

Teammates turned into family



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARITY DUBISAR/SMART SHOTS

From left to right, the 2017-18 Madras girls basketball team consists of Jayden Davis, Alesha Freeman, Chloe Smith, Kaliyah Iverson, Monika Stacena, Annie Whipple, Vanessa Culp, Janae Smith-Francis, Jalaney Suppah, Ellise David, Jackie Zamora and Lynden Harry.

How the Madras girls basketball team forged a family bond and rediscovered having fun, as told by its players and coaches

BY WILL DENNER
Sports Editor

Editor's note: Telling the story of this year's Madras girls basketball team was a methodical process. It became apparent during a conversation with Madras girls head coach Zach Lillebo that, in order to thoroughly understand it, many voices needed to be heard.

Lillebo and 10 of the Lady Buffs' players each shared a unique perspective on the team. So rather than using our words to tell a story, we turned it over to them.

The following story is told primarily from the vantage point of those players and coaches on the Lady Buffs' team, all of whom were interviewed by the Pioneer in February 2018.

Some people refer to this storytelling style as "oral history." The difference here, however, is that the team isn't done

writing its history. The Lady Buffs (21-2) will play host to Valley Catholic March 2 in the first round of the 4A playoffs. With a win, they would reach the 4A state tournament for the first time since 2016.

Entering the 2016-17 girls basketball season, Madras was a young team with sky-high expectations. The Lady Buffs were following a season that included a Tri-Valley Conference title and trip to the 4A state tournament in which they went 0-2. They wanted to get back to state and finish higher.

Previous pillars of the program, Mariah Stacena and Janae Adams, had graduated. The team was turned over to incoming juniors Kaliyah Iverson and Lynden Harry, both of whom played as freshmen, and as sophomores, were full-time starters under Lillebo.

Zach Lillebo, Madras head coach: We went from Mariah and that group, to Janae, and then we had that blank spot. It was a little different. But on the other hand, I wasn't concerned.

You had two girls that were starters on the varsity level as sophomores, so as juniors they're going to be fine. They're veterans by now, because their freshman and sophomore years, they got playing time at the varsity level, they started and they got playoff time. And they worked on their games all summer long.

Lynden Harry, senior: That's where it started was last year. We got close; we didn't get as close as we thought we were going to, and then this year, it was like we never even left.

Kaliyah Iverson, senior: I think that was a cool thing, because we got to learn from all the previous seniors, and they

gave us all their intellect. We got to pass that down to the younger group. I just thought that was cool that they (younger players) all looked up to us.

Although Harry and Iverson were practically seasoned vets by the time they reached junior year, newcomers had a steeper learning curve. Among the new additions were incoming freshman Janae Smith-Francis, and then-junior Alesha Freeman, a transfer student from nearby Culver.

Alesha Freeman, senior: I think at first, it was very intimidating, just because basketball is so known at Madras. It was kind scary coming from a 2A school, needing to try out ... I just told myself to work really hard.

I kind of made it hard on myself, but knowing a lot of the girls from COBO

See FAMILY/ Page B2

Madras moves past Tillamook at home



Buffs top 'Mooks 95-86 to earn a first-round game March 3, at No. 1 seed Banks

BY WILL DENNER
Sports Editor

The system was a work in progress all season long.

When Madras head coach Evan Brown reintroduced "3-diculous" and the platoon-style, five men on, five men off substitution pattern to the White Buffalos' boys basketball program this season, it didn't immediately yield positive results.

Ideally, the fast tempo and frequent shift changes are supposed to break even the most well-conditioned teams. That wasn't the case during the Buffs' nonleague tilt, when they allowed 100 points or more on three occasions, and at times, looked exhausted themselves.

But on Saturday, the Buffs put all their pieces together — 10 of them, to be exact — and kept their season alive.

Madras wore out Tillamook in its home play-in round game, a 95-86 win. It reaped the benefits of its depth, which went 10 players deep and wore out the Cheesemakers in the fourth quarter.

"Tonight's game is what

we've been trying to accomplish all year," Brown said. "That style of game, that type of game, that tempo of the game, is what we had envisioned in November when practice started. It's taken us 24 games to get there, but that's the picture of what we envisioned."

Both teams started hot offensively with several lead changes, and Madras led 25-24 after the first quarter.

The Buffs then went on a 11-2 run early in the second quarter, ignited by a Donnie Bagley layup, and a Kanim Smith steal and slam dunk.

At the 5:13 mark, Smith grabbed his own miss and put back a layup, which gave Madras a 38-28 lead.

By halftime, Smith had 20

points, and racked up 38 at the final buzzer. Remarkably,

Smith played only 16 minutes, 46 seconds, a byproduct of the Buffs' platoon substitutions.

No one from Madras played more than 19 minutes, while five Tillamook players totaled upwards of 23 minutes. In a fast-paced game, that contrast made all the difference.

See MADRAS/ Page B4



Kanim Smith (44) led all scorers with 38 points against Tillamook, putting together an efficient game in only 16 minutes, 46 seconds of play.

Tyler Lockey (35) led Madras with 14 rebounds (five offensive), on a night when second-chance points helped the Buffs get over the hump.

WILL DENNER/MADRAS PIONEER



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Family: A balance of having fun and working hard

From Page B1

(Central Oregon Basketball Organization) really helped.

They were really welcoming, because they knew who I was and what kind of player I was. They kind of knew where I'd fit. So it was kind of nice. I felt really at home, not even a week into practice.

Lillebo: Out of the 36 girls in the program at the beginning of this year, 31 of them played in COBO. That started with this (current) group of seniors. They were the first group that played fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth (grade).

