

BAKER CROSS COUNTRY

Bulldog boys place 4th, girls 6th at Baker Invite

Baker City Herald

The Baker boys cross-country team finished fourth, and the Bulldog girls were sixth at the Baker Invitational on Friday, Sept. 30 at Quail Ridge Golf Course.

Sophomore Sofie Kaaen was 13th overall, in a time of 22:27.2, to pace the Baker girls varsity on a warm, sunny afternoon.

Senior Thaddeus Pepera finished the hilly 5K route around the golf course in 18:52.2 to finish 19th overall and lead the Baker boys varsity.

Union won the boys team title. La Grande finished first in the girls meet.

Baker coach Suzy Cole said she was pleased with Baker's results, especially considering several runners weren't feeling well.

"Hunter Bingham and Will Spriet continue to progress nicely," Cole said.

Bingham was Baker's second boys finisher, placing 20th overall, and Spriet was 33rd overall.

Baker will compete in the Crosby Invitational on Thursday, Oct. 6 at Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario.

"Thursday will be a fast course, so looking forward to it," Cole said.

BAKER INVITATIONAL

Team Scores

BOYS

1st, Union, 50; 2nd, Heppner, 99; 3rd, Enterprise, 116; 4th, Baker, 122; 5th, Burns, 140; 6th, Parma, 141; 7th, La Grande, 181; 8th, Stanfield/Echo, 195; 9th, Vale, 201; 10th, Grant Union, 247; 11th, Pendleton, 250; 12th, Elgin, 310.

GIRLS

1st, La Grande, 27; 2nd, Enterprise, 66; 3rd, Burns, 91; 4th, Union, 98; 5th, Parma, 113; 6th, Baker, 144; 7th, Greenleaf Friends, 191; 8th, Pendleton, 205; 9th, Vale, 240; 10th, Grant Union, 264.

Boys varsity

Baker and Pine Eagle results

Thaddeus Pepera, 19th, 18:52.2; Hunter Bingham, 20th, 18:54.3; Angel DeArcos, 24th, 19:21.4; Jordan Mills, 31st, 19:37.2; William Spriet, 33rd, 19:50.4; Nate Jensen, 34th, 20:01; Gabe Brown (PE), 39th, 20:27; Karsten Cikaneck, 50th, 20:54.9; Gideon Tubbs (PE), 52nd, 21:01.2; Seth Mastrude, 59th, 21:32.4

Boys JV

Baker and Pine Eagle results

Tanner Lucas, 7th, 20:24.9; Cade Hearne, 13th, 21:15.3; David Farber, 19th, 21:42.4; Clark Norton, 20th, 21:55.3; Jack Joseph, 23rd,



Ian Crawford/Baker City Herald

Sophomore Sofie Kaaen was Baker's top runner at the Baker Invitational cross-country meet on Friday, Sept. 30, 2022, at Quail Ridge Golf Course.



Ian Crawford/Baker City Herald

Baker senior Thaddeus Pepera was the Bulldogs' top boys runner, finishing 19th overall, in the Baker Invitational on Friday, Sept. 30, 2022.

Ash leads EOU cross-country
SALEM — Justin Ash, a freshman from Baker City and Powder Valley High School graduate, was the top runner for the Eastern Oregon University cross-country team at the 47th annual Charles Bowles Invitational on Saturday, Oct. 1 in Salem.
Ash placed 10th overall in a time of 24:44.2 on the 8-kilometer course. The EOU men placed second in the team standings out of 17 schools.



Ian Crawford/Baker City Herald

Baker runners Anna Johnson, left, and Maddy Gagnon compete in the Baker Invitational on Friday, Sept. 30, 2022, at Quail Ridge Golf Course.

22:05.7; Kegan Bott, 25th, 22:14.5; Caleb Hills, 26th, 22:26.7; Seth Holden, 37th, 24:51.4; Gideon Farber, 39th, 25:11.6; Dallin Guertz (PE), 42nd, 25:48.4

Boys junior high

Peter Davis (PE), 20th, 12:14.8; Tristan Klecker, 23rd, 12:23.7; Orrin Anderson, 67th, 13:51.2; Jarrin Bott, 69th, 13:58.4; Gavin Tubbs (PE), 83rd, 15:18.5; Jayce Allen, 115th, 19:21.2.

