



## Prairie City boys place fifth in state, falling to Days Creek

Final loss decided in last minute of play

By Angel Carpenter  
 Blue Mountain Eagle

The Prairie City Panther boys basketball team finished in fifth place at the 1A Boys Basketball State Championship in Baker City on Saturday, falling 56-53 to the Days Creek Wolves.

Panther head coach Sam Workman said both teams battled hard in their final game.

"I was excited with the way they played their last game of the season and how they fought," he said of his team, adding they all performed well.

Workman said his five graduating seniors "are leaving tough shoes to fill."

Ending their high school basketball career are Levi Burke, Syd Holman, Jonathan Lawrence, Brett Copenhaver and Lane Williams.

"Each team is different, and we'll have different game plans for next year," Workman said.

He said the upperclassmen performed well all year, and his younger athletes stepped up and played hard when they had the chance.

Jojari Field, a sophomore, was a starter this season and last, when the Panthers placed second at state.

"I'm extremely proud of every single one of the players this year,"



Prairie City Panther Marcus Judd is in action against Nixyaawii with Golden Eagle player Jace Ashley (21) defending.

Field said. "We didn't get the outcome we expected, but it was still pretty good."

Field said he's proud that he and his teammates and coaches made the return to state.

"I'm going to miss playing with all the seniors, but I can't wait until

next year, because I'm pretty sure we can do great things again," he said.

Prairie City finished third in the 1A-8 High Desert League standings but won the championship title at the District 8 tournament on Feb. 16 in John Day.

Workman said his returning starters will bring talent to next year's team.

"Jojari shoots well — we couldn't do it without him," Workman said, adding that both Lucas McKinley and Cole Deiter, who will return as seniors, take

care of the ball.

McKinley is sharp at hitting 3-pointers, and Deiter will be even stronger next year, the coach said.

### Quarterfinal

Prairie City, seeded eighth, started the tournament on Feb. 27 with a thrilling 52-48 victory over the No. 1-seed Sherman Huskies in the quarterfinals.

The Panthers had previously beat the Huskies 54-52 early in the season in Prairie City.

Workman said the contest was a tough win.

"They were wanting to beat us pretty bad," he said. "It was a dog fight to the end."

Burke scored the first 2 points of the game off an assist from Field.

The teams tied the score twice in the first quarter with Sherman leading 16-11 going into the second. The Huskies had a 26-22 lead at halftime.

The teams knotted up the score twice in the third, and Sherman pulled ahead 43-34 going into the final eight minutes of play.

In the fourth, Sherman hit two of nine attempts from the field and sank 1-of-3 at the free-throw line.

Prairie City landed six of eight attempts from the field, and making a big difference in the final two minutes were Deiter, Holman and McKinley who each went 2-of-2 at the free-throw line for the Panthers' win.

See State, Page A13

## Grant Union girls end season with loss

Five seniors close high school basketball careers

By Angel Carpenter  
 Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant Union Prospector girls' season came to a heartbreaking end Friday morning with a consolation loss to the No. 9-seed Central Linn Cobras, 53-30, at the OSAA 2A Girls Basketball State Championship in Pendleton.

Grant Union, seeded fifth, lost the quarterfinal round 54-36 on Thursday to the Coquille Red Devils, seeded fourth, at the Pendleton Convention Center.

"Both were very strong teams," Grant Union head coach Kristi Moore said of their competition.

Central Linn also had height, and even though Grant Union has great jumpers, the Prospectors had difficulty rebounding and also struggled with shooting.

Moore said her team "played solid defense" in both games.

"It's a great accomplishment to make it to the state tournament," Moore said.

Out of 47 teams in the state "only eight get to play in the tournament, so it's a great opportunity," she added.

Five Prospector seniors close their high school careers in the sport: Hailie Wright, Kaylee Wright, Madi McKrola, Alcie Moore and Marissa Smith.

Smith said making it to the tournament made her senior year a memorable one.

"Our ultimate goal was to make it to the state tournament again, and we did," she said. "Although it didn't end the way we wanted it to, I'd like to thank my teammates, coaches and the community for all their support."

She said the team had great chemistry and got along well.

"Everybody worked hard, and we came in and gave 100 percent," Smith said.

