

Dawgs capture District 8 title

By ANNIE FOWLER
STAFF WRITER

Jorge Carrillo started the season on the junior varsity team, but the more Hermiston coach Rich Harshberger watched the talented freshman play, he realized he needed the young man up on varsity.

The gamble paid off during the regular season, and again on May 7, as Carrillo scored a goal to help the Bulldogs beat Kamiakin 3-1 to win the 3A District 8 title at Kennison Field.

"This is a special group," Harshberger said. "They have worked hard, and this is the result."

The trophy is just the second in the program's history, joining the 2011 Columbia River Conference title.

"It's pretty cool," said Hermiston goalie Juan Navarrete, who finished with three saves. "We are not done. I'm excited to see what happens next."

The Bulldogs (8-7) opened 3A state play on May 7 against visiting Mountain View of Vancouver.

Kamiakin's Caden Egli opened the scoring in the 14th minute of the game, beating Hermiston defender Jerome Stasik and beating Navarrete.

"On that goal, there was a lack of communication," Navarrete said. "After that, the team stepped up and I had a couple of key saves."

Carrillo evened the score 5 minutes later taking a pass from Josh Galvez outside the 18 and heading the ball past Kamiakin keeper Jonathan Andrade and into the upper right corner of the net.

"It just happened," Carrillo said of the goal. "Surprised me too. It gave me more confidence. We know how to play. This feels great."

The Dawgs went into halftime with a 2-1 lead as Coleman Solano beat a diving Andrade, putting the ball in the lower right corner of the goal with 7:20 left in the half for what would be the game-winning goal.

"I saw the space and I saw



Hermiston's Jorge Carrillo and Kamiakin's Garrett Grillo jockey for the ball in the Bulldogs' 3-1 win against the Braves on Tuesday.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

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Rich Harshberger, Coach

the defense," Solano said. "I was about at the 20. It wasn't the best shot, but I hit it with a lot of pace."

Hermiston outshot Kamiakin 8-2 in the first half. Navarrete had a couple of brilliant saves, leaping to knock a shot by Egli over the cross bar in the 13th minute, and taking another in the midsection to negate a developing play by the Braves.

With 4 minutes remain-

ing on the clock in the second half, Emilio Leal gave Hermiston an insurance goal, never giving up on the ball.

"That killed their spirit," Leal said. "That's what we needed the last couple of minutes. We have been down before, but there is a drive that pushes us."

Hermiston, which posted a 1-4 preseason record, finished the Mid-Columbia Conference 5-3, and has won both of its playoff games.

"At the beginning of the season, we set goals, and this was one of them," Solano said. "I'm really proud of this team. We had a rough start, but I'm loving the way we are playing now."



Hermiston's Emilio Leal (2) points his fingers in the air in celebration after scoring a goal in the Bulldogs' 3-1 win against Kamiakin on Tuesday in Hermiston.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

BASEBALL



The Irrigon Knights baseball team poses with coach Randy Henrichs during Friday's home field dedication.

Staff photo by Brett Kane

Irrigon honors Randy Henrichs with field dedication

By ANNIE FOWLER
STAFF WRITER

Typically, when a group of teenage boys shows up at the principal's office, nothing good can come of the visit.

But Irrigon principal Ryan Keefauver welcomed this particular group, who wanted nothing more than to set the wheels in motion to have the school's baseball field named after their coach, Randy Henrichs.

Keefauver was in favor, but it was not his decision to make. The baseball players then made a presentation to the school board. The school board and the Morrow County School

District gave their blessing.

"He deserves to have that field named after him," Irrigon athletic director Mike Royer said. "That field was built by him. He has put in hundreds of hours maintaining and mousing the field. He has turned that field into a nice facility."

This summer, a sign will be placed under the scoreboard that reads Henrichs Field.

The whole process was kept under wraps, and surprised Henrichs on Friday afternoon when it was announced between games with the Vale Vikings.

"I'm a big ol' guy, and I don't show much emotion, but these guys choked

me up," a misty-eyed Henrichs said after the presentation. "These kids are like my own. I love them. The most special time in my life is right now. This is everything to me."

The idea of naming the field came from senior Dalton Schneider.

"He asked me about it, and I was on board," said pitcher Zack Henrichs, Randy Henrichs' grandson. "We asked the team, and they were 100 percent for it."

After the team went through the proper steps, High Performance Signs & Graphics in Hermiston was contracted to make the sign. "He has no clue," Zack

said a couple of days prior to the game. "He means a lot to this group of guys. He has coached us since we were little. The only year he did not coach us was eighth grade because he took the high school job."

Henrichs is in his fifth year coaching the Knights, but he has left an impression that will last for years to come.

Under Henrichs, the Knights have qualified for state four times (including this year), including a trip to the semifinals in 2016.

After Friday's games with Vale, Henrichs' record stands at 87-37.

"He is a good coach and a good man," Royer said.

SIGNING



Staff photo by Annie Fowler

Southern Oregon University wrestling coach Mike Ritchey (right) welcomes Irrigon's Alex Miranda-Walls to the Raiders program after he signed his letter of intent Tuesday.

Irrigon's Miranda-Walls is headed to SOU

By ANNIE FOWLER
STAFF WRITER

Southern Oregon University wrestling coach Mike Ritchey is pretty particular about who he brings into his program.

The longtime Raiders coach was on hand May 7 as Irrigon's Alex Miranda-Walls signed his letter of intent.

"Alex is a kid who coach (Ken) Thompson put on our plate," Ritchey said. "This is my 25th year coaching, and Alex is one of the finest young men I have seen in regards to academics, athletics and character."

Miranda-Walls, who placed third at state the past two years at 170 pounds, said Southern Oregon was his first choice.

"As much as Coach Thompson was talking to me about them, he was talking to them about me," he said. "When I went for my visit, it was a done deal."

SOU, in Ashland, has been an NAIA wrestling powerhouse for more than 40 years. The Raiders have won four national team titles, crowned 35 national champions, and boast 245 all-Americans.

The last Irrigon wrestler to compete at the college level was Wade Aylett (2011 graduate), who went to Missouri Valley College.

Ritchey said Miranda-Walls' scholarship is part academic and part athletic. It is equivalent to a half scholarship.

"We are looking for that kid who has that extra spark and is a leader in his school," Ritchey said. "It takes time for some kids to establish those traits. Alex already has them. We are excited to bring a quality athlete from this area to our program. Hopefully this creates a pipeline. They are our biggest recruiters."

Miranda-Walls finished his senior season with a 43-3 record.