



Grant Union Gold rises at state

By Angel Carpenter
 Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant Union Gold took a spotlight at the OSAA Dance/Drill State Championships in Portland as the only 2A team.

The 13 dancers held their heads high, performing at the Veterans Memorial Coliseum, even though they were up against eight 4A teams and one 3A team.

"The girls performed amazingly well in one of the toughest divisions," said Grant Union head coach Katie Piazza.

She said they closed the gap between them and the next closest team from 10 points to 3 points.

Sweet Home finished ninth with 59.58 points, and Grant Union was close behind at 56.57.

Piazza said it "might not sound like a lot, but in dance it's huge."

Valley Catholic of Beaverton won the competition with 86.6 points, followed by Gladstone in second and Crook County of Prineville in third.

"State is the toughest judging all season, and most importantly the girls gave it their all and were very pleased with their performance," Piazza said. "In fact, I could hear their screams of delight from across the Coliseum when they exited the floor after their dance."

She said that with eight freshmen on the team, this year was a time to build on experience.

"We all learned a lot, and I'm excited to see what next year brings, with everything from changes to the state layout to teams' classifications changing," she said.



Eagle file photo

The Grant Union Gold dancers perform their state competition routine.



Eagle file photo

Rhea Mead leaps as the Grant Union Gold dancers perform their state competition routine for the crowd at their March 9 Spring Showcase, dancing to Katy Perry's song titled "Rise."

Panthers post sizable track team

Strong returners and strong freshmen

By Richard Hanners
 Blue Mountain Eagle

Nate Barber, in his second year as Prairie City track coach, is optimistic about his team this spring.

"It's the largest in a couple years," he said.

Nine girls and seven boys signed up for the team, meaning the Panthers will be able to field players in many more events. Last year, the team had only seven members.

"We'll have both boys and girls 4-by-100 relay teams, three in the 400-meter, quite a few jumpers and a lot of sprinters," Barber said. "We'll also start developing the pole vault this year."

Megan Camarena and Danner Davis are the two seniors on the team.

Camarena qualified for the district track meet in her strongest events, shot put, placing fifth, and discus, placing 12th. She also throws javelin.

Davis is new to the varsity team with prior experience in various events.



The Eagle/Richard Hanners

Panther junior Deja Amsden perfects her long jump during a Prairie City High School track practice March 8.

Joining the team this spring are several members of a strong freshman class, including Jojari Field, coming off a great basketball season. He'll be running the 100- and 200-meter races and participating in the long and triple jumps.

"He did well in junior high last year, with good stats for high school," Barber said.

Tristan McMahan, also a freshman, will do the same events as Field.

"They were one-two in junior high," Barber said.



Megan Camarena



Danner Davis

The Panthers have a strong thrower in sophomore Jake McHatton, who did well last year in the discus and shot put and wants to improve his javelin throw, Barber said.

Levi Burke, a junior who starred on the school's win-

Prairie City Panthers track schedule

April 6: hosts Prairie City Invitational at 11 a.m.
 April 10: @ Grant Union Small Schools Meet in John Day at 3:30 p.m.
 April 12: @ Rancher's Invitational in Crane at 3 p.m.
 April 14: @ Burns Lions (Archie Oster Memorial) Invitational in Burns at noon
 April 17: @ Grant Union Small Schools Meet in John Day at 3:30 p.m.
 April 20: @ Condon/Wheeler Invite in Condon at 11 a.m.
 April 27: @ Don Walker Invitational in Nyssa at noon
 April 28: @ Saint Alphonsus Invitational in Ontario at 10 a.m.
 May 3: hosts High Desert League Twilight Meet in Prairie City at 4 p.m.
 May 4: @ Grant Union Invitational in John Day at 11 a.m.
 May 11: District Track Meet at Baker City, TBD
 May 17-18: OSAA 1A State Championships at Eugene, TBD

ning basketball team, took last year off from track but is back for the high hurdles and high jump, Barber said.

On the girls side, freshman Samantha Workman, another good basketball player, will be in the triple and long jumps and sprinting in the 100 and the relay.

"She's cool under pressure — very teachable and coachable," Barber said.

Haley Pfefferkorn, a junior, has returned to throw the javelin and run the mile.

"She did well in the javelin last year, but bad weather hurt her grip," Barber said.

Overall, Barber was impressed with the team.

"The kids all know each other. They're all very coachable and have a good work ethic," he said. "If you push them, they'll do what you ask."

