



Round 1 heartbreaker ends GU girls' season

Monroe girls win at free-throw line

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

MONROE – The Grant Union girls fought hard in Monroe, but succumbed to the Dragons 33-37 in a heartbreaker battle for Round 1 of the state basketball playoffs.

“We had a really good scouting

report, and we implemented it well,” said Grant Union head coach Mark Mosley.

He added that although his team played well together defensively, the free-throw line was a factor in the result of the game.

Monroe took 25 trips to the free-throw line, hitting 15, compared to

Grant Union's 6-7.

Still, the coach said he is proud of how the girls played.

“They fought hard to the very end – they didn't give up,” he said.

Monroe entered the competition seeded No. 1 from the Mountain View Conference, 13-0 in league and 24-3 overall, while Grant Union was the No. 3 seed from the Wapiti

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The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

The Grant Union girls basketball team left the school campus in for their Round 1 state playoff game in style as emergency vehicles, sirens blaring, led them out of town. From left: head coach Mark Mosley, players Heather Mosley, Emily Mosley, Kori Pentzer, McKenzie Wilson, Riley Sharp, Mariah Moulton, Whitney McClellan, Samantha Brock, Babe Nash and Jozie Rude, and assistant coach Lisa Weigum.

Forest taps snowmobile groups for information

Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY – Malheur National Forest staffers are meeting with local snowmobile clubs to identify preferred routes in response to the recently released policy that requires region's forests to designate specific areas for snowmobile operation.

The Malheur National Forest currently has an estimated 850-mile network of trails; most of them on forest roads, which are groomed by local snowmobile clubs.

Discussions have begun with the local groups in Grant, Harney and Baker Counties as existing groomed trails provide linkages between the counties.

“In the past, forests were not required to specify where snowmobiles and other over-snow motorized vehicles can travel,” said Forest Supervisor Steve Beverlin.

The new policy, issued in January, requires each forest to designate roads, trails, and areas where such over-snow vehicles are allowed.

Beverlin said the Malheur staff is fortunate in having worked with local groups in the past to identify such areas.

The information eventually will be used to develop over-snow vehicle maps.

Bob Phillips, president of the Grant County Snowballers, was positive about a recent meeting between his group and forest officials.

“I was pleased we had a productive conversation about the excellent work the local groups had done in the past, and that this was going to be the basis for the new CFR order that will need to be signed,” he said. “We appreciate the opportunity to share our concerns and believe we were heard.”

Phillips said anyone with concerns or questions about the process should contact members of the Snowballers.

Snowmobiles and other motorized vehicles will remain prohibited in the wilderness areas.

Find more on winter recreation on the Malheur at <http://1.usa.gov/1DuIJSz> online.

Johnson takes 3rd at state

Tenacity puts Grant Union wrestler on the podium

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

PORTLAND – Natural talent is not wasted on Grant Union wrestler Clay Johnson, says head coach Andy Lusco.

That talent, combined with hard work, propelled the 120-division sophomore to third place at last weekend's OSAA State Wrestling Championship Tournament in Portland.

Johnson, seeded third going into the tournament, didn't lose confidence after finishing just 1 point away from the championship round as he continued on to the consolation round.

His state competition action began Friday in the quarterfinal round, when he faced freshman Joey Navarro of Culver.

“Clay wrestled well,” Lusco said. “With 27 seconds left in the third round, he pinned.”

In the semifinal round Saturday, Johnson lost by a 3-2 decision to No. 2-seeded sophomore Wes Turner of Gold Beach.

“It was a very good match,” Johnson said later. “Neither one of us got back points on each other. It was a close match and a hard loss. It went all three rounds, and we were both pretty tired at the end.”

Lusco said Johnson didn't lose stride after the loss.

“Clay really came back, and we felt like he was in a position to go into the finals,” the coach said.

After beating freshman Tyson Lilly of Gold Beach in the first match of the consolation semifinals, Johnson snagged the win for third from junior Kyle Bateman of Monroe.

“We went for most of the first round taking shots and blocking,” Johnson said. “He took a shot and tucked it in, and got 2 points on the takedown. I put him in a head and arm pin late in the first.”

Lusco said Johnson wrestled patiently.

“He was fundamentally sound in that match, and it put him in a good place to get a pin.” Lusco said.

From early in the season, Lusco has expected good things from Johnson.

Johnson qualified for state last



Contributed photos/Angie Johnson

Grant Union's Clay Johnson takes the win in his first match at the state championship, going on to place third in the 120 division.



Grant Union's Clay Johnson puts his opponent Joey Navarro of Culver in a bind during the Feb. 27 quarterfinal round of the OSAA Wrestling State Championship Tournament.

year, and he finished with a 24-9 record this season.

He claimed victory as the 2A/1A Special District 4 champion – the district includes 12 other schools.

“He won a lot of matches and

wrestled really well,” Lusco said.

“Clay has a goal and a focus, and I think he does a good job finishing the course – he's a better wrestler every week, and every year.”

What gave the coach such confidence in Johnson's wrestling?

“Clay is the hardest working kid on our team,” Lusco said. “He puts a tremendous amount of time in his workouts during the season and in the off season. He's naturally talented, and it's not wasted on him – he works hard. That's what we're looking for, kids that are talented and work really hard.”

The coach added, “We have high hopes for the future to shoot for a championship – we really feel that's within Clay's reach.”

Assistant coaches for Lusco include Tye Parsons and Jake Batease.

“My coaches were awesome and very supportive of me – they helped me prepare for each match,” Johnson said.

He added that the state tournament was fun, especially with three teammates, Andrew Copenhaver, Antonio Dancer and Chance Ballou along to provide encouragement.

“I'm looking forward to wrestling with my teammates, and to grow more in wrestling,” he said.

Dance teams compete at Pendleton

Next up: GU travels to Thurston

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

PENDLETON – Competing against larger schools, the 2A Grant Union Gold dancers received their best score to date for a routine they will take to state competition.

Grant Union placed fourth against Gresham, Rex Putnam and Hermiston teams – 5A and 6A teams which they don't usually face in competition.

Grant Union earned 71.33 in execution, 66 for content and 75 for effect.

“Our overall score was at its highest this year with a 70.86,” Adair said.

Rex Putnam received 75, Hermiston 77 and Gresham 81.67.



Junior dance team



Level 3 dance team



Contributed photos

The Grant Union Gold dancers after their performance at the Pendleton Competition last weekend. Front, from left, Auna Waldner, Serena Pace, Carli Gardner; middle, Lucrezia Nosedà, Reannah Lemons, Jennifer McCloskey; back, Amy Lallatin, Mackenzie Woodcock and Rebecca Batease.

“We performed very well, and I expect to continue to increase our scores through the remainder of the season as we still have 40 seconds to add to the routine,” Adair said.

The junior team, coached by varsity team members Carli Gardner and Mackenzie Woodcock, placed third in their division.

The elementary team, led by coach Stephanie Parsons, placed fourth.

“For many of these kids, this was their first time competing,” Adair said. “Everyone performed well and had a great time, and we had great support from a large John Day audience.”

Amy Lallatin of the high school team and junior team member Taylor Osgood were in the top 10 for the drill down competition.

Jennifer McCloskey of the high school team also received one of 20 super sensational awards.

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