

Spring high school sports previews

Spring openers

Homedale Trojans Softball

Thursday vs. Parma
4:30 p.m.
Sundance Park

Track and field

Thursday at Middleton
4 p.m.

Tennis

Friday at Nampa
4 p.m.

Golf

Monday vs. Parma
3 p.m.
River Bend GC, Wilder

Baseball

Tuesday at Marsing
4:30 p.m.

Marsing Huskies

Baseball

Tuesday vs. Homedale
4:30 p.m.

Softball

Wednesday vs. Homedale
4:30 p.m.

Track and field

Thursday at Homedale
4 p.m.
Deward Bell Stadium

Rimrock Raiders

Track and field

Friday at Weiser
4 p.m.

Softball

Tuesday vs. Greenleaf
Friends Academy
4:30 p.m.

Baseball

Wednesday at Homedale JV
4:30 p.m.

Adrian Antelopes

Track and field

March 17
at Walker Invitational
Nyssa, Ore.

Jordan Valley

Mustangs

Track and field

April 7
at Lions Invitational
Nyssa, Ore.

Homedale track and field

New coach expects 'big' things



Striving for State

Sophomore Terence Thomas practices his form in the discus as he prepares for his quest to return to the 3A state meet.

Thomas pleasantly surprised by 64 athletes coming out for his first team

Thomas Thomas opened his first season as Homedale High School track and field coach with a big shock.

It was a pleasant jolt, but it was a shock nonetheless.

"The big thing is our 'big' team," Thomas said. "Our team has nearly tripled in size from a year ago."

The Trojans' coaching staff is running 64 athletes through drills every day, and Thomas — who returns as a head coach for after a two-year absence — couldn't be more thrilled about that workload.

"I feel honored to have so many out," he said.

The Trojans' big band of runners, jumpers and leapers opens the season at 4 p.m. Thursday with a non-scoring meet in Middleton. Homedale will present a non-scoring meet at the Deward Bell Stadium track on March 16.

The scoring season begins on the road March 23 against Parma.

Thomas, who has 16 years of track and field coaching experience under his belt, attributes the explosion in participation to an influx of athletes from Homedale Middle School.

"When you get some new kids, others tend to follow, so it self-perpetuates," Thomas said.

The large number of freshmen, of course, means Homedale will field a young squad. But with so many bodies, Thomas is excited about the prospects for success in the 3A Snake River Valley conference this spring.

"We will have a lot of depth and the ability to score a lot of points in meets," he said. "We will be a

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Thomas Thomas

'I feel honored to have so many out.'

— Thomas Thomas

Homedale track and field coach

Marsing baseball

Huskies banking on veteran arms

Pitching will be the key to success for Marsing High School's baseball team this spring.

Third-year coach Mark Worley has a stable of seasoned varsity hurlers he hopes are up to the task of figuring out the unpredictable 2A Western Idaho Conference in 2006.

"The pitching position is the most important," Worley said. "We have to get the arms in shape and get a lot of experience out there and hopefully improve from beginning to end."

Marsing's season begins at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday against non-conference visitor Homedale.

The Huskies' hopes for

consistent mound performances rest with a five-player unit comprised of senior Trent Lootens, juniors Troy Dines and Shea McClellin and sophomores Taylor Nielsen and Matt Hill.

McClellin, Dines, Lootens and Nielsen all saw considerable time with the varsity a year ago. Hill was called up for the District III Tournament.

In all, the Huskies have six players with varsity experience returning from a 2005 team that achieved few victories.

"He didn't have a lot of

— to page 5B

— Varsity baseball returns to Homedale 5B



Eye on the future

Mark Worley likes what he sees with a young bunch of Marsing High School baseball players.

More inside

Homedale softball

Coach Larry Corta has a slew of young, hungry players joining the varsity this season. Expect electricity

Page 3B



Rimrock track and field

Kermit Tate has worked miracles for three decades at a school that doesn't have enough room for adequate practice.

Page 4B

Homedale tennis

He's baaack! Mark Weekes has finished his house in Letha. Now he returns to the Trojans' coaching ranks to lead the tennis team.

