



High Desert League names Long Creek's James Kreamier Player of the Year

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

Three Ukiah/Long Creek basketball players earned all-league honors from the High Desert basketball league at the conclusion of the 2019-2020 district tournament.

For the boys team, the league named James Kreamier, first-team, "Player of the Year."

Assistant coach Amos Studtman, who coached Kreamier throughout his high school career, said he was dedicated to practicing everyday since he was a freshman.

"He spent many, many hours in the gym working on his shots and was always dedicated to improving his game," said Studtman. "I credit his parents and his own work ethic to his success."

The senior led the Mountaineers to a 6-3 league record. Overall the team went 13-9.

"Winning Player of the Year was a huge accomplishment for me," said Kreamier. "It is the first time, as far as back as anyone can remember, that a player from Long Creek has won the honor,"



Eagle file photo

Long Creek's James Kreamier was named High Desert League Player of the Year.



Lucas McKinley

He said he worked hard throughout his high school career. "I want to thank my family, coaches and teammates for making this possible," said Kreamier.

Thomas Kreamier, a junior and James' brother, earned honorable mention.



Cole Deiter

Studtman said his favorite quote from Thomas Kreamier was when he said, "a good game for me does not show up on the books, it is when my brother has success."

Studtman said Thomas Kreamier brings the effort, teamwork and sacrifice to the team's success.



Betty Ann Wilson

From the girls basketball team, junior Dorothea Johnson, received honorable mention.

Studtman said Johnson was one of the most positive and uplifting members on the team this season.

"She puts a lot of work in on her own, working to improve every-

day," said Studtman.

"I would like to thank my family, my team and my coaches, without them I couldn't have accomplished this," Johnson said

Prairie City All-League

First team selections for the Panthers included seniors Cole Deiter and Lucas McKinley, while junior Jojari Field was named to the second team.

Honorable mention went to sophomore Marcus Judd and juniors Declan Zweygardt and Jayden Winegar

For the Lady Panthers, Betty Ann Wilson, a freshman, was named to the first team while junior Samantha Workman was named to the second team.

Honorable mention went to senior Hailey Wall and junior Katie Hire.

Dayville/Monument

Senior Drew Wilburn was named to the second team while junior Donovan Schafer earned honorable mention.

For the Lady Tigers, senior Denali Twehues was a second team selection.

Spring sports practices suspended



Eagle file photo

From the district track meet last year, sprinters in the girls 200-meter dash include, from left, Chelsy Lemmon of Stanfield-Echo (second place), Shelby Moncrief of Enterprise (first), Keree Graves of Weston-McEwen (fifth), Sierra Cates of Grant Union (third) and Shanniyah Hall of Grant Union (seventh). Spring sports practices have been suspended through March.

Grant Union track and field hopeful season is not canceled entirely because of coronavirus

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

As the rest of the sports world came to a halt in recent weeks, Grant Union's track and field met for practice Thursday, ahead of Oregon School Activities Association's suspension of all spring sports practices and contests through March 31.

A day before the ban, longtime head coach Sonna Smith said all the team could do, until further notice, was to continue to practice.

"That is all we can do right now," Smith said.

Smith said track and field competitions, even without spectators, are an inherently large gathering of people. They require a staff of 40 people or more, and tournaments typically see multiple schools competing.

Smith said that under normal circumstances it is critical to work on conditioning the first few weeks of the season, especially for those on the team who do not play a winter sport.

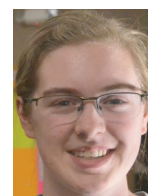
With 11 seniors return-



Sonna Smith



Sierra Cates



Erika Dickens



Megan McNamana

ing, six on the boys team and five on the girls, the looming possibility of not having a season at all takes on another dimension should OSAA decide to cancel the season altogether.

"As a coach, it is a frustration and letdown," Smith said. "I have coached many of these kids since they were in the seventh grade."

Smith said that most have plans after high school that go beyond track and field.

Smith said there would be challenges should the season resume after March 31.

