

SPORTS

Umatilla tennis shuts down Helix

BY SAM BARBEE
HERMISTON HERALD

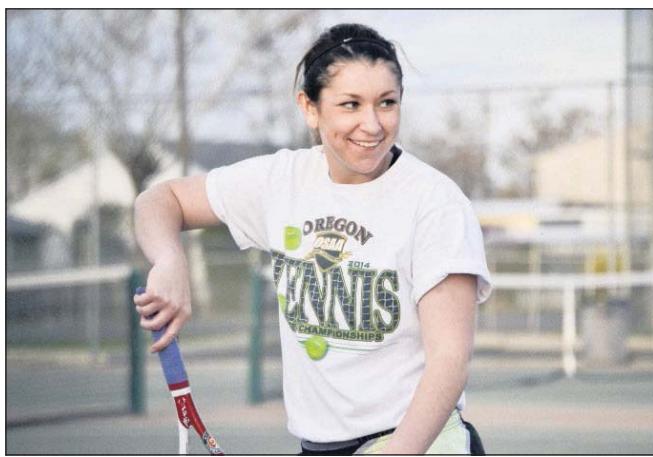
With the majority of Helix's tennis team in Europe on a field trip and Umatilla's No. 2 singles player recovering from knee surgery, Thursday's match between the Griswald High School Grizzlies and the Vikings was full of mixing and matching.

In the end, Umatilla emerged with five wins to just two losses. It's the second straight win for the boys and the second straight loss for the girls, though they only trotted out one girl. In an unofficial match, Umatilla junior Sidney Webb did her best Billy Jean King impersonation and downed Helix's No. 1 boys singles player Caiden Marks, dispatching him 8-1.

"I think we did OK," first-year head coach Calvin Meade said. "It's still pretty early in the season to get an indication of where we are as a team. From top to bottom, all of our players know there's still stuff they need to work on."

On the boys side, Umatilla cruised through its singles matches with a single blemish.

In place of Ramiro Rubio, who was resting, and



MAEGAN MURRAY PHOTO

Umatilla High School junior Sydney Webb smiles after winning a point against the No. 1 boys singles player from Griswald High School.

Alejandro Madrigal, who is recovering from the knee surgery, freshman Elian Armenta stepped into the No. 1 slot Thursday and faced Jon Shaw. Shaw would take the match 8-5, but Meade pointed out the valuable experience the frosh received.

"It's probably something completely foreign to him, partly because he's the No. 3 singles player, but also because he's a freshman," Meade said of Armenta. "... The kid has a lot of opportunity. He probably should have won that match, but it's something we can work on moving forward. You have to lose a lot before you can win a lot."

Other Umatilla victors were Giovanni Armenta, who won 8-5 over Erik Jones in the No. 2 slot, Douglas Gomez, who slid past Cody Dunn 8-5 at No. 3, and Gage Bourrie, who topped Allen Holden 8-1.

In the boys doubles, Umatilla cruised also. Edgar Madrigal and Junior Coria topped Marks and Jake Sprenger 8-4, and Joel Escamilla and Quentin Cordona beat Allen Alden and Cody Dunn 8-3.

In the lone match on the girls side, Umatilla's Brenda Coria was downed by Lynne Roberts 8-2.

The most interesting match of the day was an



MAEGAN MURRAY PHOTO

Umatilla High School junior Sydney Webb returns a rally point Thursday during her match up against the No. 1 boys singles player from Griswald High School.

unofficial one. Webb, who said she's used to playing against boys regularly, including every day at practice, lost the first game to Marks due to three unforced errors, but roared back to win 8-1.

To Meade, though, Thursday wasn't about the win. He has a bunch of young players who don't get to play matches very often, and it was important to

him to get them into a live scenario. The goal Thursday was to improve his players, and he thinks that happened.

"The value of playing (Thursday) would be getting some experience for our younger players," Meade said. "I play my top kids pretty hard. I know that they're always ready for a match. Part of it is just training the younger play-

ers to get into the mindset of (being ready to play). There are some players that — yes, they won — but they were nervous. They were timid. They didn't play as hard as they do in practice. That's just something that will come along with experience .. Today was a great opportunity to get the younger players' feet wet and throw them into the fire, so to speak."

Hermiston excels at Buck Track Classic

EO MEDIA GROUP STAFF

The Hermiston boys track and field team won the Buck Track Classic Thursday, racking up three event wins and a number of second and third-place finishes.

Umatilla also showed well, with cross country state champion Fabian Cardenas running like a state champion and Eastern Oregon-bound Amie Zitterkob taking an event. Echo also placed well.

