

SPORTS

AWARD:

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performers with a second-team nod. The sophomore wing slashes into the lane off the dribble and creates layups or foul-line

trips.

For the boys, Hermiston earned two first-team nods in seniors Keegan Crafton and Dillon Zimmerly.

Crafton, a 6-foot-3 forward, used his athleticism and motor to get buckets and rebounds at the block.

His ability to run the floor in transition got the Bulldogs good looks at the hoop, even if they didn't go down, and easy points if they did. He helped protect the rim on defense and could jump passing lanes if needed.

Zimmerly, especially early on, provided much of the scoring for a Bulldog team that sometimes struggled to get the ball in the hoop. He had a strong mid-range game with a tricky step-back move that was very good at creating space.

Concluding the Hermiston selections was senior point guard Austin Naillon, who received a second-team nod. He was the catalyst for the offense and got to the rim when his team needed points or free throws. The senior started

all but one game, senior night against Hood River Valley when Carson Lloyd was trotted out, and consistently got praises from head coach Jake McElligott for his desire to attack defenses and play good defense.

CHAMPIONS:

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McDonough, who would lose in the quarterfinals at 160 pounds, said he felt like quitting but had to put selfishness aside to help the team. He took fifth.

Wagner lost in the semis but put forth his best effort to help the team and took third at 120 pounds.

"Everyone else in the room, instead of cowering down and turning away, people put on their big-boy pants, and it was definitely a change for the Devin Bonsers of the room — kids who had potential but just had to get over that hump to winning a match at state," junior and 182-pound runner-up Bob Coleman said. "It really focused them and (they) took the responsibility that needed to be taken."

Head coach Sean Williams sung the praises of Coleman, who placed for the first time at the state tournament as a junior. In this year's final, Coleman, who Williams said was the better wrestler, couldn't score when he desperately needed to down one late in the third. He managed to pull three single-legs but couldn't get the dominant position and couldn't score. He would lose by that by a single point.

"I think next year Bob is a position where he can win it," Williams said. "If I just look two years ago



KATHY ANEY PHOTO

Hermiston's Brock McDonough (on right) faces off against Tommy Winningham, of Crater, during the Oregon OSAA Wrestling State Championships at Veteran's Memorial Coliseum in Portland.

where Bob was, it's not the same kid anymore. He's come a long way and, deservedly, he took second, but I think, with a little luck on our side, he could've been the state champion."

Coleman credited a former lifting partner turned sparring partner, among many others, for getting him to this level. One day, Coleman was looking for a weight-lifting partner and found Kyle Larson. They worked out together that day and then went up to the wrestling room and sparred a bit.

He said Larson asked him if he wanted to be a state champ, and Coleman said he did. So Lar-

son said simply, "I'll show you the way."

"It wasn't just me going, 'OK, let's flip the switch now,'" Coleman said. "It was him saying, 'OK, let's go. Here's what you got to do.'"

Coleman said Larson worked him hard the last month and a half, including 30-minute sessions before the state tournament.

"It's kind of like he saw something or potential," he said.

Though Hermiston did have a repeat champ — Colbray — its other returning champion, Liam Tarvin, came up just short. The junior won last year's 106-pound brack-

et but moved up to 113 pounds this year and almost repeated.

For Williams, just returning to the finals at a new weight class was an accomplishment in and of itself. He said once a wrestler is a champion, he can't go up because there is nothing else to accomplish. From there, they can only stay the same or go down. Tarvin, though, managed somehow to still improve in Williams' eyes.

"It was a worthy accomplishment to wrestle back to the finals," Williams said of Tarvin. "I think, in the finals, we were just too small to compete, but he wrestled well the whole tourna-

ment, and he wrestled up to expectations. His second place definitely helped us out."

Tarvin, though, wasn't completely unhappy with the loss. He said he hasn't thought about the championship match much since Saturday. He doesn't re-wrestle it in his head to figure out what he did wrong because he knows he can't change it. He will, though, take this match into next season as a bit of motivation.

"You can't win 'em all," Tarvin said. "I was happy with what I did and the way I competed. It will be on my mind in such a way that it'll motivate me to say 'Hey, you got there. What can you do to improve your position better so you can win that title next year?'"

