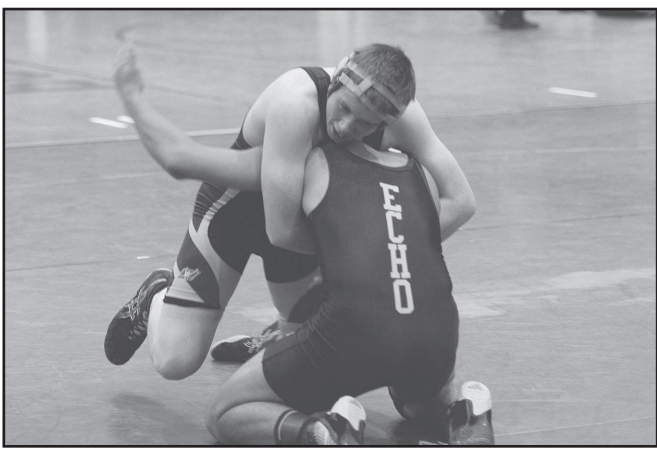


Mustangs wrestle large schools in Pendleton tournament

The Heppner/Ione wrestling team competed in the Rollin Schimmel Memorial wrestling tournament on Friday, Dec. 30, in Pendleton. The tournament included 14 teams from Oregon and Washington, mostly large schools. The Mustangs were one of only two 2A teams at the tournament.

Senior Cord Flynn led the team with a perfect record on the day and a gold medal at 220 pounds. Flynn pinned his opponent from Willamina in the semi-finals. In the finals match he faced Spencer Wells from Mac-Hi, the 4A number-one ranked wrestler at 220 pounds. Flynn held on to a 3-2 lead into the final second of the third round before scoring a takedown off Wells's shot attempt to finish with a 5-2 win.

Trevor Antonucci was the Mustangs' other placer at 113 pounds. Antonucci placed sixth.



Top: Leo Waite grapples with an opponent at the Rollin Schimmel memorial in Pendleton last week. Bottom: Charles Cason looks to take the upper hand over an Echo wrestler last Friday.
-Photos by Kirsti Cason

2016 WEATHER

-From PAGE ONE

The staff at the National Weather Service in Pendleton have cast their votes for the top weather events of 2016, and a few pieces of Heppner weather have made the cut. At the top of the NWS list, though, was the June 8 supercell that produced a tornado, large hail, and damaging winds. Events were rated on a scale of one to 11.

Top weather events were as follows:

1. June supercell (9.8)—On June 8, a thunderstorm over southern Wheeler County rapidly developed into a supercell with golf ball-sized hail, damaging winds to 70 mph, and a brief tornado as it tracked northeast to near Monument and Ukiah.

2. December snow and cold (8.2)—Widespread heavy snow was followed by arctic air during mid-December. Snowfall averaged between five and 10 inches across the Columbia Basin and eastern mountains, but ranged up to between 15 and 20 inches in central Oregon. The arctic air following the snow dropped temperatures below zero in many areas. By the end of December, mountain snowpack had surged to 115 to 130 percent of normal.

3. Fire outbreak (7.4)—Triple digit temperatures and humidity in the five to 10 percent range helped to spread an outbreak of fires at the end of July. The Weigh Station fire occurred east of Pendleton and shut down I-84. The Rail Fire near Unity, OR burned nearly 42,000 acres in rugged terrain before being contained in early September. The Range 12 fire started on the Yakima Training Center and burned for a week on 176,000 acres

of mostly grass and sage on BLM, state and private lands.

4. (TIE) Wet October (6.4)—Rainfall was one to three inches above normal and ranked in the top five wettest Octobers across the region. It was the wettest October on record in Washington at Bickleton, Prosser, Selah, Mill Creek and Whitman Mission. Trout Lake, WA, at 14.58 inches, beat their previous record by 3.62 inches.

4. (TIE) Strong El Nino to weak La Nina (6.4)—One of the strongest El Nino patterns on record last winter was reversed in a matter of months to a weak La Nina by mid-summer.

6. Launch of GOES R (6.0)—The next generation of weather satellites began with the launch of GOES R on Nov. 19. GOES R reached geostationary orbit and was re-named GOES 16 at the end of the month. After sensor deployment, calibration and checkout, it promises to revolutionize satellite imagery and data collection. It has four times the image resolution and can take an image every minute. It also has the capability to track thunderstorm lightning.

7. Tri-Cities tornado (6.0)—An intense but short-lived thunderstorm brought a brief EF0 tornado in Kennewick, WA on the late evening of May 21. The thunderstorm also produced hail up to ¾ inch, damaging winds which downed trees, and localized flash flooding.

