

# Ione gets Big Sky berth

## Ione beats Helix; Honkers over Echo

The Ione Cardinals this week gave new meaning to the old adage: "When the going gets tough, the tough get going."

At the start of the week, the Cards were faced with a do-or-die situation in order to keep hopes for a Big Sky Conference playoff berth alive. They had to beat third-ranked Helix on Friday, hope that fourth-place rival Echo lost to Arlington on Saturday, and then go on to win over Wheeler County on Saturday. The Cards had their work cut out for them, but they rose to the occasion with style.

During action on the home court on Friday, Ione engaged in a nip-and-tuck, seesawing struggle that was not decided until the final three seconds, when Robin LaRue, eight feet from the hoop and off balance, sank a bucket to end scoring at 46-44. The victory revitalized Ione's "Cardiac Cards" nickname, as well as providing a glimmer of hope for district playoff possibilities.

"We got our act together and really played good team basketball," Coach Del LaRue said. "It was a pressure situation. We had to win the ball game, and we did."

Kevin McCabe topped Ione's scoring attack with 13 points, followed by Dennis Stefani with eight, Gregg Rietmann with seven, Dan McElligott and Shawn LaRue with six each, Robin LaRue with four and John Lindstrom with two. Ky Rydrieh of Helix was the game's leading scorer, with 14 points.

Although Rietmann and McCabe brought in nine and eight rebounds respectively, Helix outrebounded the Cards by a 36-32 margin.

While the win kept a playoff berth a possibility, a district tournament slot was far from assured. Arlington's victory over Echo on Saturday brightened Ione's hopes, but the Cards still had to get past Wheeler County in order to earn the right for a fourth-place showdown with Echo to determine which team would go on to district.

The road trip to Fossil proved successful, with the Cards having no difficulty overpowering the hapless

Wheeler County team by a 74-49 margin.

Three Cardinals scored in double figures, with Dennis Stefani leading the way with 24 points. Robin LaRue was good for 15. Kevin McCabe scored 12, and Shawn LaRue chipped in seven. Also putting points on the board for Ione were Terry Starr and Tim Patton, each with four; Gregg Rietmann and Glen Krebs, each with two, and Leslie Thompson and John Lindstrom, a free throw each.

### Big Sky Conference Final Standings

Arlington	13-1
Dufur	12-2
Helix	9-5
Ione	8-7
Echo	7-7
Umapine	4-10
Cascade Locks	3-11
Wheeler Co.	1-13

Ione dominated the boards, in addition to the scoring, coming down with 52 rebounds to Wheeler's 36. The Cards jumped off to a 21-10 lead by the end of the first quarter, with Wheeler County never posing a threat from that point on.

