

Youth wrestling regular season wraps up

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County Wrestling Club athletes Taylor Parsons, 10, and Owen Parsons, 8, of John Day won championship titles at the Dec. 22 ORWAY East Cascade Regional tournament in Irrigon.

It was Taylor's fifth consecutive title, this year beating Kadin Allen of Team Xtreme in the 71-pound weight class 9-10 age division.

Owen, wrestling in the 67-pound 7-8 division, beat Aiden Gerrard of Hermiston Youth Wrestling.

Several other Grant County wrestlers competed well at the regional event.

Placing second were Kale Tremblay, Blake Sandor and Mason Benge. Ginny Clarry also earned second place in the girls division. Zeke Rookstool had a third-place finish for the boys.

The team's regular season ended with the Dec. 15 Wallowa Mountain Brawl (ORWAY) in Enterprise.

About eight of the local youth wrestlers will continue on to a few more competitions.

Mason Benge, 12, was invited to compete on the 12U All-State team, traveling to Utah for competitions. The sixth-grader also plans to finish out the season wrestling in some junior high tournaments with Grant Union.

Wrestlers who place at the Jan. 12 Eastern Oregon Classic Qualifier in La Grande, one of five qualifier events in Oregon, will advance to the Oregon Classic in Redmond, a tournament that includes youth and high school wrestlers.

Next is the Buckle Classic tournament in Burns, scheduled for Jan. 26.

Any youth wrestler who is a part of the USA league can also compete in the Feb. 2-3 Kids Collegiate State Championships in Corvallis.

Grant County Wrestling Club head coach Steve Parsons said his 29 athletes, who range in age from 4 to 14, competed well this season winning 65-75 percent of their matches as a team.

He said several wrestlers are showing improvement. "Beau Van Cleave did



Contributed photo/Heather Rookstool

Wrestling buddies Taylor Parsons, left, and Zeke Rookstool pose together after the East Cascades Regional Championships. Parsons, wrestling at 71 lbs. in the 9-10 age division, won the title in his bracket. Rookstool, wrestling at 90 lbs. in the 9-10 division, earned third place at the Dec. 22 event in Irrigon.

really well this year, and so did Jase Whatley," he said. "We had a lot of young wrestlers who came along really well, including Hank Giffin, Kale Tremblay and Blake Sandor — they went to the tournaments and competed well."

He said Van Cleave and Benge, wrestling in the top of their weight class and age range, gained a lot of experi-

ence this year.

Coach Parsons said the sport takes dedication, from the athletes and parents, and most of the events require traveling long distances and a \$5-10 fee.

"We had a lot of support from the parents," he said. "Their parents put a lot of effort into this."

The wrestling group held a "pin-a-thon" fundraiser this year. Over the season, 24 wrestlers earned 194 pins.

In the age divisions, Tremblay had 14 pins in the 5-6 age group, Van Cleave had 19 pins for 7-8, Taylor Parsons had 17 for 9-10 and Mason Benge had 16 for 11-12.

For more information on next season's enrollment or other questions, contact Jessica Knowles at 541-620-1272 or Heather Rookstool at 541-390-5790.

ORWAY East Cascade Regionals in Irrigon (Dec. 22)

- Kale Tremblay: second, 3 wins (2 by pin), 1 loss
- Blake Sandor: second, 3 wins (2 by pin), 1 loss
- Samuel Stout: sixth, 1 win, 3 losses
- Jase Whatley: 1 win by pin, 1 loss
- Beau Van Cleave: fifth, 2 wins (1 by pin), 2 losses

