

# Basketball Preview



## Fillies face new season with one returning starter

By Ashley Conklin

The 1985-86 season was a dream for the Heppner Fillies varsity girls basketball team; a 24-1 season record and the first state championship in any sport at Heppner High School.

The Fillies now awaken to the 1986-87 season with only one returning starter.

But that one returning starter is 5'9" senior Missy Eubanks who was second on the team in scoring last season (13.7 points per game) and first in rebounding (10.8 boards per contest.) Eubanks was also a first team Columbia Basin Conference all-star and one of the team's two "Most Valuable Players."

"Having Missy back will definitely be one of our strong points this season," said fourth-year head coach Mike Royer who has a 57-12 career record at Heppner.

In spite of the fact that Eubanks is the team's only returning starter Royer doesn't think inexperience will be a problem for the Fillies. "We have senior Tina Davidson (5'5"), Theresa Lindsay (5'8"), and Cindy Stroeber (5'8") back from last year and they all played a lot during the course of the season," Royer said. "Even when they weren't playing last season they were going up against Penny Connor, the Reids, and Missy Turner (the other four starters from last season,) in practice." Davidson and Stroeber were the team's "Most Improved Players" last season.

"Tina has vastly improved and will do a good job at the point guard position," Royer added. "Sophomore Tami Lindsay also is greatly improved." However Royer will start 5'8" returning sophomore Sandi Turner instead of the 6'1" Tami Lindsay and bring Lindsay in off the bench.

If there is anything Royer is worried about it's his team's lack of depth. "The girls on the bench have little experience but we do have seven pre-season games that we'll try and work those girls into," he said.

The Fillies opened their season last night at Dayville and will play them again at home on Saturday December 13. In between Heppner will meet the much improved lone

Cardinals at 3 p.m. Friday afternoon in the first game of the Morrow County Invitational Tournament. The winner of the Heppner-lone game will play the winner of the Catlin Gabel-Riverside match-up Saturday night at 6 p.m. for the tournament championship. The losers of the two opening games will play at 2 p.m. Saturday afternoon for third place. The Fillies won the tournament championship last season.

The Pirates of Riverside, a state tournament team last season, will be led by Bonnie Guthrie, Trina Hellberg and Lisa Mark.

"Riverside and Stanfield have to be the clear-cut favorites in the Western Division and Eastern Division respectively," Royer said.

The Tigers are led by senior Heather Hummell and junior Linda Porfily. Porfily led the CBC in scoring last season and was a first team CBC all-star last year. "We'll be fighting for the top spot in the East and Sherman County should finish second in the West," Royer said. "Umatilla in the East and Wahtonka in the West are two teams to look out for. Wahtonka has improved a lot and Umatilla has a few good young players."

While the top spot is a familiar role for the Fillies, a few things have changed. "Offensively we'll be a little more conservative this year and not run the fast break as much," Royer said. "We'll try to take advantage of our inside people. Cindy (Stroeber) is our only outside threat and we need to have her shoot the ball more."

"We'll stick with our 1-3-1 zone defense but we're not as quick as last year so we won't press as much," he said.

After winning the state championship last season, what goals does Royer set for the Fillies this season? "Of course our ultimate goal is to win another state championship," he said. "We want to improve every game and make it to the district tournament."

Added to this year's roster are a pair of 5'5" seniors, Tareena Nash and Christy Rathbun, sophomores Libby Britt (5'7"), Jill Conklin (5'6"), and Nance Wright (5'5"); and 5'7" freshman Jennifer Currin. Les Payne will serve as assistant coach for the third straight year.

## Coach hopes to bring new magic to Mustangs

By Ashley Conklin

A new coach hopes to bring some new magic to the Heppner varsity boys basketball team this season. Mike Royer, who was 57-12 in three years as the head girls coach and won a state championship last year, assumes double duty this season, taking over for Brent Eggers who stepped down following a 14-9 campaign and a state tournament appearance last season. Eggers was the Mustangs head coach for four years.

Royer hopes to bring some of the same ideas that made him successful as a girls coach by running the fast break whenever possible, utilizing the team's outside shooting ability, and running a 1-3-1 zone defense.

"I think I have found a few things that work," Royer said. "This team compares favorably with the past girls teams I've had in the regard that we don't have a lot of height but that we are quick."

"We will run the fast break whenever we can but we have to be smart and only run it when the opportunity presents itself," he added. "If the fast break isn't there we'll have to set up our half-court offense."

The Mustangs will rely heavily on 6'2" wing-forward Wayne Wilgers this season for much of their offense. Wilgers finished fourth in the Columbia Basin Conference scoring last

season with a 17.3 points per game average and was the only junior on the league's first team all-star list.

On the season Wilgers was second on the team in scoring (14.5 points per game), fourth in rebounding (4.4 boards per game), and first in free throw percentage (75%).

The other returning starter is 6'1" junior Duane Ball who set a new school record with 123 assists, a 5.6 average last season. However Ball who played point guard last season, will play an off guard-wing position this season.

