

STORIES:

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of the season, last year's Echo Cougars were on a mission and, largely, accomplished what they wanted to. The only thing they didn't do was get to the state tournament, but the district bracket now hangs in the Cougar Den as a reminder of the accomplishment.

7. Stanfield girls basketball enters respectability

It had been awhile since Stanfield's girls basketball program wasn't a laughingstock, and under Daniel Sharp last season, the laughter turned to applause. They played solid ball all year long and played in some district basketball tournament games, beat Culver 26-22, and won 10 games. The Tigers went 1-23 (0-16) the year before. They're continuing to climb under Sharp — who, as an aside, coached both the boys and the girls last season before taking over the girls program solely this season. Last year's stark improvement was fun to watch.



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Hermiston's Edwin Rosales passes the ball in front of Hood River's Mario Sandoval in the Bulldogs' 2-2 tie against the Eagles in Hermiston.

8. Hermiston boys soccer raises basement, pushes ceiling

You could kind of see it coming. The Hermiston boys were an athletic bunch who played really hard and sometimes just had some bad luck. After earning the fourth seed in the 5A state tournament this year, they won their first playoff game under coach Rich Harshberger, then brutally lost 2-1 on penalty kicks to Woodburn. I suppose they still had some bad luck. But out of that came three all-state selections: Edwin Rosales (first team), and Enrique Leal and John Mejia on the second team. Both these feats are indications that the Bulldogs are climbing in a classification that's largely dominated by west-side schools, with the obvious exception of Hood River, which actually dominates the classification.



FILE PHOTO

Hermiston head football coach Mark Hodges talks to his players after a practice in Hermiston.

9. Hermiston coaching carousel

So, head football coach Mark Hodges retires in May, head volleyball coach Becky Wadekamper retires shortly thereafter, then Kylee Lete (softball), Mike Frink (boys golf), Shaun Williams (wrestling) and Jake McElligott each leave for disparate reasons. It must've been a heck of a summer for Hermiston Athletic Director Blaine Ganvoa. Some positions were filled from either within the program or locally. David Faeteete, who had been an assistant under Hodges his entire seven-year stint here, was promoted. Kyle Larson, who wrestled at Hermiston and had been an assistant here for the previous handful of seasons, was promoted. Dorothy Smith, who officiated local volleyball matches and coached youth volleyball in the area, was named to that position, and Dave Ego, who previously coached Hermiston's boys team and was principal of the high school, took over the boys program on a one-year interim basis. It was rare to see Hermiston have the level of success it had — state title in football and wrestling, league champs in volleyball, state participants in boys golf — and have so much coaching turnover.



STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE

Though David Faeteete is Hermiston's new head football coach, the vision set forth by his predecessor, Mark Hodges, is still the vision he's using, Faeteete said.

Brothers in Basketball

By SAM BARBEE

Staff Writer

As one scans the recent Hermiston football and basketball rosters, a common name emerges: Neal. It belongs to Tre, a senior forward, and Dayshawn, a sophomore guard.

"Well, growing up playing together, we get to know each other's moves and what they're thinking and what they're gonna do," Tre said. "It's definitely fun. It's real fun."

The pair played together on their middle school basketball team when Tre was in eighth grade and Dayshawn in sixth.

"That's what I looked forward to," Dayshawn said.

It's an interesting dynamic between them. Though brothers, they're both independent and see each other as individuals who are brothers. They don't take their identities alone from who their siblings are.

"I don't think one of them wants to be the other one's brother," head basketball coach Dave Ego said. "I don't think...the announcers say, 'This is Dayshawn's brother Tre.' I think they want their own identity. That's important to them."

And with that desire to have separate identities, the brothers, especially Dayshawn, don't feel shackled to each other. Though Tre is the elder of the two,



STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE

The Neal brothers Dayshawn (left) and Tre (right) are playing on the same basketball team for the second time in their lives.

Dayshawn sees them as equals.

Ego said that Tre has become a leader, a "rah-rah guy." Dayshawn, meanwhile, is independent and stands his ground.

"(Dayshawn's) not gonna take any crap from his brother," Ego said smiling. "His brother probably got in trouble for giving him crap early on. And so I think that probably only a couple times so far that I've seen (Tre) tell Dayshawn, 'Straighten up. Get into this.' But it's in the same tone that he's telling everyone else."

"(Dayshawn) probably responds better to Tre than anyone else."