Harry: Alesha, she just came in and I really liked her from the start, just because I've known her from COBO. I had her in some of my classes, and

we did talk here and there. And then she caught on to how we joke around and are sarcastic with each other, and she was able to make jokes with us and laugh.

I think it was easy for Jiana to transition in last year, because she's my younger cousin, so she was always around me, Kaliyah and everybody else ... I think everybody else adjusted to her being there very well.

The Buffs' 2016-17 campaign started strong, as they won five of their first six games. They finished TVC play in third place with a 7-3 record, good enough to earn a play-in game at Cottage Grove.

But Madras lost a 50-48 at the hands of Cottage Grove, and was unable to make it back to the state tournament.

Lillebo: By this time last year, I think a lot of us were kind of itching to see the season come to an end at some point in time. Because it's a long season.

I wasn't, on one hand, but I think we got burnt out. That's partly my fault, and that's why the fun came back into it. You can't drill and kill every night.

Jiana Smith-Francis, sophomore: It was mainly because of practice. A lot of us didn't like the running and a lot of the stuff that we did. We were kind of hoping the season was going to be over, but also hoping it wasn't.

Jalaney Suppah, junior: There wasn't a lot of drama last year, but there were certain things we couldn't get over.

Jackie Zamora, junior: We didn't really come in big headed, but I feel like we didn't have as much team bonding as we did this year.

Harry: We had a lot of trouble finding our groove and learning how to play with each other. Knowing what someone can and can't do, and whether or not they're willing to do what they can do. I feel like we struggled with the confidence piece.

Iverson: I think last year was a lot harder. We were all trying to grow — that was our growing time. Like, we still needed to figure out the rotations, everything. I think we were still figuring that out last year.

Freeman: I could see the

burn out, but I could also see the fire in people's eyes for the next season. We came back twice as hard as we did last year. We wanted it.

Without a single senior on the '16-'17 team, Madras began practice in November 2017 with a near-identical roster, plus the addition of freshman Jayden Davis, whom players raved about before the season began.

Players reflected on what went wrong the previous season. Lillebo did, too.

He brought a different approach into the season, and brainstormed with players ways to make the season more fun, and less of a grind.

Players point to three moments earlier this season that not only encouraged having fun, but more importantly, laid the foundation for the family bond that now defines the team. First, a scavenger hunt around Madras after the first week of practice in late November; then, a retreat to Kah-Nee-Ta following the team's opening weekend tournament; and lastly, the Buffs' second annual trip to the Les Schwab Tournament in Coos Bay Dec. 14-16.

Annie Whipple, junior:

No one left. We all knew that this year was going to be the year. We were all just going to bond and all our pieces were going to fit together.

Lillebo: We didn't lose anybody last year; probably helps a little bit. We gained a couple players on this year versus last year. Jayden being one of them, and Jiana having an extra year under her belt.

Jayden Davis, freshman: I was scared as an eighth grader coming into high school, because I didn't think I'd keep close relationships with my friends. My big focus was how basketball season was going to go, and I had high hopes of making varsity. Now that I'm actually playing, I'm enjoying it.

Lillebo: High school basketball is not only about Xs and Os. For me, it's about creating memories for these kids that they can cherish for a lifetime ... They're going to remember going to Kah-Nee-Ta; they're going to remember going out on a freezing cold Saturday morning and doing a scavenger hunt around town in Madras.

They're going to remember bits and pieces throughout the season, but those are the memories they're going to cherish and hold on to and they can reminisce 20 years from now.

Ellise David, senior: The scavenger hunt actually was one of the biggest turning points. Not only seeing everyone else's driving skills, but actually getting to hear the girls open up, through all the chaos of the scavenger hunt. It was just fun seeing everyone in their relaxed state.

On the court, you don't really get to see that. You see their aggressive side, their focused side, but when you're doing a fun scavenger hunt, you get to see their real personality, their true self. It

I remember Kaliyah got a pair of loafers, literally made out of bread, and nobody wanted them, so she was stuck with them.

Chloe had to dress up as a soldier, because that's part of what her gift was from Jackie.

Lillebo: More importantly, they got to see a level of com-

kind of just let us all jell as a team.

Whipple: That was so much fun. We were together all day; none of us wanted to leave.

Davis: The scavenger hunt was the most fun, because we'd switch cars and were with different people. That's how our bond grew more, because we were with different friends and what not.

Harry: At Kah-Nee-Ta, we were all in one room. Those rooms aren't very big, so there were like 11, 12 of us in there. It was like, we're all going to be there, we're all going to talk to each other and just have fun with each other.

We did this team bonding thing where we played "chubby bunny," where you stuff marshmallows in your mouth and you try to talk.

It's definitely easier to come out of your shell when everybody's laughing. I think that's how we got Jayden to come out of her shell ... She's a freshman, very quiet, but after that, she just opened up and now she makes jokes.

Smith-Francis: When we were at Kah-Nee-Ta, we played games and everything, but after, we would just talk. That's where we built most of the chemistry, because we started to understand each other.

Lillebo: Coos Bay is always a good trip. Five hours in a bus together, go down on the coast, see a different part of the state. They got to practice in the high school I grew up in (North Bend), see where I kind of came from.

We had a white elephant exchange over at my sister's house in North Bend, and then a family dinner over at my parents' house.

Harry: When I'd said that we're going there, they're like, "Where's that? Is that in Washington?" And we're like, "No, it's in Oregon, in the corner."

