

Heppner softball star signs on to play at Treasure Valley



On Thursday, Jan. 17, Heppner student Baily Bennett signed a letter of intent to play softball at Treasure Valley Community College. Her parents, Mike and Misty Bennett of Heppner, looked on proudly as she initialed and signed the document. Bennett has been offered a tuition waiver to play softball for the Chukars for the 2014 season. There, she will continue her softball career and begin her college education. Coaches, staff members and friends were there to share in this exciting moment. —Photo by David Sykes

Local wrestlers start young



A group of Heppner parents got together this winter and decided that, rather than take their grade-school-age boys to Hermiston to participate in wrestling, they would form their own practice locally. The boys wrestled in the Oregon Wrestling Association for Youth (ORWAY), a non-profit organization whose mission is "...to grow amateur collegiate wrestling in Oregon and positively influence the lives of Oregon youth by maximizing participation and opportunity at all levels through grass roots promotions and by providing a low-cost, user-friendly experience." The kids traveled all over the Northwest, competing with other Cascade teams from Riverside, Hermiston, Pendleton, Mac-Hi, La Grande, Wallowa/Enterprise, Upton, Baker, Sherman, John Day, Irrigon, Elgin-Tri-Cities, Othello and Big River. All the boys placed in each event. Pictured are Heppner participants (L-R) Blaine Mahoney, Caleb George, Alakae Rodriguez, David Cribbs, Caden George and Keegin Chitty. —Contributed photo

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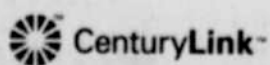
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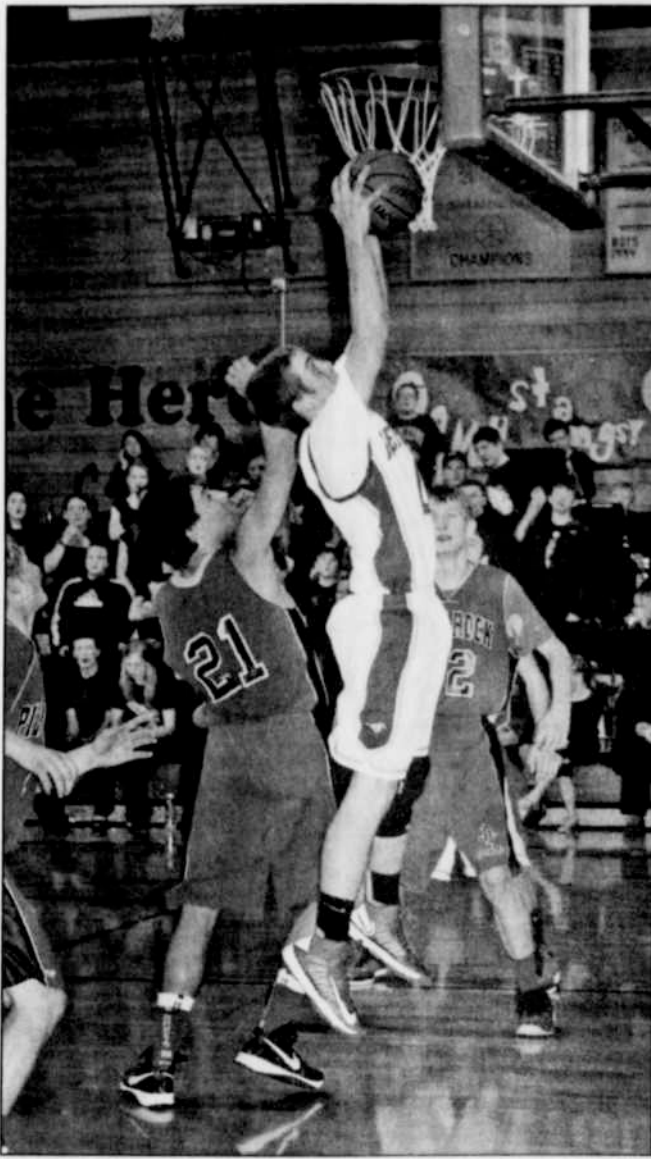
Lifeline eligible subscribers may also qualify for reliable home high-speed Internet service up to 1.5Mbps for \$9.95* per month for the first 12 months of service. Further details are available at centurylink.com/internetbasics.

If you live in a CenturyLink service area, please call 1-800-201-4099 or visit centurylink.com/lifeline with questions or to request an application for the Lifeline program.

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Mustang girls split weekend, boys struggle with offense



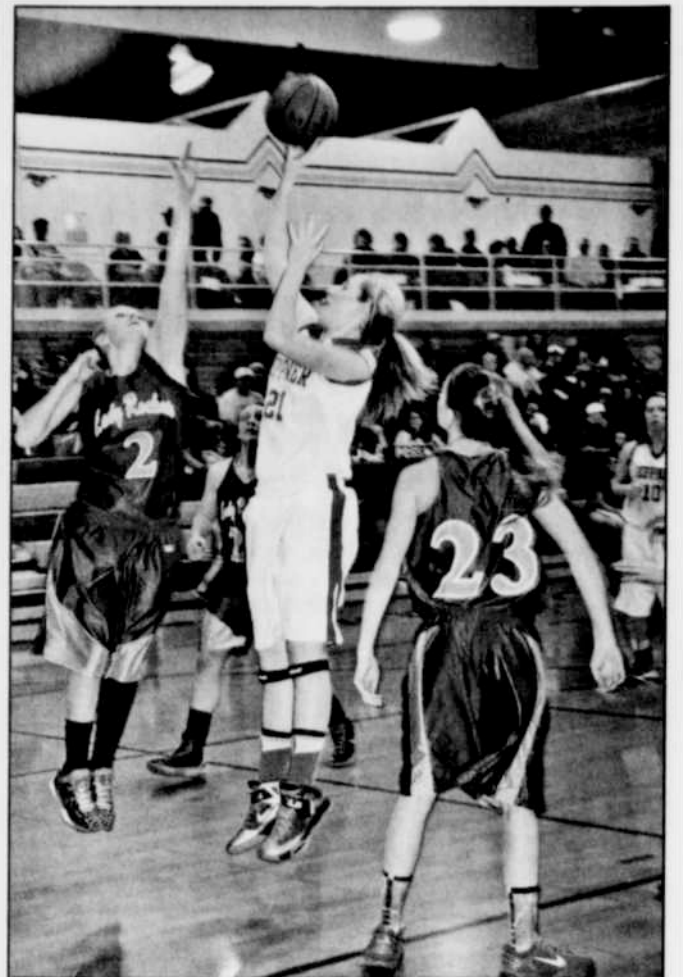
Heppner hosted the Pilot Rock Rockets (6-2 Blue Mountain Conference) Friday night.