8. Warm, Dry April (4.4)—It was the warmest April on record in Washington at Walla Walla, Ellensburg, Yakima, Cle Elum, Kennewick, Moxee City and Richland. In Oregon, it was the warmest April on record at The Dalles,

Hermiston, La Grande, and Pelton Dam. Ellensburg beat their previous record warm April by nearly five degrees. The unseasonable warmth coupled with a drier-than-normal month made the mountain snowpack virtually disappear.

9. (TIE) Snowless January and February (4.2)—Many stations in the southern Columbia Basin went through the entire months of January and February without measurable snowfall. In Washington, this included Dayton, Ice Harbor Dam, Walla Walla, and Whitman Mission. In Oregon, a snowless end of winter was observed at Heppner, Hermiston, Madras, Milton-Freewater, Pendleton and Pilot Rock. Snowpack in the mountains also suffered decreases.

9. (TIE) Drought eased (4.2)—Moderate to severe drought was diminished in March, made a comeback in June, and finally eased to just abnormally dry in December. The mid-December rating was the least drought coverage for the area since November 2013.

11. November warmth (3.4)—Indian Summer continued into November across eastern Washington and eastern Oregon. In Washington, it was the warmest November on record statewide, and second warmest on record in Oregon. Individual stations in Washington that set records for warmest November include Walla Walla, Ellensburg, Pasco, Yakima, Easton and Moxee City. In Oregon, record warmth was set at The Dalles, Hermiston, Pendleton, Antelope, Grizzly, La Grande and Monument. Precipitation was below normal and mountain snowpack well behind normal.

Cold, snowy weather to continue

The cold temperatures and snow the area experienced during December likely won't let up in January, according to the National Weather Service in Pendleton.

Temperatures at Heppner averaged colder than normal during the month of December, with an average temperature of 30.7 degrees, or 2.8 degrees below normal. High temperatures averaged 38.3 degrees, which was 3.1 degrees below normal. The highest was 51 degrees on the 30th. Low temperatures averaged 23.1 degrees, which was 2.4 degrees below normal. The lowest was two degrees, on the 17th.

There were 26 days with the low temperature below 32 degrees. There were nine days when the high temperature stayed below 32 degrees.

It was also a wet month; precipitation totaled 1.52 inches during December, which was 0.20 inches above normal. Measurable precipitation of at least .01 inch, was received on 13 days with the heaviest, 0.59 inches, reported on the 15th.

Precipitation in 2016 totaled 12.03 inches, which is 1.97 inches below normal. Since October, the water year precipitation at Heppner has been 4.32 inches, which is 0.26 inches above normal.

Snowfall totaled 13 inches with at least one inch of snow reported on five days. The heaviest snowfall was 5.5 inches reported on the 15th. The greatest depth of snow on the ground was six inches on the 15th.

The highest wind gust was 37 mph, which occurred on the 23rd.

The outlook for January from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center calls for below-normal temperatures and near- to above-normal precipitation. Normal highs for Heppner during January are 43.6 degrees and normal lows are 26.7 degrees. The 30-year normal precipitation is 1.47 inches.

Mustang boys sweep play at Irrigon tournament

The Heppner Mustang boys' basketball team won two games last week at the Irrigon Invitational Tournament. The Mustangs defeated the 4A McLoughlin Pioneers by a score of 44-34 and then beat a good Waitsburg, WA team by the score of 53-51.

An early afternoon start time for the game with the Pioneers may have led to the sluggish start by the Mustangs. Heppner struggled to score early in the game and led at the end of the first quarter by the score of 11-6. The scoring drought continued in the second quarter as the Mustangs could only put eight more points on the board. The defensive effort was good as Heppner held the Pioneers to only six points in the quarter. The Mustangs led at halftime by the score of 19-12.

The pace of the game picked up in the second half as the Mustangs came out and scored 16 points in the third quarter. They led the game 35-24 as the fourth quarter started. The Pioneers outscored the Mustangs in the quarter 10-9 but it wasn't enough, and the Mustangs won the game 44-34.

Logan Grieb led the team in scoring with 22 points. He also had 6 rebounds, 2 assists, 6 steals and a blocked shot. Jake Lindsay scored 6 points, and had 2 rebounds and a

steal in the game. Kevin Murray and Kevin Smith each scored 6 points for the Mustangs. Murray also had 9 rebounds and an assist while Smith had 9 rebounds, 2 blocked shots and a steal. Caden Hedman had 3 points, 2 rebounds and 1 assist for the team. Hunter Nichols scored 1 point and Alex Lindsay finished with 5 rebounds, 1 assist and 1 steal.

The Waitsburg Cardinals were a very tall team, with a lineup of seven players over the height of 6'1". They featured two players who could really shoot the ball well and who ended up scoring all but 9 of their teams points in the game.