Suppah: The Coos Bay trip was a really fun trip. The road trip going to Coos Bay, we played board games ... Cards Against Humanity, that game is crazy, but it's funny. Lots of laughs.

Iverson: We play this hand (clap) game; it's like a categories game. And then we play Cards Against Humanity a lot.

Davis: We play Cards Against Humanity on road trips, and we laugh at the dumbest stuff, or the funniest stuff (on) what the cards say. We play this game with our hands where we clap and we just start laughing. I like that most about us.

Harry: We did a white elephant gift exchange. It was really fun. Everybody wanted something, and there was a limit, so everybody was kind of mad when you stole something and couldn't get it back. I remember Kaliyah got a pair of loafers, literally made out of bread, and nobody wanted them, so she was stuck with them.

Chloe had to dress up as a soldier, because that's part of what her gift was from Jackie.

Lillebo: More importantly, they got to see a level of com-



PIONEER FILE PHOTO
Madras got a taste of the physical 4A state tournament when they qualified in 2016, before being eliminated with two losses. That Madras team included Iverson (above, right), Harry, Culps, Smith and Zamora.

petition. I think that's key for our girls: they want the competition, and they want it each and every night.

Zamora: That's a huge tournament for us.

Chloe Smith, junior: I thought the Coos Bay tournament really brought us together. At first, everybody had their own little groups and would be shy.

But then everybody bonded. Since then, we've all just been really close.

Madras picked up its biggest win of the young season at the tournament, a 36-17 thrashing of four-time defending state champion Sutherlin.

Coming off the high of that win, Madras suffered its first loss of the season to No. 1-ranked Marshfield. It was a learning moment for the Buffs in the best possible way.

Since then, they've lost only one game, to 5A Bend, and finished the regular season 21-2.

They haven't overreacted to wins. And, they've found a balance between having fun and working hard. Practices aren't only about drills; pre-game routines go beyond thinking about basketball.

Lillebo: We've had different things in practice ... dance-offs, we play freeze tag, leapfrog for warm ups. Just stupid stuff that most grown adults would look at and say, "Why are we doing it?" It has everything to do with bringing the fun back into it, because that's why 90 percent of our athletes play this sport.

David: It's a new set of girls, a new set of values and principles that we go by. It's a fun chemistry. You look forward to going to practice, which is not what many people say, but you actually do.

Freeman: A lot of it happens at practice, spending two, two-and-a-half hours with these girls. And we get a lot out of it, it's not something little ... I learn something new about someone almost every day.

Suppah: Before games, we

usually listen to loud music and have a little dance session. That helps ... to get rid of all the seriousness, and then we go out and we're ready. I feel like that's a big part. Like, even if it's little, just a few minutes before the game.

Whipple: I'm usually the only one dancing, but it usually gets everybody really hyped up.

Iverson: Oh my god, Annie is the best dancer on the team. She just comes up with crazy stuff and she's not afraid to do anything. She's by far the best dancer. I think it's very beneficial before the games. We're not stressed ... We're all getting loose and having fun.

Harry: Annie is the best dancer hands down. Kaliyah definitely comes in second place with that.

Smith-Francis: Annie is the best overall dancer on the whole entire team, I think.

Whipple: I just like to dance, I guess. I've seen them pull out some pretty good moves. They won't admit it, but I've seen it. They're good dancers too.

I'll be looking back on this and thinking about how fun it was, and how childish and goofy, how it was totally acceptable for us to act a certain way, and for us to just accept each other.

Suppah: We all love each other like we're a family, and I think that's what makes it so easy for us to bond. We don't have to see each other all the time.

When it comes to basketball season, these are our girls. This is us.

Lillebo: Our kids really wanted to come back together and just be a part of one. They don't fight, but they disagree. They don't hang out 24/7 ... But when we come across that big blue line to get into our court, it's time to focus, time to come together and time to play basketball. They seem to be having fun doing it.

Friday's first-round play-off game against Valley Catholic is the last hurdle Madras needs to clear in order to return to the state tournament.

If the Buffs are able to take care of business at home, several girls, who were part of the last Madras team to reach

state, will have plenty of experience and wisdom to impart on their teammates.

Zamora: It was a huge experience. It felt like I was playing in a huge stadium. Everything's changed; you weren't back home. It just felt weird playing there.

The crowds were loud. You've got to play through everything, because the refs aren't going to be the same as league and preseason. We never know how they're going to be. You've just got to play your hardest, no dumb mistakes, just put all your effort out there.

Harry: It was definitely a bigger and better atmosphere. The playing was more aggressive, the officials let a lot of contact go, and that's what we needed ... to know that we could go into contact, not get a call or get a foul, and have to be able to finish through that. The defense was more intense there.

You can't be scared, you can't back down. It was tough there for me and (Kaliyah). It was totally new for me and her.

Smith: The defense is a lot harder. That really picked up our defense. We were mainly the "run and gun" type of team. Now it's our defense.

When we press, we get a bunch of points off of that. I think it's our defense that really went up since that tournament.

Lillebo: The game has changed so much at that tournament. It's a lot rougher — the refs let you play a lot more. I know our girls are tough enough to play in that kind of atmosphere, as long as we're ready for it, and as long as we're prepared.

Come that time, those seniors are going to look at us and say, "OK, this is what we got to do, and this is what we have to be prepared for. This is what happened two years ago. It's not going to change."

Harry: A few of them have been there ... Chloe, Vanessa and Jackie. We need to expose Jiana, Alesha, Jayden, Jalaney, (Annie), (Ellise) to that. And hopefully we get to. That's our gameplan.

Smith: Since we made it this far, we want to go farther.