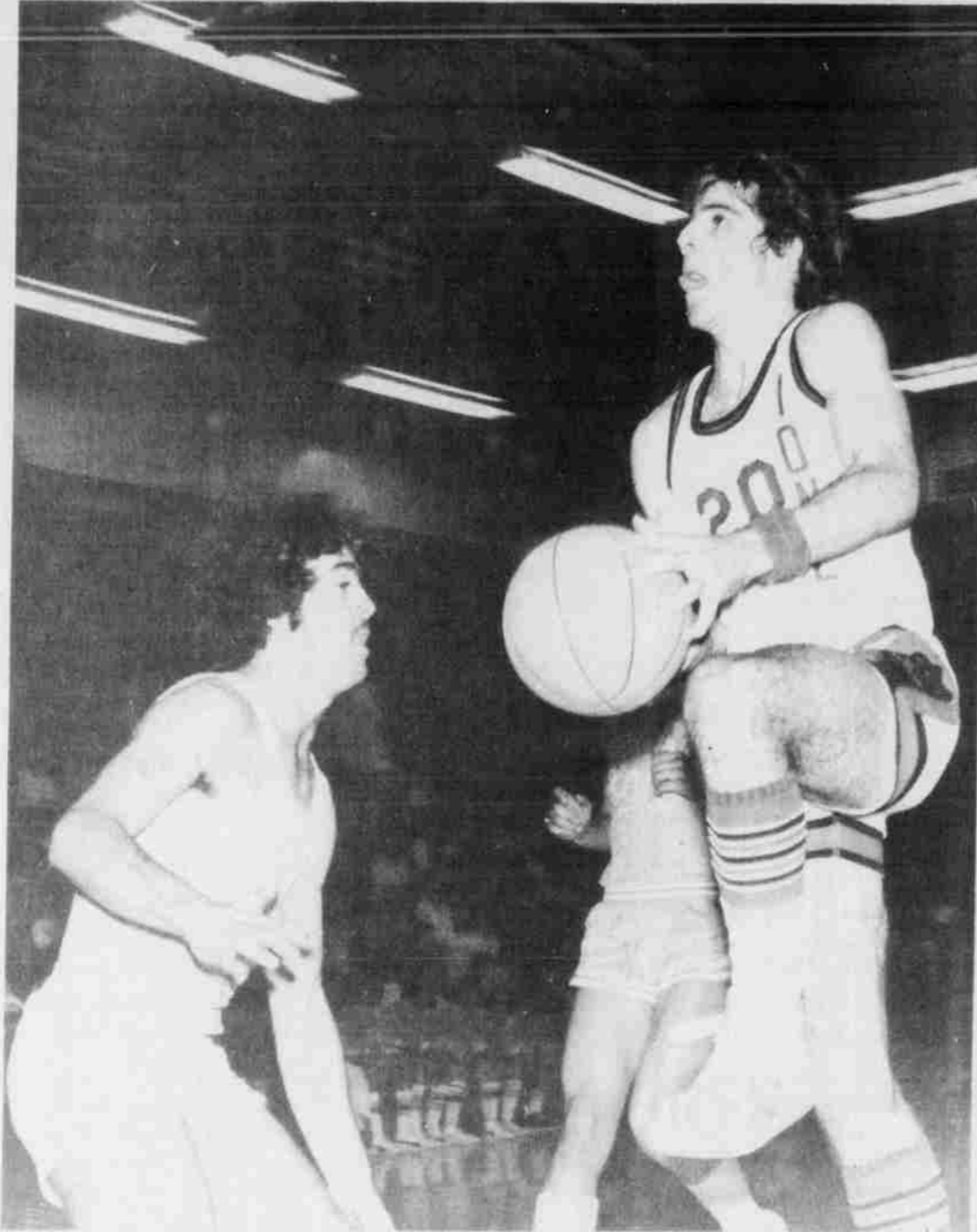
The win left only one obstacle between the Cards and a piece of district tourney action—a Monday night showdown in Boardman between Echo and Ione. Both teams had league records of 7-7 at that point. The winner would earn a fourth place seed at the Big Sky championships at The Dalles. The Cards apparently wanted the playoff slot more.

After trailing seven points at the half, the Cards switched from a man-to-man defense to a full-court press in the third quarter. Coach Del LaRue's strategy worked, as his Cards forced a series of turnovers, capitalized on them, and tied scoring by the end of the third quarter.

"We came out for the second half really thinking we could win," said Coach LaRue. "The press did the job for us."

Ione moved ahead at the start of the fourth quarter, and remained in the lead for the remainder of the game. The Cards' third-quarter turn-

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Ione got 17 points out of Robin LaRue (20) Monday night in beating the Echo Cougars 63-54 in a special playoff game to determine which of the two teams would get to advance on to the district tournament which begins tonight in The Dalles. LaRue made six of his 14 shots from the field. Both Ione and Echo tied for fourth place in the Big Sky Conference with 7-7 records. The Cardinals will now meet Arlington at 9 p.m.

## Mustangs win two; finish 11-8 for year

The Heppner Mustangs ended regular season play on a bright note, with a 67-48 win over Umatilla and a 50-40 victory over Wasco County.

The wins brought the Mustangs' overall record to 11-8 for the year, in third place in the CBC's eastern division with a league record of 6-7.

In Friday's matchup against Umatilla, the Mustangs "played more inspired ball than they've been playing in a long time," according to Coach Tom Day, who gave particular praise to the efforts of center Howard Huddleston—"He played his best ball of the season this weekend" and Dale Holland.

