

# Lady Pros win state

## Team takes first state championship in 28 years

By Angel Carpenter  
Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant Union Prospector volleyball team is on top of the world after battling the Culver Bulldogs Saturday with a 3-1 win for the 2A state championship title.

It was the first time since 1989 that Grant Union has won the volleyball state championship — when Prospector head coach Shae Speth was a junior on the varsity team.

"I told the girls this means so much more as a coach to see all the work that they've put in come to a championship," Speth said.

After winning a close first set 25-23, Grant Union lost the second 22-25, then finished, victorious, with scores of 25-17 and 25-20.

Entering the tournament, Grant Union was the No. 2 seed, and Culver, led by Randi Viggiano, was the No. 1 seed.

The Prospectors' only loss this season came in September to the Bulldogs at the Grant Union court.

In that match, Prospector setter Hailie Wright, a junior, was injured, and she was out of play for a couple weeks.

"It was kind of hard to come back from getting injured in that first Culver game," Wright said. "I worked really hard in practices, and so did the team. Every day we practiced hard and we needed everybody, and that's what helped us get the win."

Prospector opposite hitter Reagan Shelley, a senior, said achieving the championship win feels amazing.

"I think everyone brought everything they had and played their best when we really needed it," she said.

Grant Union's first test at the two-day tournament, held at Ridgeview High School in Redmond, was in the quarterfinals, meeting up with the Monroe Dragons. The Prospectors won with scores of 26-24, 25-18 and 25-12.

Speth said, although her team came out to a rough start, they were able to settle their nerves and increase their offensive momentum.

"We missed too many serves in the first set, but after that for the entire tournament we were really solid serving, not just consistently, but we were serving consistently tough," she said.

In the semifinals, Speth said the Kennedy Trojans showed they were an improved team, young but with tall middle blockers.

The Prospectors beat Kennedy 25-19, 25-17, 20-25, 21-25 and 15-13.

Middle blockers Kaylee Wright and Trinity Hutchison played well against the height across the net, Speth said.

"They really stepped up ... getting up and hands over," she said. "They did really well, even hitting against a big block."

Prospector outside hitter Sydney

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Contributed photos/Tanni Wenger Photography Studio

Grant Union celebrates their state championship win over Culver. From left, Sydney Brockway (11), Kaylee Wright (13), Hailie Wright (10), Whitney McClellan (12) and Alcie Moore (1).



Grant Union Prospector Kaylee Wright kills the ball with Culver player Maddie Miller attempting the block. Also in the photo, from left, are Sydney Brockway (11), Whitney McClellan, Hailie Wright and Reagan Shelley.

TOP IMAGE: The Grant Union Prospectors stand with their award Saturday.



Contributed photos/JJ Collier

Grant Union linebacker Dillon Maley pounces on a ball fumbled by Central Linn's Chase Barnes in Saturday's round one matchup in the state playoffs.

## Grant Union shuts out Central Linn in first-round rout

Prospectors host Santiam at 1 p.m. Saturday

By Angel Carpenter  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant Union's Duane Stokes started Saturday's first-round playoff win with a bang for the Prospectors, scoring on the first kickoff return in the 52-0 shutout of the Central Linn Cobras.

Grant Union head coach Jason Miller said his team blocked well on the play, but added sometimes an early re-



Grant Union Prospector receiver Duane Stokes makes a catch and hangs on while tackled by Central Linn Cobra Cameron McKee.

turn like that can mean "the kiss of death."

"That was true for the first

quarter and a half, where we couldn't move the ball very well," he said.

Grant Union ended the first quarter 8-0.

The Prospectors added 14 more to the scoreboard, and with just a minute and a half left in the second, Central Linn turned the ball over and Grant Union scored, leading 28-0 at the half.

"The third quarter, we moved the ball easier, continued stopping them on 'D' and ended up 52-0," Miller said. "Defense played lights out — they played well."

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## SCHOOL SPIRIT

### Cheerleaders rally around state contenders

By Angel Carpenter  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Go! Fight! Win!

Grant Union cheerleaders were busy making posters, with those words, in preparation for the Saturday, Nov. 4, state playoff football game.

"I'm proud of the team," said cheerleader Kelsey Morrison, a senior. "They've worked really hard. I'm excited about the game, and I hope we win."

It was a sentiment shared by the other girls.

"It's been a great season," said Tegan Wright, referring to the football and cheerleading team.

This year's cheer squad includes 10 girls, led by head coach Jodi Ranft who is in her fifth year leading the team. All but two on the roster are new to cheerleading.

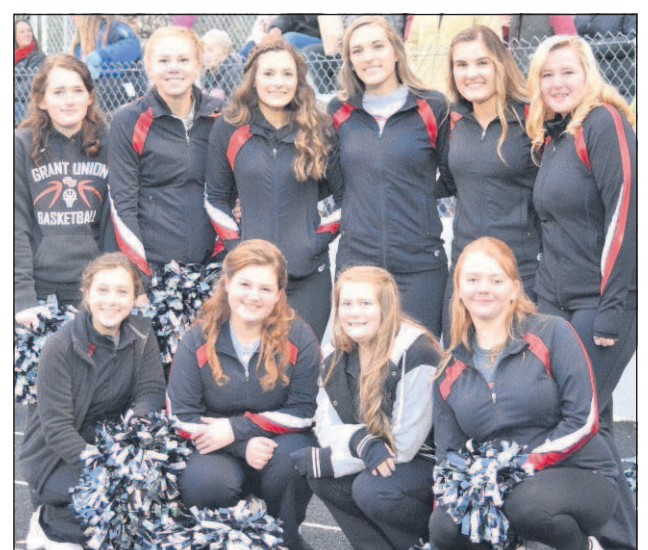
"After our first practice, I was thinking 'Oh, Lordy, how am I going to do this?'" Ranft said. "All of them have surprised me, and they work hard in practice."

Junior Celine Hicks has eight years of experience, and Morrison has been cheering for five years.

Morrison said she's especially enjoyed cheerleading with the team this season.

"Most are in their first year, and they've done well, and they've worked really hard," she said.

Other seniors on the team



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

The Grant Union cheerleaders, from left, front row, Maddy Way, Fallen Bolman, Celine Hicks, Emily Springer; back row, Aidan Broemeling, Mariah Wright, Cody Jo Madden, Tressa Ranft, Tegan Wright and Kelsey Morrison.

are Cody Jo Madden, Tressa Ranft, Tegan Wright and Mariah Wright, along with one more junior and three freshmen.

Coach Ranft said a focus of hers, which she shares with the girls, is to bring back school spirit, including more crowd participation in cheering for the team.

"All in all, the girls have been having a blast," she said. "We have a lot of fun, and that's been one of my biggest goals."

Madden said she tried out for cheerleading this year to be involved and be with friends.

"It's a lot of fun, and it would be more fun if we had more students who participated in cheering," she said. "I enjoy cheering for our boys when they've come this far in their season."

Tressa said she also enjoys the time cheering gives for her to be with friends.

"It will be a memorable season, because I'm here with my friends, and we've been supporting our boys through their football season," she said.

Tegan Wright added, "I'm proud of the boys for how far they've come, and hopefully they keep going and win a state championship."