PREP ATHLETES OF THE WEEK



Kanim Smith

MADRAS BOYS BASKETBALL

Playing his last game at the Buffalo Dome against Tillamook last Saturday, the senior dropped 38 points and 11 rebounds in just 16 minutes, 46 seconds of game action.

Kahne Herkshan

MADRAS BOYS BASKETBALL

The junior was lights out from 3-point range against Tillamook, as he knocked down three of five attempts from deep and totaled 13 points.

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SCOREBOARD

CALENDAR

March 2
Girls basketball (4A first round)
Madras vs. Valley Catholic, 6:30 p.m.

March 3
Boys basketball (4A first round)
Madras at Banks, 3 p.m.

BASKETBALL

Feb. 20
Boys basketball
Madras 84, Crook County 78

Girls basketball
Madras 59, Crook County 24

Feb. 23-24
Boys basketball (4A play-in round)
HENLEY 58, North Marion 57
MADRAS 95, Tillamook 86
SUTHERLIN 53, Brookings-Harbor 39
PHILOMATH 52, North Valley 34
BAKER 77, Cottage Grove 68
VALLEY CATHOLIC 46, Crook County 27
STAYTON 65, Scappoose 45
Cascade 76, NORTH BEND 47

Girls basketball (4A play-in round)
BROOKINGS-HARBOR 68, Philomath 38
HENLEY 53, Douglas 24
Newport 52, LA GRANDE 35
NORTH MARION 60, South Umpqua 23
MAZAMA 56, Sutherlin 36
MOLALLA 53, Astoria 29
VALLEY CATHOLIC 45, Gladstone 36

BOWLING

Results of Feb. 20 - 23 week
Madras Bowl

Tuesday Night Twisters Team standings

Freeloaders 4-0
Purple Sage Spa Pirates 4-0
Madras Sanitary 3-1
Dufur Taxidermy 3-1
Spare-ly Made It 3-1
Quartz Creek Ranch 2-2
Dancing Beans 2-2
Alley Rats 1-3
Schytz-N-Gyglz 1-3
Team Toto 1-3
Got Sand 0-4
The Elite 0-4

Individual scores Men

High game: Jim Lantz 245, Dustin Williams 236, Austin Greene Jr. 214
High series: Ray Shike 640, Joe Steller 566, Jerry Sampson 533
High handicap game: Kevin Haugen 294, John Williams 261, Liam Hollyman 261
High handicap series: Chris Ansett 761, Jake Koolhaas 720, Michael Henson 706

Women

High game: Jean Stanton 200, Urbana Ross 200, Lori Urbach 189
High series: Jean McCloskey 501, Annie Hausinger 486, Angie Spino 457, Cindy Dubisar 457
High handicap game: Jodene Boise 285, Tammy Wilson 262, Jami Carroll 252
High handicap series: Norene Sampson 710, Jordynn O'Brien 689, Sue Light 672

Thursday Night Keglers Team standings

Berg Air 4-0
Erickson's 4-0
Thoze Guyz 3-1
Middleton's 3-1
Warm Spring Composite 3-1
Hometown Drug 2-2
OK Bowlers 2-2
D&D Realty 1-3
Liquid Aloha 1-3
Bulldog Septic 1-3
Dig-A-Dee'z 0-4
Perfect Storm 0-4

Individual scores Men

High game: Louis Morales 244, Kalani Kepaa 232, Ed McDaniel 224
High series: Kalani Kepaa 648, Ed McDaniel 631, Stephen Lengele 598
High handicap game: Louis Morales 297, Nick Boslby 297, John Fisher 272
High handicap series: Ed McDaniel 754, Tristen Smith 734, Stephen Lengele 733

Women

High game: Aimee Neill 232, Christie Bouvia 193, Tammie Clark

178
High series: Christie Bouvia 482, Gretchen Halverson 480, Aimee Neill 475
High handicap game: Aimee Neill 322, Tammie Clark 268, Betty Lengele 259, Jennifer Grant 259
High handicap series: Aimee Neill 745, Tammie Clark 730, Jennifer Grant 707

WRESTLING

Feb. 16-17
2A/1A State Wrestling Tournament
Veterans Memorial Coliseum,
Portland

Culver High School results

106

Brody Piercy (20-15) placed 3rd and scored 12.00 team points.
Quarterfinal - Brody Piercy (Culver) 20-15 won by decision over Christian Solomon (Reedsport) 16-14 (Dec 8-4).

Semifinal - Steven Beckman (Joseph/Wallowa) 32-1 won by fall over Brody Piercy (Culver) 20-15 (Fall 0:36).

Cons. Semi - Brody Piercy (Culver) 20-15 won by decision over Jordan Piercy (Culver) 10-16 (Dec 5-2).

3rd Place Match - Brody Piercy (Culver) 20-15 won by injury default over Ethan Ferris (Toledo) 27-3 (Inj. 0:45).

Jordan Piercy (10-16) place is unknown and scored 3.00 team points.
Quarterfinal - Carson Keith (Reedsport) 16-4 won by fall over Jordan Piercy (Culver) 10-16 (Fall 1:02).

Cons. Round 1 - Jordan Piercy (Culver) 10-16 won by fall over Ethan Moore (Grant Union) 21-18 (Fall 0:53).

Cons. Semi - Brody Piercy (Culver) 20-15 won by decision over Jordan Piercy (Culver) 10-16 (Dec 5-2).

113

Anthony Hood (20-10) placed 2nd and scored 18.00 team points.
Quarterfinal - Anthony Hood (Culver) 20-10 won by fall over Cutter Tanaka (Pine Eagle) 26-15 (Fall 5:36).