Taking over the point guard position will be 5'8" sophomore Bryan Padberg who played well off the bench last season, averaging 3.1 assists and 2.6 points per game and shot 71 percent from the free throw line.

Wilgers and Padberg are the team's top outside shooters with Ball and 6'0" sophomore Dick Devin capable of lighting things up from the outside. Devin played mostly on the junior varsity and freshmen teams last season and will fill a forward-post position this season.

Senior Trent Harrison (6'1") the fourth returning letterman, will play center this year. He proved to be a very formidable backup last season by shooting 47% from the field and grabbing 10 rebounds in one game.

"I don't really think we'll have to worry about inexperience this year," Royer said. "A lot of our players

played junior varsity basketball last season and we are young, but once they get some playing time they'll only get better."

Two of last year's JV players 6'0" senior David Pedro and 5'11" junior Mark Fishburn will probably get the first call off the bench.

Pedro is only in his third year of playing organized basketball, but has improved greatly since his sophomore year.

Meanwhile Fishburn is coming back from a dislocated shoulder suffered at the beginning of football season. Fishburn also played in nine varsity games last year.

"We don't really have any established 'sixth man'," Royer said. "It all depends on which of our starters needs a rest or is in foul trouble."

The Mustangs opened their season last night at Class "B" Dayville and will host them on December 13.

Sandwiched in between will be an appearance in the Morrow County Invitational Tournament in Boardman this Friday and Saturday.

Heppner will meet the Catlin Gabel Eagles at 5 p.m. Friday afternoon.

The winner of the Heppner-Catlin Gabel game will meet the winner of the lone-Riverside game in the tournament championship game at 8 p.m. Saturday night. The losers of the two games will meet Saturday at 4 p.m. for third place.

Heppner will also participate in the Mac-Hi Christmas Tournament on December 19 and 20.

"We have a good pre-season schedule and that will only help us get ready for our league season," Royer said.

Royer picks the Stanfield Tigers as the favorite in his team's CBC Eastern Division while saying the Western Division is up for grabs.

Stanfield will be led by 6'6½" junior center Tony Brown and 6'2" junior Eric Mac Pherson inside and junior guard Dusty Grogan outside.

"Pilot Rock has a few good offensive players that were young last season and we can't overlook them," cautioned Royer. "We can't overlook anybody because if we do we'll lose."

"I think we should compete favorably with the rest of the league," he added, "and we'll have a shot at the second district tournament spot in our division."

Senior Ashley Conklin (6'1") will add some height to the team while seniors Gene Garrett (5'10"), Arkie Smith (5'6"), and Matt Wilson (5'5"), and junior Jason Dougherty (5'10") add quickness to the backcourt. Lee Padberg and John Boyer who are both in their second year as the junior varsity and freshmen coaches respectively, will serve as Royer's assistants.

"We are quick and shoot well from the outside, but we need to work on our rebounding," Royer said. "We'll mostly play zone defense but we'll go man-to-man when we can match up with the other teams."

"Our short-term goal is to improve every game," he added, "while our long-term goal is to make it back to the district tournament which we have a realistic chance of making."

If Royer's new magic can work for the boys team this season, look for some of the old results he got as the girls coach.

## County high schools compete at tourney

By Ashley Conklin

All three of Morrow County's high school basketball teams will be in action this weekend at the Morrow County Invitational Tournament in Boardman on Friday and Saturday.

All three teams, Heppner, lone, and Riverside, competed in the tournament last year as did the Catlin Gabel Eagles who will return this year.

The first opening-round game will take place Friday afternoon at 3 p.m. when the Heppner Fillies take on the lone Cardinals.

The Fillies are the defending Class "A" state champions and have senior Missy Eubanks back from last season. The Fillies will also be expecting big things from senior point guard Tina Davidson this season. The Fillies won the tournament championship last season.

The Cardinals will have their most experienced team in the four years that Jocelyn Jones has been coaching there.

lone is led by senior Deena Hams who has been one of the Big Sky Conference's dominant players the

last three years. Last season lone finished fourth in the tournament.

Game number two will pit the Heppner boys against the Catlin Gabel boys at 5 p.m. Friday afternoon.

The Mustangs captured division, district, and regional championships last season on their way to a seventh place finish at the state tournament.

Heppner will be led by the outside play of senior Wayne Wilgers, junior Duane Ball, and sophomores Bryan Padberg and Dick Devin and the inside play of senior Trent Harrison.

The Eagles return nearly all of last season's team intact and are not to be considered lightly according to Heppner coach Mike Royer.

At 7 p.m. Friday the Riverside girls will meet the Catlin Gabel girls.

Catlin Gabel's girls team finished third last season and will again be led by Maren Walta.

Riverside which finished seventh at the state tournament last season is looking for a return ticket there this season and hopes to win the tournament they lost to Heppner last season.

Sen' r Trina Hellberg and junior

Lisa Mark will lead the Pirates inside game with junior Bonnie Guthrie leading the outside attack.

