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SPORTS • OUTDOORS • CLASSIFIEDS

Grant Union places third at district VB tourney

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant Union Prospector volleyball team placed third at the 2A Blue Mountain Conference District Tournament Saturday, and now await news to see if they advance to the state playoffs with a wildcard.

The Prospectors started the tournament with 3-2 loss to Stanfield, the Tigers winning with scores of 18-25, 25-17, 26-24 and 25-21.

“We came out and played the first set perfectly, executed our game plan well, and won the first set of the match,” said Grant Union head coach Ali Abrego. “Throughout the course of the next three sets, the girls battled really hard, always working for each point, and had several bright spots with our hitters, just unfortunately couldn’t pull out the win — still very proud of their efforts.”

Grant Union next defeated the Weston-McEwen TigerScots 3-2, with scores of 25-19, 16-25, 23-25, 25-23 and 15-13.

“This game was intense — coming down to the last two points of the game (in three out of five) sets,” Abrego said.

In the final set, the Prospectors were down several points at the start, then battled back to win the match and claim third place.

“This weekend Abby Lusco was a huge stand-out in both matches, Harli Grove came into the Weston (during) set four and had some very crucial plays for us, and Baylee Combs with assists,” Abrego said.

Receiving All-League honors were seniors Kaytlyn Wells and Taylor Allen for second team. Honorable mention recognition went to junior Maddie Spencer, senior Baylee Combs and sophomore Lauryn Pettyjohn.

The Union Bobcats placed first at the district tournament with the Stanfield Tigers in second. After Grant Union, Weston-McEwen placed fourth, and the Heppner Mustangs were fifth.

A ranking freeze will take place Tuesday night, past press time.

The top two teams from each of the six leagues will advance to the playoffs, as well as the four highest-ranked teams that were not in the top two of their league.

As of Tuesday morning, Grant Union was ranked 11th in the state. The teams ranked first, third, fourth, sixth, seventh and 10th as of Tuesday morning advanced to the playoffs as the top two from their leagues.

The league with the second- and fifth-ranked teams had not announced its top two as of Tuesday morning.

Prairie City volleyball team advances to state playoffs

Panthers place third at district tournament

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

The Prairie City Panther volleyball team will face the Joseph Eagles at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 30, in Joseph in round one of the 1A OSAA State Championships.

Prairie City defeated the Adrian Antelopes 3-2 for third place Saturday at the District 1A High Desert League Volleyball Tournament playoffs in John Day.

The Panthers and Antelopes went back and forth with Prairie City pulling ahead to claim the victory, 25-15, 16-25, 25-17, 10-25 and 15-9.

Panther Katie Hire had several kills in the first set, and Rilee Emmel had a couple aces early on, helping their team stay ahead of Adrian from the beginning.

Prairie City’s Emily Ennis made it 19-11 with a kill. Then, after a long rally, Panther Hailee Wall blocked to make it 20-11 on their way to the 10-point win in set one.