Semifinal - Anthony Hood (Culver) 20-10 won by fall over Wyatt Jones (Vernonia) 24-9 (Fall 5:27).

1st Place Match - Hunter McIrvin (Central Linn) 35-12 won by decision over Anthony Hood (Culver) 20-10 (Dec 10-4).

120

Lorenzo Vasquez (43-2) placed 1st and scored 24.00 team points.
Quarterfinal - Lorenzo Vasquez (Culver) 43-2 won by fall over Zeb Ramsden (Joseph/Wallowa) 26-12 (Fall 2:48).

Semifinal - Lorenzo Vasquez (Culver) 43-2 won by fall over Yesenia Velazquez (Reedsport) 4-12 (Fall 0:51).

1st Place Match - Lorenzo Vasquez (Culver) 43-2 won by fall over Tyler Huerta (Myrtle Point) 22-3 (Fall 1:38).

126

Orlando Torres (22-10) placed 2nd and scored 16.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Orlando Torres (Culver) 22-10 won by decision over Clifford Johnson (Myrtle Point) 10-9 (Dec 12-7).

Semifinal - Orlando Torres (Culver) 22-10 won by fall over Jaxon



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Five JCMS wrestlers placed at the Central Oregon Middle School Championships in Redmond Feb. 23-24. From left to right, Reece White placed first at 175 pounds, Cael White fifth at 91, Malachi Aire third at 120, Elijah McCourtney fourth at 136 and Logan Webb fourth at 210.

Blackburn (Union/Cove) 10-8 (Fall 2:54)

1st Place Match - Cole Farwell (Enterprise) 47-2 won by fall over Orlando Torres (Culver) 22-10 (Fall 1:54)

132
Cooper Becker (25-14) place is unknown and scored 4.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Cooper Becker (Culver) 25-14 won by fall over Trace Evans (Enterprise) 25-12 (Fall 5:34).

Semifinal - Luke Goozee (Knappa) 35-10 won by fall over Cooper Becker (Culver) 25-14 (Fall 3:45).

Cons. Semi - Lane Downing (Culver) 33-12 won by decision over Cooper Becker (Culver) 25-14 (Dec 7-4).

Lane Downing (33-12) placed 3rd and scored 10.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Logan Butcher (Imbler) 9-7 won by major decision over Lane Downing (Culver) 33-12 (MD 11-2).

Cons. Round 1 - Lane Downing (Culver) 33-12 won by major decision over Enoch Fry (Neah-Kah-Nie) 21-24 (MD 16-4).

Cons. Semi - Lane Downing (Culver) 33-12 won by decision over Cooper Becker (Culver) 25-14 (Dec 7-4).

3rd Place Match - Lane Downing (Culver) 33-12 won in sudden victory - 1 over Kent McIntosh (Lowell) 26-14 (SV 1-8-2).

145
Jorge Olivera (36-5) placed 1st and scored 24.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Jorge Olivera (Culver) 36-5 won by fall over Isaac Ruef (Myrtle Point) 15-11 (Fall 3:26).

Semifinal - Jorge Olivera (Culver) 36-5 won by fall over Gus Ramsden (Joseph/Wallowa) 8-9 (Fall 1:32).

1st Place Match - Jorge Olivera (Culver) 36-5 won by fall over Hunter Lewis (Toledo) 29-9 (Fall 0:55).

Hunter Augustynovich (9-10) placed 4th and scored 7.50 team points.

Quarterfinal - Tandy Martin (Gold Beach) 20-4 won by fall over Hunter Augustynovich (Culver) 9-10 (Fall 3:47).

Cons. Round 1 - Hunter Augustynovich (Culver) 9-10 won by tech fall over Zach Bredfield (Heppner/Ione) 12-11 (TF 1-5.00 (22-6)).

152
Victor Torres (40-8) placed 1st and scored 23.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Victor Torres (Culver) 40-8 won by fall over Seth Butler (Pine Eagle) 27-15 (Fall 5:16).

Semifinal - Victor Torres (Culver) 40-8 won by fall over Sebastian Garcin (Lowell) 21-10 (Fall 4:33).

1st Place Match - Victor Torres (Culver) 40-8 won by major decision over Brody Davidson (Santiam) 17-7 (MD 18-7).

160
Jerron Rhen (33-7) placed 1st and scored 19.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Jerron Rhen (Culver) 33-7 won by major decision over Donovan Hargraves (Riddle/Days Creek) 6-5 (MD 9-1).

195
Cylus Hoke (39-5) placed 1st and scored 23.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Cylus Hoke (Culver) 39-5 won by major decision over Joshy Howell (Siletz Valley) 5-3 (MD 10-2).

Semifinal - Cylus Hoke (Culver) 39-5 won by fall over Clayton Hammond (Elgin) 20-20 (Fall 1:35).

1st Place Match - Cylus Hoke (Culver) 39-5 won by fall over William Kidwell (Glendale) 24-5 (Fall 0:41).

285
Martin Negrete (9-10) place is

Semifinal - Jerron Rhen (Culver) 33-7 won by decision over Austin Brockamp (Joseph/Wallowa) 24-11 (Dec 7-0).

1st Place Match - Jerron Rhen (Culver) 33-7 won by decision over Nate Roat (Lowell) 26-6 (Dec 7-0).

170

Joseph Russo (21-17) placed 4th and scored 8.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Elijah Epling (Crane) 23-1 won by fall over Joseph Russo (Culver) 21-17 (Fall 3:45).