The nightcap will feature the lone and Riverside boys at 9 p.m. Friday night.

The Cardinals will be a more seasoned ball club than last season when they finished fourth at the Morrow County Invitational Tournament.

lone will rely on playmaking junior guards Kevin Ball and Ken Snider and the inside bruising play of sophomore Dustin Padberg.

Riverside will feature a deadly inside game with a triple tower combination of 6'4" senior Keith Limanen, 6'3" senior Pat Tolar, and 6'5" junior Rob Rea. Senior guards Bing Ganvoa and Mike Griffin will feed the big guys inside. Riverside won the tournament last year over the Mustangs.

Action on Saturday begins at 2 p.m. with the girls third place game. Following at 4 p.m. will be the boys third place game.

Championship action will start at 6 p.m. with the girls trophy game. Then, at 8 p.m., the boys championship game will take place.

## JVs will capitalize on last year's experience

By Ashley Conklin

In his second year at the helm, Lee Padberg will again coach the Heppner junior varsity boys basketball team.

Last season's JV team finished 4-9 but Padberg says that last year's experience will be a contributing factor this season. "I'll be able to recognize other teams' offenses and defenses," he said. "Hopefully I'll be able to get my point across to the kids a little better this season."

Only two holdovers from last year's team anchor positions this season as the majority of last season's team is playing at the varsity level.

The two holdovers from last year's team are juniors Jeff Devin and Derek Hoelt. Added to the team this year are junior Dan Struthers; sophomores Craig Angell, Mike Correa, Randy Hanson, Tim Hays, Barney Lindsay, Mike Mahoney, Will Martin, and Brian Skaggs; and freshman Russell Britt. Britt will divide his time between the JV and freshmen teams.

Offensively the Mustangs will try to get the ball inside while playing a 1-3-1 zone defense according to Padberg.

"We don't really have any long bomb shooters this year," he said. "Outside shooting, free throw shooting, and ball handling are our

weak points. Everybody's dribbling skills are really low.

"Defense should be our strong point this season," Padberg said. "We're also quick which helps, although we won't press a lot at the first of the season."

In his second season what does Padberg want to accomplish?

"We want to win every game," he declared. "Hopefully the kids will improve every game and hopefully they'll be able to help out the varsity next season."

Heppner opened its season last night at home against Riverside. The Mustangs will meet the Pirates again next Tuesday in a 7:30 p.m. game at Boardman.

## '86 and '87 Fair and Rodeo Courts meet

The 1986 Morrow County Fair and Rodeo Court met the 1987 court at an informal get-together Saturday, November 28. The court veterans passed several valuable tips to the new court, said a spokesperson. About 30 members of the rodeo committee were also at the meeting. The 1987 court wore their official fair outfit, which is a light teal ivory dropped waist skirt and Western yoked blouse for the princesses and an ivory outfit with teal accents for the Queen.

## Frosh season underway

By Ashley Conklin

The freshmen boys basketball team opened their season last night against the Riverside Pirates, under the direction of second-year coach John Boyer.

Last year's freshmen team came on strong at the end of the season to finish with a 6-6 record, but Boyer expects greater things from this year's freshmen team.

"I've set high goals for this team," he said. "We've been working hard in practice and I expect us to play better than 500 ball."

Those on this year's freshmen team are Russell Britt, Eric Connor, Raymond Hire, Tom Kenny, Ryan Miller, Slater Mitchell, Dean Munkers, Casey Pedro, Brian Siminoo, John Steagall, and Ty

Zeller. Britt will also see some playing time on the junior varsity team.

"We've got some pretty good height this year and we'll try to take advantage of that offensively by getting the ball inside to our big guys," Boyer said. "We're weak defensively and we're not as quick as we were last year. Again we'll try and utilize our big guys and try and keep a lot of pressure on opposing teams."

With one year of coaching experience behind him, Boyer notes that that will help him and his team out this season. "Last year was a learning experience," he said. "This time I'll know how some of the different coaching styles of opposing coaches which will help us to win a few more games."

The Mustangs will meet Riverside again next Tuesday when they travel to Boardman for a 6 p.m. contest.

## Garden club prepares Greens Workshop

By Justine Weatherford

Jane Rawlins, president of the Heppner Garden Club, is reminding those planning to make their own evergreen Christmas Wreaths to be sure to bring garden clippers to the Artifactory's Greens Workshop this Saturday. As a community service, the Heppner Garden Club supplies greens and sells wire and trimming items for wreath makers. Experienced persons are on hand, ready to help first timers.

The December monthly meeting

of the garden club will be held at the fairgrounds at 7 p.m. on Friday evening, Dec. 5, and members will set up the workshop for Saturday. During this week members will be working each afternoon and most evenings making wreaths that have been pre-ordered through Ida Farra at 676-9446.

A special feature of the 1986 workshop will be the sale of handmade candles. A few table centerpieces will also be created for sale during the workshop.

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