



Contributed photo
Emma Valade shot this doe in 2018.

SHOOTING THE BREEZE Double slam doe hunt

By Dale Valade
 For the Blue Mountain Eagle

For the meat hunting purist, antlerless big game tags provide a means to get your winter provender without having to be as particular in your search efforts. Ideally, no one with such a tag should blast the first antlerless deer that they see. Consideration must be given to age, size and, most vitally, whether or not she has a fawn. To fail to do so is immoral and frankly defeats the purpose of these hunts.



Dale Valade

To maintain a proper buck to doe ratio, ODFW issues doe tags annually, providing hunters additional chances to fill the larder. In my opinion these hunts are perfect for rookies and veterans alike. There are lots of opportunities, and success is as close to guaranteed as it gets while still providing the challenge of the hunt.

Emma and I were out busting the brush again this year on opening day. Having filled my damage control elk tag and buck tag, this was my last effort for the year. Since it was the only tag my wife drew, I wanted her to take the first shot. She brought along her trusty .243. I decided to take a Savage 99 in .308 that my father gave to me 20 years ago. Having never used it to take a deer, it was past due.

We spotted several deer right off, but they were farther away than Emma felt comfortable shooting. So we made a stalk to try to get in closer. We moved extra slow due to the steep, open country providing very little cover. But while crossing an open hillside, the wind hit us in the six, and the deer busted us. It was a bit disappointing after the hike we put in trying to close the gap, but that's hunting. Later that afternoon, we happened into a little band of does and fawns.

After we watched them for a short spell, Emma took aim and dropped her doe with a single shot. Contrary to normal, the rest of the deer didn't run off but rather stuck around, curious. I picked one out and let fly, hitting her behind the shoulder. Two does down in just a matter of seconds!

And just like that, we had venison! After taking pictures, we field dressed the two deer. Thankfully, it wasn't very far back to the truck — that's always a blessing. And I finally got to take a deer with Dad's legendary old .308. What a wonderful day!

Although the antlerless deer tags aren't as easy of a draw, I encourage you to keep putting in. It's a great hunt with a delicious pot of venison-flavored gold at the end of the rainbow!

Got any good hunting stories to tell? Email us at shootingthebreezebme@gmail.com!

Dale Valade is a local country gent with a deep love for handloading, hunting and shooting.



The Grant Union Prospector volleyball team earned second place at the OSAA 2A State Volleyball Championships in Redmond. Front row, from left: Kaylee Wright, Yui Asami and McKeely Miller; back, Alcie Moore, head coach Ali Abrego, Sydney Brockway, Trinity Hutchison, Hailie Wright, Kori Jo Girvin, Aidan Broemeling, Kaytlyn Wells, Taylor Allen, Baylee Combs and assistant coach Erin Beil.

Grant Union finishes volleyball season second in state

By Angel Carpenter
 Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant Union Prospector volleyball team finished their season in second place at Saturday's OSAA 2A State Championship title game, falling in a tight 3-2 battle against the Portland Christian Royals.

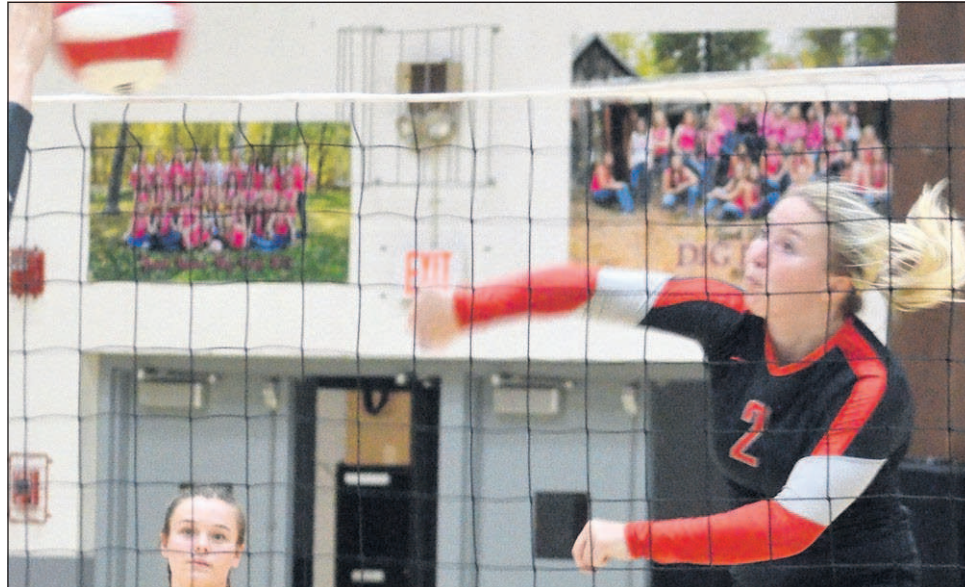
Grant Union's uphill climb at the tournament, held at Ridgeview High School in Redmond, included victories over the Coquille Red Devils and the Central Linn Cobras.

