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Benavidez leads Lions past Dawgs

By ANNIE FOWLER
STAFF WRITER

For three quarters, Hermiston played even ball with the Lions in the fourth. Hermiston trailed 67-47 with 3:29 to play, but the Bulldogs played would close out the game with a 12-5 run.

“Tonight, we competed with the Kennewick, and proved to people we can compete with them,” Preuninger said. “Even though we lost, everyone in the gym is surprised with how well we played.”

Rangel led the Bulldogs with 16 points, and Ruloph added 13 and Trent Pitney 12.

“We know we can compete with a lot of teams in the league,” Rangel said. “They had us on size the whole game, but we were quicker. We failed to use that to our advantage. We just need to finish what we start.”

“The third quarter, we came out flat,” Hermiston coach Drew Preuninger said. “We needed to play smarter offensively and defensively. I have been so proud of these kids. They are proving people wrong. They never give up.”

The game was the MCC opener for the Lions.

“We came out with some renewed focus,” Kennewick Braydn Leyde said the third quarter. “We weren’t happy with how we played in the first half. Holding them to six points was the turning point.”

Hermiston, which won its MCC opener Friday at Pasco, trailed 20-18 after the first quarter.

The Bulldogs took a 13-10 lead with 3:12 left in the first with a 3-pointer by Jaiden Ruloph, and Ivan Rangel stretched the lead to 18-12 with a 3 from the left wing.

Benavidez, who was held to just three points the first 6:35 of the game, scored the final eight points of the quarter for the 20-18 lead.

The Kennewick senior continued his scoring spree in the second, pouring in 15 points at the Lions led 39-36 at the half.

“He is really shifty and he is very smooth,” Leyde said of Benavidez, who had six 3-pointers on the night. “He can play inside and outside.”

The Lions went on a 16-6 run in the third quarter to take a 55-42 lead. Myles Mayovsky had eight of his 10 points in the quarter, and Kennewick got quality minutes off the bench by Jagger Childs.

“Jagger is just coming back from football, and so is Baylor (McElroy),” Leyde said. “They are starting to get their basketball legs, and their height (Jagger is 6-4, and McElroy is 6-5) helps out.”

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troops and played even ball with the Lions in the fourth.

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Bulldogs beat Pasco

Preuninger got his first taste of the Mid-Columbia Conference on Friday, and his team came away with a 57-53 road win over Pasco.

“We talked about this game all week,” Preuninger said.

“We were the only ones playing tonight, and if we won we’d be leading the league — for at least a day.”

Hermiston led 23-14 midway through the second quarter, and 34-22 at the half.

Pasco cut the deficit to 45-34 after three quarters, but could not catch the Dawgs down the stretch.

“We are very inexperienced,” Preuninger said. “We hadn’t been in that situation before (holding onto a lead late). We turned the ball over and took too quick of shots, and we weren’t making them. It was a super fun game for our kids to go through this early in the season.”

Jaiden Rudolph led Hermiston (2-2, 1-0 MCC) with 12 points, while Trent Pitney added 11 points and eight rebounds. Sergio Madrigal had 11 points and four rebounds.

Ethan Legard led Pasco with a game-high 16 points. Nick Gutierrez added 11 points.

BOX SCORE

KENNEWICK	20	19	16	17	— 72
HERMISTON	18	18	6	17	— 59
KENNEWICK	— Benavidez 33, Moses 3, Collier 9, Mayer 1, Mayovsky 10, Knapik 7, Childs 5, McElroy 4.				
HERMISTON	— Ruloph 13, Pitney 12, Ramos-Barron 5, Rangel 16, Madrigal 9, Jay.Ramirez 2, Jai.Ramirez 2.				



Staff photos by Kathy Aney

Above, Hermiston's Jaime Ramirez puts up a shot as Kennewick's Ayon Benavidez defends during Saturday's game at the Dawg House.

At left, Hermiston's A.J. Ramos-Barron brings the ball down the court during Saturday's game against the Kennewick Lions.



Riverhawks soar past Dawgs in MCC matchup

By ANNIE FOWLER
STAFF WRITER

Chiawana is every bit as good as its No. 1 ranking.

The Riverhawks won 12 of 14 matches Thursday night in handing Hermiston a 66-8 Mid-Columbia Conference loss at the Dawg House.

“We wrestled them like they are the 4A state champions,” Hermiston coach Kyle Larson said. “We were timid. A number of the matches, they were better than us, but not like the score shows. We have to move on.”

It was the first MCC dual of the season for Chiawana, and coach Jack Anderson liked what he saw from his team.

“I’m excited for this team,” Anderson said. “They have been working their tails off. They love the sport, and they love to compete. It’s fun for us to come down and compete against a storied program like Hermiston. They have a great community.”

The Bulldogs (1-1 MCC) were a little short-handed Thursday with Zayne Helfer not making weight, and Jor-



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Sam Cadenas of Hermiston exults after defeating Chiawana's Cayetano Talavera in the 220-pound weight class during Thursday's dual meet.

dan Franklin injured, but they had a full lineup with a couple of young wrestlers in the mix.

Lance Stover got things rolling for the Riverhawks with a second-round pin of Cesar Barraza at 145 pounds. Robby Vaughn (152) followed with a first-round pin of Hermiston's Ethan Teel, and Darian Johnson gave Chiawana an 18-0 lead with a second-round pin of Gavin Tarvin at 160.

In the marquee match of the night at 170, Hermiston's Trevor Wagner took on Riley Cissne. Both placed fourth at state last year in their divisions, and their match did not disappoint.

Wagner had a 6-3 lead after the first round, but Cissne turned the tables in the second with a takedown and 2-point near fall to tie the score at 7-7. An escape by Wagner gave him an 8-7

lead heading into the third round.

Cissne again tied the match with an escape, but Wagner took Cissne down with 31 seconds left in the match, then added a 2-point near fall for a 12-8 victory.

“I knew he was good,” Wagner said. “I fell to him the final seconds last year. I came out a little flat footed, but once I got into a groove, I started wrestling my match. When you can beat one of



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Trevor Wagner of Hermiston wrestles Chiawana's Riley Cissne in the 170-pound weight class during Thursday's dual meet at the Dawg House.

the top guys in the state, it feels good.”

Anderson had nothing but praise for Wagner.

“That kid is dangerous,” he said. “He is fun to watch wrestle, just not against my guys. It was an awesome match. Riley knows what he needs to work on and will come back and be better next time.”

Pins by defending state champions Tyson Stover (182) and Isaiah Anderson (195) gave Chiawana a 30-3 lead, putting the match out of reach.

Hermiston got back in the win column at 220, as soph-

omore Sam Cadenas earned a 17-1 technical fall over Cayetano Talavera.

“I underestimated his speed and strength,” Cadenas said of leading just 4-0 after the first round. “I knew if I could get a leg I could take him down. I had to block some shots or I would have gone down.”

The Riverhawks ran the table from 106 to 138, getting four pins in the final six matches.

“We weren’t consistent or disciplined,” Larson said. “We have to be more disciplined as a team in all aspects of life.”