

Mustang boys advance to state tournament

By Rick Paullus

The Heppner Mustang boys used a stifling defense to advance to the OSAA 2A State Tournament by winning two games at the District 7 Basketball Tournament on Friday, Feb. 23, and Saturday, Feb. 24. With the two wins, the Mustangs earned the second seed from the Columbia Basin Conference and were to play Dayton, the second ranked team in the state, on Tuesday, Feb. 27. (The Mustangs lost to Dayton in a close game.)

The Mustangs beat Sherman County on Friday, 44-33, and Culver on Saturday, 54-35, to improve to 19 and five on the year.

The Sherman County Huskies took an early 2-0 lead before Ryan Matteson hit a three-pointer and Craig Scott hit a short jumper to make it 5-2. Joe Papineau scored off a pass from Michael McCabe and David Piper scored off a rebound to end the first quarter with the Mustangs leading, 9-4.

Scott hit one of two free throws and Stefan Matheny scored off a pass from Blake Knowles to make it 12-5. Brian Rust hit a jumper to make it 14-5. Papineau hit a free throw to close out the first half scoring with the Mustangs leading, 15-9.

Neither team could find the mark in the first three minutes of the second half until Scott made a lay-in and Matheny hit a three-pointer, but the Huskies came back to get within 20-15. Matheny hit a long jumper and Matteson hit a three-pointer to make it 25-17. Matheny hit two more three-pointers to make it 31-21 and Knowles scored on a rebound to make it 33-21. The Huskies scored at the end of the third to cut the lead to 33-23.

Matheny hit a long jumper to open the fourth to make it 35-23. Papineau made a free throw and Knowles hit a long jumper, but the Huskies came back to get within 38-30. Matheny hit another long jumper, Scott made two free throws to make it 42-30, and Brad Adams hit two more free throws to make it 44-31. Piper hit a jumper to end the game with the Mustangs taking the win, 46-33.

Matheny hit seven of 11 from the field, including three of three from the three-point range, to finish with 17 points to lead all scorers. He also had three steals. Scott had seven points, five rebounds and two steals. Matteson had six points and Knowles pulled down 11 rebounds. McCabe had four rebounds and two steals. Papineau had four rebounds.

The Mustangs fell behind 2-0 to the Culver Bulldogs early in Saturday's game, but McCabe came back with a three-pointer, Matheny fed Knowles for a lay-in and Knowles scored off a rebound to make it 8-2. Matteson hit a three-pointer from the corner and Scott scored on a nice pass from McCabe to make it 12-4. Papineau then scored off a nice pass from Knowles to end the first quarter with the Mustangs leading, 14-6.

Matheny hit a running jumper and Rust put in a rebound basket to start the second to increase to lead to 18-6. After a Bulldog three-pointer, Rust hit a short jumper to make it 20-9. After another Bulldog three-pointer, Knowles scored on a pass from Piper and Papineau scored on a fast break off a nice pass from Scott to make it 24-12. Chuy Elguezabal hit a three-pointer to close out the first half with the Mustangs ahead, 27-14.

Scott hit a short jumper off a rebound to make it 29-15 to start off the third, then Matteson hit a three-pointer, Piper scored off a drive, Knowles hit a rebound basket and Piper hit a jumper from the free throw line to make it 38-16. Piper scored off a rebound, Rust hit two free throws to make it 42-21 and Piper scored off his own miss to end the third with the Mustangs out in front, 44-24.

McCabe hit a short jumper from the baseline and Matteson scored on an inbounds play on a nice pass from Matheny to open the fourth, giving the Mustangs a 48-26 lead. Then Knowles came up with the defensive play of the night, hustling down the court and blocking a shot off the backboard on a breakaway. The Bulldogs got to within 48-33, but Rust hit three of four free throws and Adams hit one of two down the stretch. Elguezabal got a steal and lay-in to close out the scoring, giving the Mustangs the 54-35 win.

Rust hit five of seven free throws to lead the Mustangs with nine points and added three rebounds. Knowles had eight points and pulled



David Piper looks for rebound in district playoff game. 35 is Joe Papineau

down 11 rebounds. Piper had eight points and six rebounds. Matteson had six points and McCabe had five points and five rebounds. Scott had three steals and two assists. Matheny had two assists and Elguezabal had five points.

