# Lady Pros fall to Honkers

**By JUSTIN DAVIS** Blue Mountain Eagle

he Grant Union/Prairie City softball team had faced Lakeview twice this season and emerged with victories on both

Their third matchup of the season went a different way as the Lady Prospectors fell to the Lady Honkers 5-3 in the finals of the Oregon State Activities Association 2A state softball tournament at Jane Sanders Stadium in Eugene on Friday, June 3.

The Lady Pros finished the first inning up 1-0 and everything looked to be going according to plan. Lakeview struck back in the third inning, however, putting a pair of runs on the board to lead 2-1 headed into the fourth. The fourth was scoreless, with Grant Union going three up- three down and Lakeview leaving two on base to keep the game at 2-1 headed into the fifth inning.

Lakeview would add another run in the fifth with an RBI double and push their lead to 3-1 headed into the sixth. The sixth inning got off to a promising start for the Lady Pros, with Savannah Watterson leading off the frame with a triple to right field. A Riley Robertson single two at-bats later would see Watterson score from third to put the Lady Pros within striking distance at 3-2. Halle Parsons would double to center field on the next at-bat,



Chris Pietsch for the Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant Union/Prairie City's Drew Williams pitches against Lakeview in the OSAA 2A/1A State Championship game at Jane Sanders Stadium in Eugene on Friday, June 3, 2022.

and Paige Weaver would be thrown out at home trying to score off the Parsons double. Raney Anderson would fly out the next at-bat to keep the contest at 3-2 entering the final

A pair of wild pitches set the table for two Lady Honker runs to score, which pushed the Lakeview lead to 5-2 headed into the bottom of the seventh inning. Ava Gerry would score a run for the Lady Pros in the bottom of the seventh inning following an Addy Northway groundout to cut the Lakeview lead to 5-3 with one more out before the end of the contest. The rally was not to be, however, as Watterson would strike out to end the contest at 5-3 and leave the Lady Pros just short

of their first state softball championship in school history.

Robertson led the Lady Pros at the plate, finishing 2-3 with a pair of RBIs. Northway provided the other RBI for the Lady Pros while finishing 1-4, with an RBI and a run scored. Harli Grove didn't log an RBI or run scored but did finish the game a perfect 3-3 at the plate.

Drew Williams pitched the entire contest for the Lady Pros. Williams finished the game with eight hits surrendered and a single earned run while striking out 15 batters. Grant Union/Prairie City finished the contest with an uncharacteristic seven errors and stranded five runners on base. The Lady Pros never reclaimed the lead after falling behind in the third inning.

Despite the disappointing final game, Grant Union/Prairie City softball coach Zach Williams said it was a great season and that the girls battled all year to get to the championship game.

"It wasn't our day. We got outplayed, and we have to tip our hats to Lakeview. Drew pitched really well and we hit really well. We didn't play solid defense, and it cost us," he said.

"We will miss the five seniors that played their last game on Friday, and we wish them the best after graduation."

Williams also said the team couldn't have accomplished what it did without the support of the community and his coaching staff.

"We have been very humbled by the support and excitement of the community, and we want to thank everyone that came out and cheered us on," he said. "We had hoped to bring the title back to Grant County. but we'll give it our best shot again next season. I would also like to thank my assistant coaches, Levi Watterson, Brandon Culley, Amy Martin and our AD, Ryan Gerry. We couldn't do any of this without them."

The second-place finish is the best state softball result in school history for the Lady Prospectors, who finished the season with a record of 26-2. Grove, Weaver, Robertson, Emily Finley and Paige Gerry all played their final game for the Lady Pros in Eugene.

### SHOOTING THE **BREEZE Shooting match** a true test of marksmanship

¬hroughout history, marksmanship has been a much-respected, coveted and useful skill. As technology has progressed from things like slings and sharpened sticks to archery and finally firearms, mankind has been able to extend its



**Dale Valade** 

and accuracy. No one, however, is born with the skills it takes to be the best. Nearly anyone can learn

the fundamentals

reach as apex pred-

ator in both range

of good shooting to a point, but it's practicing and honing one's skills that leads to mastery. Competition is always a good measuring stick in raising the bar to the next level.

The shooting match has always been revered as a way to settle that never-ending dispute regarding who is the best at their game. The tools, rules and objects of the match can differ greatly in their nature, but the point is always the same: Who among us at this match is the best?

One of my favorite historical examples of settling such a dispute involved the use of the particular nickname "Buffalo Bill." Sometime between 1867 and 1868, William F. Cody and Bill Comstock had both been hired to provide meat for the workers of the Kansas Pacific Railroad. Both men fancied the aforementioned nickname, but everyone knew there could be only one.

