

Prairie City/Burnt River football ends season fourth in state

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

The Prairie City/Burnt River Panthers ended a successful season in fourth place at Saturday's 1A Six-Man Crossover Championship — but third place went to the Triangle Lake Lakers who claimed the 25-20 win at Madras High School.

A pivotal moment, in favor of the Lakers, came in the fourth quarter when the Panthers were down 13-6.

The Lakers fumbled near Panther head coach Scott Dean standing on the sidelines with the Panthers recovering the ball. However, an inadvertent whistle was called on the play.

"The inadvertent whistle cost us a clear fumble recovery at midfield, and it was given back to Triangle, and they scored a touchdown on the next play," Dean said. "We went back down field and scored what would have been the winning touchdown with 54 seconds, but it was for naught. Referees make mistakes, but we shouldn't have placed ourselves in that position."

The Panthers had a 6-0 lead in the first quarter with Opie McDaniel making a 2-yard carry on a handoff from quarterback Jayden Winegar to score a touchdown.

Triangle Lake scored in the second quarter. McDaniel intercepted a Laker pass with just 2 seconds left and the score was tied 6-6 at the half.



Prairie City/Burnt River Panther Jayden Winegar (5) deflects a ball intended for Triangle Lake receiver Ben Wyse (87) on Saturday in Madras.

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Laker Ethan Reed added seven points for the Lakers in the third, scoring a touchdown on a long carry and rushing for the 1-point conversion.

The Panthers scored two touchdowns in the fourth quarter with Declan Zwegardt rushing 22 yards on the first and adding the 1-point conversion, and offensive lineman Jake McHatton grabbing a touchdown pass with Zwegardt scoring the extra point.

With just 54 seconds left in the game, the Lakers were able to run out the clock.

Placing first in the cham-

pionship was South Wasco Redsidies, defeating Joseph 19-6, and giving the Eagles their only loss of the season.

"I will miss our seniors, Austin Catron, Jake McHatton and Opie McDaniel who helped change our program for the better," Dean said of his team.

"The help of the Burnt River players for depth was instrumental to a successful season, Sammy Allen, Skyelar Evins, Emmanuel Stephen, Rocky Wang, Joao Vieira, Georgie Georgyiv, Jose Olea, Jedi Leesurapong and Sejun Park," the coach said.

"With Jayden Winegar,

Declan Zwegardt, Cole Teel, Boe Workman, Marcus Judd and Doyal Lawrence, we have a nucleus to build a successful future," he added.

"I want to thank my players, the parents, the community and my coaches Dennis Flippence and Jonathan Engberg for the change in program direction," Dean said. "Being the East Six-Man Football Southern Champions served our players well because they became champions — that can never be taken away and the program must work hard to get better in the future."



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The Prairie City cheerleading team gathers at the start of the Panthers' game versus the Huntington/Harper Locomotives on Sept. 27 in Prairie City. In the photo (front row, from left): Kat Ashley, Shaelynn Bice, Tianna Lawrence, Aries Bice; back row, Aleah Johns, Caitlin Titus, Caitlin Willet, BettyAnn Wilson and Emily Ennis.

Cheer team rallies around Prairie City athletes

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dance routines and games involving the students.

The Prairie City cheerleading team fires up the Panther sports fans with cheers, jumps, stunts and dance routines at the games as well as pep assemblies and homecoming rallies.

This year's nine cheerleaders, led by head coach Jill Wright, also found time to give back.

Each collected funds during a "Miracle Minute" on Friday, supporting breast cancer awareness, during Prairie City's homecoming match against Dayville/Monument at the Panther gym. The fundraiser was led by Prairie City senior Shaine Madden, a volleyball player, for her senior project, and the funds will help patients pay for mammograms at Blue Mountain Hospital in John Day.

The cheer team, along with the Panther mascot, also supported preschool and elementary school participants in the Oct. 16 Prairie City Panthers Jog-a-thon, which benefits the school's Parent Teacher Association.

Senior Shaelynn Bice is cheerleading captain, and four of the cheerleaders are members of the volleyball team, including seniors Emily Ennis and Aleah Johns and freshmen Kaitlynn Ashley and BettyAnn Wilson. Cheerleaders also include two juniors, Aries Bice and Caitlin Willet, and one sophomore, Tianna Lawrence.

Bice is in her third year of cheerleading.

She and the other cheerleaders organized a homecoming pep assembly, which included nine cheers, two

Bice said homecoming week went off with a big bang, noting a day was dedicated to decorating trucks and trailers with students riding the floats through town followed by a noise parade and bonfire.

She said she's enjoying having a big group on the cheer team this year.

"We're able to pull up big stunts that we haven't been able to do in the past," she said. "With a total of nine girls there's a lot we can do."

She added, "I'm just overall really happy with how our season turned out and really glad to have so many girls for my last year of cheering."

Wright said the cheerleaders will support the football team and the basketball team — though there may be different girls on the team for each season.

She likes the girls to focus on "a clean finish and sharp, clean movements" as they cheer.

When the Panthers score a touchdown, the girls share the excitement with moves such as the pencil, Herkie, toe touch and star jumps.

They also present dance routines and stunts, such as a pyramid formation, during halftime.

Wright said they're always learning new cheers and adding to the mix.

"We always want to build," she said. "I ask the girls what we're going to do to top it."

She said she's received many compliments and positive comments about her team.

"My heart overflows with pride," she said.

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Decoupage with Dave: Thursdays, starting November 7, 5:30 - 7:30 PM. Turn old boxes, furniture, trunks, etc. into durable, useful, and beautiful works of art.
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Arts After School & Friday Art Club: Ongoing; see more at PaintedSkyCenter.com/Kids-Art. Wait lists enabled; with enough interest we will look at starting additional classes.
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