Statistics
Game One
 Sherman County: 4 5 14 10 - 33
 Heppner: 9 8 18 13 - 46
 Sherman County (33): Welk 4 2-4 10, Kaseberg 3 1-2 7, Yourchek 3 0-0 6, Langston 2 1-2 5, Shelton 2 1-2 5, Sanchez 0 0-2 0, Reiten, Ketchum. Totals 14-47 5-12 33.
 Three-pointers: none.
 Heppner (46): Stefan Matheny 7 0-0 17, Craig Scott 2 3-4 7, Ryan Matteson 2 0-0

6, Blake Knowles 2 0-0 4, David Piper 2 0-0 4, Joe Papineau 1 2-4 4, Brian Rust 1 0-0 2, Brad Adams 0 2-3 2, Michael McCabe, Sam Van Liew, Chuy Elguezabal. Totals 17-52 7-11 46. Three-pointers: Matheny (3), Matteson (2).

Game Two
 Culver: 6 8 10 11 - 35
 Heppner: 14 13 17 10 - 54
 Culver (35): Cruz 3 2-4 9, Sosa 3 2-2 8, Macy 2 1-2 6, Lewis 1 2-3 4, Cloud 2 0-0 4, Herman 1 1-2 3, Dix 0 1-2 1, Z. McKim, Whitaker, J. McKim, Pollock, Say. Totals 12-63 9-15 35. Three-pointers: Macy, Cruz, Heppner (54): Rust 2 5-7 9, Knowles 4 0-1 8, Piper 4 0-0 8, Matteson 2 0-0 6, McCabe 2 0-0 5, Elguezabal 2 0-1 5, Matheny 2 0-0 4, Scott 2 0-0 4, Papineau 2 0-0 4, Adams 0 1-2 1, Van Liew. Totals 22-68 6-11 54. Three-pointers: Matteson (2), McCabe, Elguezabal.

Health district contracts new billing system

By Molly Rhea

"If it's not broke - Don't fix it." Right? Well, Pioneer Memorial Clinic's billing system through Good Shepherd Medical Group wasn't "broke", it just never worked in the first place.

As of March 1, the billing and collections for the Morrow County Health District clinics is being contracted out to Vidian Services, a company based in West Richland, specializing in billing for clinics and physician practices.

"Vidian has the software ability to extract the data from both software systems the clinics are currently running and transfer it to their billing system," said MCHD CEO Victor VanderDoes.

Vidian will be reimbursed 6.75 percent of their collections. As part of the service they will provide and install computer terminals (or just the software if the PCs are already in place) at both the Heppner and Irrigon clinics. Each provider's office, nurse's desk, as well as the office manager's and the receptionist's

desks will sport a computer terminal.

The software package includes patient scheduling, which all clinic staff will be accessing. Vidian is providing off-site as well as on-site staff training within the first week of March.

Monica Swanson is joining the clinic staff as office manager of both the Heppner and Irrigon clinics. Swanson brings 15 years of office management experience with her, albeit in the dental field.

"I'm excited to be coming back to work for the health district," said Swanson, "And looking forward to learning the medical aspects of this position."

Swanson joins PMC receptionist Nola Binchus, clinic nurses Linda Dunaway and Trish Maben, as well as Shelly Rietmann and Susan Thompson, who fill in on an "as needed" basis.

The clinic staff in Irrigon includes Physician Assistant, Nancy Drinkwalter, R.N., receptionist Maria Romero, and medical assistant Michelle Jung.

Mustang girls fall short against Tiger-Scots in district tournament

By Molly Rhea

The Mustang girls put up a valiant effort on Friday, February 23, but fell short, losing 44-51 to Weston-McEwen in their first game of the loser-out Columbia Basin Conference district tournament held at the Pendleton Convention Center over the weekend.

Marissa McCabe started the evening's scoring by hitting from the baseline, and the Mustangs immediately transitioned to full court pressure. The TigerScote Chelsie Bonifer sunk one to tin up the score, then back oil offense, San Juanita Elguezabal scooped a rebound and put the ball in the bucket to put Heppner back on top. Becky Sparks hit the front end of a one-plus-one freethrow, Mustang Shelley Rietmann grabbed the rebound and the Mustangs raced down the court. When Elguezabal was unable to penetrate the key, she passed the ball back out to Lacey Matteson who swooshed in a three point shot to put the Mustangs up 7-3.

After another trip down the floor with the TigerScots scoring a basket, Jodie Carlson slipped her defender to hit a jumper from the side, again increasing Heppner's lead to four points. McCabe and Matteson forced a Weston-McEwen turnover. Elguezabal was fouled and went to the line to sink the first half of a one-and-one. Carlson grabbed the rebound, but wasn't able to convert the basket. Two TigerScots hit for another four points, to end the first quarter with the Mustangs leading by one, 10-9.