- Owen Parsons: first, 3 wins by pin, 1 loss
 - Jerrett Wadell: fifth, 2 wins by pin, 2 losses
 - Taylor Parsons: first, 4 wins (3 by pin)
 - Zeke Rookstool: third, 1 win, 2 losses
 - Mason Benge: second, 4 wins (3 by pin), 1 loss
 - Tristan Clarry: fifth, 1 win by pin, 2 losses
- #### USA Austin Hennessee Memorial Tournament in Knappa, Idaho (Dec. 15)
- Owen Parsons: first, 3 wins (2 by pin)
 - Taylor Parsons: first, 2 wins by pin
- #### ORWAY Wallowa Mountain Brawl in Enterprise (Dec. 15)
- Samuel Stout: second, 2 wins, 1 loss
 - Jack Knowles: first, 1 win
 - Zeke Rookstool: first, 4 wins by pin
 - Charley Knowles: fourth
- #### ORWAY Eastern Oregon Open in Milton-Freewater (Dec. 8)
- Coyle Van Cleave: second, 3 wins
 - Blake Sandor: first, 3 wins (2 by pin)
 - Jase Whatley: 4 wins (3 by pin) 1 loss
 - Beau Van Cleave: first, 5 wins (4 by pin)
 - Jarett Waddell: fifth, 1 win, 3 losses
 - Mason Benge: first, 5 wins (3 by pin)
- #### USA La Pine Hawk Challenge (Dec. 8)
- Owen Parsons: third, 4 wins by pin, 1 loss
 - Taylor Parsons: third, 3 wins (1 by pin), 1 loss
- #### ORWAY Northeast Oregon Classic in Union (Dec. 1)
- Beau Van Cleave: first, 3 pins
 - Coyle Van Cleave: first, 2 pins
 - Jase Whatley: second, 2 wins by pin, 1 loss
 - Blake Sandor: second, 2 wins (by pin), 1 loss
 - Mason Benge: second, 3 wins by pin, 1 loss
 - Zeke Rookstool: second, 2 wins (1 by pin), 1 loss
 - Taylor Parsons: first, 4 wins (3 by pin)
 - Owen Parsons: third, 2 wins by pin, 2 losses
 - Brogan Rookstool: first, 3 wins by pin
 - Ritter Rookstool: third, 1 win by pin, 2 losses

SPORTS SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, JAN. 11

Long Creek/Ukiah @ Burnt River in Unity, girls 5 p.m., boys 6:30 p.m.

Dayville/Monument vs. Crane in Dayville, girls 6 p.m., boys 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JAN. 12

Dayville/Monument vs. Prairie City in Monument, girls 2 p.m., boys 3:30 p.m.

Long Creek/Ukiah @ Crane, girls 2 p.m., boys 3:30 p.m.

Grant Union basketball @ Weston-McEwen in Athena, boys 4 p.m., girls 5:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, JAN. 15

Grant Union wrestling @ Burns Crane Duals in Burns, TBA

SPORTS ROUNDUP

Two Prospector wrestlers earn tournament titles

Grant Union Prospector wrestlers Drew Lusco (285), a junior, and Damion Young (145), a senior, earned championship titles at the Friday-Saturday Cosgrove-Eschler Invitational Tournament at Joseph High School.

"Damion had an excellent tournament," said Grant Union head coach Andy Lusco. "We are very proud of his effort and improvement."

Young has a 10-5 season record, and Drew Lusco is 22-1.

Drew said he was happy to beat Travis Jonsson (11-3) of Neah-Kah-Nie, who is the opponent he defeated at last season's state championship finals.

He said Saturday's match went well, and he won by a 7-2 decision.

"Drew beat him handily," coach Lusco said.

Freshman Justin Hodge, who is 14-8 on the season, earned second place at the tournament in the 152 weight class.

"Justin had a great tournament," Lusco said. "It is pretty impressive to see a freshman in the finals."

The coach said sophomore Ethan Moore (9-9), who earned third in the 106 weight class, is becoming "one of the best in the district."

Lusco said sophomore Logan McCluskey (9-6) had the "best tournament of his career" with a fourth-place finish in a tough weight bracket.

"He defeated some quality opponents," the coach said. "He came in as our No. 2 at 152 and unseeded, so a fourth-place finish is awesome."

Sophomore Quinten Hallgarth (11-8) earned fourth in the 170 bracket.

"Quinten has really turned a corner and become a tough kid to beat," Lusco said. "He is maturing and learning to work through

hard times on the mat without getting pinned."