Freshman AJ Tuia performance at state is also notable. The 132-pounder almost missed the district tournament because of the illness that swept through the Hermiston wrestling team like a flood.

Hours before the deadline to be entered into the 5A Special District 4 tournament, Tuia was cleared by his doctor to resume wrestling. Williams was notified and entered Tuia, who qualified for state.

Tuia said he was burnt out from wrestling before state, and he wasn't sure if he wanted to keep going. He credits Williams for setting a schedule to get

him back on the mat and competing. He followed that schedule and rediscovered his fire, which he rode to his sixth-place finish.

"When (I came back), I felt good, like I was back, I was ready," Tuia said. "During the matches, it kind of showed that I was capable of being able to come back. Then having accomplished that, I was like, 'Yeah, I can do this.' So, if I ever get stuck in this situation again, I need to not have my mind set to where I can't come back and I can't do this. I need to keep my mind set on the goal and pursue that goal."

Of Hermiston's 15 wrestlers, just two are seniors. Of Hermiston's eight placers, just one, Rodelo, is a senior. That means the bulk of Hermiston's best wrestlers are returning to defend the team's state title and, for juniors like Coleman and Colbray, give them a shot to win four team titles in four years.

For wrestlers like Palmer, Emilio Landin, Beau Blake, Wade Kirkpatrick and Meads, the program doesn't appear to be missing any beats.

"With another spring, with another summer, with another fall, by this time next year, these freshmen and sophomores are gonna be different kids — they're gonna be better," Williams said. "The future is bright."

BIKERS:

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In the elite men's category, which encompassed a 36-mile race through the trails outside of Echo, Chris Ganter of Boise won handily with a time of 2 hours, 5 minutes and 53 seconds. Colorado's Cody Peterson finished second with a 2:08:51 time, just barely nudging 19-year-old Nolan Brady by two seconds.

In the elite women's category, Serena Gordon took the race, winning by six seconds with a 2:24:30 posting. Alice Pennington took second in 2:30:37, and Erika Krumpelman of Hayden, Idaho, finished third in 2:36:09.

The rest of the category 1 placers were: Kevin Thon-

ney of Walla Walla took the 19-39 division in 2:13.31, and Andrew Sargent from Bend squeaked by in the 40-plus race by five seconds in 2:13.48 over Richland's Greg Turpen. Evan Plews won the men's single-speed race in 2:22.46, edging Monroe, Washington's Doug Graver by two seconds.

Justin Ziehnert took the category two 15-18 race with a 2:01:26 time on the 24-mile course. Jake Szymanski of Portland snuck past Matt Browning of Heppner with a 1:48.39 time in the category two 19-39 race. In the category two 40-49 heat, Rob Angelo of Bend won by five seconds over Portland's George Varhola with a time of 1:45.27. Eric Jenson of Richland took the category two 50-59 race in 1:48.24.

Clinton Andring of Richland took the category two 60-plus in 1:50.05.

In category three, Kevin Anderson won the 19-39 division in 2:00.38, and Bellingham, Washington's Paul Clement took category three 40-plus in 2:02.13.

In the men's clydesdales division, Rob Jordan of Lacey, Washington slid past Mark Sturges of West Richland with a time of 1:59.32.

Bruce Avery of Vancouver, Washington, riding the 12-mile beginner course, had the fastest time at that length after posting a 1:03.01 time.

Caleb Trumbull of Hood River took the category three 10-13 division with a time of 1:02.16, and Nathan Glade took the category three 14-18 heat in 1:00.38.

On the women's side,

Beth Kobza (category one, 19-39) won handily in 2:48.10, and Becky Wilson of Walla Walla (category one, 40-plus) won with a time of 2:55.49.

In category two, Alana Armstrong of Portland (2:10.46), Elise Huggins of Portland (2:05.38) and Mary Dallas of Bend (2:06.35) took the 19-39 race, 40-49 heat and 50-plus heat, respectively.