"Opening with Coquille was a good indicator of how intense the tournament was going to be for us," said Grant Union head coach Ali Abrego. "When you get to Redmond, every team is of state champion caliber."

She believed Coquille should have been ranked higher, but her team gave a solid performance Friday, sweeping with scores of 27-25, 25-21 and 27-25.

The pressure increased as the Prospectors faced Central Linn Friday night in the semifinal round, Grant Union winning 22-25, 25-14, 25-14 and 25-19.

"Going into that game, I really tried to keep my girls focused on the end goal, which was to play Saturday night," Abrego said. "These girls worked incredibly hard to eliminate our own



Eagle file photo

Grant Union Prospector Kaylee Wright blasts the ball past a Union blocker.



Sydney Brockway



Hailie Wright



Kaylee Wright

mistakes and make it to the championship match on Saturday night."

Portland Christian entered the tournament as the No. 4

team and beat No. 1 Kennedy 3-2 on their way to the championship game.

The Royals defeated Grant Union 28-26, 23-25,

25-11, 24-26 and 15-13.

With Prospector Hailie Wright up to serve in the final set, Grant Union earned their first 3 points off kills from

Brockway, Hutchison and Brockway again.

The teams kept within a 3-point margin of each other the rest of the way.

After tying the score 8-8, Portland Christian took a slim lead. Grant Union, down 12-9, started a comeback.

With Prospector Aidan Broemeling serving, Hailie Wright made two consecutive kills from Alcie Moore to tie the score 12-12.

The Royals got the ball back, and Brockway slammed a kill to make it 13-13.

Portland Christian's Simone Gordon made the final two kills to secure the win. Gordon, 6-foot-2, was a force for the Royals with 29 kills, one ace and four blocks in the five sets.

Prospector Kaylee Wright led Grant Union in the match with 13 kills and two aces, followed by Hailie Wright with 12 kills and one ace. Sydney Brockway had nine kills, four aces and one block, and Trinity Hutchison had eight kills and two blocks.

"We played our hearts out," said Kaylee Wright.

"We knew it was going to be a tough game," she said. "We had to work for those last points, and we were working hard all year for those last points. There is nothing we shouldn't be proud of."

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Grant Union falls to No. 1 Monroe at state football playoff

By Angel Carpenter
 Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant Union Prospectors battled No. 1-ranked Monroe in the OSAA first round state playoffs Saturday, Grant Union falling 49-0 on the Dragons' turf.

Grant Union, No. 16, ended their season with a 5-5 overall record, finishing second in the 2A Special District 6 with a 3-1 record.

Grant Union head coach Jason Miller said a pivotal moment in their season came when they defeated the Umatilla Vikings 30-20 on Sept. 21 in John Day.

"We were able to hit some key passes offensively and make some big stops on defense against a talented team," Miller said. "I think that game was a big confidence boost."

The Prospectors hosted Monroe early in the season on Sept. 9, Grant Union taking a 20-8 loss.

In Saturday's game, the Dragons showed their strength. Miller said his boys fought hard but were out-matched by a bigger, faster, stronger and more experienced team.



File photo

Grant Union's Justin Hodge looks for a break in the Heppner line while rushing the ball this season.

Besides the size difference, Monroe's team, led by Bill Crowson, included seven seniors to Grant Union's two. The score was 28-0 at the half.

"We were able to string a couple of drives together that ended near the 20 but could not punch it in," Miller said.

He said his younger players gained experience and improved their football knowl-

edge and fundamentals over the season.

If all the Prospector juniors return, Grant Union will have six seniors next season.

Running backs Russell Hodge and Taylor Hunt and lineman Drew Lusco plan to return for their senior year of football.

Hodge said the team is proud they made it further than many thought they

would.

"I think we'll be a lot better next season," he said. "We're not going to be as young."

Hunt said the team played hard in Saturday's game.

He said next year they'll have greater numbers, with potentially eight freshmen.

"We're going to be a lot more experienced," he said. "I'm pretty excited for what's going to happen."



File photo

Grant Union's Quinton Hallgarth and Peyton Neault (66) wrap up Heppner quarterback Jayden Wilson in the Mustangs' 47-17 win against the Prospectors this season in Heppner.

Lusco said the team now needs to prepare.

"We have to focus on next year — work in the off season with weights and other sports," he said. "We had a great year with a great group of guys."

Miller hopes this season will be one they can build off of to make another run into the playoffs.

"I am extremely proud of the progress and success of this team," he said. "All of these young men should be proud of their season."