

PREP ROUNDUP

Hermiston girls drop soccer game to Clarkston, 5-0

HERMISTON HERALD

Luella Skinner scored four first-half goals Saturday to lead the Clarkston Bantams to a 5-0 nonleague win over visiting Hermiston in soccer.

Lauren Johnson had two assists for Clarkston, while goalie Erika Pickett had three saves in the shutout.

Hermiston (1-11 overall), which had three shots on goal, got 10 saves from keeper Lanie Gomez.

The Bulldogs will play at Pasco on Thursday.

WALLA WALLA 2, HERMISTON 1 (OT) — Sophomore midfielder Sydney Seavert helped the Bulldogs to a 1-0 lead at the half, but the match was all Walla Walla coming out of the locker room Thursday night.

The Blue Devils scored a goal to knot the score in the second half, and another in overtime to rally past Hermiston in the Mid-Columbia Conference match.

“We outplayed them the whole game,” Hermiston coach Freddy Guizar said. “We had possession of the ball 55% of the time. It just wasn’t in our favor.”

Volleyball

Walla Walla improved to 9-0 in the Mid-Columbia Conference standings with a 25-21, 25-11, 26-24 victory over the visiting Hermiston Bulldogs on Thursday night.

Kendall Dowdy led the Bulldogs (3-6 MCC) with 13 assists, 6 digs, four kills and two aces, while Grace Vertrees had six kills, five aces and five digs. Daisy Maddox had six kills; Halee Stubbs 22 digs; and Emma Combes 10 digs.

Swimming

Hermiston finished sixth at the Tri-City Championships on Saturday, with Abigail Sharon leading the way with a fourth-place finish in the 200 freestyle.

Georgia Stevenson was seventh in the 100 backstroke, and the 400 free relay of Laly Morfin, Bailey Young, Stevenson and Sharon finished fourth with a season-best time.

At a meet Thursday, Halle Thomas qualified for district in the 100 backstroke. The Bulldogs have 13 swimmers who have qualified for district.

Hermiston volleyball team goes pink for a good cause

The volleyball team is raising money for the Side-Out Foundation

By **ANNIE FOWLER**
STAFF WRITER

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month around the country, and the Hermiston volleyball team is doing its part in helping bring awareness to the cause.

The Bulldogs will host Pasco on Thursday in a Mid-Columbia Conference match. The players will wear pink shirts, have pink shirts for sale, have gift baskets of goodies to raffle during the match, and have a serving contest, where contestants will pay \$1 per serve in an attempt to hit a target on the other side of the net.

“Volleyball, more than any other sport, has championed breast cancer awareness and research,” Hermiston coach Amy Dyck said.

“This is my fourth year with the program, and we have done this every year. They were doing it before I got here,” the coach added.

The money raised will go to the Side-Out Foundation, which unifies the volleyball community to drive change in the way that breast cancer is treated.

The Side-Out Foundation, created in 2004, is a nonprofit charity that raises awareness and funds for the treatment of metastatic breast cancer.

Side-Out’s Dig Pink movement has raised more than \$14,000,000 with the support of more than 9,000 volleyball teams across the nation.

“Wearing pink is a great way to start a conversation,” Dyck said. “We were at Walla Walla last week, and it’s cool to look back at the film and see so many girls wearing pink. They are teenage girls who have a responsibility and opportunity to be part of something bigger than themselves, and take pride and ownership of it.”

The Bulldogs also will honor breast cancer survivors at the game. Several have received help through the Sister’s Influencing Survivorship program in Hermiston.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Cydney Sanchez and Amand Nygard, of Hermiston, run a hill during Thursday’s Bulldog Fest cross-country race. Nygard won in 20:08.60 and Sanchez came in second with a time of 20:12.50.

Nygaard hasn’t missed a step

By **BRETT KANE**
STAFF WRITER

Last year, Amanda Nygard was faced with a tough choice.

The Hermiston High School athlete, both a soccer player and a cross country runner, was forced to conform to one of the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association’s biggest rules: All varsity athletes are allowed to compete in just one sport at a time.

And so, the question stood: cross country in the fall, or soccer in the fall?

“I love soccer,” said Nygard, now a junior. “I wanted to play it for one more year before focusing on cross country.”

Nygard joined the Bulldogs’ soccer squad to cap off her sophomore year, much to the dismay of Hermiston XC coach Troy Blackburn.

“I told her, ‘You’re making a mistake,’” Blackburn joked, “but she figured it out after a year.”

Since Nygard made her return to the cross country team this fall, she’s made her presence known throughout the Mid-Columbia Conference.

She currently holds the No. 2 spot in the girls’ standings in league action with her personal

record of 19:23.30, which she earned at the Brooks Fort Steilacoom Invitational in Lakewood, Washington, at the end of September. She’s placed in the top 10 in all six of her varsity meets so far this season, including a first-place finish at last Thursday’s Bulldog Fest with a time of 20:08.60.

“We talked a lot about it,” Blackburn said. “It’s been a good decision for her. In cross country, individuals shine, and she’s a great leader. There’s no one that works harder than Amanda. That’s the best thing about having her back. When you have an athlete that works hard like that, it trickles down to everyone else.”

Nygard shares team captain duties with fellow junior Ellie Ernst.