McKrola was named the Player of the Game in both matches.

"Madi is determined, and she plays great defense and those things really rewarded her," Moore said. "She definitely was our Player of the Game. She's our 'go-to' a



A trio of Coquille players surround Madison McKrola, of Grant Union, as she eyes the basket Thursday during a state quarterfinal game in Pendleton.

lot, and she deserved that honor."

The Prospectors were league champions and placed second at the Blue Mountain Conference tournament to Heppner.

Heppner, seeded sixth at the state championship, won the title.

In Friday's consolation game, held at Pendleton High School, Grant Union and Central Linn had an equal share of good and poor shooting in the first quarter with the Cobras gaining a slim 15-13 lead.

Twin sisters Hailie and Kaylee Wright each sank a 3-pointer, with Hailie also hitting a jump shot. Prospector Tyler Blood had a block and scored on a layup, and McKrola scored in the paint and shot 1-of-2 at the free-throw line.

Cobra Colleen McLaughlin scored 11 of her 17 points, including three 3-pointers, in the first eight minutes. Grant Union was down 26-15 midway through the second, but started to climb out of the hole when McKrola scored off an assist from Kaytlyn Wells. Then Hailie Wright scored off Smith's steal.

The Prospectors came within 2 points of the Cobras, holding Central Linn at 26, until the last 23 seconds. That's when Cobra Sarah Conner scored on a layup, and Gracie Robb stole the ball with Jessica Neal sinking a 3-pointer, giving Central Linn a 31-24 lead going into halftime.

Central Linn held Grant Union to 4 points in the third, while scoring 13, to move ahead 44-28. The Cobras also outscored the Prospectors 9-2 in the fourth for the 23-point win.

McLaughlin was Player

of the Game for Central Linn.

McKrola and Hailie Wright led Grant Union in scoring with 9 each, and McKrola had five rebounds and Hailie had four rebounds. Kaylee Wright scored 8 points, Tyler Blood and Kaytlyn Wells each scored 2, and Wells had five rebounds.

McLaughlin led the teams in scoring with 17 points, followed by Sarah Conner with 16 points and 11 rebounds.

Grant Union's shooting percentage from the field fell from 40 percent in the first half to 8.3 percent in the second, while Central Linn shot 42.3 percent from the field in the first half and 34.8 percent in the second half.

The Cobras, led by head coach Marcus Campbell, hit 6-of-12 3-pointers and had 41 rebounds, and the Prospectors had 3-of-16 3-pointers and had 26 rebounds.

On free throws, Central Linn shot 9-of-16, while Grant Union hit 3-of-12.

### Quarterfinal

In the quarterfinal match Thursday, Grant Union kept the first half close against the Coquille Red Devils but fell 54-36.

Prospector Hailie Wright lit up Grant Union's side of the scoreboard first, with a layup scored off her steal. She had three steals in the first quarter, and McKrola had one steal. The pair combined for 11 points to Coquille's 14.

The teams each scored 11 points in the second.

Prospector Abby Lusco came in to score 4 points early in the quarter, and McKrola added 2. Kaylee Wright stole the ball and scored on a fast break. Near

### GRANT UNION VS. CENTRAL LINN

Hailie Wright: 9 points (one 3-pointer), 4 rebounds, 2 assists, 1 steal  
 Madi McKrola: 9 points (one 3-pointer, 2-4 free throws), 5 rebounds, 1 steal  
 Kaylee Wright: 8 points (one 3-pointer, 1-4 free throws), 3 rebounds, 1 assist, 2 steals  
 Kaytlyn Wells: 2 points, 5 rebounds, 1 assist  
 Tyler Blood: 2 points, 2 blocks  
 Marissa Smith: 3 rebounds, 1 steal  
 Baylee Combs: 1 rebound  
 Alcie Moore: 1 rebound, 1 assist, 1 block

### GRANT UNION VS. COQUILLE

Madi McKrola: 14 points (4-6 free throws), 9 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal  
 Hailie Wright: 9 points (one 3-pointer, 2-2 free throws), 4 rebounds, 1 assist, 4 steals  
 Tyler Blood: 4 points (2-2 free throws), 4 rebounds, 2 blocks, 1 steal  
 Kaylee Wright: 3 points (2-2 free throws), 3 rebounds, 1 assist, 2 blocks, 1 steal  
 Baylee Combs: 3 points (one 3-pointer), 2 rebounds, 1 assist, 2 steals  
 Kaytlyn Wells: 4 rebounds, 1 assist  
 Marissa Smith: 2 rebounds  
 Abby Lusco: 4 points, 1 rebound  
 Alcie Moore: 3 rebounds, 1 assist

the buzzer, Hailie Wright landed a 3-pointer, and Coquille led 25-22 going into halftime.

