

Borgen

"I was proud"

Heppner Head Basketball Mentor Chris Borgen looks back on his first year of coaching with "a lot of insights." The Mustangs finished the year in last place with a 1-11 league mark and a 2-18 overall record.

But there were many good points, according to Borgen. "The biggest label," Borgen said, thinking back on the year, "is that this was a real learning experience for both the kids and myself. I'll be honest with you; I think I learned as much as the kids this year."

Borgen led the Mustangs to wins over Condon and Umatilla. In non-conference play, Heppner beat Condon, 59-54, and at the year's end, they slapped the Vikings, 73-63.

"I was proud," Borgen explained. "We never had our will killed. Yea, on record, we had a bad season, very bad. But there was never a game where we came to play and folded. We always worked hard and played an aggressive game."

Heppner never did give up, even when they trailed teams by as many as 30 points this

year. One point of example was against Weston-McEwen. Heppner trailed by about 17 points. Brian Marlin, one of seven returners Borgen will count on next season, was in the game during a timer foul-up. Marlin argued with the officials to give Heppner their allotted seven seconds instead of the five on the clock.

"It was frustrating," Borgen said. "We worked our tails off in practice. They did everything I asked of them and they didn't get what they deserved."

Borgen calls the season a learning experience and said the "younger kids have gained a lot of confidence in themselves now. They really developed and will be a very fine nucleus."

Borgen can only smile when he thinks about the seven varsity players that return next season. They are Ken Grieb, Dennis Peck, juniors; Mark Huddleston, Bruce Young, Jerry Cutsforth, Sam Meyers and Marlin, seniors. Of those seven, five started at one time or another this year.

Borgen said next year will be better because the Mustangs won't have to start with another new offensive program. "Next year will be a lot easier," he said. "I think we'll be very successful. We won't have to wait half the year to get our offense going. We finished fifth in team offense this year." (See final stat story.)

Borgen maintains his "pride in defense" theory and noted how the Mustangs shut down the likes of Wasco County, Umatilla, Riverside, Oregon Trail, Condon and Pilot Rock in their last six contests.

"One quarter...kind of characterizes the whole year. It was inexperience. A few minutes each game or a quarter, there was a mental lapse; we'd lose concentration."

Borgen said his Mustangs outscored or stayed even with opponents in at least two quarters a game and almost three in some.

The key was confidence, Borgen stated. "The thing we were missing all year. We found it in the last six games. It finally occurred to us that 'hey, we can play this game. We're as good as anybody, man for man.'"

Borgen plans to work hard in the off season with his nucleus and the likes of some of the junior varsity hopefuls. One big cog in the Mustang machine next year will be Howard Huddleston and Dale Holland, Jr. Both young, big men, next year "Hudd" will be a junior, Holland a sophomore, will undoubtedly see playing time in the varsity ranks.

Huddleston is about 6-4 and Holland pushing 6-3. The seven players back have little height,

but decent rebounding power.

Seven players have come to Borgen already, asking about a spring and summer program which Borgen said he would happily oblige.

"I'm looking for a good year next year," he said. "We'll be looking for a district play-off spot. We'll be capable of big things and that's our goal right now."

Borgen couldn't praise the year without mentioning loyal supporters.

"We wanted to give them a win," Borgen said sincerely. "The fans need a win, too. We had super fans. They outnumbered the people at Umatilla, oh, two to one."

"Even the last game against Wasco County, we had a good crowd. The fans hung in there all year. To tell you the truth, I don't know if I'd have been able to as a fan."

"The kids appreciated it and, heaven knows, how I appreciated it. They deserved more than what they got as far as win-loss is concerned. But attitude-wise, they saw a group that worked hard. I only wish we'd have had more wins for them."

Borgen doesn't consider the year a bad one.

"Yes, in win-loss it was bad. But we had a lot of fun and we worked hard. We killed our opponents will, but never had ours killed. That was very satisfying. The only part of the season that wasn't satisfying was the win-loss record."

"I made a lot of mistakes this year that we will correct. I take the blame for a lot of the losses; I guess every coach does."

"But we'll build from this."