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Sports

Homedale salutes winter athletes at banquet

Homedale High School went back to the future to acknowledge the efforts of its winter sports athletes at Monday's banquet inside the school's cafeteria.

Awards were handed out by coaches from the wrestling, boys basketball and girls basketball programs as the entire Trojans athletic community gathered at one time.

The collective banquet was an attempt to return to the old galas of the past where all athletes from a given segment of the school year were recognized at the same time. Recently, each sport has held its own awards banquet.

The Homedale Boosters cooked a spaghetti dinner for the banquet, too.

The Trojans' wrestling program

had plenty to celebrate Monday night after returning from the state tournament with seven state placers, including champions Jeremy Ensley at 119 pounds and Tyler Christoffersen at 145 pounds.

The Trojans scored 142½ points to finish fourth in the state tournament by a 47½-point margin.

Coach Toby Johnson closed his ninth season guiding Homedale by handing out several awards, including:

Most outstanding wrestler — Ensley, who won his fourth state crown and finished his career with school records of 100 pins and 131 victories

Most inspirational — Ensley, Christoffersen and Stuart Miyasako, all of whom are seniors

Coaches' award — Rowdy

Lair

Most improved — Frankie Obregon

Most pins — Ensley, 28

Fastest pin — Josh Jolley, the 215-pound 3A state runner-up won a match in 11 seconds this season

Most takedowns — Christoffersen, 69

Johnson also paid tribute to the entire team, which put 12 wrestlers into the state tournament, one off the school record. The 2005-06 squad collected 290 pins, four fewer than the 2003 team's school record 294.

This year's team also can boast of four district champions and school record-tying seven placers in the state meet — Ensley and Christoffersen (champions), Jolley (second place), 171-pounder

Ricco Gonzalez (third place), Miyasako (fourth place, 130) and fifth-place wrestlers Tyler Maxwell (160 pounds) and Amador Cortinas (275).

Boys basketball

Coach Brad Hill wrapped up his first season as the Trojans' boys basketball coach by handing out the Trojan Hustle Award.

Senior Ryan Rupp earned the honor for the varsity team, while David Liddell was the recipient for the junior varsity and Rodrigo Villarreal won for the freshman team.

Hill also announced that Rupp and senior Garrett Sweet were selected to the honorable mention list for the All-Snake River Valley conference team.

Both also were selected to play in the District III senior all-star game.

Girls basketball

Coach Mike Greeley left it up to his players to select their season-ending awards.

Seniors Faith Brasher and Hail-ee Garrett were named most inspirational by their teammates.

Senior Hailey Hall won the most valuable player award for offense, and Cheyanne Andrade and Jessica Mooney, both seniors, shared the MVP award on defense.

Greeley also handed out certificates for team leaders in each statistical category.

Homedale girls All-SRV, 6B

TROJAN SPRING SPORTS

Baseball

Varsity

- Friday, March 10, home vs. Parma, 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 14 at Marsing, 4:30 p.m.

Junior varsity

- Friday, March 10 at Parma, 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 14, home vs. Rimrock, 4:30 p.m.

Softball

Varsity

- Friday, March 10, home vs. Parma, 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 14, home vs. Nampa Christian, 4:30 p.m.

Junior varsity

- Friday, March 10 at Parma, 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 14, home vs. Nampa Christian, 4:30 p.m.

Track and Field

- Thursday, March 9, non-scoring meet at Middleton, 4 p.m.

Tennis

- Friday, March 10 at Nampa, 4 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 14, home vs. Nyssa, Ore., 4 p.m.

Golf

- Monday, March 13, home vs. Parma, River Bend Golf Course, Wilder, 3 p.m.



Homedale's Gonzalez medals at state meet

As good as the Homedale High School wrestling showing at the 1999 and 2004 squads. Gonzalez's victory in the third-place showdown was remarkable because Callejes had pinned the Trojan wrestler with 11 seconds remaining in the pair's quarterfinal match earlier in the tournament. Callejes eventually lost in the semis to second-seeded Jozef Musial of Bonners Ferry.