Lusco said that although the girls didn't win a match at the tournament, they wrestled well, taking several matches to three full rounds versus varsity boys.

He noted that freshmen Arionna Young (7-2) and Ashley Henry (1-3), both wrestling at 120, each won an exhibition match by a pin, and Sophie Brockway (2-4) and Trinity Hutchison (1-0) each wrestled the No. 1 seed in their brackets.

"The girls have improved rapidly," he said. "Many coaches and fans commented on how tough they are."

Lusco said they placed fourth as team, but they left a lot of team members, and "points," at home.

"When we get to full strength as a team, we have a chance to be in the top two at districts," he said.

- 106: Ethan Moore (9-9), third, 20 team points, 3 wins, 1 loss
- 120: Ashley Henry (1-5), 2 losses
- Arionna Young (7-4), 2 losses
- 126: Sam McCracken (4-9), 2 losses
- 132: Casey Vaughan (3-12), 1 team point, 1 win, 2 losses
- 138: Sydney Brockway (0-3), 2 losses
- 145: Damion Young (14-5), first place, 29 team points, 4 wins, 0 losses
- 152: Sophie Brockway (2-6), 2 losses
- 152: Justin Hodge (17-9), second place, 19 team points, 3 wins, 1 loss
- Logan McCluskey (13-8), fourth place, 4 wins, 2 losses
- 170: Trinity Hutchison (1-2), 2 losses
- Quinten Hallgarth (14-10), fourth place, 16 team points, 3 wins, 1 loss
- 285: Drew Lusco (22-1) first place, 26 team points, 3 wins, 0 losses

Grant Union girls' pressure defense snags Bobcats, Outlaws

Grant Union senior sisters Kaylee and Hailie Wright combined for 41 points in Saturday night's 60-52 conference basketball win over the Union Bobcats.

The win gives the Prospectors a 4-0 record in the Blue Mountain Conference. Grant Union ranks No. 4 among OSAA's 2A teams with a 10-3 overall record.

The Prospectors led by three points over Union in the first quarter and were ahead 34-29 at the half.

"Once again we relied on our defense to pull us



Wallowa County Chieftain/Tim Trainor

Dylan Marr of Enterprise looks for a pass as he is hounded by Grant Union defender Mason Gerry Friday.

through the game," said Grant Union head coach Kristi Moore. "They had some great shooters, so our pressure defense took away their open shot."

The team was road weary after returning from Friday's game in Enterprise at 3 a.m. Moore said being tired and the break in rhythm from the holidays was the hardest part, but the team pushed through.

The Grant Union girls defeated the Enterprise Outlaws 56-44.

Playing in the Outlaws' smaller gym, with a loud community crowd and school band, is both fun and challenging, Moore said.

"We were able to pressure them, and luckily it all worked out in our favor both nights," she added.

Grant Union will face the Weston-McEwen Tiger-Scots on the road in Athena Saturday. The Prospector boys play at 4 p.m. followed by the girls at 5:30 p.m.

"My theory is that, if we do what we do best, we can outplay the other teams and prevail," Moore said. "We'll focus on refining our game plan."

Prospector boys show competitive side with 2 wins

Teamwork made the difference for the Grant Union Prospector boys basketball team as they won back-to-back conference games, defeating the Outlaws 48-43 on Friday in Enterprise and

the Union Bobcats 59-47 Saturday in John Day.

Prospector head coach Kelsy Wright said his boys are "starting to put it together, working as a team."

On Saturday night, Grant Union was ahead 31-27 at the half, then outshot Union 18-12 in the fourth.

Wright said junior Tristan Morris and senior Jacob Vaughan both hit big shots and had some good defensive plays.

"Devon Stokes (a sophomore) had phenomenal defense the whole game on their best player," the coach said. "Tanner Elliott (a senior) is always hustling on the floor and always getting rebounds and put-backs, the way that we need him to work — he's been like that the last three to four games."

Wright said in their game against Enterprise, his team came "ready to play." "It's always good to get a road win, especially in league," he said.