Carrie Johnson of Portland (2:21.18) took the category three 19-39 division. Kirsten Dahlquist of Portland (2:17.18) had the fastest 40-plus time in category three. Eugene's Amanda Morris (1:15.12) was the fastest 19-plus beginner, and Roxanna Hart of Washington, the lone women's junior 10-18, recorded a 1:36.04.



SAM BARBEE PHOTO

A pair of riders finish at the Echo Red 2 Red mountain bike race Saturday in Echo.

COUGARS:

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at home and a 67-45 shellacking at Powder Valley hurt Echo's ranking headed into the last stretch, and co-league and district titles weren't enough to bump up Echo for a better draw.

"We don't drop those games, (then) we get a little higher ranking and play teams that aren't

as good," Brazil said. "Without calling out other teams, I've scouted quite a few of those teams, and, yeah, we did not get the matchup we wanted. So I think if we had taken care of some more of those things later in the year, some of those games that are a little harder to get up for, maybe we'd be looking at Baker right now. Either way, we accomplished a lot. We gave our community something to be

proud of."

Echo finished the year 19-7 and 9-3 in its first year in the Old Oregon League. Its "best" losses were to third-ranked Country Christian, a decent Tri-Cities Prep (Washington) team, Dufur and Adrian. The Cougars beat 2A Columbia Basin Conference champion Pilot Rock by 13 in December and 3A Riverside in their first game of the year.

Though Echo loses only two

seniors — McCarty and Bailey Strobe — Brazil said it's more like he's losing five because of the leadership and intangible contributions made by those two players.

The Cougars' core will be largely the same next season. Juniors Kelsey Ranger, Erika Parks and Lizzie Cox will step into leadership roles. Sophomores Hattie Reese, Devin Tarvin and Beth Milbrodt have

at least a full year of varsity experience under their belts, and freshman Taylor Swaggert will see an increase in minutes and responsibilities, as well.

With the majority of the roster returning, Brazil said he is looking forward to next year and improving on this season's successes.

"I think the program's moving in the right direction," Brazil said.

VIKINGS:

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that deserved to be (in Coos Bay at state)."

The Vikings (19-8) were a victim of the seeding process as they fell from seventh to 12th after their district loss to Vale. That took Umatilla out of the top eight, which meant the team would have hosted a playoff game against a more favorable matchup.

The league schedule proved to be the highest hurdle for Umatilla to jump. After coasting through its non-league schedule, Umatilla had no answer for Vale. In four games, the southern Vikings outscored the northern Vikings 205-156 with the closest coming in February in an eight-point decision.

It was a disappointing ending for the seniors, who,

in four years, had never advanced to Coos Bay. Iri Campos, Kassandra Galbraith, Kelly Barajas and Berenice Chavez are graduating this year, leaving a core led by Aleesha Watson and Sidney Webb to try again next year.

Bow said he wanted those seniors to end their season on a more positive note.

"They've worked four years for an opportunity to do that," Bow said of the seniors getting to Coos Bay. "It was close, being up in the final 50 seconds by two. To lose a lead like that late in the game was very heart-breaking for them."

"Being in that locker room, hearing the other team cheer in the locker room nearby and hearing what our locker room was like, that's a feeling that will never go away," he added.

"Out of all the games we played this year, that'll be the one they remember for a very long time."

Looking forward, Webb will return as a senior next year and will resume primary ball-handling duties.

Watson will be a junior and will again be the primary option on offense. Courtney Dohman will also be a senior and will have a larger roll at the block with Campos gone. Brenda Campos, Iri's little sister,

figures to get more minutes, too, and Mari Paz will get more shots.

From there, Bow doesn't really know what the rest of

the roster will look like. He says he needs more depth and has to think about how he can replace his four varsity players.

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AGING	OKRA	TERN	EIRE
LOSSES	EMU	ICECAPADES	
	NEST	LACED	GOLAST
KATE	CAPSHAW	TAKESTO	
EPOXY	LEO	ASPERSE	
GLOP	DATE	RHODA	RASPY
ELICIT	IMAGE	CAPTURE	
ONMARS	URN	WON	SORBET
STATE	CAPITAL	ENTOMB	
TYNES	SIGEP	FIDO	PEON
	SHANGRI	EDU	SONIA
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