



# Tiger girls ready to prove potential

By Angel Carpenter  
 Blue Mountain Eagle

The Dayville/Monument Tiger girls basketball team stepped onto the Wheeler High School court Friday to begin what they hope will be a strong season.

If their victories at the Paul Humphreys Memorial Tournament over the Arlington Honkers, 34-23, and Condon/Wheeler Knights, 38-25, are any indication, the Tigers could be on their way to fulfilling their goals.

Head coach Taylor Schmadeka, in his fourth year leading the team, said his No. 1 goal for the girls is to give a “perfect effort” — and he’s confident about advancing to the post season.

“Always play 100 percent every game, no matter what the score is,” he said.

He said his five starters are the main returners and are showing a lot of enthusiasm.

“They have an attitude of wanting to compete and win,” he said.

The team lost one talented senior, Danielle Rhoda, to graduation last season, but the remainder of the team returned.

Three seniors are returning starters, with two junior returning starters, plus two sophomores. Three athletic freshmen have also joined the ranks. Schmadeka has Kristi Emerson back as assistant coach, and Cheyenne Perkins is also joining as assistant coach this year.

Dayville/Monument ended last season with a loss to the Adrian Antelopes early on at the High Desert District 8 1A Tournament, follow-



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter  
**Dayville/Monument Tiger Sam Adams picks up a rebound during Thursday's practice scrimmage.**

ing up with a win over the Harper Hornets in the consolation round. Now seniors, Faythe Schafer and Kyla Emerson each scored 7 points in the game with Adrian, and Courtney Nichols was also in the action.

Schafer said she’s eager to use

her last season as a springboard, and she’s looking forward to developing the team chemistry with their newer members.

“I’m excited to see where the season takes us,” she said. “We have a lot of speed, and that will be a

good challenge for the other teams.”

Kyla Emerson, who has played basketball since fourth grade, said it’s the intensity of the game and time on the court that draws her to the sport. She said she appreciates the opportunity to spend her final season with the other girls and the coaches.

“We have a strong team, and our bench is good,” she said.

Nichols said she’s looking to improve her shot. She’s developed a good relationship with the team and enjoys working with the younger players, she said.

“I think our freshmen are going to be super strong this year,” she said. “They’re learning quickly.”

Schmadeka said the three freshmen are showing potential. He noted freshman Aubreanna Osborne is strong, and each freshman is showing different strengths in their abilities.

“The biggest thing will be court time and getting a feel for the speed of the game,” he said.

He said point guard Schafer will be driving the ball to the basket and commanding the floor more.

He expects Emerson and Nichols to take on attacking the rim, as well as playing aggressive defense.

“Aubrey Bowlus (a junior) is stepping up as a post and getting a lot of rebounds for us this year,” he said.

Overall, he said, the teams’ greatest asset is their quick tempo.

“They’re working really well together, and we’re going to utilize our speed this year,” he said. “I believe we have a good chance to get to the state playoffs and compete there.”

## Dayville/Monument Tiger girls schedule

Dec. 7-8: @ Arlington Tournament, 3 p.m., 12 p.m.

Dec. 14-15: Tiger Tourney in Dayville (vs. Mitchell/Spray and Grant Union junior varsity), 6 p.m., 4:30 p.m.

Dec. 20-22: Union Christmas Classic, TBD

Dec. 28: Alumni games in Dayville, 5 p.m.

Jan. 4: @ Long Creek/Ukiah in Long Creek, 6 p.m.

Jan. 5: @ Harper, 3 p.m.

Jan. 8: vs. Burnt River in Dayville, 5 p.m.

Jan. 11: vs. Crane in Dayville, 5 p.m.

Jan. 12: vs. Prairie City in Monument, 2 p.m.

Jan. 18: @ Burnt River in Unity, 6 p.m.

Jan. 19: vs. Four Rivers in Monument, 2 p.m.

Jan. 22: @ Grant Union JV in John Day, 5 p.m.

Jan. 25: @ Adrian, 5 p.m.

Jan. 26: vs. Jordan Valley in Dayville, 4 p.m.

Feb. 1: @ Huntington, 6 p.m.

Feb. 2: @ Crane, 4 p.m.

Feb. 5: @ Prairie City, 5 p.m.

Feb. 8: vs. Harper in Monument, 5 p.m.

Feb. 9: vs. Long Creek/Ukiah in Monument (senior recognition), 2 p.m.