Girls varsity

Sofie Kaaen, 13th, 22:27.2; Gwen Rasmussen, 27th, 23:21.5; Emma Timm, 32nd, 23:47.5; Tyler Gressley, 50th, 25:13.4; Katie Spaugh, 52nd,

25:20.7; Paige Marlia, 56th, 25:39.8; Sage Cuzick, 64th, 27:55.5

Girls JV

Maddy Gagnon, 9th, 26:20.3; Anastasia Johnson, 12th, 26:47.5; Riley Hurliman, 16th, 27:13.7; Avery Collier, 20th, 28:18.4; Evie Davis (PE), 25th, 29:36.7; Lilly Collins, 26th, 29:52.1

Girls junior high

Matty Gressley, 3rd, 12:15.5; Ruby Heriza, 33rd, 14:12.7; Taryn Niday, 46th, 14:48.5; Molly Rasmussen, 52nd, 15:12; Anne Hindman, 53rd, 15:16.5; Grace Tracy, 56th, 15:37.2; Anaya Sanchez, 72nd, 16:45.6

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BAKER FOOTBALL

La Grande runs past Baker, 55-21

Tigers amass 452 rushing yards, pull away in second half

BY JAYSON JACOBY
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Baker's football game at La Grande crammed as much excitement into less than one minute as some contests manage over the whole 48.

Unfortunately for the Bulldogs, the Tigers benefited more from the frantic final seconds of the second quarter on Friday, Sept. 30 at Community Stadium in La Grande.

And the Tigers carried that momentum into the second half, going on to a 55-21 win that snapped Baker's two-game winning streak and gives La Grande an early advantage after the first Greater Oregon League game for both teams.

The wild sequence actually started earlier in the second quarter, after La Grande took a 27-14 lead.

Baker junior quarterback Paul Hobson, who threw for 306 yards, dropped a perfect pass into the arms of freshman wide receiver Rasean Jones. The completion went for 75 yards, but La Grande senior Jace Schow made a key tackle, pulling down Jones at the Tiger 5.

La Grande then forced a fumble from Hobson and recovered the loose ball at the 10 yard line to prevent what seemed a likely Baker touchdown.

The Bulldog defense held, though, forcing a La Grande punt.

This time Baker took advantage.

With less than a minute before halftime, Hobson hit junior receiver Hudson Spike in stride on a slant pattern for an 18-yard touchdown. Spike's extra point cut La Grande's lead to 27-21.

But La Grande — and Schow in particular — wasn't content to let the clock run out.

On the subsequent kickoff, Schow took the ball on a bounce at his own 10 and raced untouched through the Baker coverage team for 90 yards. Suddenly the Tigers' lead was back to two scores, at



Isabella Crowley/The Observer

La Grande's Sam Tsiatsos intercepts a pass intended for Baker's Rasean Jones at Community Stadium in La Grande on Friday, Sept. 30, 2022. La Grande beat Baker 55-21.

34-21, with less than 20 seconds left.

The Tigers dominated the second half, taking more than five minutes off the clock on their first drive and scoring a touchdown to boost their lead to 41-21.

Schow's kickoff return was a "pivotal moment," Baker coach Jason Ramos said.

"It was deflating, to say the least," Ramos said. "It was a rough play for us."

He said Baker was feeling confident after Spike's touchdown catch, with the prospect of trailing by just six points going into the second half.

Instead the Bulldogs were behind by 13, and with La Grande set to receive the second half kickoff.

The Tigers' first possession of the second half was in effect the worst-case scenario for Baker — La Grande kept the ball away from Baker and completed its clock-milking drive with another touchdown.

The game was a dramatic contrast in offensive styles.

Baker, as has been the case all season, relied heavily on Hobson's arm and on receivers Jones, Spike and junior Malaki Myer.

Jones had five catches for 165 yards, Spike six for 89 yards and Myer six for 52 yards as Baker gained 306 of its 338 total yards through the air.

La Grande, meanwhile, rolled up 452 rushing yards, gaining a modest 57 passing yards.

"Our real struggle was defensively matching their size and physicality," Ramos said.

"We were unable to stop their run game. We were out of position a lot and had some technique issues that were critical."

Turnovers were also key — Baker had four, La Grande none.

The first half was marked by explosive plays well before the last-minute scoring flurry.

Jones took the opening kickoff and ran it back 90 yards for a touchdown, giving Baker a 7-0 lead before fans had time to settle in. Jones weaved his way through La Grande defenders before exploiting his speed to pull away from pursuers down the sideline.

Baker forced a La Grande punt, but when the Tigers got the ball back they quickly answered. Schow took a pitch sweep from quarterback Logan Williams and sliced through the Baker defense for a 74-yard touchdown run.

The extra point caromed off the left upright, though, and Baker still led, 7-6.

Spike's 45-yard field goal try on the subsequent drive was short, and La Grande moved down the field, with Schow scoring from 17 yards out on a double handoff. The extra point was good and the Tigers had their first lead at 13-7.

Baker regained the lead early in the second quarter when Hobson again found Jones, this time on a 35-yard touchdown, and Baker led 14-13.

But the Bulldogs' lead didn't last long, as La Grande scored two more running touchdowns to go up 27-14, leading to the wild final minute of the first half.

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