Cons. Round 1 - Joseph Russo (Culver) 21-17 won by decision over Zack Esplin (Monroe) 16-8 (Dec 7-2).

Cons. Semi - Joseph Russo (Culver) 21-17 won by fall over Brandon Roe (Pine Eagle) 25-21 (Fall 4:47).

3rd Place Match - Patrick Shawver (Siletz Valley) 35-6 won by fall over Joseph Russo (Culver) 21-17 (Fall 3:07).

182

Joey Navarro (13-16) place is unknown and scored 3.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Russell Hodge (Grant Union) 19-18 won by fall over Joey Navarro (Culver) 13-16 (Fall 3:01).

Cons. Round 1 - Joey Navarro (Culver) 13-16 won by fall over Nathan Gilbert (Gold Beach) 1-3 (Fall 2:14).

Cons. Semi - Travis Bennett (Neah-Kah-Nie) 28-14 won by fall over Joey Navarro (Culver) 13-16 (Fall 2:52).

unknown and scored 3.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Thomas Talamantes-Ward (Lowell) 22-8 won by fall over Martin Negrete (Culver) 9-10 (Fall 2:19).

Cons. Round 1 - Martin Negrete (Culver) 9-10 won by fall over Kenneth Johnston Jr. (Siletz Valley) 2-1 (Fall 1:14).

Cons. Semi - Justin Malone (Central Linn) 25-13 won by fall over Martin Negrete (Culver) 9-10 (Fall 1:10).

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Madras High School results

170

Thomas LeClaire (25-10) place is unknown and scored 4.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 - Thomas LeClaire (Madras) 25-10 won by decision over Kolby Lavin-Williams (Douglas) 15-26 (Dec 12-9).

Quarterfinal - Travis Wittlake (Marshfield) 56-0 won by fall over Thomas LeClaire (Madras) 25-10 (Fall 1:30).

Cons. Round 2 - Thomas LeClaire (Madras) 25-10 won by major decision over Connor Kohn (Philomath) 24-20 (MD 16-5).

Cons. Round 3 - Nich James (Sweet Home) 40-17 won by major decision over Thomas LeClaire (Madras) 25-10 (MD 10-1).

Madras: Buffs outrun Tillamook in final period

From Page B1

"It's tough coming out, but it gives you more energy when the next rotation comes in," Smith said. "You just got to keep it consistent."

While Madras was running, Tillamook was matching it for a good portion of the game.

Ian Collett, who was coming off a 46-point performance against Scappoose a few days earlier, led the Mooks with 28 points. He, along with fellow guard Ramon Flores, who scored 18 points, frequently leaked out in transition and scored easy baskets.

For a while, it appeared that Tillamook had an answer for nearly every Madras score. Until the final period, at least.

Madras held a 65-62 edge entering the fourth, and soon after, scored seven points. Bagley hit another deep ball, followed by two made free throws from Smith, and a Chad Thurby layup to give Madras a 74-64 lead.

Tillamook had a couple parting shots, drawing to within six points after Anthony Taylor scored four straight points.

But the Buffs scored on their next possession, when Kahne Herkshan cleaned up an offensive rebound and scored two of his 13 points. Thurby then grabbed a steal and unselfishly set up Lockey for a layup with 4:18 remaining. Madras didn't allow Til-

lamook to draw any closer than seven points for the remainder of the game.

"We knew they were going to run with us, we knew they were going to be just as fast as us, but we also knew they only play a few players," Herkshan said. "That helped us, because they couldn't run as fast (of) a pace."

In addition to the Buffs' 11 3-pointers made, compared to just three from Tillamook, they pulled down 28 offensive rebounds, eight of which were credited to Smith and another five to Lockey.

The win secured Madras a first-round playoff game, but the road gets much tougher from here.

The Buffs found out shortly after Saturday's game that they will play at Banks (22-2), the No. 1 seed in the bracket. Some will probably be overlooking them, but after the Buffs found their formula against Tillamook, they could be a tough out in the playoffs.

"I'm just going to leave it all out there, like I did this game," said Smith, a senior. "Just keep going and chip away at the tournament."

Madras travels to play Banks on March 3. Tipoff is scheduled for 3 p.m.

Madras survives late Crook County rally in TVC finale

A win was paramount for the Madras boys basketball team on Feb. 20.

The White Buffalos and their opponent, the Crook County Cowboys, were tied for second-place in the Tri-Valley Conference, each with 7-2 records coming into the game.

With Gladstone having already wrapped up first place, Madras and Crook County were guaranteed play-in games on Feb. 24. But the winner of their matchup was assured of a home game, while the loser would be forced to play a higher-seeded team on the road.

Knowing that the Buffs' last regular season game could be the last time their four seniors played in the Buffalo Dome, they wanted to give them an extra one at home.

The Buffs won 74-68, but earning that higher seed didn't come without some drama late in Tuesday's game. Though Madras held a 20-point lead entering the fourth quarter, Crook County shrunk it to four points in the final minute and nearly came back to win.

"We knew they were going to fight tough against us the whole entire game," said Madras senior Chad Thurby, who finished with 11 points. "But we just had to keep our composure and keep up with these guys. We just had to play our hearts out."

When Kanim Smith converted a three-point play, giving Madras a 70-54 lead with 3

minutes, 18 seconds remaining, the Buffs looked to be in control. But Crook County swung momentum in a flash.

Devin Bishop drew a fifth and final on Smith while making a layup at the 1:54 mark. Just a few seconds later, Kahne Herkshan joined Smith on the bench when he was called for a charge while going up for a shot. Madras was assessed a technical foul for arguing the call.

