

Lady Pro spikers advance

By STEVEN MITCHELL
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — Grant Union volleyball is moving on to the quarterfinals of the state playoffs after the team defeated Sheridan 3-0 in front of a hometown crowd on Saturday, Oct. 30.

The Lady Prospectors, after putting down Stanfield in a three-set thriller Oct. 26 on the road (25-19, 26-24, 26-24), had spring in their step on Saturday and made quick work of the Spartans in the first two sets, handily winning both 26-14.

Sheridan stubbornly held on in the third set, at one point knotting up the score at 22 apiece.

However, according to sophomore Jaydika Anderson, the team leaned on each other to forge ahead in the decisive third set, 27-25, to run away with the win.

Grant Union sophomore Drewsey Williams said the energy the hometown crowd brought made a significant impact.

For her part, senior Paige Gerry said the team had confidence in one another to pick up the win.

Shanna Northway, Grant Union's volleyball coach, told the Eagle in a Sunday email that the squad is currently playing well as a team.

Northway added that the Lady Pros' serving game was on point Saturday and they had just four serving errors the entire match.

Overall, Northway said



The Grant Union Lady Prospectors beat the Sheridan Spartans 3-0 on Saturday, Oct. 30, to advance to the quarterfinals of the state championships and were set to host Vernonia on Tuesday, Nov. 2.



Grant Union senior Grace Taylor goes up for a kill Saturday, Oct. 30, during the first round of the state playoffs against Sheridan at Grant Union High School.

the team is special and an all-around great group of student athletes.

"They put in the time on and off the court," Northway said. "They work incredibly hard and have very high

expectations of themselves and their teammates."

As an example, she said that over the past two seasons the team has spent an incredible amount of time working on serving and passing.

ment did not take place last season. However, Northway said her team is excited to still be in the hunt this year.

The Lady Pros were set to host the fifth-ranked Vernonia Loggers at an undetermined time Tuesday, Nov. 2.

The Loggers are 20-5 overall and 11-5 in league play.

Northway said the Loggers will be a great matchup for the Lady Pros.

Vernonia, according to Northway, is a fundamentally sound team.

"Much of our success this year has come from keeping teams out of system," she said.

When opponents are unable to get their offense going, Northway said, her team can capitalize on it.

In addition to Vernonia's sound fundamentals, the team has a pair of notable hitters and an outstanding senior setter, according to Northway.

It will be crucial that Grant Union's serve/pass game is on against Vernonia, she said.

"Tuesday will be a great game," Northway said. "If we keep playing with the focus and intensity that we have in the past couple of weeks, things will go well for us."

"Our strength of schedule has really taught these girls how to battle and fight for every point. We are prepared for this to be a battle and are excited to play some good volleyball on Tuesday."

SPORTS ROUNDUP

By STEVEN MITCHELL
Blue Mountain Eagle

Prairie City volleyball team falls on the road

Prairie City volleyball ended its season in a first-round playoff match against Central Christian on the road.

Jordan Bass, Panther volleyball head coach, said several fundamental breakdowns in the match contributed to Wednesday's loss.

Bass said three freshmen were on the floor, Reece Jacobs, Skylar McKay and Savannah Watterson, and they played exceptionally well.

According to Bass, the freshman trio primarily played on junior varsity, but they stepped up and contributed in the postseason.

McKay served 100% in Wednesday's match, Bass said. Jacobs, who was the team's setter on the JV squad, played a huge role in the Lady Panthers' success at the district tourney.

For her part, Watterson stepped in for an injured player in the playoff game on Wednesday and added four aces and four kills in the last two sets of the match.

Bass said middle blockers Jaycee Winegar and Brooke Teel, both sophomores who lost their freshman season to the pandemic, learned quickly and contributed this season.

The Lady Panthers have the majority of their squad returning next year. "We have lots of young talent and a few older girls that have great potential to lead a winning team," Bass said.

Going forward, Bass said, the goal is to get the team plenty of competition so they are prepared to face challenging opponents in league and postseason play.

"They have incredible potential and a passion for volleyball," she said of her returnees. "That is really exciting."

Grant Union football loses first playoff game

Weston-McEwen handed the Pros a 28-26 loss on the road Friday, Oct. 29, in the squad's first playoff game.

Jason Miller, Grant Union's football coach, told the Eagle the team played hard.

According to Miller, his team would have won the game if the Pros converted a 2-point try or had one less turnover.

"We played tougher than ever this year," Miller said. "We just ran out of gas."

Miller said Umatilla had a bench stacked with 50 players, while the Prospectors had 16.

On Friday, Grant Union will go on the road to face Lakeview in the state playoffs.

Grant Union boys take third at district

By STEVEN MITCHELL
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — The Seventh Street Sports Complex became a cross country race course for the second week in a row on Friday, Oct. 29, as Grant Union's cross country team hosted the 3A/2A/1A-Special District State Championship.

The boys' team finished third overall with 101 points behind Heppner, which finished second with 55 points, and Union, which won the meet with 27.

Prospectors cross country coach Sonna Smith told the Eagle that the boys' team did a great job closing the gap from a 100-point spread to 50 points between them and Heppner.

"That was a monumental feat in itself," she said.

She said no Grant Union runners qualified for the state tourney this year. According to Smith, the Oregon School Activities Association changed



Grant Union junior Quinn Larson runs the Seventh Street Sports Complex course Friday, Oct. 29, during the 3A/2A/1A-Special District Championships.

its process from last season. This year, only the district's first- and second-place 2A teams meet qualified for the state championships, with no wild cards.

Nonetheless, she said, five of the seven runners on the

Grant Union boys squad set personal records in Friday's race.

According to Smith, juniors Brady Dole and Quinn Larson cut 30 seconds off their times and sophomore Landon Boyd cut a minute off his previous best.

"Our top three runners set the pace for the entire team," Smith said.

Leading the pack for the boys were Dole, who ran in 11th place in 17:35, and Lar-



Brady Dole, a Grant Union junior, competes in the district meet.

son, who finished 21st in 18:28.

Landon Boyd came in 31st with a time of 20:07, while junior Max Bailey took 40th in 20:48. Not far behind was sophomore Skylor Boyd, who finished 45th in 21:05, while freshman Logan Randleas followed to take 46th in 21:20 and freshman Reid Dole finished 50th, clocking a time of 22:09.

While the girls did not have enough runners to compete as a team, Smith noted that soph-

omore Alicia Archibald ran her second-best time ever for the first time in her high school career. Meanwhile, freshman standout Maddie Bailey was close behind with another great time.

Archibald placed 29th out of 62 runners in 23:41, while Bailey finished 32nd in 24:05 and senior Katelyn Hughes, who set a season record, came in 34th in 24:20. Smith noted that Hughes shaved an entire minute off her time in last week's race.

Smith said the Prospectors have the entire boys' squad returning next season, while Bailey and Archibald would be heading up the girls' team.

Smith thanked the John Day-Canyon City Parks and Recreation District and the volunteers who braved the rain to make the district meet a success.

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