"I have encouraged them to work on conditioning in the meantime, but the reality is that not all of them will," Smith said. "So for those kids we

are at square one."

For the girls team, who were a half of a point shy of taking the state championship last season, the goal is to place high enough in their respective events to make it to the state tourney.

Senior Megan McNamana, a shot put and disc thrower, said her goal is to go to state in one of her events.

"A few more feet in of those events can get me to state," McNamana said.

McNamana said the team is very supportive of one another, and many have competed together since middle school, which adds to the group camaraderie.

"Throwers can get down on themselves when they come up short, but

runners are always there to cheer you on," she said.

Sierra Cates, a runner, said she has struggled with self-doubt before competitions and is working on building her confidence and mental toughness.

Last season, she placed third in the 100-meter dash, clocking in with a personal record of 13.06 at the state tourney and fifth in the 200 and ninth on the 4x400 relay team.

She said just going to state was a great experience.

Cates said she is hopeful she is able to watch the underclassmen have the same experience she did at state last year.

"I really want to be a part of that experience, and I want to see them have the time that I had last year," she said.

Smith said, while the team is hoping the season picks back up after March 31, they are being realistic, considering the precautions being taken by league officials at both the college and professional level.

SHOOTING THE BREEZE The Big Bwana

What is it about big guns? The fascination, the stigma, the Hollywood exaggerations? There are two kinds of people, when given the opportunity to shoot some kind of hand-held howitzer: The one lights up like a Christmas tree, and the other, dreading the thought, takes a couple steps back. Both, mind you, usually take the chance to shoot it, and when they do so it's usually "not that bad." No cartoon-esque scene where the poor nimrod is jerked backwards out of their shoes, sailing through the air doing several backflips off of a steep embankment ending up in the bottom of Brown Creek just over the county line while steam rolls out of their ears.

Nope, those big ones kick, but with a few exceptions, you'll likely retain your teeth and your footwear. Obviously, I belong to the aforementioned first group of people who get excited at the thought of firing something huge.

Everyone's definition of big may vary. To the weekend warrior accustomed to .22s and 9mm handguns, a .30-30 could be considered huge. To the average big game hunter totting a .243, .270 or .30-06, the .338 Magnums are veritable cannons. To the African Professional Hunter who carries a .375 or .458 Magnum on a daily basis, well, you get the idea. Most of us however, will never "need" anything genuinely huge. Since I fall into the big game hunter category, I consider anything larger than a .300 Magnum to be "huge."

Recently, finding myself in a local hardware store, I grabbed a used Winchester Model 70 off of the used rack. The legend stamped on its barrel read ".375 H&H Magnum." Instantly I was chasing lions through the bushveld with Robert Ruark and Finn Aagaard. As I shouldered the rifle, I drew a bead on an imaginary giant brown bear reared up on its hind



Contributed photo

Dale Valade bought this Winchester Model 70 in John Day.



Dale Valade

legs as Jack O'Connor, Townsend Whelen and I were stopped along the Yukon, watering our pack string. And magically as I looked at the price tag, my wallet levitated out of my back pocket and spewed money like confetti at a ticker tape parade. My wife was very kind. On the ride home, she said, "You don't have to explain. I heard the angelic hallelujah chorus from across the store." She's a keeper! That happens to me a lot. I've got to quit going in there, or win the lottery — one of the two!

No, sir, the Big Bwana followed me home that day. And I cannot wait to throw down on a bear or an elk with it in the near future. There is just something about a big gun. You don't need one until you do. By then it might be too late.

I'm thinking maybe I should save up for a nice couch in the near future, if I'm going to be buying guns with such predictable regularity, I'll be spending more time on ours after hours. But if Sasquatch should come a knocking in the night, and Emma doesn't shoot him with her .243, she will be glad I have that .375! It will give me another excuse to go back to the hardware store — not to look at guns but to buy material to replace the wall I got kicked through when I shot Sasquatch with my cannon!

Like to see the big stuff? Write to us at shootingthebreezebme@gmail.com!

Dale Valade is a local country gent with a deep love for handloading, hunting and shooting.