

**PANTHERS**

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From there, Hitz, Wilson and Burke kept the team's momentum up for the 10-point win.

"At the beginning of the season, the kids had one goal," Gill said. "They just wanted Prairie City to be represented at state. It's way sweeter to go through tough things and still reach their goal."

He highlighted Brandon's steal for three points as the "play of the season" and said it was also Wilson's 20 points in the game and Hitz's leadership that brought the victory.

"We played hard and aggressively," Burke said. "I have to give it to the team, because we fought really hard this time. We've never had that type of environment (with loud and enthusiastic fans), and we gave the crowd what they wanted — on to state."

"We knew if we fought the best we could, we would win," said Lane Williams.

"It feels awesome to go to state," said Wyatt Williams. "It was definitely teamwork, especially since we lost one of our starters, Ethan Camarena. We banded together and gave him another chance to play on Wednesday."

In their first game at the tournament, the Prairie City Panthers elevated their game in the fourth quarter to claim a 48-41 victory over the Adrian Antelopes, then they took a 35-47 loss in their next game to top-seeded team, Jordan Valley.

Although the Panthers were disheartened with that loss — a win would have pitted them against Dayville/Monument, their cross-county competitors in the championship game — they said they're looking forward to their first state playoff game in recent years.

The Joseph Eagles (15-9, 9-3) are No. 21 in the OSAA rankings, while the Panthers (16-11, 5-7) are No. 31.

Gill said his team has pro-



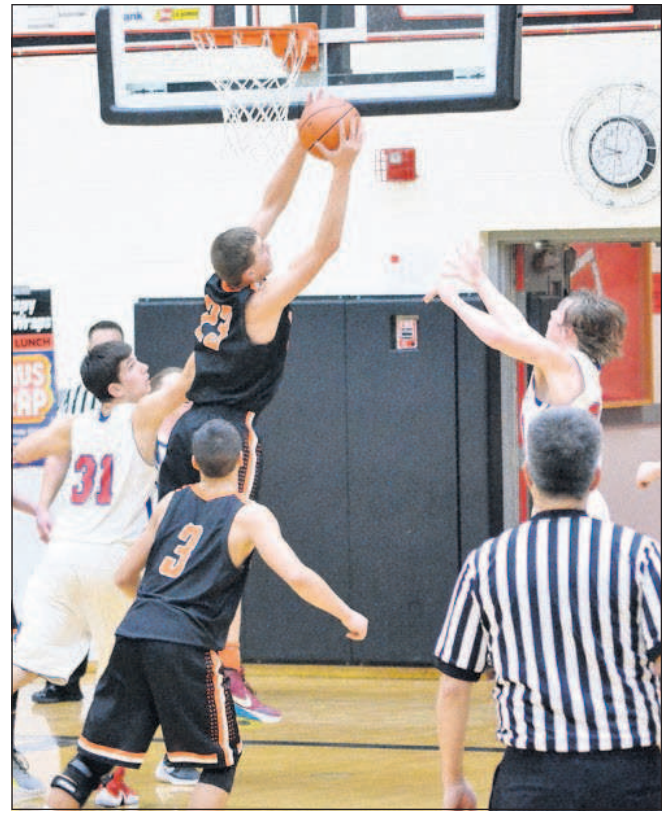
**Prairie City Panther Wyatt Williams (12) gets in the path of a Jordan Valley player in last Friday's game.**



**Prairie City Panther Garrett Hitz focuses in to score over the Jordan Valley Mustang defense.**

gressed over the season and they are a team that uses their "heads and their hearts."

Receiving All-Tournament honors were sophomore Dorrان Wilson and senior Garrett Hitz, first team; and freshman Levi Burke, second team.



**Prairie City Panther Garrett Hitz grabs a defensive rebound, his teammate Dorrان Wilson (3) is in the action in last Friday's game against Jordan Valley at Grant Union Junior-Senior High School in John Day.**

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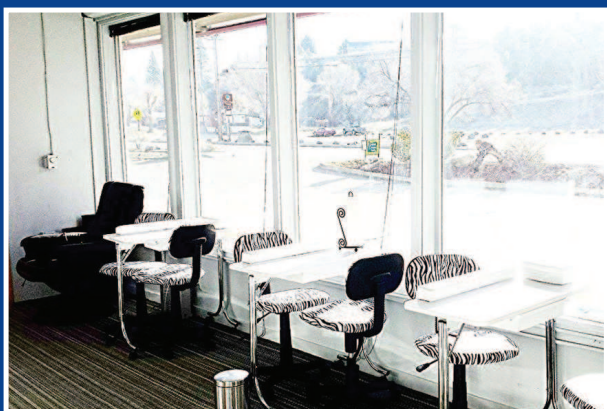
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