



The Chieftain/Paul Wahl

Grant Union cross country runner Samantha Buckhaults passes through a mud bog during Friday's Catherine Creek Scamper.

# Down and dirty

Cross country teams take on Catherine Creek Scamper

By Angel Carpenter  
 Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant Union Prospector cross country boys had a full team competing in the Catherine Creek Scamper, moving one place higher than last year in 11th place.

Prospector Gage Brandon had the top time for the Grant Union boys in the 5K, which included two trips through a mud pit, with a time of 22:05, and Tanner Elliott finished in a time of 22:15.

"They were racing against Washington schools and larger schools, so I am proud of their races," said Grant Union head coach Sonna Smith.

The middle school boys also had a



Contributed photo

The Grant Union Prospector cross country team cheers at the start of the Catherine Creek Scamper 5K held near Union. Head coach Sonna Smith is at back left along with assistant coach Brandon Smith.

full team and finished sixth out of 11 teams.

"Max Bailey set a blistering pace and was fifth out of 99, racing on the first loop, only to fall in the mud pit the second time through and give back some time," Smith said. "Grant Hall was our top finisher in middle school boys race."

Hall, a seventh-grader, finished the 3K in 15th place with a time of 10:45, and Bailey, an eighth-grader, finished 35th with a time of 11:34.

Junior Rylee Browning, running junior varsity, had the strongest finish for Grant Union with a time of 28.54 in eighth place out of 39 runners.

Next up for the Grant Union teams is the Footrace to Valhalla hosted by Umattilla High School at noon in Boardman.



Contributed photo

John Day native Dustin Elliott rides Zip Code at the 2010 PBR World Finals. Elliott will be inducted into the Chadron State College Athletic Hall of Fame this fall.

# Bull rider Dustin Elliott to be honored by his alma mater

By Con Marshall  
 To the Blue Mountain Eagle

Dustin Elliott, a 1999 graduate of Grant Union High School, will be inducted into the Chadron State College Athletic Hall of Fame this fall.

The ceremonies will be at 6 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 27, following the Eagles' football game.

Elliott came to Chadron State, located in northwestern Nebraska, after winning the Oregon high school rodeo bull riding championship, was the College National Finals Rodeo bull riding winner as a sophomore and the Pro Rodeo Cowboys' Association champion just one year after concluding his collegiate career.

He now lives with his wife, Cynthia, and their twins, Ethan and Emma, in North Platte, Nebraska, where he owns some ranch land, has haying and trucking businesses and coaches the rodeo team at the local community college.

Elliott was recruited by Chadron State's rodeo coach Darrell Marshall during the National High School Rodeo in Gillette, Wyoming.

"He was the only college coach to really talk to me there," Elliott recalled several years later. "He was willing to take a chance on me. He offered me a \$500 scholarship each semester. That was enough to bring me to Chadron State. I've always been happy I made that decision."

As a freshman, Elliott finished fourth in the Central Rocky Mountain Region bull riding standings. That didn't qualify him for the College National Finals Rodeo, but it did get him invited to be among the 40 entries in the Overland Stagecoach Invitational Bull Riding in Monahans, Texas, that summer. He finished second in that competition, winning more than \$4,000, a lot of money for a college kid in those days.

The next year, Elliott qualified for the national finals by placing second in the region's standings and then won the championship at the college finals in Casper, Wyoming. He was the only entry among the 48 national qualifiers to stay aboard all four of his bulls the required eight seconds. Ironically, it was the first time he had won his pet event at a college rodeo, although he'd often been second or third.

The finals rodeo was exciting. He scored 79 points on Copenhagen Durango, the high mark of the rodeo entering the finals. But it was tough and go whether he had made the eight-second whistle. When the judges gave the thumbs-up signal, Elliott sailed his big black hat high into the Casper Events Center's rafters.

During the championship go-round, the capacity crowd was so loud when Elliott rode his fourth bull that he stayed aboard for at least 10 seconds because he could not hear the whistle.