Dessert

Heppner High School will hold a basketball dessert next Thursday, Mar. 10, at the high school.

The 7:30 p.m. meeting is set for the HHS cafeteria. All girls and boys basketball squads from the high school will be honored.

Parents are asked to bring a dessert for their families.

Wrangler meeting

The Morrow County Wranglers Riding Club will have a potluck dinner and meeting on Sunday, Mar. 6, at 6:30 at the Fair Annex Building in Heppner.

There will be an interesting slide program on horse psychology.

All members are reminded that there will be a clean-up day at the grounds on Sunday, Mar. 27, beginning at 10 a.m. Bring a sack lunch.

Playdays will begin on Apr. 3 and continue on Apr. 17, Apr. 24 and May 1.

Sherman wins district, favored in state tilt

Steve Jossi, staff writer for The Oregonian, called Sherman County the favorite to win the class A boys' state basketball tourney in Pendleton this week.

Jossi, in a story in Tuesday's Oregonian, said the 20-2 Huskies "loom as the favorite, but as usual, the Oregon Class A boys' state high school basketball tournament, which starts Wednesday in Pendleton, figures to be a wide open affair."

Sherman County blasted opponents last week in the district play-offs to earn the tournament berth. The Huskies, who beat Wasco County 82-62 for the championship of the Columbia Basin Conference, were to play Western Mennonite at 9 a.m. Wednesday morning.

The Huskies would face either St. Mary's or Jefferson in their second game.

Sherman started the district play as a favorite, along with all three other squads. Wasco County and Sherman represented the west CBC. Weston-McEwen and Pilot Rock, who between the two have represented the league in state

during the last seven years, were also favored, but were ousted by the more physical west squads.

Sherman outlasted Weston-McEwen, 62-48, on Thursday, gaining 21 points from first team all conference star Dave Simantel and 20 points from first teamer Bert Baunach.

Doug Warner, another CBC first teamer, scored 24 points

the Rockets. Jeff Lavender, first teamer, had 24 points.

Sherman put five men in double figures and pounded Wasco County to improve their year's mark to 20-2 with their 19th straight win, and earn the state berth Friday. Baunach led the team with 18, followed by Skiles with 17, Simantel with 16, Colquitt with 13 and Fritts with 10.

Britain led a three man double figure attack for Wasco with 25 points.

A big, 30-15, fourth period aided the Sherman drive to state.

Jeff Lavender scored 22 points in the first half, but Weston-McEwen put a stop to that in the second half and hung on for a 61-58 third place victory.

Lavender finished with 24 points. Teri King had 14 for WM.

Other teams in the state tourney include: St. Mary's, Jefferson, Western Mennonite, Enterprise, Vernonia, Crow and Chiloquin.

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for the losing Tiger Scots.

In the other contest Thursday, Pilot Rock was bounced by a rallying Wasco County, 65-57. Wasco outscored PR, 22-5, in the second quarter.

Tim Puckett, an honorable mention, had 22 points for Wasco while second teamer, Jeff Woodside, added 19. For



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Final HHS stats

(Continued from page 8)

scoring with a 7.3 average. Heppner's Mustangs finished strong enough to take fifth in offensive team averages for the CBC. Heppner finished with 682 points and a 56.8 game average. Weston-McEwen finished on top with 856 points and a 71.3 average. Heppner finished ahead of Pilot Rock, Oregon Trail, Umatilla and Condon in scoring.

Carl Christman, senior, led the team in individual ranking, finishing eighth in assists in the league. Christman ended up with 32 for a 2.7 average. Jeff Woodside of Wasco County topped that field with 68 assists.

Wayne Seitz finished in ninth place in rebounds with 109 caroms for a 9.1 average. Carlson of Umatilla was the leader with 178 rebounds.

Heppner had no one in scoring ranks, but Mark Huddleston finished 13th in field goal percentage. Huddleston, a junior, was 23 for 48 from the field, a 43 per cent. Lavender of Pilot Rock was 94 for 161 and a 59 percentage.

Dennis Peck finished 11th in free throws percentage, canning 28 of 39 for 69 per cent. But Thayer of Condon hit 87 per cent.

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