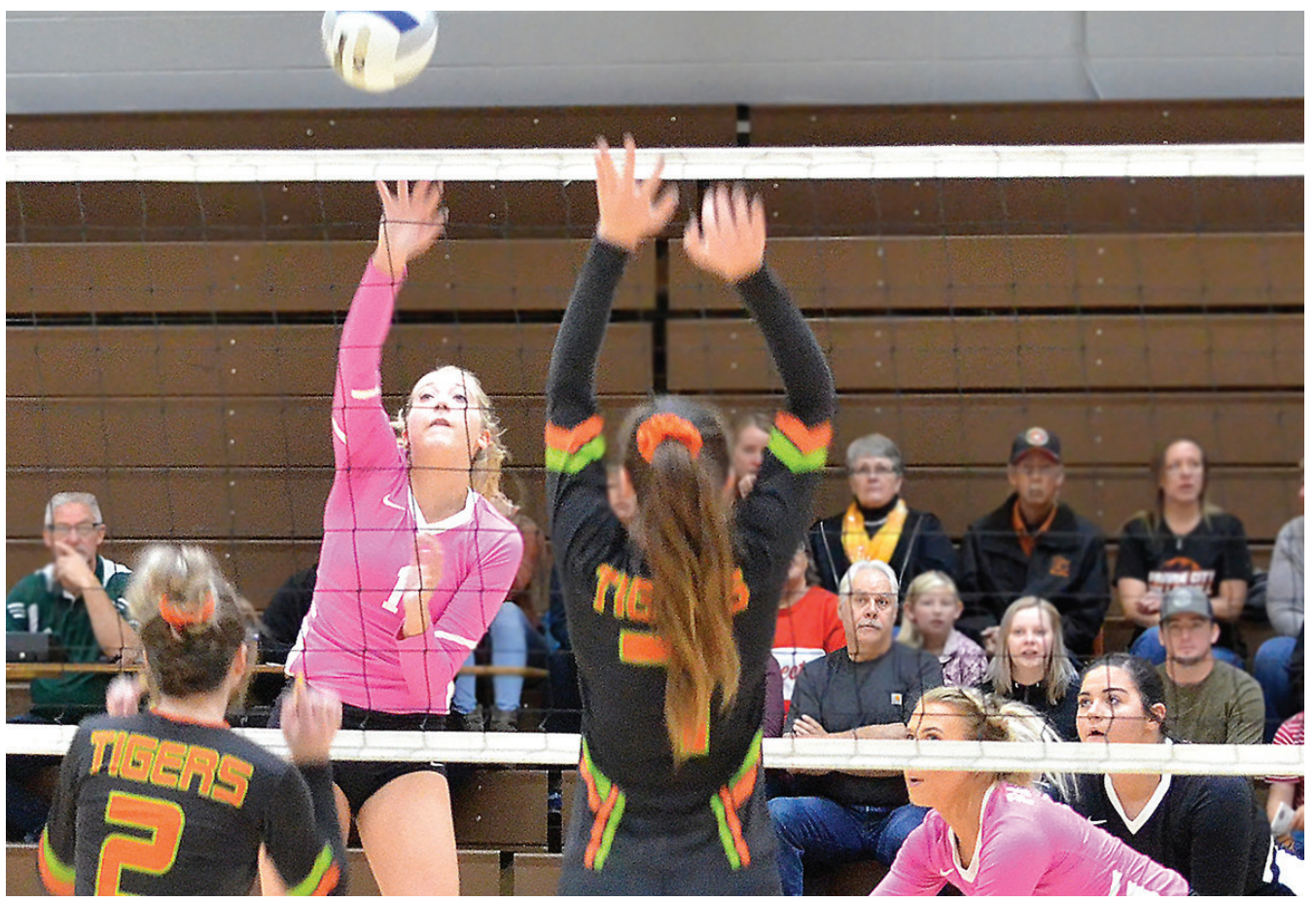
Adrian turned the tables in set two. Prairie City came within 2 points midway, but Adrian pulled ahead with a 6-point serving run and held the lead.

The teams went back and forth again for sets three and four.

In the fifth set, the teams were tied 6-6. Then Panther Laken McKay spiked the ball, and with McKay serving, the team jumped ahead 11-6.

Prairie City finished it off with Wall and Emmel attacking the ball. Then Ennis served an ace, followed by Hire spiking for the win.

“We knew the girls had it in them the whole time,” said Prairie City head coach Jordan Bass. “When the girls played Adrian in Adrian (earlier in the season), we didn’t have our best day, so going into today, I



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter
Prairie City Panther Katie Hire (1) hits the ball with Dayville/Monument Tiger Aubreianna Osborne (7) looking to block at the District 1A High Desert League District Tournament.



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter
Dayville/Monument Tiger Brooklyn Near (2) slams the ball over the net to the awaiting Prairie City Panthers.

just hoped everything would come together.”

“I always tell them, I’m never going to stop demanding their best,” she said. “It was good to see that those girls were mentally tough today and were able to get it done.”

Bass said Hire had a solid day.

“Definitely on offense, this was probably her biggest showing,” the coach said, adding that both Hire and Emily Ennis performed well as setters.

“Shaine Madden (defen-

sive specialist) was working really hard trying to do her job back there and serving really tough today,” Bass said.

The coach said Laken McKay, a freshman, also performed well and gained valuable experience.

“It’s huge for her, going into the next parts of her career,” Bass said. “It’s really exciting to see what she’s going to do.”

Emmel was an “all-around” at the tournament, Bass said.

“I really have a lot of

faith in her,” she said. “She really stepped up today all around the court, serving, passing, hitting — I couldn’t be happier with the way that they all played today.”