Dayville/Monument girls blast road opponents

The Dayville/Monument Tiger girls basketball team blew away their competition with a 47-15 win Friday over the Long Creek/Ukiah Mountain Lions in Long Creek and a 39-14 win Saturday over the Harper Hornets.

Tiger junior starter Aubrey Bowlus was injured early in Friday's game.

"We will be looking for a younger player to step up on defense going against some tough league opponents this week," said Tiger head coach Taylor Schmadeka.

Kyla Emerson led Dayville/Monument with 16 points on Friday, followed by Faythe Schafer with 12. Denali Twehues added 10, and Courtney Nichols added 9.

On Saturday, Twehues led the Tigers with a season-high 15 points. Schafer contributed 8 points, and Emerson and Nichols added 7 each. Haylee Collins had 2 points.

"Both days the girls played very good defense and did a great job on the offensive and defensive rebounds," Schmadeka said. "We took open shots and didn't try to force any shots."

"For this week, we are going to continue our strong defense and focus on getting rebounds," he added.

Dayville/Monument (9-2 overall, 1-0 league) was scheduled to host High Desert League opponents the Burnt River Bulls (1-6, 0-2) in Dayville Tuesday, past press time.

The Tigers host the Crane Mustangs (10-2, 2-0) at 6 p.m. Friday in Dayville and the Prairie City Panthers (2-8, 2-0) at 2 p.m. Saturday in Monument.

Long Creek/Ukiah has two road games this week, facing Burnt River in Unity at 5 p.m., followed by the boys, Friday and the Crane Mustangs on Saturday at 2 p.m.

Long Creek/Ukiah boys top Dayville/Monument in close contest

The Long Creek/Ukiah Mountain Lions defeated Dayville/Monument in a 64-60 nail-biter Friday in Long Creek.

The teams knotted up the score several times, including 28-28 at the half.

"We tied again at 40, then we managed to pull away a little bit at the very end of

the game," said Long Creek/Ukiah coach Amos Studtmann who co-coaches with TC Conner.

He said the Tigers started to close the gap with free throws and layups, but "we held onto our lead and were able to finish strong."

Mountain Lion James Kreamier shot the ball well, and teammates Ben Combs and Thomas Kreamier helped on rebounding with Thomas contributing to the win with several blocks, Studtmann said.

"When our team worked together, passed the ball, communicated on defense, the game would swing in our favor," Studtmann said. "When they tried to score alone or forgot to talk, we'd turn the ball over, and the other team would score."

Dayville/Monument head coach Jeff Schafer said his team didn't play to their full potential that night.

"We started well, but slowly slipped back into some of our bad habits," Schafer said. "I'm looking forward to playing them again. I feel we will be stronger and better prepared."

Donovan Schafer led the Tigers with 22 points, and Drew Wilburn had 13.

The Tigers have a 4-7 overall record and are 0-1 in league, and the Mountain Lions are 2-7 and 1-2.

Dayville/Monument followed up Saturday with a 47-37 win over Harper on the road.

Coach Schafer said he was pleased with the teamwork he saw in their game against Harper, which he said has a solid team this season.

"I was pleased to see our boys rally back after a tough loss," he said.

Against the Hornets, Donovan Schafer led the Tigers with 18 points, followed by Wilburn with 10.

"Mark Thomas played great defense both games," the coach said. "Cade Milton and Drew Wilburn were strong at rebounding on Saturday."

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JUNIPER ARTS COUNCIL/GRANT COUNTY CULTURAL COALITION IS SEEKING GRANT PROPOSALS FOR OREGON CULTURAL TRUST GRANT AWARDS

The coalition has \$7,000 from the Oregon Cultural Trust to distribute in Grant County to organizations for projects relating to culture. Projects may be related to the visual or performing arts, heritage, and/or humanities.

Applications are available from Karin Barntish, 131 W. Main Street, John Day or call Kris Beal at 541-932-4892 for more information or an application.

Grant applications will be accepted until February 8, 2019 at 5:00 pm.