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# Grant Union defeats Heppner in first league battle

Lady Pros sweep Heppner 3-0 in John Day

By Angel Carpenter  
 Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant Union Prospectors battled in their first league match at home, sweeping the Heppner Mustangs 3-0 with scores of 25-11, 25-18 and 25-18.

Prospector head coach Ali Abrego said senior Sydney Brockway's hustle on a few plays were "incredible."

"She saved our bacon on a few of them," the coach said.

"Hailie Wright and Alcie Moore, their leadership as setters and captains is pretty fun to watch," she added. "The senior group is awesome."

Another force on the team for the night was freshman Grace Taylor, the only freshman on the court for the Prospectors.

"This is the best she's ever played, so I'm really pleased to see that," Abrego said.

Grant Union had a good handle on the first set early on for a big win, but Heppner pushed the envelope in the second and third.

The Prospectors were ahead in the second, 9-6, when the Mustangs battled to tie the score 10-10.

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The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Grant Union Prospector Alcie Moore (1) flies after the ball along with Aidan Broemeling, who dove for it, and Yui Asami, right.

# Five returners set standard for Long Creek/Ukiah volleyball

Communication, unity highlight team's strengths

By Angel Carpenter  
 Blue Mountain Eagle

Five experienced players are leading the way for the IA Long Creek/Ukiah junior varsity volleyball team as the season starts.

Returning to the court are seniors Gladys Johnson and Alea Douglas, junior Brook Harrison and sophomores Dorotha Hounding and Jenny Kim.

Rounding out the roster of 12 are one more senior, three more juniors, one more sophomore and two freshmen.

Linda Studtmann, on the Long Creek side, has helped coach for five years, and Reagan Enriquez, for Ukiah, has led the team for 10 years.

Both say the season is progressing well for the team.

"They've improved on com-



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Long Creek/Ukiah player Brooke Harrison passes the ball toward Jenny Lee, center, and Jenny Kim in practice.



Gladys Johnson



Alea Douglas



Jenny Lee

Enriquez added, "The seniors this year are doing a great job at holding the team together with better attitudes."

Studtmann said the seniors have taken on leadership roles, and they're good at evaluating

## 2018 Long Creek/Ukiah volleyball schedule

- Sept. 20: @ Prairie City JV at 5 p.m.
- Sept. 21: vs. Mitchell/Spray in Long Creek at 5 p.m.
- Sept. 22: @ Adrian JV at 11 a.m. (MT)
- Oct. 1: @ Pilot Rock at 4 p.m.
- Oct. 5: @ Burnt River in Unity at 4 p.m.
- Oct. 6: vs. Jordan Valley in Dayville at 3:30 p.m.
- Oct. 13: @ Crane and Dayville/Monument in Monument at 12 p.m., 3 p.m.
- Oct. 18: vs. Huntington in Long Creek at TBD

the team's strengths and weaknesses

She said sophomore Jenny Kim is also an asset to the team, helping the new foreign exchange students learn some basic volleyball moves, and Harrison has stepped in as the main setter.

So far, the Mountaineer/Cougars are 1-2 with a 3-0 win over Harper and losses to Burnt River and Mitchell/Spray in matches that went to five sets.

Gladys Johnson said the games were competitive.

"They were fair and fun to play," she said. "Volleyball is my favorite sport, so I always like coming back."

She said she enjoys seeing the foreign exchange students grow as they learn the game.

Senior Jenny Lee from South Korea is new to the sport and said she appreciates the help and encouragement she receives from her coaches and teammates.

Both Gladys Johnson and Douglas have been playing volleyball since junior high school.

Douglas said she's looking forward to senior year in the sport.

"I'm really glad we have a great team this year and great players," she said. "I want to make great memories. I love spending time with my friends and being active, and I love the sport."

Studtmann said the team's successes have been good for morale, but more important is having good communication and team unity.

The maturity the team has with returning athletes helps them as they maintain focus "in the stress of the game" and continue, and not fall apart, she said.

"I love being with the kids and seeing them learn and get excited over successes," Studtmann said. "I enjoy seeing how they pull the team together and how they progress."

She added, "I know we'll have some tough competition, but I think we're up for the challenge."