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IN BRIEF

Lien, Simmons lead Lewis-Clark title surge

Chris Lien opened his final round at the Frontier Conference Championships in Tempe, Arizona, with three-straight birdies, and the Lewis-Clark State senior from Heppner went on to post the lowest round of the 54-hole tournament to win the men’s title on April 20.

Lien made the turn at ASU Karsten Golf Course at three-under par for the day and was five-under before hitting bogeys on two of the final four holes to come into the clubhouse with a 68. That was enough to surpass Rocky Mountain’s Colton Murphy, who entered the final round with a four-stroke lead that disintegrated when he shot three bogeys and two bogeys on the front nine to make the turn at seven-over.

Lien finished with a three-round score of 76-74-68—218 and Murphy came in at 76-70-79—225 to tie for second. L-C State’s Casey Brown held a two-stroke lead on Lien headed into the final 18 but was hurt but a double bogey on No. 5 and a triple bogey on No. 18 to finish tied for second with 74-74-77—225.

Lien’s rise to the top on Wednesday mirrored that of the team as the Warriors overcame a five-shot deficit to win the team title with a score of 304-301-292—897. Rocky Mountain finished six strokes back with 309-291-303—903.

Kurt Simmons also played a huge part in the Warriors’ surge, and the senior from Hermiston shot a one-under 70 for his best round of the tournament to finish tied for fourth with 80-76-70—226. Simmons shot an eagle on the par-5 No. 10 hole and was on pace to match Lien’s final round until a double bogey on No. 16.

The Warriors women’s team finish second by 10 strokes to Rocky Mountain with a three-round total of 994. L-C State led by the fourth-place finishes of Karina Davila and Kayla Monroe with 242 totals, and Hermiston native Janci Spoo placed 13th with a 90-87-90—267.

The men’s team win secured them a spot in the NAIA National Championships to be held May 24-27 at TPC Deere Run in Moline, Illinois. The women’s team will need an at-large bid to qualify for their championships, which are May 17-20 at Savannah Quarters Country Club in Pooler, Georgia.

Kreps sinks hole-in-one at Willow Run

Ryan Kreps sank a hole-in-one during his

round at Willow Run Golf Course in Boardman.

Kreps aced the 117-yard par 3 No. 4 hole on April 6 using his Ping 9-iron.

Kreps has been playing golf for six years and it was his first hole-in-one.

Hermiston senior chose BMCC from several other offers

Tyler Sexton has had a love for the game of baseball for as long as he can remember.

That love has grown stronger and stronger over the course of his high school career, and now he has the opportunity to take his talents to the collegiate level for at least the next two years.

Earlier this month at a ceremony at Hermiston High School, Sexton put pen to paper and signed on to play baseball at Blue Mountain Community College.

“Every kid has that dream of playing at the next level either in college or the major leagues,” Sexton said. “I liked the school and I like the program, so it’s good to find a place where I feel like I belong.

“It’s definitely a blessing to be able to maintain my health so I was able to play at the next level.”

The Bulldog senior said he considered several other schools as well, such as Yakima Valley Community College, Clackamas Community College and Columbia Basin College, but in the end Blue Mountain won over his heart.

Sexton said that Blue Mountain coach Brad Baker will slot him in as a pitcher, but also wants to utilize his powerful bat and 6-foot-4 frame at first base.

The decision to attend Blue Mountain came with the stamp of approval from his parents, father Jim and mother Kim, who are excited to have just a short drive to Pendleton to be able to watch Sexton at the Timberwolves home games.

“My mom is especially happy I’m staying close to home,” Sexton said with a smile. “(My family) is going to be able to make it to home games since it’s only a half hour drive versus Clackamas or Yakima Valley that were an hour to four hours away.”

Through 14 games for Hermiston in his senior season, Sexton is hitting .307 (12-39) with 10 RBI, eight runs scored and a pair of doubles at the plate. He has also been very strong on the mound as a reliever and starter, throwing 26.2 total innings with a 3.78 ERA while racking up 33 strikeouts to 16 walks and 17 hits.