It seemed the Red Devils couldn't miss a shot in the third, scoring 17 points while holding Grant Union to 5.

Hailie and Kaylee Wright both went 2-of-2 at the free-throw line, and McKrola added 1-of-2.

Red Devil Morgan Baird scored 8 of her 22 points in the fourth, including 6-of-6 at the free-throw line in the final two minutes.

McKrola had 14 points, nine rebounds, one assist and one steal in the game.

Baird, who had 22 points, nine rebounds, five assists and two steals, was Player of the Game for Coquille.

Moore, who has previous coaching experience in Phoenix, Arizona, took the reins as Grant Union head coach this year.

She said every day was a "great experience" coaching the team.

"It was fun," she said. "They have a great perspective on life, and that just makes the season better."

She said the team is a "great group of kids on and off the basketball court."

The seniors, she said, are "hard working, athletic and great teammates."

"We'll definitely miss them next year, but we look forward to our posts all returning — Kaytlyn Wells, Tyler Blood and Abby Lusco — which is exciting for the program."



Columnist Rod Carpenter shot this Utah bison with a .338 Winchester Magnum in 2015.

## The hammer of Thor

Long ago, in a land far, far away, a young man found himself within spitting distance of a cranky grizzly bear while carrying a borrowed 7mm Remington Magnum.

By some miracle, he was not converted to bear scat, and his heart did eventually restart. Upon his return to civilization, he promptly went out and bought a .338 Winchester Magnum and has never looked back.

In 1958, Winchester shortened the .375 H&H case to fit in .30-06 length actions, necked it down to .338 and the .338 Winchester Magnum was born. It has never been wildly popular but has always had a steady following. Jim Carmichael and Jack Atcheson were big fans.

Alaskan guides gravitated to it as a backup gun for the big bears.

That being said, the .338 isn't for everyone. With around 30 foot-pounds of recoil (twice that of a .270), there is no question in your mind when it goes off. Handling that kind of recoil, while maintaining good accuracy, takes some practice. However, if you really want to make something dead, it is hard to beat the .338 in pure thumping power. The .338 dumps as much energy at 200 yards as the .30-06 does at the muzzle.

The .338 doesn't have the sex appeal of the 28 Nosler or the .300 RUM. It isn't kind and cuddly like the 6.5 Creed or your favorite .243. No, the .338 is the quiet, slightly scary guy that most folks give plenty of room until they get in a jam, and suddenly he is really popular. I play around with lots of different rifles and calibers,



Rod Carpenter

but in the corner of my gun closet sits my Ruger .338, and when I draw a hard-to-get tag or go hunting big things

like elk, it is the gun I reach for every time.

One of the nice things about the .338 is that all the bullets in that caliber are designed to work best at .338 Winchester Magnum velocities because for a long time it was the only cartridge of that caliber around.

Manufactures of .30 caliber or 7mm bullets struggle to develop bullets that will be driven anywhere from 2,600 to 3,500 feet per second. That is just hard to do. They do make .338 bullets that weigh less than 200 grains, but I think that is trying to make it something it is not. For all around use, bullets of 200 to 225 grains work well. The 250-grain bullets arrive with amazing authority.

In 2015, lightning struck, and I drew a Utah bison tag. I managed to sneak up within 330 yards of a big bull and thumped him three times with a 250-grain Swift A frame. He didn't go 50 yards. He was probably dead after the first one, but I get excited sometimes.

No, the .338 Winchester Magnum is not the best choice for a long-range rig. It is the worst idea for an ultra-light backpacking rifle, but if you just want a reliable, works-first-time-every-time rifle, it is hard to beat.

We welcome your comments at shootingthebreezebme@gmail.com.

Rod Carpenter is a husband, father and hunting fool.