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## DAWGS EDGE PASCO IN OT



Hermiston's Kaylee Young (left) and Jazlyn Romero exult after winning Tuesday's overtime game against the Pasco Bulldogs.

Jazlyn Romero poured in 36 points and grabbed 10 rebounds to lead Hermiston

By ANNIE FOWLER  
SPORTS EDITOR

Jazlyn Romero played every second of the Bulldogs' Jan. 21 Mid-Columbia Conference game against Pasco.

The Hermiston senior guard made the most of her time on the court, scoring a career-high 36 points as the Bulldogs came away with a 72-61 overtime victory at the Dawg House.

"They took a game from us earlier," said Romero, who also had 10 rebounds. "We had to make sure to get that split."

Romero's 36 points is just two shy of the school record of 38, held by Alissa Edwards.

"I don't think I have ever been so proud of someone," Hermiston coach Maloree Moss said. "She got beat up. We played every single second, but we had to have her and Jayden Ray on the floor for defense. Offensively, they couldn't stop her."

Pasco (9-4, 6-4 MCC) led 55-54 with 24 seconds left in regulation. Romero hit two free throws with 5 seconds remaining for a 56-55 lead.

Mya Groce drove the lane in the final second, and was fouled, putting her at the line for two. Groce missed the first free throw, but made the second to tie



Hermiston's Jazlyn Romero is fouled as she goes to the hoop near the end of an overtime game Tuesday against Pasco.

the score and send the game into overtime.

"I thought it was over when she went to the line," Romero said. "She missed the first one, and Kaylee (Young) said 'We got this.'"

Romero drained a 3-pointer

from the top of the key to open overtime. Over the course of the 4-minute period, she went 7 of 7 from the free-throw line and finished with 12 points.

"I had already taken over when I hit that 3," Romero said, "but it was go time. Tonight

wasn't about me, it was about us. That W would not have been a W without all of us."

Hermiston (8-6, 5-5 MCC) led 12-10 after the first quarter, but Pasco went on a 22-13 run in the second to take a 32-25 lead at the half.

Pasco kept its foot on the gas in the third, taking a 43-36 lead into the fourth quarter.

It was there that things started to fall apart for Pasco, which had an eight-point lead with 5:51 to play.

Foul trouble plagued Pasco, which saw Taija Mackey foul out, taking away its inside presence, and Aniyah Heavens pick up her fifth foul with 1:09 to play.

Hermiston had a steady stream of players go to the free-throw line. The Bulldogs were 10 of 17 from the line in the fourth, but it was just enough to pull them back into the game.

"It was a good team effort," Moss said. "Our sideline was so engaged, and that energy went out onto the floor. They communicated, and the leadership from our captains (Romero, Young and Ray) was awesome."

Katelyn Heideman added 11 points for Hermiston, while Young had 10 and Kendall Dowdy eight.

Taleya Maiden led Pasco with 15 points, nine coming in the second quarter. Ashtyn Nelson added 10 points, with seven coming after halftime.

### PREPS ROUNDUP



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Hermiston's Tyler Lin (3) looks to pass to a teammate during Friday's game against Southridge at the Dawg House.

## Dawgs fall short against Suns

By ANNIE FOWLER  
SPORTS EDITOR

Hermiston was within six points of Southridge after the third quarter, but the Suns went on a 23-14 run the final quarter to seal a 67-52 Mid-Columbia Conference win Friday over the Bulldogs.

"Our game plan was to stop (Tristan) Smith," Hermiston boys basketball coach Drew Preuninger said. "He had 13 points. We ran a guy to double him. He only had four points in the first half. I was proud of them for that."

The Suns had a 20-15 lead after the first quarter, and led 28-24 at the half.

The third quarter once again was an issue for the Bulldogs, but they rallied to score 14 points.

"We started the third terrible," Preuninger said. "I think they had an 8-0 run and we were down by 11. I called a time out, we battled back and scored some points."

Trent Pitney had a career-high 19 points to lead the Bulldogs (2-13, 1-11 MCC), 10 in the second half.

"Offensively, Trent does some good things," Preuninger said. "I put pressure on him to score. I'm proud of him for getting his career high."

Chase Elliott added nine points, and AJ Ramos-Barron seven for the Bulldogs, who will host Chiawana at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Donavyn Perry led the Suns (5-11, 4-8 MCC) with 15 points, while Eddie Marines had 14.