Gonzalez pinned 2006 semifinalist Kyle Joiner of St. Maries in 4:14 to reach the third-place match.

The tournament started for Gonzalez, who qualified for State at 152 pounds as a junior, with a first-round pin against Travis Turner of American Falls.

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Ricco Gonzalez

Track

very good team in both boys and girls in the SRV."

And the youth will have some successful teammates for guidance and inspiration.

Taryn Corta, Terence Thomas — both of whom are only sophomores — junior Mark Vance and senior Cheyanne Andrade all return to the team after trips to the 3A state meet last fall.

Corta was a state competitor in the jumps, and Thomas said she'll contribute to the Trojans' relays this season.

Although the coach hasn't been at the helm of the program for very long, he already has spread forth a prediction for jumper and sprinter Mark Vance.

Thomas projects that Vance will break the Trojans' triple jump record of 42 feet, 5½ inches set by Vance's older brother, Derek, in 2002.

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Sports

Homedale softball



Senior leader

Shortstop Jessica Hansen is one of a handful of upperclassmen who have played softball at Homedale High School for years with little postseason success. Trojans coach Larry Corta suspects that the shot in the arm provided by a bunch of freshmen and sophomores could be what the doctor ordered to return Homedale to softball glory.

Youth could lead Trojans this spring

Successful in Caldwell summer league, freshmen are eager to relive championship feeling

Larry Corta’s Homedale High School softball team, Version 3.0, has an interesting feature that would make most computer geeks blog for joy. Plug and Play. “Basically we’ve got girls that can go from the infield to the outfield,” the third-year coach said. “If we ask any of them to go to first base, they could do it. “If we ask any of them to play left field, they could do it and get it done.” As they try to improve on last year’s 12-12 season, the Trojans have versatility not only between the lines, but in the dugout. There are seven returners from the 2005 squad, but Corta said leadership could come from anywhere this season as a scrappy and hungry bunch of freshmen and sophomores infiltrate the roster. The hard-nosed ninth-grade corps, which includes the likes of right fielder Kendall Rupp,

catcher Hannah Johnson, third baseman Mikal Mackenzie and outfielder Erika Shanley, won a Caldwell summer league championship. “The freshman are all competitive and so wanting to win,” Corta said. “They’re hungry to do well.” Throw into that boiling desire a bunch of aggressive seniors like left fielder Hailey Hall and first baseman Jessica Mooney, and the Trojans could be in for a special season. Senior BreAnn Rodriguez joins the varsity as a second baseman this year. “If we start out strong, we’ll just grow from that,” said Corta, whose daughter, Taryn, will play center field this spring. Homedale begins the season at 4:30 p.m. Friday at Sundance Park against non-conference foe Parma. Sophomore Corey Hall most likely will be the starting pitcher in the season opener.

“She came in last year in the third game,” Corta said. “We feel one year of experience will help her a lot.” Having big sister Hailey playing behind can’t hurt. “She’s just a competitor,” Corta said of Hailey Hall. “Whatever it takes to win, she’s willing to do.” That seems to be a common theme. The Trojans seem to be open to any avenue to — as Larry the Cable Guy would say — “Get ’er done.” That leads to a lot of all-around players. In fact, it seemed every other phrase Corta uttered while sizing up his squad was just that — “all-around.” Corta on: Senior shortstop Jessica Hansen: “She’s very aggressive and a player to watch. She’s a good all-around player.” Senior right fielder Shaunna Vaughan: “She’s just an all-around hustler.” Senior second baseman Jenny George: “She gets the job done. She’s aggressive on the basepaths and helps out with our running. She’s an all-around player.”