Feb. 14-16: District Tournament in John Day, TBD

Feb. 19: First round state playoffs

Feb. 22: Second round state playoffs

# Grant Union wrestling team up for season’s challenges

By Angel Carpenter  
 Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant Union Prospector head coach Andy Lusco sees a promising season for his wrestlers, even though potentially difficult battles lie ahead.

Three state-qualifying team members and several others are returning, and five girls are joining the team of 21.

Junior Drew Lusco, who won the state title last year in the 285-pound bracket in triple overtime, is back as well as Russell Hodge and Ethan Moore, who wrestled their way to the state semifinals at 182 and 106, respectively.

Last season was Drew Lusco’s second visit to the state competition — he placed fourth at 220 as a freshman.

Coach Lusco, who is in his seventh year leading the 2A team, said, although they’re a younger team and “a little bit raw” in experience, the discipline they’re showing in their work habits is going to pay off.

“We want our wrestlers to be physically and mentally tough,” he said. “We believe that all success on the mat stems from these attributes.”

He said their practices and conditioning are designed with development in these areas in mind.

The coaches continue to emphasize to the wrestlers: “Learn a few things, and do them exceptionally well,” the coach said.

“I enjoy the opportunity to

help our wrestlers learn to work harder than they thought possible and become high quality people who contribute positively in our community,” he said.

Tye Parsons is the assistant high school coach, and Nate Barber coaches the junior high team and is an assistant high school coach. Kyle Erickson is assistant coach for both the high school and junior high teams.

At the first meet of the season Nov. 30, Grant Union defeated Vale 42-24, Lakeview 36-30 and Irrigon 42-36. The Prospectors fell 69-12 to Burns.

A new team in the 2A/1A Special District 4 this year is Culver (2A). Echo will also combine with Stanfield (1A) this year.

Other district opponents include: Adrian (1A), Crane (1A), Elgin (1A), Enterprise (2A), Heppner/Ione (2A), Imbler (1A), Joseph/Wallowa (1A), Pine Eagle (1A) and Union/Cove (2A).

“Culver makes things more difficult,” coach Lusco said. “They’ve won the state championship for more than 10 years in a row.”

He said the Culver Bulldogs have a quality program and lots of wrestlers on their team.

Grant Union will have an early look at Culver as they compete at the Bulldogs’ invitational and girls tournament Friday-Saturday, Dec. 7-8.

“Crane is another competitor,” he said. “Our conference



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter  
**Grant Union seniors Trinity Hutchison, left, and Sydney Brockway are two new girls on the Prospector wrestling team.**

is always consistently tough. We’re going to test ourselves and rise to the challenge.”

He said the goal for the team is to place in the top three at the district tournament and, like last year, send six wrestlers to state.

Another plus for the team this season is having several wrestlers in varying weight classes.

“We should be able to fill almost all the weight classes, so we’ll have a pretty solid lineup in terms of dual meets,” the coach said.

He said he believes several of his returners will be strong competitors.

“Drew (Lusco) has a shot if he works hard and does his part,” he said. “I think Russell Hodge, a state qualifier last year, is going to be tough. Ethan Moore, he’s going to be

tough, lightweight again.”

Other wrestlers the coach said he expects will do well this season include juniors Damon Young, Quinten Hallgarth, Logan McCluskey and Frank Douglass, as well as sophomore Ben Henry and freshman Justin Hodge.

Three senior wrestlers are new to the team, Trinity Hutchison, Sydney Brockway and Grant LeQuieu.

Five juniors, five sophomores and eight freshmen round out the roster.

Drew Lusco said he’s impressed with the guys and girls out for wrestling this year.

“Everyone has a good work ethic and good attitude, and I’m glad to be a part of this wrestling family,” he said. “This season, I’d like to be state champion again and be undefeated. For the team, I’d like to

## Grant Union wrestling schedule

Dec. 7-8: @ Culver Tournament, TBD

Dec. 14-15: @ Elgin Tournament, 1 p.m., 10 a.m.

Jan. 4-5: @ Jo-Hi Wrestling Tournament in Joseph, TBD

Jan. 15: @ Burns/Crane Duals in Burns, TBD

Jan. 18-19: Oregon Classic in Redmond, TBD

Jan. 25: Grant Union Tournament in John Day at 12 p.m.

Jan. 26: Hood River Tournament (girls only), TBD

Feb. 1-2: State Qualifier (girls only) at Thurston, TBD

Feb. 2: Bank of Eastern Oregon Tournament in Heppner at 10 a.m.