**PASCO 74, HERMISTON 58** — The third quarter has haunted the Hermiston boys basketball team all season, and their Jan. 21 game was no exception.

The Bulldogs held a 16-12 lead after the first quarter, and led 39-26 at the half. It was a 17-4 run in the third quarter by Pasco that turned the tide and led to a Mid-Columbia Conference win over Hermiston.

"Tonight was tough," Preuninger said. "The group of kids who are still around, I'm proud of them and the way they played early on. Our energy went down toward the end of the first half and carried over into the second."

Hermiston (2-11, 1-9 MCC) got a career-high 24 points from sophomore Chase Elliott, nine from Trent Pitney and eight from Ivan Rangel.

"Chase is our guy offensively," Preuninger said. "With the couple of guys who have removed themselves from our team, we need somebody else to step up and score. For us to get some wins, AJ (Ramos-Barron) and Ivan need to score for us."

Pasco's Ethan Legard led all scorers with 36 points.

## Two Dawgs sign to play soccer at CBC

Lanie Gomez and Cydney Lind will join strong Hawks squad

By ANNIE FOWLER  
SPORTS EDITOR

When Lanie Gomez and Cydney Lind were in middle school, they were bitter rivals on the soccer field.

In fact, Lind said they did not like each other.

Fast forward a few years, and the two Hermiston seniors were

signing their letters of intent together last Wednesday to continue playing together at Columbia Basin College in Pasco, Washington.

"I'm really excited to be there with Lanie," said Lind, who plays midfielder and defender. "As freshmen, we hated each other, but now I couldn't imagine playing with anyone else. We have been through some hard times and games, and that has brought us closer as friends and teammates."

Gomez, a goalie, said neither player had gotten much interest, except from CBC.

"We went together to one of their practices and we had a lot of fun," Gomez said. "I was a little nervous, but I did what I had to do. The players were a lot of fun and had a lot of energy. It was too good of an offer to pass up."

The Hawks finished second in the NWAC East last fall and advanced to the NWAC playoffs. They finished with a record of 15-2-4.



Staff photo by Annie Fowler

Hermiston soccer players Lanie Gomez, left, and Cydney Lind signed letters of intent on Wednesday to play at Columbia Basin College.

## Realignment shakes up MCC, moving Kamiakin and Walla Walla

Hermiston will remain in 3A division, which will have expanded state tournaments

By ANNIE FOWLER  
SPORTS EDITOR

The Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) released the classification numbers for the 2020-24 cycle Sunday, and while Hermiston will remain in the 3A classification, the Mid-Columbia Conference will have a different look come fall.

Kamiakin will move up to 4A, while Walla Walla will move down to 3A.

The realignment still gives the MCC four 3A schools — Hermiston, Kennewick, Southridge and Wa-Hi.

The 4A schools are Kamiakin, Hanford, Richland, Pasco and Chiawana, which is the largest high school in Washington with more than 2,100 students in grades 9-11.

The MCC teams still will play a regular-season schedule, then split for the playoffs.

The MCC is part of District 8 with the Spokane schools, where

three 4A schools — Ferris, University and Mead — will drop to 3A and join Cheney, North Central (2A for football) and Mt. Spokane.

Because of the large number of 3A schools (79), the amount of playoff berths a district receives will change, but those numbers have not been announced.

"We don't know about the allocations, but it could be at least one or more," Hermiston athletic director Larry Usher said.

What is known is that the 3A will move from 16-team state tournaments to 20 teams for football, volleyball, basketball, soccer, baseball and softball.

"Not sure how all of that will work," Usher said. "The (WIAA) committees will have to deal with that."

Changes also are expected for wrestling, swimming and track allocations, but again, those numbers have not been announced.

For the first time, the WIAA funded lunch numbers in the classification formula.

According to the WIAA, a school with a free and reduced lunch rate greater than the statewide average (47%) had its enrollment number reduced for

each percent that they exceed the statewide average, except at the 1B and 2B classification level.

For Hermiston, whose average enrollment is 1,237 students, the formula lowered the enrollment number by just 38 students.

"Our district numbers are higher, but at the high school, you just don't get the kids filling out the paper work," Usher said. "A lot of them don't eat at school."

In the WIAA, 3A schools are those that range between 900 and 1,299 students. There are 79 schools in that range, while the 4A division (1,300 or more students) dropped to 51 schools.