— JB

Rimrock, Marsing girls named all-conference

Bob Delle wrapped up his high school coaching career in a familiar place, even if his Rimrock High School girls basketball team didn’t reach its ultimate goal — a third state championship under his watch. Delle, who made it known in November that the 2005-06 campaign would be his last with the Raiders, was named the 1A Western Idaho Conference Coach of the Year. Rimrock won another conference championship with another unbeaten season. The Raiders, who won the first 22 games of the season before losing the 1A District III championship game to Garden Valley, were staffed by a group of seniors that played their entire careers without losing a league game. Leading the way was 5-foot-8 guard Emily Chandler, who was voted the 1A WIC Player of the Year. She was the Raiders’ leading scorer, averaging 11.9 points per game and hitting a co-team-high 36 3-point goals. She also averaged 4.6 steals per night. Alex Thomas, a 5-6 guard, and Robynn Ridley, a 5-10 guard, were placed on the first team from Rimrock. Thomas nailed 36 treys

and averaged 7.4 points and 4.9 assists per game. Ridley averaged 11.4 points. Thomas, Ridley and Chandler joined teammates Shannon Hipwell and Melanie Simper on the District III 1A senior all-star team. Simper, a 5-11 post, was second-team all-conference, averaging 8.4 points and 7.3 rebounds. Hipwell was an honorable mention on the all-conference team after averaging 7.1 rebounds and 8.4 points a game. Another senior, Kaeloni Roberson, was selected to the all-star team as an alternate. All-2A WIC Senior MJ Usabel wrapped up her basketball career at Marsing High School as the Huskies’ lone first-team All-2A Western Idaho Conference selection. Usabel led the Huskies in scoring with 9.9 points per game. She also was Marsing’s leading rebounder with 8.1 boards a game. Mollee Nielsen, a senior guard for the Huskies, was placed on the second team, while sophomores Elisa Moreno and Holly Heller made their way onto the honorable mention list.

MARSING HUSKIES

SPRING SPORTS SCHEDULE

Baseball

Tuesday, March 14, home vs. Homedale, 4:30 p.m.

Softball

Wednesday, March 15, home vs. Homedale, 4:30 p.m.

Track & Field

Thursday, March 16 at Homedale, 4 p.m.

Go Huskies!

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Sports

Rimrock track and field

Tate takes on another season with Raiders

Rimrock High School’s running Raiders don’t have a home track. In fact, as coach Kermit Tate enters his 27th season leading the program, the Raiders have never known a proper practice facility on their campus in Bruneau. Yet, year after year, Tate finds a crop of athletes willing to run away from home — figuratively, of course — and try for that glorious berth in the track and field state championship meet held each May at Bronco Stadium in Boise. This year, 20 athletes are out for the Rimrock team, including

returning state meet qualifiers Ellie Cantrell, who placed in the long jump and competed in the 100-meter hurdles as a freshman, and senior Marco Jacobo (3,200 run). “That’s right up there with about our historic maximum,” Tate said of the turnout. “We were running at 20 to 25 for a while, but baseball and softball cut into that.” And Tate sees no discouragement from his athletes even though the only thing that resembles a proper track for training is a 400-meter course painted around

Softball opens against Greenleaf

Coach Mike Chandler and the Rimrock softball team start the season at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday at home against Greenleaf Friends Academy.

the football field. “I have an immense amount of respect for these kids,” Tate said. “They are unbelievable to

work with.” Tate has a team chock full of underclassmen with Jacobo representing the only senior this year. “Marco’s a very athletic competitor with a good sense of race tactics and has the attitude that anyone who finishes ahead of him is going to deal with a lot of pain to get there. He can be a dominating runner.” His personal best in the 3,200 last year was 11 minutes, 21 seconds. Cantrell notched personal records of 18.96 seconds in the 100 hurdles and 16 feet in the

long jump. Tate has eight juniors out this year, including exchange student Jessica Santessa, middle distance runner Hugo Araujo, jumper Mike Myers, distance runners Bob Jackson, Leigh Martin and Joe Black and distance runner and jumper Stephen Campbell. Sophomore Hyun A. Kim is another exchange student in Tate’s stable this season. “Hyun doesn’t have much experience, but when she finds an event set to work on, she should settle in well,” Tate said.