Heppner started the game out better than they had the day before. They came out with more energy and were shooting the ball well. The Mustangs led at the end of the first quarter by the score of 14-10. Heppner continued to control the game in the second quarter and looked as though they would go to halftime with a six-point lead. The Cardinals then got the ball and made a half-court shot at the buzzer to cut the Mustang lead to 27-24 at halftime.

A tightly contested third quarter saw both teams score 13 points, and the Mustangs led 40-37. Heppner stretched the lead out a little bit in the fourth quarter but Waitsburg made

some big shots and came right back. Heppner made some big free-throws near the end of the game, but none were bigger than the two that Jake Lindsay made with only seconds left in the game to give the Mustangs a five-point lead. The Cardinals came down the floor quickly and made a three-pointer as time ran out on the clock. The Mustangs got the win by the score of 53-51.

Grieb once again had a hot hand and torched the net for 25 points. He also had 6 rebounds and a steal in the game. Jake Lindsay had a good all-around game and finished with 14 points, 6 assists, 5 rebounds and 1 steal. Hedman had 10 points, 2 assists, 2 steals and 2 rebounds for the team. Murray and Smith each scored 2 points and had 10 rebounds for the Mustangs. Murray also had 2 steals and an assist while Smith blocked 2 Waitsburg shots. Alex Lindsay battled foul trouble the entire game and contributed 1 assist and blocked 1 shot. Coby Dougherty played well in the game and grabbed 2 rebounds.

With the wins, Heppner has a 7-2 record for the season. The Mustangs have two home games this weekend. On Friday night they will host the Union Bobcats and then on Saturday the Elgin Huskies will come to town.

Town and Country nominations due Jan. 13

Community nominations for the Heppner Chamber of Commerce's annual Town and Country Community Awards are due Friday, Jan. 13. All nomination forms need to be received by the Heppner chamber or Kuhn Law Offices by that day. Nominations can also be emailed to heppnerchamber@centurytel.net or faxed to 541-676-5656.

Tickets will go on sale starting this Friday, Jan. 6, and will be available at the Bank of Eastern Oregon, chamber office, City of Heppner, Community Bank and Murray's. Ticket prices this year are \$25 each until the week of Feb. 6, at which time they will be \$30, so

those planning on attending are encouraged to get their tickets early. Reserved tables will be available on a first come, first served basis; reserved tables require a purchase of at least a round table of eight or a long table of six. Contact the Heppner chamber at 541-676-5536 for more information and to reserve seating.

Rep. Smith to compete in Dancing with Hermiston Stars

Dancing with the Hermiston Stars, celebrating its fifth season, returns to rock the Hermiston High School auditorium Jan. 14. Among the local celebrities participating in the event will be State Representative Greg Smith of Heppner.

Rep. Smith will be taking to the dance floor to "campaign" for votes and donations for the Hermiston Warming Station. He said he cares about the Hermiston Warming Station because their mission is to make sure there is shelter and warmth for everyone who needs it during the winter months.



State Rep. Greg Smith

Other area stars competing next month will be Umatilla County Commissioner Bill Elfering, Hermiston City Councilor and Oregon Commission for Women Board mem-

ber Clara Beas-Fitzgerald, Hermiston business owner Eva Swain, business owner and community volunteer LuAnn Davison, and retired Hermiston firefighter and EMT Spike Piersol.

As in previous years, the six community members will be paired with professional dancers from the Utah Ballroom Dance Troupe in attempt to quickstep, rumba and cha cha cha their way into the audience's hearts.

Judges will rate them, the audience will vote with ticket stubs and cheering, and cash donations are tallied and combined to crown the Mirror Ball trophy winner as the evening comes to a close.

Utah Ballroom Dance Troupe professional dancers will train local celebrities for a week and then dance with them. A special

guest performance choreographed by Utah Ballroom Dance Troupe and performed by local children will open the evening, while a festive intermission will allow local celebrities to secure audience votes and donations.

"Dancing with Hermiston Stars" performance will be held on Jan. 14 at the Hermiston High School Fine Arts Auditorium. The box office opens at 6 p.m., doors open at 6:30 p.m., and the performances begin at 7 p.m.

General admission tickets are \$20, and \$10 for those under 18. Tickets are available online at www.desertartscouncil.com, the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce and Hermiston Parks and Recreation Office.

For information, call 541-667-5018. The event is sponsored by the Hermiston Breakfast Kiwanis Club.

Morrow County Road Committee Meeting
will be held on
January 12, 2017 at 1:00 pm
in the Morrow County Bartholomew Upper Conference room, 110 N. Court St., Heppner, OR.

Deadline for news and advertising:
Monday at 5 p.m.

SELL YOUR UNWANTED ITEMS! Place on ad in the GT
Email your for sale ad to: megan@rapidsolve.net