Playing on the same football team as siblings is different than playing on the same basketball team. Tre played defensive line, and Dayshawn played quarterback. Rarely, if ever, do they participate in the same drill, and rarely, if ever, are they on the field at the same time.

Basketball is different. They're always practicing together and often are on the court together. In fact, they started the first few games.

"We have our little knacks

that get on each other's nerves," Tre said.

Tre and Dayshawn, though, are just two members of a basketball team trying to find its identity. Despite that, though, the mixing of personalities that comes with any team has begun to gel.

"It's been fun so far," Ego said. "As a group, we play with a lot of different personalities. There's been some self-doubt from kids and not a lot of self-esteem about what they're doing. But I think with those two we don't have to worry about that department."

PREP ROUNDUP

Girls basketball

Hermiston JV defeats Heppner in tourney

HERMISTON (JV) 41, HEPPNER 31 — At Pendleton, the Heppner Mustangs struggled with shooting on Monday against the Hermiston junior varsity, as the Bulldogs pulled out a 10 point win.

Jacee Currin led Heppner with 19 points in 31 minutes of action in the game. She connected on five of 14 field goal attempts and nailed 9-12 from the free throw line. Jessica Kempken had a team-best nine rebounds.

Regan Meyers topped the Bulldogs' scoring efforts with 14 points on 6-18 shooting.

HEP (2-8) 3 8 9 11 — 31
HEM (1-0) 7 12 4 18 — 41
HEPPNER — J. Currin 19, J. Kempken 5, K. Gray 3, K. Lindsay 2, C. Grieb 2, R. Dompier, J. Mahoney, R. Kollman, J. Evans, M. Correa.
HERMISTON — R. Meyers 14, K. Smith 7, J. Thomas 7, C. Wheeler 6, H. Thompson 5, K. Green 2, H. Earl, S. Stefani, M. Huff.
3-pointers — HEP 0, HEM 3. Free throws — HEP 11-29, HEM 12-21. Fouls — HEP 16, HEM 21.

Echo falls to Condon/Wheeler in A1 Hoop Classic

CONDON/WHEELER 44, ECHO 19 — At Dufur, the Condon/Wheeler Knights kept its undefeated season going with a win over Echo at the 1A Hoops Classic on Monday afternoon.

The Knights held a 19-4 lead at halftime before putting the game away for good in the second half. Annika Rietman led the way in scoring for the Knights with 16 points on 7-9 shooting and added nine rebounds. Emma Logan chipped in 12 points and 10 rebounds.

As a team, Condon/Wheeler shot 54 percent from the field, while Echo shot a meager 10.7 percent — making just 7-65 attempts from the floor. Hannah McCarty led Echo with eight points and eight rebounds.

C/W () 9 10 11 14 — 44
ECHO () 1 3 7 8 — 19
CONDON/WHEELER — A. Rietman 16, E. Logan 12, B. Dyer 6, J. Homer 6, L. Aamodt 4, K. Reser, A. Tierland, B. Jaeger, A. Ramsey, A. Carmine.
ECHO — H. McCarty 8, E. Parks 3, K. Ranger 3, D. Tarvin 2, L. Cox 2, B. Milbrodt 1, T. Swiggart, L. Wiggins.
3-pointers — C/W 2, EHS 0. Free throws — C/W 4-7, EHS 4-13. Fouls — C/W 15, EHS 14. Fouled out — L. Cox (EHS).

HERMISTON 79, WEST LINN 74 — At Lake Oswego, the Hermiston Bulldogs gutted out a win over West Linn in a consolation game at the Nike Interstate Shootout on Monday.

The Bulldogs rebounded for the win after falling on Sunday to South Medford 62-56 to begin the Shootout

play in the Swoosh bracket. No other details were reported.

With the win, Hermiston improves to 8-2 on the season.

UMATILLA 44, ST. MARY'S MEDFORD 19 — At Salem, the Umatilla Vikings started off the Crusader New Years Invitational on a positive note, defeating St. Mary's, Medford 44-19.

No details were reported.

Boys Basketball

CONDON/WHEELER 49, ECHO 39 — At Dufur, the Condon/Wheeler Knights pulled away from the Echo Cougars in the second half to earn a 10 point victory on Monday afternoon at the 1A Hoops

Classic.

"We worked well as a team and played great defense to shut (Echo) down in the second half," said Knights coach Austin Cinnamon.

Alex Lindsay led the Knights in scoring with 17 points and 12 rebounds off the bench. Michael Thompson netted 19 points on 7-18 shooting and added a team-best 12 rebounds.

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