Homedale tennis

Familiar face agrees to guide unfamiliar sport for Trojans

Mark Weekes didn’t stay away from Homedale High School athletics for very long. When the former girls basketball coach was contacted about the head-coaching job for the tennis program, he accepted the challenge. “My tennis knowledge isn’t real great, but I couldn’t stand by and see anyone not have a tennis program,” Weekes said. He said there are about 36 student-athletes signed up to take part in tennis this spring. The season begins with a 4 p.m. match Friday on the road against Nampa.



Mark Weekes

“Mark is doing a great service to Homedale in taking over the Homedale High School tennis program,” Trojans athletic director Dave Hart said. “Most of Mark’s prior experience has been in basketball and volleyball. Mark Weekes will do a great job organizing and leading our tennis program.” Weekes doesn’t consider himself by any means a savior for the sport or its storied history at Homedale High School. The 41-year-old earth sciences teacher is just filling a need to give athletes a chance to continue the legacy set forth by Jim Smyth. Smyth resigned as tennis coach last year after a 19-year career. He helped found the Homedale

Meet the coach
Name: Mark Weekes
Age: 41
Family: Sandra, wife of 22 years. Children: Mark, 17; Sabrina, 13; Isaac, 11; Jamie, 9; Alex, 6; and Jordan, 3
Hometown: Emmett
Residence: Letha
College: Boise State University, 1994
Occupation: Earth science and biology teacher at Homedale High School; seventh-grade boys basketball coach at Homedale Middle School

program that put two pieces of state championship hardware in the Trojans’ trophy case (1996 and 2003). “There’s no way I’m as good of a coach as Jim was,” Weekes said. “He was a good coach, and I would have liked to have seen him continue. Talking to other coaches, he has real respect among them.” Weekes knows a thing or two about guiding a successful program, though. Although his win-loss record in five seasons with the Trojans was a sub-.500 53-61, Weekes led Homedale to the championship game of the 2A state tournament at the end of the 2002-03 season. Homedale lost to Nampa Chris-

tian in the title game at the Idaho Center in Nampa. His tenure as Homedale’s girls basketball coach ended with his resignation in February 2005. Weekes said that, while many of his colleagues’ departures were controversial, he stepped down to concentrate on building a home for his family in Letha. “I was building a house, and that took a lot of time,” Weekes said. But Weekes, who is the father of six, returned to coaching by picking up the clipboard and whistle for the Homedale Middle School seventh-grade boys basketball team this winter. Weekes missed the first week of tennis practice as the HMS hoops team competed in the Snake River Valley conference tournament. But Homedale schools superintendent Tim Rosandick helped fill the void at the tennis workouts. “I have a very limited tennis background,” Weekes said, adding that he took tennis as a physical education class while attending Boise State University more than a decade ago. With an admitted dearth of tennis knowledge, Weekes is trying to pick up pointers wherever he can. “I’ve been talking to some other coaches and semipro-type of guys,” he said. “I know how to structure and run a practice from coaching, but I’m not a knowledgeable tennis coach. “I’m just trying to help out the program.” — JB



Seniors vs. faculty

It may seem like a mismatch, but Homedale High School senior BreAnn Rodriguez, left, may have a thing or two to show Homedale teacher and coach Thomas Thomas when the school’s upperclassmen meet staff members on the basketball court tonight for a benefit game. Tickets are \$1 for the game that starts at 7 p.m. inside the Trojans’ gymnasium. There also will be a cake auction and a silent auction for gift baskets. Proceeds benefit the Homedale Class of 2006. For more information, call Wendy Vaughan at (208) 337-4130. Photo by Shaunna Vaughan

“My tennis knowledge isn’t real great, but I couldn’t stand by and see anyone not have a tennis program.” — Mark Weekes Homedale tennis coach

Sports

Homedale baseball

Coach optimistic about return to varsity ball

Some would say that this is not the year to debut a baseball team in the stacked 3A Snake River Valley conference.

Homedale High School baseball coach Tim Fulwood admits that the varsity rosters for Middleton, Fruitland, Payette and Weiser are crowded with seasoned veterans. Fruitland beat Middleton in the state championship game last spring, and Weiser placed fourth in the tournament.

