

The Grant Union/Prairie City softball team pose with their medals and second-place trophy following the finals of the OSAA 2A/1A state championship game at Jane Sanders Stadium in Eugene on Friday, June 3, 2022.

Lady Pros make all-state team

By STEVEN MITCHELL
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — The Oregon School Activities Association named six Grant Union/Prairie City softball players to the 2A/1A All-State Team, with two Lady Pros earning Co-Player and Co-Pitcher of the Year awards.

The Lady Prospectors had a stellar season, going 23-0 before dropping a non-

league game at the close of the regular season, a 9-6 loss on the road at La Grande.

The squad steamrolled through the preliminary rounds of the playoffs, outscoring their opponents 34-1 in the first three games. However, in the end, they fell just short of a state title, losing 5-3 to Lakeview in the June 3 championship game in Eugene.

Riley Robertson, a graduating senior, was named Co-Player of the Year and a

first team all-state catcher, while Drew Williams, a sophomore, was named Co-Pitcher of the Year and a first team all-state pitcher.

Along with Robertson and Williams, four other Lady Pros made the first team: senior Paige Gerry, first base; freshman Savannah Watterson, infielder; freshman Addy Northway, outfielder; and junior Raney Anderson, utility/designated player.

Chris Pietsch for the Blue Mountain Eagle, File

Local riders bring home buckles

By STEVEN MITCHELL
Blue Mountain Eagle



Contributed Photo Grant County high school students Sarah Clark and Jack Strong both brought home first-place novice buckles in their respective events at the Ukiah Rodeo last month.

UKIAH — Two Grant County high school athletes brought home a pair of first-place novice buckles on July 2 from the Ukiah Rodeo, which was held for the first time after a 55-year hiatus.

Jack Strong, a senior at Grant Union High School, edged out the competition in bull riding, while Sarah Clark, a Prairie City High School junior, beat out roughly 30 other riders in barrel racing.

In bull riding, the rider must stay on the bull for at least eight seconds while only touching the animal

with their riding hand. In barrel racing, a horse and rider attempt to run a pattern around barrels in the fastest time.

Strong, who stayed on his bull for longer than eight seconds, bested the time of the rider before him.

Winning a buckle, he said, is something he had dreamed about since he was a kid.

“Being raised where we are at,” Strong said, “ever since you’re a little kid, you always want to win a buckle.”

He said it meant a lot to win the prize in front of his dad, Mike Strong, and stepmother, Trista Strong, especially since Mike and Trista

built an arena where he could practice and improve his skills.

Not only that, Jack said, but his dad helps keep in contact with bull riders from the Professional Bull Riders organization. Jack said he sends the more experienced riders videos of his rides and asks them for tips on what he needs to fix and where he can improve.

“(They) helped me win the buckle,” Jack said of his father and stepmother.

For her part, Clark said this was her first year competing in the Idaho Cowboy Association, the organizer of the event, but said she competes at other rodeos.

As for winning first place, she said things came together for her at the Ukiah Rodeo.

“Sometimes you have a good weekend,” Clark said, “and then sometimes you have a bad weekend.”

Clark, who has been on the back of a horse since she was 2 years old, trained the horse she rode in Ukiah herself. She said she has had the former racehorse, a Thoroughbred, for about two years. Clark added she has trained all of the horses she rides for barrel racing herself.

She said the Ukiah Rodeo was a lot of fun.

“Everybody was super kind,” she said. “They had great vendors, and they put on a really good rodeo.”



Contributed Photo Can't find your old standby? It might be time to try something new.

SHOOTING THE BREEZE

When it comes to powder, be prepared to substitute

What are we supposed to do when our ammunition supply wanes and we cannot find our favorite components among the slowly restocking shelves?

As the Rolling Stones once put it, “You can't always get what you want.” But with a little research, you might just find something close enough to get the job done.

I know, it's almost heretical to suggest any sort of deviation from old standbys. My preferred powders are all quite utilitarian and work well in many different cartridges. For example, I've been happily using IMR-4350 powder in several of my favorite rifles for years. The problem is, so many other folks use it too — ditto the Hodgdon version — that whenever any supply hits the shelves, it is bought out quickly. Sound familiar?

Do yourself a favor: Where gunpowder is concerned, find an accurate powder burn rate chart. Some reloading manuals contain this information, but with new powders being released quite often, their chart might not be comprehensive. You'll want one with as many different powder manufacturers and types of powder as possible.

Armed with this information, simply cross-reference a powder with a burn rate similar to your unavailable standby and repair to your favorite retail store. Like as not you'll find something close which can be made to work.

For instance, AA 2700 and AA 4350 by Western Powders have nearly identical burn rates to IMR-4350. Others with similar rates include the aforementioned H-4350, Ramshot Big Game, IMR-4451, W760 and H414.

For safety's sake, you WILL need to perform the necessary load workup anytime you are trying some-

thing new with your particu-



Dale Valade

lar rifle. With all the variables involved in mass production, book data was not tested nor proven in your gun — and until it is, you'll not know what is safe or not.

Most rifles aren't super finicky where it comes to developing a good load. Unless you're shooting a match, which requires the very tightest tolerances of accuracy and consistency, you'll likely not have to struggle before finding a good load.

Times are changing, and we will have to roll with the punches. There was a time when keeping two or three kinds of powder — 4831, 4350 and 4895, for example — would have covered all the bases. They still would if you could easily and regularly find them.

If you have sufficient resources to keep your cases loaded and your freezer full, maybe you won't need to consider building auxiliary loads for your favorite shooting irons. If not, I strongly suggest you start looking into substitutes.

These substitutes may offer better performance or worse than what you are accustomed to. You may have to sacrifice top velocities or gilded-edge accuracy for the sake of simply having something to shoot. It may be some time, if ever, before we see our favorite powders fully stocked on store shelves again.

Have you broadened your horizons on reloading components? Write to us at shootingthebreezeme@gmail.com and check us out on Facebook!

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NOTICE HOME SCHOOL PARENTS

- Grant ESD will offer assessment testing for home school students finishing grades 3,5,8, and 10. Cost is \$20.00 per student.
- Payment is due at the time of testing. Register your student for assessment testing by calling Jo Sproul, 541-575-1349 on or before July 26, 2022.
- Home school students participating in any OSAA activity through their local school district must be tested before the 15th of August prior to participation.

Testing Dates:
July 27, 2022 • July 28, 2022 • 8am to 2pm





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