 0 0-0 0, Mitchell 0 0-0 0. Totals 26 9-14 67.

**LA GRANDE (41)**

Tsiatsos 2 0-0 5, Williams 2 0-0 4, Young 0 0-0 0, A. Rodriguez 0 0-2 0, Bell 8 1-2 21, C. Rodriguez 0 0-0 0, Huntsman 0 0-0 0, Show 2 0-0 6, Hutchins 2 0-0 5, Staab 0 0-0 0. Totals 17 1-4 41.

Baker 20 27 13 7 — 67  
La Grande 8 15 12 6 — 41

Baker improved to 13-3 overall, and capped an undefeated January with its seventh win during the month.

Jones said his challenge is to prevent the Bulldogs from getting complacent after their recent run of wins.

"I talked to the guys after the game, and told them to celebrate this game the whole weekend, but when it gets to Monday we need to forget about La Grande and move on to the next challenge," he said.

Jones said freshman starting guard Jaron Long, who was carried off the court at La Grande with an apparent knee injury late in the third quarter, seemed to be recovering well.

Jones said he would know more about Long's prognosis on Monday, Jan. 31.

Baker travels to Nyssa on Tuesday, Feb. 1, for a 6:30 p.m. PST tipoff. Nyssa is 3-14 on the season.

Baker's game against Vale, originally scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 29, in the Baker gym, was postponed due to a lack of referees. The game has been rescheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 9, at 6 p.m. in the Baker gym.

**POWDER VALLEY BOYS BASKETBALL**

# Badgers get key win over Nixyaawii

BY DAVIS CARBAUGH

The (La Grande) Observer

**NORTH POWDER** — The Powder Valley boys basketball team defended home turf in one its biggest games of the season.

The Badgers knocked off the Nixyaawii Golden Eagles 76-64 on Saturday, Jan. 29, taking a firm position on the top of the Old Oregon League standings. Powder Valley senior forward Kaden Krieger was a force in the paint throughout the game, scoring 24 points.

The matchup started at an incredibly quick pace, with both teams pushing the fast break. Powder Valley's Cole Martin scored six of his 19 points in the first quarter, helping the Badgers take a narrow 19-17 lead at the end of the first frame. Nixyaawii's Baron Moses was efficient on offense for the Golden Eagles, scoring 10 points in the first quarter — Moses finished with 24 points.

A huge second quarter helped propel Powder Valley into the lead, with the Golden Eagles never managing to retake the lead for the remainder of the game. Krieger scored 10 points in the second frame as the Badgers went into halftime leading 42-29.

The third quarter was more of the same, with Powder Valley extending its lead to 59-41 heading into

**Pine Eagle boys split 2 games**

The Pine Eagle boys basketball team split a pair of weekend games.

The Spartans lost 82-47 at Powder Valley on Friday, Jan. 28. The next day the Spartans played host to Wallowa and won 37-28 to improve to 6-9 overall and 3-4 in the Old Oregon League.

the final eight minutes. The Golden Eagles gave one last push in the fourth quarter, drawing the game to within single digits with three minutes remaining. Dylan Abrahamson scored nine of his 13 points in the fourth quarter to lead the comeback attempt.

It was Krieger's steady shooting at the free-throw line that ultimately sealed the deal for Powder Valley — the forward went 9-10 at the line in the fourth quarter.

The win improved Powder Valley's record to 6-0 in conference play and 16-1 overall. The Badgers will play again on Feb. 1, facing Wallowa on the road at 6:30 p.m.

Nixyaawii dropped to 14-5 on the season and 5-2 in Old Oregon League competition. The Golden Eagles will be back in action at McLoughlin on Feb. 1 — tip-off is slated for 7:30 p.m.

 Follow us on Facebook!

**Tires LES SCHWAB**

**It's never too late**

**Traction Traction Traction**

**Studded snow Tires, Studless snow Tires, Tire chains and sand bags.**

**Come and see us or call to schedule an appointment today!**

**LEW BROS.**

**(541) 523-3679**

**210 Bridge St., Baker City, OR 97814**

**N7 NORTH SEVEN BREWING CO.**

**Baker City's Newest Brewery**

Taproom Hours:  
Wed-Fri 4pm to 8pm  
Sat 2pm to 8pm  
Closed Sun-Tues

Snacks | Beer | Cider

 541-519-1337 | 1935 1st St, Baker City, OR 

**GARAGE DOORS**

**Wayne Dalton**

Custom wood, Stained finish, 16 Lite Arched windows

With Thermospan™ doors, you have your choice of styles, colors and customizing options.

**NE-HI ENTERPRISES** CCB#155399

2122 10th • Baker City • 541-523-6008