The Heppner Lady Mustangs' (7-1 BMC) poor shooting from the field cost them a victory and put them in a second-place tie with the Rockets in league play.

The Rockets led 23-11 at the half; Heppner only came within eight points of the Rockets in the con-

test. Blake Greenup led the Mustangs in scoring with nine points.

The boys were beaten by the Rockets 51-42 in league play. The Mustangs played smart basketball in the first half, holding the lead at the half. The Rockets adjusted, though, and took the momentum away in the third quarter, eventually winning the contest. Aidan



The Mustangs hosted the Pilot Rock Rockets last Friday but ended the night disappointed when they sent the visitors home with the victory. Above right: Maddie Lindsay goes up for the shot in the Heppner versus Pilot Rock game last Friday in Heppner. Above left: JC Putman faces off the Rockets at the board. —Photos by Sandy Matthews

Wright was high scorer for the Mustangs.

Heppner traveled to Stanfield to play the Tigers on Saturday.

The Lady Mustangs rebounded from their Friday night loss, beating the Tigers 47-30. The Tigers got into foul trouble and couldn't keep pace with the Mustangs. Baily Bennett scored 13 and Alana Wilson

had 11 in the win for the Mustangs.

The boys' team continued to struggle offensively, being down 26-20 at half-time. Both teams played physical basketball in the second half; the Mustangs came within four points of the Tigers but lost the contest 46-37. Stephen Thompson led the Mustangs in scoring with 14.

Mustang wrestling makes OWC quarterfinals

The Heppner wrestling team competed in the Oregon Wrestling Classic (OWC) in Redmond, OR on Friday and Saturday of last week. The OWC is the unofficial dual-meet state championship. The competition is a weight-to-weight team match-up.

Despite having only nine wrestlers to fill the 14 weight classes, Heppner made it to the quarterfinals and fell one point short of an upset of the number-two dual team in the state.

The tournament begins with each team placed in a pool. The top two teams from each pool advance to the championship round of competition. In four previous years at the OWC, Heppner had never made it to the second round of the tournament.

The Mustangs easily defeated their first opponent, Gold Beach, by a score of 39-15. Heppner only lost two matches in the dual.

The next dual, against Knappa, came down to the last match. Although Heppner gave up 30 points to forfeits, the team was leading by six points, and freshman Will Lutcher had to not get pinned for the Mustangs to win and qualify for the championship round. Lutcher made a mistake and found himself in a tight head-and-arm with 1:30 left in the third round. Lutcher battled for his life and, although he lost the match, he didn't give up the pin. It was only the second match of the dual that Heppner lost. The final score was 42-40.

In the third dual of the pool, Heppner faced the perennial powerhouse Lowell. From the beginning, Lowell was a favorite to advance to the finals in the tournament. Despite winning twice as many individual matches, the Mustangs fell one point short due to forfeits. Heppner lost the dual 33-34.

As the number one seed from the pool, Lowell went on to easily defeat its next two opponents and advance to the finals. As the second seed from the pool round, Heppner faced Culver, the five-time defending state champion and eventual 2013 OWC champion. The Mustangs were no match for Culver's full line-up.

The final score was 58-15 with 36 of Culver's points coming from forfeits.

Of the contested individual matches, Heppner won a total of 21 over the two days and lost only 14. In every dual except Culver, the Mustangs won more individual matches than their opponents.

Mustang wrestlers and their individual records

in the tournament were:

Ryan Smith (106 lbs.) 4-1, Will Lutcher (120 lbs.) 2-3, Jared Lemmon (126 lbs.) 4-0, Alex Smith (132/138 lbs.) 4-1, Treston Maben (145 lbs.) 2-3, Earl Propheteter (152 lbs.) 2-3, Tim Nelson (195/220 lbs.) 5-0, John Propheteter (220/285 lbs.) 4-1, Jesse Boyd (138 lbs.) 1-3.

HHS math students help children's hospital



Math students from Heppner High School wrapped up their annual fundraiser for Doernbecher Children's Hospital in Portland recently. They were able to raise \$2,500, bringing their two-year total to \$7,300. —Contributed photo

HES students of the month



Heppner Elementary School has announced the students of the month for December. Top (L-R): Madison Palmer, Kendall Dowdy, Tyson Vawser, Leo Waite, Alison Cecil, Caitlyn Scrivner and Derek Howard. Bottom (L-R): John Lindsay, Ally Green, Jake Lentz, Austin Brown, Reece Gorham, Jett Stewart and Serenity Rodriguez. The character trait for December was "managing yourself." —Contributed photo