Prospector boys get bats cracking at tournaments

Pros' Triangle Oil tourney starts 11 a.m. Thursday

By Angel Carpenter
 Blue Mountain Eagle

The Prospector baseball bats were cracking Friday and Saturday as they hosted several teams for the Icebreaker Tournament in John Day.

The 2A Grant Union-Prairie City Prospectors defeated the 3A Vale Vikings 11-1 in Friday's game, and came up with a 10-7 loss to the 3A Joseph/Enterprise/Wallowa Eagles on Saturday. Grant Union head coach Dusty Williams said a few errors on Saturday killed them.

"We're young," he said. "We only committed one error yesterday (against Vale). We played really good baseball, defensively and offensively — the whole team."

The Culver Bulldogs, in the Wapiti League with Grant Union, also lost to the Eagles 6-4 in the tournament.

Grant Union dropped their first game of the season 9-2 to 3A Burns in the Prospectors' home opener on Tuesday, March 13.

The Prospectors return three seniors this year, pitcher Zack Deiter, short stop Wade Reimers and catcher Ty McDaniel.

Deiter said he's looking forward to the season.

"Our pitchers are throwing strikes," he said.

Because it's a young team



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Grant Union Prospector Warner Robertson pitches as short stop Zack Deiter (13) watches for the ball in Saturday's game against the Joseph Eagles.



Zack Deiter

Grant Union baseball schedule

March 22: vs. Homedale, Idaho at 11 a.m. (Iron Triangle Tournament)
 March 23: vs. Lost River at 2 p.m. (Iron Triangle Tournament)
 March 24: vs. Nyssa at 2 p.m. (Iron Triangle Tournament)
 March 31: vs. Oakland at 11 a.m. (Les Schwab Tournament)
 March 31: vs. Monroe at 2 p.m. (Les Schwab Tournament)
 April 3: @ Burns at 4 p.m.
 April 7: @ Culver at 11 a.m. (2)
 April 10: @ Elgin at 4 p.m.
 April 14: vs. Elgin at 11 a.m. (2)
 April 17: vs. Pilot Rock at 4 p.m.
 April 21: @ Pilot Rock at 11 a.m. (2)
 April 24: vs. Weston-McEwen at 4 p.m.
 April 27: @ Weston-McEwen at 1 p.m. (2)
 May 1: @ Union at 4 p.m.
 May 5: vs. Union at 11 a.m. (2)
 May 11: District Tournament, East No. 3 vs. No. 2, TBA
 May 15: District Tournament (No. 2 vs. No. 3 winners), TBA
 May 18: District East No. 1 vs. West No. 1 in Pendleton at 4 p.m.
 May 23: State Playoffs, first round, TBA
 May 25: State Playoffs, quarterfinals, TBA
 May 29: State Playoffs, semifinals, TBA
 June 1: State Finals, TBA



Ty McDaniel



Wade Reimers

being able to help the younger kids out so they fare well next season and finish this season off," he said.

"I'm excited to play," McDaniel said. "It's always a lot of fun. We're going to get the younger kids coached up."

The coach said he looks forward to the seniors' leadership helping the team.

"They know what we're trying to do, and I'm seeing a big improvement already from last year," he said.

of just 13, he said, players are getting "a lot of reps."

Reimers said they're lim-

ited on pitchers, but he thinks the team will do all right.

"I'm looking forward to

ton/Condon and Culver.

The No. 1 teams from either side of the league will face off for the No. 1 and No. 2 positions heading to state. Those in second and third will playoff on their respective sides, and the winners of those games will face each other for the third spot to state.

Pilot Rock and Elgin are returning all of last year's pitchers, and Williams said he expects both those teams to be tough.

Williams is joined by assistant coach Doug Sharp and pitching coach Russ Reimers. "I expect to do really well in our league," Williams said.

He said the pitch count rule is a challenge his team deals with, but he added it's a struggle that all the teams face.

"We're not like the big schools with 10 pitchers on the bench," he said.

"Overall we're good," he added. "We've just got to continue to work hard and look to our juniors and seniors for leadership. I think it's going to be an exciting year."

Grant Union will host several teams for the Thursday through Saturday Iron Triangle Tournament.

The Prospectors will face Homedale, Idaho, at 11 a.m. Thursday, weather permitting.

Grant Union will be up against Lost River on Friday and Nyssa on Saturday, with both games scheduled for 2 p.m.