Sorey, Smith continue hot streak

Intermountain team ropers win title in Hermiston

Team ropers Trent Sorey and Calgary Smith are getting hot at just the right time and continued their climb in the season standings by winning the aggregate title at the Intermountain High School Rodeo in Hermiston over the weekend.

Sorey, of Pendleton, and Smith, of Adams, were the fastest in each competition round to win with 12.83 seconds on two head. They started the weekend with a 5.56 to win the first half of the doubleheader rodeo, then posted a 7.27 to win the second half and give them a streak of three straight wins. The pair has shot up the season leaderboard with 37 points on their last four steers and trail event leaders Zach and Jake Raley by one point, 48-47, after the brothers from Brush Prairie, Washington, scored just nine points in Hermiston.

Smith also won the boys’ Papa Murphy’s All-Around title and the Boulet Boots that came with it. He also won one round of tie-down roping to finish with 30 points and edge teammate



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Hermiston’s Preston Pederson chase down his calf on his way to a 14.93-second time in tie down roping Friday at the Intermountain High School Rodeo in Hermiston.

Preston Pederson of Hermiston, who finished with 26.

Pederson won two event aggregate titles — tie-down, 24.24 on two, and steer wrestling, 7.6 on one. He was also the champion on cow cutter for the boys with 284 points on two, but those points did not factor into the all-around standings.

Pederson’s finish in the cutting unofficially ties him for the season championship, but he’s still awaiting final word from the Oregon High School Rodeo Association’s number crunchers.

No other Intermountain team members won event titles in Hermiston, but Heppner’s Jacee Currin

was the top girls’ rookie and finished with 40 total points while winning the second round of goat tying in 7.89 seconds.

Hope Luttrell of Carlton won the girls’ all-around with 54 points and was the aggregate champion in barrel racing with 35.102 on two, and breakaway roping with 5.93 on two.

Dawson Branton of Jefferson was the boys’ rookie champion with 23 points and won the first round of bull riding with an 81-point ride.

Chase Dougherty of Woodburn won the bull riding aggregate with 154 on two, and other event winners were: Orrin Ouska of

Hermiston drops double header against Hood River

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
Staff Writer

It was a heartbreaker then a headscratcher for the Hermiston baseball team Saturday, as the Bulldogs dropped both games in a doubleheader against Hood River at Armand Larive Middle School.

Hermiston had a chance to leapfrog the first-place Eagles in the Columbia River Conference standings by winning both games, but the Bulldogs lost the first game 3-2 before falling to the Eagles again 19-9 in five innings in a game which they looked poised to win at several times.

Although the 10-run rule was invoked in the second game, the final score didn’t reflect the Bulldogs’ hot start.

After being held to two runs in the first game, the Hermiston bats exploded for five runs in the first inning and four runs in the second.

Despite the strong showing at the plate, Hermiston (9-8, 2-3 CRC) wasn’t able to hang onto the lead against the third ranked team in the state.

After the Eagles (15-3, 5-0 CRC) went down 1-2-3 in the first inning, Hood River matched Hermiston with five runs in the second inning and four runs in the third.

The Bulldogs continued to get on base against Hood River pitcher Isaiah Enriquez, but didn’t score after the second inning.

Meanwhile, the Eagles continued to rack up runs, plating six in the fourth and four in the fifth.

The Hermiston coaching staff made several pitching changes, but neither Tyler Sexton, Slade Gritz, Andrew James or Kody Moss could



STAFF PHOTO BY KATHY ANEY

The Bulldogs’ R.J. Robles comes home Saturday during a Columbia River Conference game against Hood River in Hermiston.

solve the Eagles line-up.

The Bulldogs pitching staff also had to deal with a couple of fielding errors and gusty game conditions that led to some routine outs becoming hits.

Given that both teams dealt with the windy conditions, Hermiston coach Lance Hawkins didn’t buy the weather as an excuse for his team’s performance.

“That isn’t an issue in my book,” Hawkins said.

Hood River is well known for its offense — the Eagles averaged 7.8 runs per game going into Saturday’s contest — and Hawkins said the Bulldog defense couldn’t allow them to extend innings.

“They teed off on us,” said R.J. Robles, who played out-

field in the Game 2. Pitching for the Bulldogs in the first game, Robles kept the Eagles’ potent line-up at bay for most of the game.