Bass is assisted by Lance and Louanne Zwegardt.

On the way to third at the tournament, Prairie City beat the Dayville/Monument Tigers 3-1 in Game One, then fell to the No. 1-seeded Crane Mustangs, Crane winning 3-0.

Concerning the upcoming round one state playoff match, Bass said that on Saturday they can only have so many expectations about what the other team is going to bring.

“We just have to bring our best and if our best is better than theirs, that’s all we can hope for,” she said.

Dayville/Monument Tigers

Dayville/Monument went on to beat the Huntington Locomotives in the consolation game.

“My kids, they were

good teammates,” said coach Osborne. “They rallied behind each other.”

For the day, she said Aubreianna Osborne had “a couple knock-down middle blocks,” and Aubrey Bowlus did a great job of finishing the rallies.

She said Miranda Cook had a good serving roll, and they fought to keep her serving.

“All the kids that came in did well, like Maggie Loescher,” the coach said. “She had some great passes from the back row. Hannah Hand had a couple kills in the front row. The kids did really well.”

Coach Osborne, assisted by Steven Schmidt, said she’s looking forward to seeing some of their sophomores and juniors stepping up next year.

She said their team is small, and they have a gap between veterans and beginners, but they plan to attend camps and work hard to bridge that gap.

Grant Union falls to Heppner 41-18 in John Day

Team faces Weston-McEwen on Friday

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant Union Prospector had hoped to be the first team to beat the Heppner Mustangs this season on Friday, but Heppner came away with the 41-18 win in John Day.

Heppner’s Kason Cimmiyotti scored the first touchdown of the game off a pass from Mustang quarterback Jayden Wilson, Cimmiyotti wide open in the center of the end zone.

Prospector Frank Douglass blocked the Mustang’s attempted kick for extra points.

Wilson scored 6 points on a keeper, with Mason Lehman adding the 2-point conversion. Then Grant Union fired up their offense.

Prospector Justin Hodge ran more than 50 yards on a kickoff return, weaving through a pack of Mustangs to score Grant Union’s first touchdown.

Heppner led 34-6 at the half.

Grant Union was energized after halftime.

Justin Hodge scored in the third, again on a kickoff return.

On Heppner’s next possession, Prospector Jack Strong made a tackle to bring up fourth and 1 for the Mustangs. Then



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter
Grant Union Prospector wide receiver Jordan Hall catches a long pass from Prospector quarterback Devon Stokes in Friday’s game against Heppner.



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter
Grant Union Prospectors Jack Strong, left, and Tanler Fuller (20) wrap up a Heppner ball carrier in Friday’s game.

Grant Union stopped Wilson in his tracks to take over on downs at the Hep-

pner 32-yard line. Unfortunately the Prospectors fumbled at the 5-yard line,

giving the ball up to Heppner, the Mustangs leading 41-12 going into the final 15 minutes.

With four minutes to go, Grant Union had possession of the ball on third and 9, and an offside penalty against Heppner made it third and 4.

Justin Hodge then made a carry for first down, and Grant Union quarterback Devon Stokes completed a pass to Russell Hodge.

Stokes connected with receiver Jordan Hall on a 31-yard pass, followed by Russell Hodge rushing 4 yards to score a touchdown.

“Tonight, we got behind

the eight ball early,” said Grant Union head coach Jason Miller. “A couple mistakes gave (Heppner) a short field, and they scored, and we were playing catch up for the rest of the game.”

He added, “The second half, I was extremely proud of our guys. They battled, they tackled well and completed some good passes. There were some great efforts, and we just can’t wait — we’ve got to do that from play one.”

Miller said that Heppner, led by head coach Greg Grant, is No. 1 in the state for a reason.

“They’re well coached, they have great talent,” Miller said. “Their quarterback is amazing, but you know, we can hang with them if we choose to.”

He said Stokes threw well, and the receivers came through and made some good catches.

“Defense was lights out second half,” he said. “They just battled, and that was great to see.”

Grant Union will face the Weston-McEwen TigerScots on the road Friday at 7 p.m. in Athena.

The TigerScots fell to the Stanfield Tigers 28-14 on Oct. 28, and Stanfield is a team Grant Union beat at home 32-0 on Oct. 11.

If Grant Union wins, they would be second in league with a chance to move on to the state playoffs.