While Crook County's Thaiden Mullan was shooting the technical free throws, someone from the crowd, presumably in the Madras student section, threw a plastic bottle in the direction of the four other Cowboy players standing near half court.

That prompted Madras head coach Evan Brown to grab the microphone from announcer Dave Wiles and tell the crowd to knock off the antics, also saying that they were exhibiting poor sportsmanship.

Madras drew another technical foul for the fan-related incident, giving Mullan a total of four free throws. He made all of them, and Crook County took possession afterwards. A Chase Bales 3-pointer drew Crook County within five, 70-65, with 1:26 to go.

"When all that crazy stuff happened, all the techs and stuff, we just pulled everyone in and we just started talking like, 'This could be our last

home game for all the seniors. This is our last time to show out in front of our crowd,'" said junior Byron Patt, who led the Buffs with 18 points. "We wanted to make it count."

Patt and Tyler Lockey combined to hit 2 of 5 free throws during the next three Madras possessions, and with 21 seconds left, Mullan hit his third deep ball of the game to keep Crook County within four.

The Cowboys then stole Madras' inbounds pass after a timeout. They got an open look at a 3-pointer, but the ball clanked off the front rim. Madras rebounded the miss, and Patt was able to hit a pair of free throws and put the game out of reach for Crook County.

"We knew they weren't going to quit, we knew they weren't going to go away, and keep battling, and they did," Brown said. "They battled their way back into the game, especially in those last four minutes or so. Our fouls in the second half allowed them to score with clock stopped and slow the pace of the game down, which is exactly what we don't want to (have) happen."

Mullan was the main source of offense for the Cowboys, finishing with 35 points on 12 of 21 shooting, and 8 of 9 from the foul line.

"There was one guy we needed to worry about," Brown said, "and late in the

game we talked about in the timeout keeping track of Thaiden, and he still sticks that three to get them within four."

Mullan scored eight of the Cowboys' 16 points in the opening quarter, which Madras led 19-16 entering the second period.

Madras then went on a 15-2 run to open the second, owning Crook County on the glass and in transition. The Buffs' offense came from a variety of places, as Smith, Patt, Lockey, Herkshan, Donnie Bagley and Julian Badoni scored during the three-minute stretch.

"We needed ball movement and going to the hoop," Mullan said of the Cowboys' early scoring problems. "But we had a comeback, so it was pretty fun at the end, even though it's disappointing that we lost. I felt like I did pretty good, but I wish that we would have got the W."

By halftime, Crook County had dug itself a 40-24 hole. The deficit grew to 22 points in the third quarter, before the Cowboys put together a last-minute comeback.

"I was proud of their effort," Crook County head coach Darin Kessi said. "They didn't quit, they didn't get too down. I mean, obviously, we were disappointed in that first half, but I was pleased with the belief and the effort and the fact that we figured out a way to get back into it."

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All-CBC list features four Lady Bulldogs

BY WILL DENNER
Sports Editor

With four players earning all-league recognition, one more than last season, the Culver girls basketball team drew plenty of praise from its Columbia Basin Conference peers.

Junior Irma Retano was one of three CBC players unanimously voted to the first team, junior Mia Gamboa and senior Ely Bautista were named to the second team, and senior Lesli Alvarado earned an honorable mention nod. Culver head coach Scott Fritz was named Coach of the Year.

Retano's junior season carried high expectations after she was named CBC Player of the Year last season as a sophomore. The Bulldogs knew opponents would devote lots of time trying to gameplan stopping Retano. She responded well.

Retano led the Bulldogs in a

majority of statistical categories, with averages of 16.2 points, 10 rebounds and 6.4 steals.

She also became a better distributor this season, Fritz said, and took on a bigger defensive role than past years.

"We usually put her on one of the weaker players, because she's so aggressive going for the ball, we didn't want her leaving the team's best player open," Fritz said. "Earlier in the year, we were kind of doing the same thing, and she kept coming over and saying, 'Put me on their best player,' and we started doing it."

The conference declined to name a Player of the Year this season, though Retano earned more points than fellow unanimous selections, Chelsea Quaempts of Weston-McEwen and Kayla Deist of Pilot Rock.

Also trying to follow up a strong sophomore season, Gamboa got on track toward



Above left, Mia Gamboa was named to the CBC second team, and Irma Retano (above right) was voted a unanimous first team selection.



ELLY BAUTISTA

the end of nonleague games after she was sidelined for a few weeks in December with an ankle injury.

Gamboa found some shooting rhythm down the stretch, averaging 12.5 points during Culver's final four regular season games.

"Anytime she can hit out there and give us that second threat, it makes us twice as good of a team," Fritz said.

Bautista earned the distinction of being the only player on the Bulldogs to play in all 25 games this season. With injuries to key players throughout the season, Bautista was a mark of consistency.

She averaged 5.3 points and 2.1 steals, giving the Bulldogs another offensive weapon.

And, during offseason stretches when coaches



WILL DENNER/MADRAS PIONEER

aren't allowed to instruct players, Bautista was the one leading open gyms and workouts.

"She's in every game, every practice, every open gym," Fritz said. "It goes a long way. It teaches those younger girls what they need to be doing."

Alvarado missed the first half of league with an injury. But it was no coincidence

that, when she returned, Culver rattled off four straight wins, all by double digits.

Her defensive instincts and basketball IQ were key for the Bulldogs, Fritz said.

"I think she's got to be credited with a lot of that ... It's just her knowledge of the game and being able to see the court and know what's going on," he said.



Culver seniors Matt Krueger (above left) and Weston Basl (above right) both garnered all-CBC honors.



