



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

**Prairie City Panther Brandon Horell grabs a rebound in practice, his teammates Jayden Winegar, left, Lucas McKinley and Kevin Duvall in the action.**

## Panther brotherhood looking to return to playoffs this season

**New coach Sam Workman leads Prairie City boys**

By Angel Carpenter  
 Blue Mountain Eagle



Dorran Wilson

The Prairie City boys basketball team closed out a successful season last school year, reaching the second-round state playoff match.

The Panthers are right back at it, hopeful for another shot at a bright postseason.

Dorran Wilson, the sole senior among the 12 players, has a deeply vested interest in the team.

"We started working on this program my freshman year," he said. "It's exciting to see it all coming together."

Wilson and junior Levi Burke were two of the team's top players last year, frequently scoring in double digits.

"I'm looking forward to winning because we have a good brotherhood started," Burke said. "We've got some new kids who are going to bring something to the plate."

The team's new head coach this year is Sam Workman. This is Workman's first year coaching high school basketball, and he brings years of experience working with youth programs. He was an assistant junior high girls coach the last two years for Prairie City. He's also coached John Day-Canyon City Parks and Recreation basketball and football for eight years and Little League baseball the last four years.

Six freshmen players are joining the varsity ranks this year, plus two sophomores, and three juniors.

Workman said his goal is "to get as much out of those

guys as we can every night ... and have fun." Right now, the team is working on rigorous full-court drills to get them into shape and offense and defense moves.

He's already seeing strengths in the individual players. Team captain Wilson, the coach said, has "all the strengths for the game."

Bringing some height for rebounding are Burke, junior Syd Holman and freshman Declan Zweggardt.

"Levi shoots from the inside and outside," Workman said. "Syd is quick off the floor, a good rebounder and good inside shooter. Declan is young, but he's a tough kid."

Workman, who is assisted by his brother Bo Workman who coaches the girls varsity team, said being from a small school is a positive factor for their team.

"They all interact well with each other," he said. "They should be tough. We have a little bit of everything on the court."

The bottom line is, "everybody stays healthy," Sam Workman added.

Last school year, the Panthers ended the season 16-8, ranked No. 18.

They were second at the 1A-8 High Desert District Tournament and won the Sportsmanship Award.

Prairie City claimed a 62-32 victory over the Echo Cougars in the round-one

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# Lady Panthers shoot to be competitive in league



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**Prairie City Panther Cassie Hire moves the ball past Katie Hire and Samantha Workman in the team's Nov. 16 practice.**

## Team is hopeful for postseason action

By Angel Carpenter  
 Blue Mountain Eagle

**C**onfidence and mental toughness are two qualities the Prairie City Lady Panthers basketball team hopes will take them into postseason action this year.

Several of the girls on the basketball team were also part of the volleyball team that won the 1A district volleyball championship tournament.

Brianna Zweggardt, one of three seniors on this year's basketball team, said she's hopeful the energy gained from a successful volleyball season will carry over to basketball.

"We're definitely excited and looking forward to competing with the higher-level teams this year," she said. "I'm confident that we can make it farther than we have in the past."

The other two seniors leading the way this year are Cassie Hire and Megan Camarena.

Camarena said the team members have known each other their entire lives.

"We know each other's strengths and weaknesses," she said. "I'm really excited to see how well we work together this season."

Hire added the team is close with good chemistry.

"I'm just excited to play basketball and get along with my teammates," she said.

Prairie City's schedule starts off with a rigorous round of travel to three tournaments in Maupin, Condon and Klamath Falls.

"We're looking to see some tough competition preseason," said head coach Bo Workman. "Before we get into league in January, we'll deal



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**Prairie City Panther Hailee Wall looks to pass in practice, with Megan Camarena on defense. Emily Ennis and Samantha Workman, right, are in the action, and head coach Bo Workman looks on.**



Cassie Hire



Brianna Zweggardt



Megan Camarena

with adversity, traveling, with no home game and long bus trips."

This is Workman's second year as coach, and overall, he has four years of coaching experience.

He said his main goals for the team are "improvement from last year and being mentally prepared, day in and day out — that's the biggest one."

The team of 11 is working on mastering "mental toughness and individual skills, footwork — that can never be mastered," he said.

Joining the three seniors this year are one junior, four sophomores and three freshmen.

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# Grant Union wrestlers aim to sweep districts

**Experienced team 'chomping at the bit'**

By Angel Carpenter  
 Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant Union wrestling head coach Andy Lusco said this year's team is something to be excited about and has been a long time in the making.

He's seeing growth in numbers this season as well as experience, plus the weight classes are stacked up.

There are 25 wrestlers out for the team this year, compared to 20 last season.

"We look good in terms of breadth, so that's encouraging," he said. "We're starting to see some quality wrestling. I think we'll be pretty competitive."

Grant Union took the 2A/1A-SD4 Special District 4 championship title last season, and four Prospectors qualified for the state tournament.

Clay Johnson, who graduated, won second place in the 138 weight class. Drew Lusco, now a sophomore, placed fourth in heavyweight.



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**Grant Union assistant wrestling coach Tye Parsons, standing center, shows takedown techniques with Cameron Hallgarth to the team in their Monday, Nov. 20, practice.**

Now among the nine seniors on the team, Dillon Maley and Toby Boatwright also competed in the 285 weight class at state, Maley falling to Lusco and Boatwright falling to the top-seeded wrestler.

Maley said the team has a goal to repeat their district championship

win, and his personal goal is to return to state.

Boatwright reached state last year as a first-time wrestler. He said he likes the competitive nature of wrestling.

"It's a tough sport," he said. "I'm looking forward to winning districts

and making it to state again."

This is Lusco's sixth year as head coach, and his assistant coaches are Tye Parsons, who also coaches the junior high team, and Guy Johnson.

Coach Lusco said the three returning state qualifiers should earn a trip back to state with hard work.

"Dillon has worked very hard for years and is a high-quality wrestler who has a great chance of a medal at state," coach Lusco said. "Toby also has an excellent chance to medal and is working hard in practice. Drew is looking to make the finals and win a championship. It will take a lot of hard work to make that a reality for a sophomore."

Coach Lusco said a few of the other wrestlers he and the assistant coaches see working their way to a state qualification include junior Braden Spencer, sophomore Eli Sheedy, sophomore Russell Hodge, senior Elijah Humbird, senior Ely Carniglia, senior Cameron Hallgarth, senior Hadley Boethin and sophomore Damion Young.

Young wrestlers who could surprise everyone include freshmen

Quinten Hallgarth, Logan McCluskey and Ben Henry, the coach said.

"We really believe any of our 25 could qualify for state and are excited to see them compete and grow," he said.

New seniors to the varsity team are Josh Carpenter and Savannah Wyllie.

Senior Collin Harvey wrestled through middle school and his freshman and sophomore year.

Spencer is the sole junior, and there are eight sophomores and seven freshmen.

Grant Union will face nine opponents in their district: Adrian, Crane, Elgin, Enterprise, Heppner/Ione, Imbler, Joseph/Wallowa, Pine Eagle and Union/Cove.

"Crane and Enterprise are usually the toughest team competition, but all teams have pretty talented individual wrestlers," Lusco said.

On Friday, Grant Union will have their first test at the Woodfin Tournament in Burns.

Lusco said it's hard to say, this

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