Feb. 9: Pine Eagle Tournament in Halfway at 10 a.m.

Feb. 15-16: District Tournament in Halfway at 8 a.m.

Feb. 22-23: State Tournament in Portland, TBD

see at least five guys go to state and some of the girls.”

Brockway said she decided to go out for wrestling after learning her sister, sophomore Sophie Brockway, signed up.

“I thought I’d give it a try my senior year,” she said.

She said she’s been learning takedowns, drills and the basics in practice.

“It’s good conditioning,” she said. “I hope it turns out to be a good season, and I want to watch my teammates improve too.”

Trinity Hutchison made a switch from basketball to join the wrestling team.

“I wrestled when I was little, but this is my first year in high school doing it,” she said. “I’m really enjoying it so far.”

She said she’s inexperienced but hopes to be successful.

“I’m listening, learning and working hard,” she said. “I’m looking forward to the year.”

LeQuieu, who also made a shift from basketball to wrestling, said his goal is to learn the fundamental moves and techniques.

“This is by far one of the hardest high school sports I’ve ever played,” he said. “We have really great coaches teaching us, and we’re definitely one big family.”

This is junior Russell Hodge’s third year on the high school team, and he’s been wrestling for 11 years. His goal is to place first at the district tournament and advance to state and place well there.

He said what he enjoys most about the sport is “the fact that you can’t blame anyone else” if you lose.

“If you really want it, you have to put 100 percent into it,” he said. “It’s physically demanding, which makes it fun.”

## SPORTS ROUNDUP

### Grant Union boys compete at Sherman Tournament

Grant Union junior Mason Gerry stepped up for the Prospector boys in their 59-48 win over the 2A Culver Bulldogs at the second day of the Sherman Tournament in Moro.

“He didn’t take a lot of outside shots, but took it to the rim and had awesome rebounding,” said Grant Union head coach Kelsy Wright. “He had an all-out great game.”

Senior Jacob Vaughan earned 22 points for Grant Union and senior Tanner Elliott had 11 offensive rebounds,

several put-backs and shot well from the free-throw line, Wright added.

The 2A Prospectors lost their first game of the tournament on Friday, 57-28, to the 1A Sherman Huskies. Last season, the Huskies were Big Sky District champions.

Missing a couple key players for their first outing, Grant Union fell 62-35 to the Burns Hilanders Nov. 28 on the road.

The team travels to the Umatilla Tournament Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 6-8 where they will face 1A Nixyaawii on day one.

Wright is expecting Thursday’s game to be a tough match up.

“They have phenomenal

shooters and press the whole game — it doesn’t matter if they’re up by 50 or down by 50,” he said.

### Grant Union girls work out first-game jitters

The 2A Grant Union Prospector girls came out with a 73-22 win Friday over the 1A Sherman Huskies, which hosted a tournament in Moro last weekend.

The Prospectors had a close loss Saturday 41-39 to the 2A Culver Bulldogs.

In their first game of the season, Nov. 28, Grant Union fell 58-47 to the 3A Burns Hilanders.

Head coach Kristi Moore said it was a competitive game, and her team worked hard, making a run in the fourth quarter to try to close the gap.

“We missed some critical shots and some layups which reflect the start-of-the-season nerves,” she said. “Burns is a great team with intense defense. We know that we need to continue to work on rebounding.”

Senior Kaylee Wright had 20 points in the game, earning 11 in the fourth quarter.

Grant Union next travels to the Thursday-through-Saturday Umatilla Tournament, and they will host Burns at 6 p.m. Friday, Dec. 14.

### Prairie City boys start season with two wins, girls lose two

The 1A Prairie City Panther boys started their season on a positive note on the road.

The team beat the 1A Joseph Eagles 55-52 on Friday.

Panther head coach Sam Workman said his team was a little “rough around the edges” and noted it was both teams’ first game of the season.

“Levi (Burke) did well — they all did well,” he said. “We didn’t shoot as

well as we wanted to but came out with the win.”

In Saturday’s game against the Enterprise Outlaws, a team that moved from the 2A to 1A class, Prairie City came out with a 64-57 win.

Workman said it was a close game, and the Outlaws were catching back up.

“They forgot to miss, and we couldn’t hit,” he said. “My big guys had to work.”

Prairie City will travel to the Friday-Saturday Condon Christmas Tournament where they will face Ione and Condon/Wheeler.

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