Huddleston led a balanced Mustang scoring game, posting 13 points, while gathering in seven rebounds. Dennis Peck added 11 points, as did Mike Stooky, with Holland contributing nine, Lionel Wood, seven, Jim Parker, six; Todd Sherer and Curt Day,

four each, and Bryan Marlin, two.

As a team, the Mustangs connected on 26 of 75 field goal tries, for an average of 34 per cent.

McCabe and Marlin will join ranks in the backfield with former rivals Tadd Wetherall of Arlington, Marion Weatherford of Condon and Brandt

"We played good defense, too," added Day, "especially in the first three quarters." Umatilla scored 24 points in

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## Heppner-Ione backs are Shrine All-Stars

Heppner's standout fullback Bryan Marlin and Kevin McCabe, sparkplug of the Ione Cardinal's state championship class-A grid team, are among outstanding high school seniors selected to represent Eastern Oregon in the annual East-West Shrine All-Star game, set for Baker on Aug. 18.

McCabe and Marlin will join ranks in the backfield with former rivals Tadd Wetherall of Arlington, Marion Weatherford of Condon and Brandt

Bannister of Weston-McEwen. Other area players selected to the East's all-star squad include tackle Deeno Leighton of Riverside, Arlington guard Ted Proctor, and Wahtonka's Ron Schmidt.

Heppner's Dennis Peck, who helped drive the Mustangs to the Columbia Basin Conference crown with his outstanding rushing performance, was among area players named alternates to the East-West game.

Game at 7 p.m.

## Fillies in CBC playoff spot at Pendleton tonight

District playoff action begins at 7 p.m. tonight, Thursday, for the Heppner Fillies, who ended regular season play this past weekend with a 17-3 record, following a 67-27 win over Umatilla and 35-44 drubbing at the hands of Wasco County.

The Fillies will have a chance to avenge their week-end loss to Wasco tonight, when they face the Redsidies during the first game of tournament action. Should the Fillies win, they will face the winner of a matchup between unbeaten Pilot Rock and Wahtonka of the CBC's western division, for the championship showdown. Pilot Rock seems likely to prevail in the contest with Wahtonka, which has lost five games in league play. The Fillies have at least an even-on chance against Wasco.

Poor shooting and an inordinate number of fourth-quarter fouls were blamed by Coach Sheri Brock for Saturday's loss to the Redsidies. Uncharacteristically, the Fillies shot only 24 per cent from the floor. During the final quarter of play, Wasco picked up 11 points from the bonus line—enough to put the game out of reach—thanks to Heppner fouling and a 57 per cent free throw shooting rate.

Jackie Mollahan was Heppner's high point scorer during the Wasco game, with nine, followed by Maureen Healy with seven, Lynn Dee Devin, five, and Jana Steagall, Geri Grieb and Julie Grieb, each with four.

## Van Marter takes Town Team title

Van Marter staged a come-from-behind, overtime victory over previously unbeaten Eckman to take sole possession of first place in Town Team basketball league action on Sunday.

VanMarter is now the only Town Team in the league to retain an unblemished record.

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Healy and Wendy Myers each gathered in eight rebounds.

Play was more consistent with the Heppner girls' season record on Friday, when the Fillies hosted Umatilla.

Four Fillies racked up double figures in the scoring race, with Jackie Mollahan leading the pack with 12. Maureen Healy scored 11 points, in addition to 11 rebounds and eight steals, with Jana Steagall and Mary Kincaid each scoring 10. Sophomore Lynn Dee Devin

was credited with nine steals, with Alice Abrams and Geri Grieb each making five rebounds.

Heppner connected on 26 of 74 hoop attempts from the court, and maintained a 50 per cent success rate from the line.

Other point winners for the Fillies were Lynn Dee Devin, nine; Wendy Myers, eight; Geri Grieb, three; Deann Connor, two, and Julie Grieb, two.

Umatilla was held to only 11 points in the first half.

## Workday set for Willow Creek golf course

Willow Creek Country Club will have a workday Saturday, March 3 beginning at 9 a.m.

President Harold Kerr announced this week.

Kerr said silt has to be removed from the number three fairway; debris cleaned

from the Willow Creek channel; and the footbridge has to be replaced.

A previously announced workday for this Saturday, Feb. 24 has been cancelled because the ground is still too soft to move equipment on it.

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