Junior long-distance standout Josiah Niederwerfer took the 3,000-meter run in 9 minutes, 34.11 seconds, edging teammate Angel Castellanos by four seconds. Hermiston dominated the event, as junior Donnell Rome took third, nine seconds off the pace. Niederwerfer also placed second in the 1,500-meter run, finishing in 4:23.71. Umatilla senior, and defending state cross country champion, Fabian Cardenas, won the 1,500 meter in a blistering 4:07.63.

Cardenas also took second in the 800 meters, finishing two seconds behind event winner Nolan Byerga of Pendleton.

The Bulldog boys also took the 4 x 100 meter relay, as the tandem of Hiram Michel, Alexis Mercado, Felix Garcia and Javier Gonzalez finished in 43.34, slipping past the group from La Grande by nearly three seconds.

Luis Medina placed second in the 110-meter high hurdles, running a time of 17.53, two seconds behind race winner Tristin Warne of Mac-Hi. Sheridan Zumwalt took fourth in the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 46.64, about five seconds off the pace.

Tyler McAbe won the boys long jump, springing for a jump of 20-1, nearly an inch better than runner-up Owen Lanning of Waitsburg-Prescott. Andrew Horn finished third with a jump of 19-04.

Will Sharkey took third in the pole vault, clearing 11 feet, about a foot and a half short of event winner AJ Timpy of Irrigon.

Transfer Trey Neal had a good day throwing, finishing third in the shot put with a distance of 41-02, and fifth in the discus at 121-10. Elias Arenas finished seventh at 116-01.

On the girls side, sophomore Aubrey Lincoln edged Umatilla's Zitterkob in the 100-meter sprint. The Hermiston sophomore ran a quick time of 12.59, edging the future Mountaineer by just 11 tenths of a second. Echo freshman Taylor Swaggart finished fourth, about a second off the pace.

In the 200 meter, Zitterkob and Lincoln flipped, with Zitterkob edging the Hermiston sophomore by nearly four tenths in a time of 26.57. Swaggart finished fifth this time, posting a time of 28.53.

Hermiston freshman Sara Ortiz, in her first meet, finished second in the 400 meter, finishing in 1:08.10, nearly five seconds behind Elizabeth Herbes.

In the 800-meter run, Umatilla senior, and also future Mountaineer, Berenice Chavez came in fourth. She posted a 2:41.31, edging Tana Fouts of Union by just three tenths of a second.

In the 400 meter relay, Umatilla posted a winning team on the legs of Zitterkob, Adriana Madrigal, Sonia Lemus-Cisneros and Kassandra Galbraith, posting a day-best time of 53.57, edging McLoughlin's team by five hundredths of a second in one of the closest races of the day.

In the girls' throwing events, Hermiston's Jazmin Gutierrez placed second with a shot-put toss of 32-08, nearly a foot shorter than Pendleton's Keagan Utter, and teammate Ayleen Sandoval came in fifth with a distance of 31-04. Jeira Carillo took fourth with a toss of 31-05.

Umatilla's Genesis Lugo placed third in the discus posting a 89-10 throw, and Sandoval again placed fifth with an 84-01 toss.

Echo's Elizabeth McCarty posted the third-best javelin toss of the day, a 109-09 effort,

eight feet short of La Grande's Shanya Cooper's meet-winning toss.

To round out the area performers, Echo's Swaggart and Kelsey Ranger placed third and seventh, respectively, in the long jump. Swaggart jumped 14-08, about a foot short of the best jump of the day, and Ranger leaped 14-06.

BASEBALL

ORTING (WA) 5, STANFIELD 2

In its first game the year, Stanfield dropped a tough one to Orting (WA) 5-2 Friday night in Ephrata, Washington.

Dylan Grogan got the start and went four-plus innings until he struggled with his control. Orting got two in the second and one in each of the final three innings to pull away from Stanfield.

Thyler Monkus, Klay Jenson and Tony Flores had the only three hits for the Tigers.

"Orting's a good club," head coach Bryan Johnson said. "They're a bigger school. They make you earn it. I thought we could've played a bit better, but it's the first game. It's good to have one game under our belt, I guess."

Stanfield is in Cashmere, Washington for a double header today against Cascade (Leavenworth) and Cashmere today. Play starts at 11 a.m.

SHERMAN COUNTY 13, UMATILLA 8

Errors plagued the Umatilla baseball team as the Vikings gave up "too many" unearned runs, according to head coach Corleone "Booter" Lewis, and Umatilla and lost to Sherman County, 13-8, Friday. Sophomore hurler Diego Soto went all eight innings and "pitched a hell of a game," Lewis said. Cory Landon, Soto, Josh Dever and Tristen Sanguino led the Vikings at the plate, each picking up hits.

Umatilla led 3-1 after an inning when

Landon, Soto and Dever all reached and scored. Sherman County countered with five in the bottom half of the first to take a 5-3 lead. Umatilla got one in the fifth, one in the sixth and three in the top half of the seventh, but Sherman County kept its distance, getting five in the fifth to pull away.