Elguezabal started out the second quarter by putting back an offensive rebound to increase the Mustang lead to three. At that point Weston-McEwen's Sparks went into a scoring frenzy, hitting 11 of her eventual 20 points in this period. The Mustangs were down 12-16 when Matteson hit a short jumper to narrow the gap to two. TigerScot Renee Robertson hit a trey, again stretching the lead.

Elguezabal slipped through the key to put in another two for the Mustangs. Bonifer hit the back end of a two shot freethrow and the Heppner squad went back down the court. Matteson passed the ball to Brett Barber for two points from inside the key, and the Mustangs trailed by two, 18-20. Sparks and Robertson combined for six quick points for Weston-McEwen, then Barber took matters into her own hands, dribbled through the key to score another bucket for the Mustangs. Down in TigerScot territory



SanJuanitaElguezabal goes up for shot in district play Friday. No. 32 is Shelley Rietmann.

Elguezabal nabbed a rebound, passed to Matteson, who was then fouled on the breakaway. Matteson hit the second of her two shot freethrow attempts, then Weston-McEwen's Darlene Thompson hit her only bucket of the night to finish the first half's scoring, Heppner trailing 21-28.

Elguezabal started the third quarter as she had the second, by converting an offensive rebound into two points for the Mustangs. Then Weston-McEwen's Beckys (Sparks and Brito) went to work, scoring all of 10 of the TigerScots' third quarter points. It was 23-36 when Barber again went inside to score. Next Matteson stole the ball and put it in for another two points, bringing the score to 27-36. Sparks hit for two at the other end, and Rietmann scored from the outside to post another two points for the Mustangs and end the third period, 29-38.

Sparks scored the first four points of the final quarter, widening Weston-McEwen's lead to 13. The Mustangs buckled down to narrow the margin. Rietmann scored with her patented finger roll for two and Matteson hit a trey. Brito scored the final field goal for the TigerScots to extend their lead back to 10, 34-44. Matteson again drove the key to score two points and went back on defense to force a turnover. Elguezabal pulled down an offensive board and dished off to Rietmann for another Mustang bucket. Barber then stole the ball and passed the ball to Elguezabal for another score, bringing the Heppner fans to their feet and the Mustangs within four, 40-44.

With only a few minutes remaining, the Mustangs turned up the heat, but the TigerScots were able to counter this pressure by converting seven of nine freethrows. Although Meghan Bailey hit an outside shot and Elguezabal scored another, the Mustangs ran out of time and came up short to end their season.

Elguezabal scrapped her way through the game to lead the

team with 13 points and 11 rebounds. Matteson scored 13 points, made four steals and was credited with two assists. Rietmann scored six points, pulled down 11 boards and made one assist, while Barber ended with six points, two steals and two rebounds. Carlson made two points and scooped four boards, McCabe also had two points, along with two rebounds, three steals and an assist. Bailey finished with two points, two rebounds and one assist.

Once again the outcome of the game came down to freethrows. While Heppner went to the line only six times to score two points, WestonMcEwen went behind the charity stripe 16 times, converting 10. Although the Mustangs outscored the TigerScots from the field, the Heppner squad shot a miserable 28 percent, whereas WestonMcEwen hit for 43 percent.

Becky Sparks ended with 20 points and 10 rebounds for the TigerScots. Individually Sparks shot 64 percent from the field.

WestonMcEwen 9 19 10 13 - 51
 Heppner 10 11 8 15 - 44

Weston-McEwen (51) Harrison, Thompson, Brito 5 4-5 14, Bonifer 2 1-2 5, Robertson 3 2-3 9, Allen, Winn 0 1-2 1, Bennett, Sparks 9 2-4 20.

Totals 19 10-16 51.
 Heppner (44) Barber 3 0-0 6, Elguezabal 6 1-3 13, Matteson 5 1-2 13, McCabe 1 0-0 2, Patton, Bailey 1 0-1 2, Rietmann 3 0-0 6, Carlson 1 0-0 2, Greenup. Totals 20 2-6 44

Three point goals - Weston McEwen 1 (Robertson), Heppner 2 (Matteson 2). Fouled out - Barber.

MS Walk set

The annual MS Walk & Roll, Rain or Shine has been scheduled for Saturday, April 21.

Last year the MS Walk raised over \$360,000 in the fight against multiple sclerosis statewide and in Clark County, WA. This year's state-wide goal is \$500,000.

Local chair is Merilee McDowell.

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