"It's going to be a tough league," Fulwood said. "I would guess it's one of the strongest 3A leagues in the state."

But, even though the Trojans are fielding a varsity baseball team for the first time in two years, he doesn't seem as fretful about what might be a daunting task for his Trojans.

The season begins at 4:30 p.m. Friday with a non-conference home game against Parma.

"I'm extremely excited about the kids we've got," the fifth-year coach said. "They're hard-working, good kids. I'm looking forward to seeing how they compete on the varsity level."

Fulwood was forced to can-

cel the 2005 varsity season because of a lack of numbers, but it wasn't a complete surprise.

"We knew it was coming," he said. "Last year's class and this year's class didn't have many baseball players."

But there were plenty of freshmen and sophomores a year ago to field a strong junior varsity team. The Trojans went 18-3 and won the SRV championship.

This year, there isn't the problem with the baseball population of last year.

"I'm really happy with the numbers," Fulwood said. "We have 29 kids out right now."

"We wanted to create interest and get the numbers back."

Winning a championship, even a JV title, goes a long way toward stirring interest and bringing players out of the woodwork.

"We wanted to get some players back out who haven't played in a

while," Fulwood said, adding that one of his seniors hasn't played organized baseball since the eighth grade.

For all the new faces, though, the Trojans will have a solid core of returners to light the way.

Josh Jolley will bring the power. A runner-up at the 3A wrestling state tournament last month, the junior catcher led Trojans' JV squad with four home runs a year ago.

"We're looking for big things out of Jolley," Fulwood said. "He's one of our leaders. He does a good job of leading on the field, and he's solid behind the plate."

Fulwood also will have a good crop of do-everything-necessary players, such as junior utility man Ryan Johnson and senior outfielder Andrew VanDerhoff.

"The thing I like about Ryan is he's going to do the best job he can do wherever he's at," the

coach said.

VanDerhoff, who was a strong contributor to last year's JV title drive, is a guy who flies under the radar, Fulwood said.

"He's pretty steady," he said. "He won't hit for power, but you look at the end of the game and he has one or two big hits and some key catches for us."

Not every contributor for the Trojans will be walking the halls at Homedale, though. Sophomore Brandt Graber attends Greenleaf Friends Academy, but plays will play second base for his hometown team because the Grizzlies don't have a baseball team.

"As far as baseball savvy and baseball mechanics, Brandt is one of our most solid players," Fulwood said.

Speedy junior center fielder David Liddell is on course to be a solid defensive asset, Fulwood said. Junior right-hander Claudio

Garcia returns as one of the Trojans' top pitchers.

"He definitely has to step it up," Fulwood said of Garcia. "He'll be throwing a lot of innings for us."

Other players to watch include junior pitcher and shortstop Trevor Krzesnik and first-year Trojan Ross DeWitt, a senior transfer from Kamiakin High School in Kennewick, Wash., who also pitches and plays on the infield.

"I think that Trevor will continue to get better and better and will be a real good player for us the next two years," Fulwood said.

"Ross has a live arm and, besides pitching, can play either third base or shortstop."

Fulwood foresees the Trojans being a scrappy bunch on offense that happens to be a solid defensive unit. But, as can be expected from a coach watching a program get back off the deck, he's stressing basics.

"We have to be prepared to put the ball in play and make (the opponent's) defense work," Fulwood said.

"We're working on doing the simple things great."

— JB



Tim Fulwood



Josh Jolley



Claudio Garcia

Baseball

varsity experience, but he's solid defensively," Worley said of Hill, who will be in the outfield when he's not on the mound.

The same can be said for Lootens, also an outfielder in his spare time, whom Worley says has good control and always throws strikes.

Dines might be the pitching equivalent of a boxer who thinks his way through fights rather than brawling. He'll play shortstop when he doesn't have the pitching assignment.

"He's a good hitter," Worley said. "He has a good knowledge of the game, and he'll be a pretty good pitcher for us."

Nielsen could be one of the most valuable athletes for Worley after a fine freshman season on the mound and behind the plate.