Hermiston scored a run in the top of the first and Robles pitched a no-hitter through the fifth inning.

But opposing pitcher Patrick Harvey broke up the bid with a home run and also hit the decisive double that put the Eagles up for good.

SOFTBALL

HERMISTON 9-0, HOOD RIVER 4-10 — At Hermiston, Ellery Jones hit a two-run home run in the fourth inning and Rebecca Englebrecht hit a three-run

Dundee in bareback, 128 on two; Joe Scott in saddle bronc, 121 on two; Maria Millard of White City in pole bending, 41.050 on two; Kimmer Severance of Prineville in goat tying, 16.13 on two; Aimee Davis of Central Point in girls’ cutting, 286 on two.

Intermountain team coach Curtis Pederson said it was lot of work for the team to host the three-day rodeo, but he was happy to see their effort in working the rodeo as well as competing.

“We really tried to produce a good rodeo and we had a strong showing out of our own team while they were working at it and producing the rodeo, and that was nice to see,” he said, adding the team’s family members and sponsors also stepped up big to make it a successful weekend for all. “The sponsors that we have to represent the rodeo is really what makes the rodeo fly, and makes the weekend fly. (The team’s) got strong Umatilla and Morrow County support, from the whole nine yards we get a good support group and good sponsors.”

Next on the schedule for Oregon’s high school rodeo season is the Prineville doubleheader on May 7-8.

homer in the sixth to lift Hermiston to a 9-4 win over Hood River in the first half of their CRC doubleheader on Saturday.

The Bulldogs tallied 11 hits in the win, but couldn’t keep the production up in the second game and only had one runner past first base in a five-hit, 10-0 loss.

In Game 1, Hood River (9-9, 2-3 CRC) went up 4-0 after scoring three runs in the top of the third thanks to a couple of Hermiston (12-7, 3-2) errors and a Zoe Munn double, but Bulldogs pitcher Julissa Almaguer was able to lean on her defense from there.

Almaguer, who finished with three strikeouts and two walks, induced ground ball after ground ball in the later innings and the defense played clean ball to erase Hood River scoring chances in the fourth, fifth and seventh innings.

Jones’ two-run shot in the third began the comeback and Hermiston added seven runs on seven hits in the sixth.

Amanda Barron’s two-out single scored Mikayla Kopacz for the eventual game-winning run. Englebrecht (2 for 4), Jones (3 for 4), Kopacz (2 for 4) and Kylie Hinkley (2 for 2) led the Bulldogs hitters.

In Game 2, Hood River took the lead with a two-out rally in the first inning when Janessa Castaneda capped a string of four straight singles with a two-RBI hit to left field.

Hermiston pitcher Taylor Betz struck out five and walked none, but gave up 14 hits and the Hermiston defense committed six errors behind her.

Bulldogs place 3rd at Big River

Lowest round of the season not enough for win

By **MATT ENTRUP**
Staff Writer

The Bulldogs shot their best round as a team but couldn’t catch the Pendleton Buckaroos in boys golf Thursday at Big River Golf Course.

All five Bucks came in between 70 and 77 to break the school record for lowest

round with a 294 and win Hermiston Invitational.

Hermiston shot 329 for its lowest team score of the year and finished third behind The Dalles (310).

Ander Lind was 10 strokes ahead of his previous season-best and finished third with a 73.

“It was the first time when we dipped down to what we wanted to do,” said Hermiston coach Aaron Lind. “It’s the lowest we’ve done in a competition, significantly. ... And we know we can be better

than that.”

Lind said he was happy to see Jared Thacker shoot an 80 that was second on the team, but he knows Thacker isn’t satisfied with the score. Dylan Martin (85), Kayden Mecham (91) and Tyler Cameron (91) completed Hermiston’s round.

“The kids are working hard and we’ve still got to put to some stuff together, but we’re definitely moving in the right direction,” Lind said.

Mac-Hi placed fourth with a team score of 344.



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Hermiston’s Anders Lind tees off on the 6th hole during the Hermiston Invitational on Thursday at Big River Golf Course in Umatilla.