WILL DENNER/MADRAS PIONEER

Basl, Krueger cap off senior years with all-league awards

BY WILL DENNER
Sports Editor

Behind Culver's improvements during the 2017-18 season were a pair of seniors who put the Bulldogs on their backs.

Weston Basl and Matt Krueger were a big reason why Culver was able to make significant strides as a program this past season.

Basl and Krueger's efforts earned them Columbia Basin Conference all-league recognition, as Basl was named to the second team and Krueger was one of five players named as honorable mentions.

In his second straight year garnering all-league honors, Basl was once again the Bulldogs' most versatile scorer. Basl averaged a team-leading

16.2 points, as well as 4.2 rebounds.

He shot 34 percent from 3-point range, and his 68 deep balls made for the season very nearly set a new Culver boys basketball record.

Kenny Macy still owns the record of 71 for a single season, which he set in 1998, but Basl moved past the likes of Landon Roberts (54) and Nate Lewis (63) into second place.

"We saw a vastly different Weston Basl during our summer season, and that attitude change gave us a lot of momentum going into this season," Culver head coach Johnny Wilson said. "As good as he is, I still don't think Weston has ever gotten as much of the credit as he deserves for what he did for this team. He always draws the

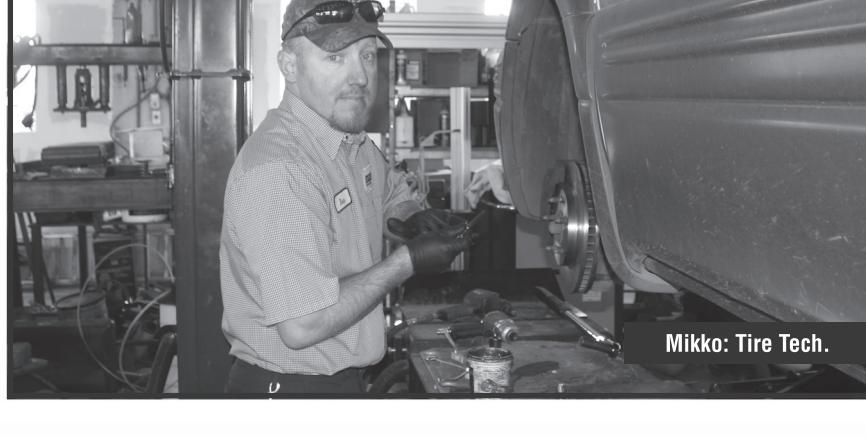
other team's best defender, and makes many of the difficult parts of the game look really easy."

Krueger, meanwhile, earned all-league honors for the first time, after a season in which he took on a larger scoring role, and gave the Bulldogs two dangerous inside-out players, along with Basl.

Krueger averaged 10.2 points, 3.2 boards and 2.2 steals per game. The latter statistic led the team.

"His transformation as a basketball player was nothing short of amazing, and he is a great example of what hard work and extra gym time can do for a player," Wilson said. "Nobody on this team cared more about this team than Matt Krueger."

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PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM NELSON
From left to right, Madras Swim Team members Kami Ackley, Elli Williams, Lexi Williams and Julian Hollingshead competed in the 11-14 OSI Short Course Championships Feb. 22-25 in Corvallis.

MST brings home several state titles and medals

BY WILL DENNER
Sports Editor

Four Madras Swim Team members went to the OSI 11-14 Short Course Championships in Corvallis Feb. 22-25, and when all was said and done, MST improved personal bests in all 18 events it was entered in.

Leading the charge was 11-year-old Lexi Williams, who won four freestyle events, and also placed second in the 50 butterfly with a time of 29.70 seconds, and third in the 100 IM (1:07.77).

She dropped time in four wins — the 50 (25.87), 100 (56.45), 200 (2:02.54), and 500 (5:37.54) free. Williams is now ranked in the top 30 nationwide among 11-year-olds in all of her freestyle events, aside from the 500.

"I was really happy with the 50 free," Williams said. "When I saw the 25 on the clock, I was not expecting that."

Likewise, Julian Hollingshead set new PRs in all six of

his events, highlighted by a fourth-place finish in the 100 breaststroke, in which he dropped to 1:05.40, three-and-a-half seconds better than the time he had coming into the meet.

"I did a lot better than I thought I was going to do," Hollingshead said. "I was thinking I was going to go to 1:07, maybe."

He also dropped significant time in the 200 freestyle, which he'd only competed in twice this season. Hollingshead clocked a time of 2:01.10 from lane eight.

"By far, that was the most competitive event," MST coach Tim Nelson said. "All eight kids had just amazing times for that event, for a 13-year-old."

Both Hollingshead and Williams have a little under a month to train for the Northwest Region SC Age Group Championships, taking place in Federal Way, Washington March 22-25.

Hollingshead, penciled in to swim the 200 breaststroke,

said he wants to focus on his technique between now and then. Williams aims to improve on her flip turns for each of her four regional events — the 50, 100, 200 and 500 free.

Elli Williams competed in the 50 and 100 freestyle, and in the former event, clocked a 27.10, a marked improvement from earlier this season when she earned a state-qualifying time during a last chance meet in Madras a few weeks ago.

"I was really proud of my sister, because she's been working so hard to get that 27," Lexi Williams said.

Kami Ackley dropped nearly two seconds off her 50 fly time, dipping below the 32-second mark, just missing out on finals. She also clocked faster times in the 50 and 100 free, as well as the 50 back.

"She's got a bright future; she's a strong girl," Nelson said.

Following regionals next month, MST will kick off its long course season in April.