Nygard’s teammate, sophomore Cydney Sanchez, is the No. 3 runner in the MCC standings. She also earned her PR at the Brooks Fort Steilacoom Invitational (19:37.30).

Wednesday, Nygard and her team will compete against some of the area’s best at the MCC Meet #2 in Kennewick.

Among the lineup of racers are the MCC’s best — Ella Nelson of Walla Walla, Geraldine Correa of Kennewick, Natalie

If you go
What: Mid-Columbia Conference Meet #2
Where: Lawrence Scott Park, Kennewick, Wash.
When: Wednesday, Oct. 16, 3 p.m.

Ruzauskas of Richland and Deverie Gutierrez of Kamiakin, who just edged Nygard at the Fort Steilacoom race.

“There’s a lot of fast runners (in the MCC),” Nygard said. “But that’s good for me — I can push myself. There’s more competition. I didn’t start out being the top runner in the MCC. I worked my way up.”

Starting strong

Nygard first got a taste of cross country glory in eighth grade, when she won the state title while on the Sandstone Middle School team.

“I was like, ‘Wow, that was kinda cool,’” she recalled. “Troy started talking to me about joining his team right away.”

As a freshman, Nygard finished fifth at the Columbia River Conference district meet, qualifying for the Oregon Class 5A state championships. She placed

29th at state in a time of 20:13.

With her focus now solely on running, Nygard and her team maintain a strict weekly practice routine: On Mondays, they run five 1,000-meter dashes at Echo Hills Golf Course. On Tuesdays, they do a base run. On Wednesdays, they cycle through 10 200-meter runs at Sandstone. Thursdays are for lighter base runs, and Fridays include a 5-mile run and four 200-meter returns.

“I like how physical it is,” Nygard said of cross country. “I love the competitive nature of running.”

A look ahead

Although Wednesday’s second MCC meet of the season hosts an array of top tier athletes, Nygard has built the confidence up to withstand such rigid competition.

“I know a lot of the bigger girls are going,” she said. “I’m going to keep up with them and kick ‘em in the end.”

After all the success she’s seen so far on the course this season, which uniform will Nygard don for her senior year?

“Probably cross country,” she said.

“We’re like a family. They help me become a better runner, and I help them, too.”

Dawgs take the lead at Bulldog Fest

By **BRETT KANE**
STAFF WRITER

In a cross country meet that pitted 10 area schools against each other, it was Hermiston who emerged the top dogs.

Hermiston, who hosted Thursday’s Bulldog Fest at Butte Park, placed three boys and two girls at the top of their respective races, and took first in the team standings, outrunning athletes from Pendleton, Heppner, Weston-McEwen, Walla Walla, Umatilla, Riverside, Nixyaawii, Helix, Pilot Rock, and Condon.

“It was great to see our kids focus on pack running,” Hermiston coach Troy Blackburn said. “To see all of our kids improve — it built confidence. This will help us going back into league — both the guys and girls. It’s always fun to see your kids win races.”

The 5K course, which wrapped around the Butte, the Good Shepherd Medical Center and back, was led by Hermiston runners from start to finish. Greg Anderson, a senior, swept the competition, finishing at 17:24.60 — nearly 30 seconds ahead of Bulldogs sophomore Jackson Shaver (17:53.20).

“This is a really good meet,” Anderson said. “It’s a tune-up. Our guys were all working on negative splits — we wanted



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Greg Anderson, of Hermiston, leads Thursday’s Bulldog Fest cross-country race. Anderson won with a time of 17:24.60.

to run each mile faster than the last.”

Hermiston rounded out the top three with sophomore Jackson Shaver at third (17:54.60). Heppner newcomer Trevor Nichols placed fourth, crossing the finish line at 18:00.70.

“There was some really good competition here,” said Nichols, a freshman. “It pushes you. It’s hard, but it’s nice. Everyone ran hard and pushed each other

today.”

Sophomore James Thatcher was Pendleton’s fastest runner, turning in an 18:14.60-finish for fifth place. Right behind him was Mustangs sophomore Joseph Sherman at 18:18.40. Hermiston placed two more runners in the top 10: freshman Miguel Duron at seventh (18:29.60) and senior Freddy Ibarra at ninth (18:34.60).

“It was great to see Greg run

ning with our No. 2 and 3 guys (Shaver and Springstead),” Blackburn said. “Those two have made great strides.”

The Hermiston boys’ first-place team finish was earned with 21 points, leaving Pendleton well behind them at second with 63. Walla Walla took third (84), Heppner fourth (97), Riverside fifth (128), and Umatilla sixth (135).

Junior Amanda Nygard led the way in the girls varsity race, breaking away from the group for good just before their first turn around the Butte. She placed first, clocking in at 20:08.60.

“We run here all the time,” she said. “I know how to run these hills. It’s like our home base.”

Sophomore Cydney Sanchez finished behind Nygard at 20:12.50. Heppner sophomore Hailey Heideman finished third at 21:01.40, and junior teammate Madelyn Nichols was fourth at 21:17.80.

The Pendleton girls got their day’s fastest run from junior Jordyn Murphy, who placed fifth with a time of 21:27.80.

The Bulldog girls placed first in the team standings with 35 points, followed by Pendleton at 51. Heppner earned third place with 54 points, followed by Helix at 103.