Lewis couldn't say enough about Dever, Sanguino and Soto.

"Those three have been carrying this team defense-wise and with the sticks, especially Josh. He's great," he said.

Umatilla has a double header in Dufur today. First pitch is scheduled for 11 a.m.

Softball

UNION 15, ECHO 4 — At Echo, the defending 2A/1A state champions were too much for the Echo Cougars on Thursday in a non-league game.

Union started the game off with seven runs in the first two innings. The Cougars (1-1) cut the lead down to 7-3 in the third and then added another run in the fourth but couldn't find enough gaps to hang with hard-hitting Union which finished with 12 hits.

"We hit a lot right at fielders," Echo coach Bryan Bailey said. "I bet we had six or seven hits that went straight to outfielders. So we hit the ball well, just couldn't find any gaps to hit to."

Bailey said just taking Union to a full seven innings felt like a victory.

"We had a good day," he said. "The outcome wasn't what we wanted, but Union is definitely a good team."

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Jaiden Wright and Carsyn Roberts. Alyssa Ray and Erika Parks.
2B — Keesha Sarman 2, Wright (Union); Monique Montoya (Echo). 3B — Cynthia Curiel (Echo).

BULLDOGS:

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niors, with one sophomore, combined to go 3-for-7 with two runs scored. The nine spot, which was a tag team from Kylee Green and Barton, never failed to reach and scored two important runs.

Post Falls got two runs in the first when Casey Goleekee doubled to shallow center and Abi Melton walked. An out later, Bowers singled, plating Goleekee, but was thrown out trying to stretch her single into a double. Taylor Ekness followed with a single, plating Melton to give the Trojans an early 2-0 lead.

Hermiston responded in the second when Kopacz walked, reached second on a sacrifice by Elory Jones, moved to third on a wild pitch and eventually scored on a sac fly off the bat of Weems to pull Hermiston within a run at 2-1.

Post Falls came right back with two of their own. Kira Haskew led off the third with a walk, and Bowers doubled to the right field fence, scoring Haskew all the way from first. Bowers moved to third on a late throw to the plate to get Haskew and scored a batter later when Ekness' sac fly got her in to make the score 4-1.

The Bulldogs tacked on another in the third when Barton walked, was sacrificed to second and third, then scored on a wild pitch to cut the deficit in half at 4-2.

It was then that Lete pulled starting pitcher Julissa Almaguer, who threw 50 pitches in three innings, for the junior Naylor. It proved to be the right decision as Naylor effectively shut down the Trojans.

"It was nice for us, and it was nice for Naylor, too," Lete said. "She came in, and I think it helps Julissa out, too. It picks her up. She came out, shut the ball down, had some confidence. We saw some things out of her that were exciting to see."

Then Hermiston got its bats out.

Jones singled, Weems walked and Barton singled to score Jones to move the count to 4-3. Then Hinkley ripped her two-out single, and Hermiston went ahead for good. "(The win) shows that we didn't get down on each other," Drotzmann said of the come-from-behind victory. "We were staying pretty positive the whole game, and that's a good thing. That's something we need to be able to keep the whole season: the ability to come back."

In the first game of the dou-



SAM BARBEE PHOTO

Hermiston's Jaime Hinkley reaches for a bunt during the first inning of Hermiston's 6-4 victory over the Post Falls (ID) Trojans on Monday at Rocky Heights Elementary School. Hinkley's two-out, two-run single in the fourth put Hermiston up for good.

ble header, Hermiston broke open a 4-4 game with six runs in the bottom of the fifth to pull away with a 10-5 win. Kopacz hit a double to plate Drotzmann to set off the explosion. Later, Kopacz took a double off the fence in center but was thrown

out at third trying to turn it into a triple.

Hermiston again takes the field in Happy Valley, Oregon, for the Spring Break Invitational. The Bulldogs square off with Oregon City at noon Monday and at 4 p.m. against Franklin.

Bulldogs pull away for first win Wednesday

EAST OREGONIAN STAFF

The Hermiston baseball team defeated Pasco 8-2 on Wednesday in non-league play.

Taking advantage of two Pasco errors, Hermiston scored five in the second inning to pull away in its first win of the season.

Dylan Caldwell was 2-for-4 with a double and four RBIs, Michael Gossler added a 2-for-2 day with a double for Hermiston (1-1).

Tyler Sexton pitched the first six innings, and Chase Root threw a scoreless seventh to close out the game.

Jose Vasquez gave Pasco (0-2) its only lead of the game with an RBI triple in the first inning. Hermiston added one run in the third inning and two in the fifth and finished with nine hits and one error. Pasco also finished with nine hits.