A contest to settle the dispute was arranged. Each man had eight hours to kill as many bison as he could, and whoever killed the most would retain all rights to be the one and only Buffalo Bill.

Comstock was armed with an 1860 Henry repeater, while Cody preferred to stick with his larger bore single-shot Springfield that he endearingly named "Lucretia Borgia." Eight hours later, Comstock had killed a total of 48 buffalo while Cody took the victory with a total of

While the poor bison have yet to fully recover from the excesses of our forebears, the reverence continues for the sanctity of shooting matches even today. Everything from 3D archery targets to air rifles and rimfires, trap and skeet, vintage sniper rifles, cowboy action shooting, hunting and dangerous game target, long-range high-power, Precision Rifle Series, three-gun, muzzleloader and black powder cartridge rifle are represented in some capacity. Challenges from every position and discipline imaginable are available to test your skills.

I for one wish more of our differences could be settled by poking holes in paper or ringing steel. Nothing is more American than shooting. I guess you could say the shooting match is America's true pastime!

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## John Day Bull Bash makes a splash

By STEVEN MITCHELL Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — Rainy weather did not dampen the spirits of hundreds of rodeo fans who attended the John Day Bull

Bash at the Grant County Fairgrounds on

Friday and Saturday, May 27-28. In its second year, the rodeo featured bull, steer and calf riding as well as professional bullfighting, with both local and out-of-town competitors from the bull riding community, according to organizer and Grant County resident Joe Oakes.

Oakes, a former professional bull rider himself, said he thought people would skip the event because of the unrelenting rain.

"(The weather) was just depressing and I didn't think anyone would come,' Oakes said, "but then I couldn't believe how many people came in that kind of

Oakes said 400 to 500 people

attended the first night and no fewer than 400 came out for the second.

Last year — without the rain — he said the event drew a much larger crowd. Oakes, who grew up competing in high school rodeos at the Grant County Fairgrounds, said he was inspired to organize the event amid the fatigue many in the county and across the country were feeling with the ongoing pandemic restrictions.

"I was depressed and wanted to do something," Oakes said. "I felt like the community was ready to do something."

Oakes said he called his friends in the bull riding community and others in the county got involved and people packed the grandstands at the fairgrounds.

Oakes said he grew up riding bulls, but now he is too old. Nonetheless, he still wants to be involved with the sport.

The bull riding community, he said, is a family-oriented group of people and the rodeo community is its own family, too. Not just the contestants but the fans as

well. Events like the bull bash, he added, bring commerce to the county's restaurants and other businesses.

"It's a big shot in the arm for them," he said. "(The rodeo) gives people something to remember and they love it, and they'll come back next year."

#### Kids' competition

Bransyn Harper, 9, took first in the mini-bull riding competition with 79 points, while his older brother Taytyn, 13, took second with 75. Gus McDaniel took the steer riding championship while Oakes' son Sterling (Little Joe), 6, was the calf riding champion.

**Bull riding champions** 

Colten Dougherty took first place overall with a score of 84 on Friday and 87 Saturday.

In the second-place spot was Wyatt Moulton, who scored 83 on the first night of the competition and 86 in the final going.

By STEVEN MITCHELL

Blue Mountain Eagle

students will compete at the Oregon High

School Rodeo State Finals, which will be

held in Prineville Wednesday-Saturday,

saddle bronc and bull riding. Mean-

while, Sam McCracken, a senior,

qualified in reined cow horse and

boys cutting, while his sister Bailey

McCracken, a sophomore, qualified in

barrel racing and pole bending. Sarah

Jack Strong, a junior, qualified in

June 8-11.

PRINEVILLE — Four Grant Union

Grant sends four to state rodeo

ing as well.

got a "no time."

lette, Wyoming.



Steven Mitchell/Blue Mountain Eagle **Grant County's Taytyn Harper** hangs on in the first go-round of the mini-bull riding competition during the John Day Bull Bash on May 28, 2022, at the **Grant County Fairgrounds.** 

Clark, a junior, qualified in pole bend-

of qualifying for the state finals. Israel

said she competed in breakaway roping,

pole bending and goat tying. Unfortu-

nately, Israel said, she did not tie the legs

tight enough and the goat got up and she

will move on to state finals competition

on Saturday, June 9. From there, the top

four overall finishers will move on to the

National Finals Rodeo July 17-23 in Gil-

AT&Tinternet

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Rowdy Israel, a sophomore, fell short

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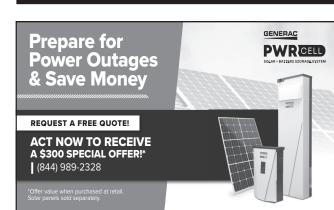
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