"He had a solid offensive season for us, too," the coach said. "He's got a good arm, and he can play a variety of positions."

McClellin will bring the pop for Marsing. Worley said the junior outfielder led the Huskies with a batting average near .350 during his sophomore season.

"Out of our guys, he'll be the one (with power)," Worley said. "When he hits the ball, it goes. He's got a good, strong arm, too."

Senior first baseman Jake Sevy is another guy to watch on offense, even though he is entering only his second season of playing ball.



Intense behind the plate

Freshman Sean Finley has opened Marsing High School baseball coach Mark Worley's eyes with his fire and competitive nature. Finley will see time at catcher for the Huskies this season.

"He's got a good swing, and he makes good contact with the ball," Worley said.

The 2006 season is one of the strongest for Worley in terms of participation. T

he coach, who has been involved with the Huskies since the start of the decade, has about 20 players out for his junior varsity and varsity squads.

"I like the numbers, obviously," the coach said. "The fact that we only have two seniors won't help us this year, but as far as building

the program, that will help us in the future."

Youth will be the variable for Marsing, but there are some pretty interesting freshmen lacing up spikes.

Sean Finley brings a fire to the catcher position, and Worley likes the strength, size and arm of pitcher/infielder Martin Galvez.

"Sean is really aggressive," Worley said. "He's the most aggressive player that we've seen in a long time."

— JB

Sports tracker

A look at Owyhee County athletes competing after high school

Marsing's Andrew Endicott, a graduate of Homedale High School, kicks off the spring portion of his senior season with the Eastern Oregon University rodeo team this weekend. The Mountaineers are in Walla Walla, Wash., for three days beginning Friday. Friday's event is the third round of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association regionals, and EOU takes part in the Walla Walla Community

College Rodeo on Saturday and Sunday.

— The Owyhee Avalanche wants to keep up with local athletes who have gone on to play in the collegiate ranks or beyond. If you know of any athletes currently playing sports in college, send a note to Jon Brown at jbrowneditor@cablone.net or call (208) 337-4681.

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Sports

Middle schools finish basketball seasons



Near perfection

The sixth-grade girls basketball team from Marsing Middle School won seven of their eight games this season in the Payette/Weiser Rec League. Front row, left to right: Becky Carter and Yuri Quebrado. Back row, left to right: Coach Jim Briggs, Deidrie Briggs, Kendra Wilson, Garbriella VanEs, Annie Finley, Sarah Padgett, Shannon Malmberg, Kelsey Easterday and coach Tony Malmberg. Submitted photo

The girls basketball program at Marsing Middle School is alive and kicking, if the sixth- and seventh-grade 2005-06 seasons are any indication.

The seventh-grade team wrapped up an unbeaten 7-0 regular season by knocking off previously unbeaten Notus 35-29 and downing Caldwell 47-24.

“It’s been a good season,” coach Brent Merritt said. “We’re hoping things click and these girls put it all together. (Opponents will) be out to get us as we head into tournaments.”

The seventh-graders’ postseason began last week in Fruitland and Payette.

The sixth-grade squad coached by Jim Briggs wrapped up a 7-1 season in the Payette/Weiser Rec League on Feb. 25. Competition came from squads from Weiser, Payette, Fruitland and New Plymouth.

“It’s awesome to see all their hard work come together and watch the girls play hard and have a good time during games,” Briggs said.

Seventh grade
Marsing 35, Notus 29

After jumping out to a 22-9 halftime lead, the Huskies saw their league evaporate under the heat of Notus’ press in the third.

Despite the Pirates outscoring Marsing 20-13 in the second

half, the Huskies held on as the rebounding of Andi Merritt and Rebecca Cossel and the quickness of Candi Leon helped break Notus’ press.

Marsing 47, Caldwell 24
Cossel scored 16 points and handled the rebounding chores as the Huskies crushed Caldwell in their season finale.

“A real asset to the team has been Rebecca,” coach Brent Merritt said. “She’ll give it her all — in practice and the game.”

Leon had a fine night from the free-throw line as part of her seven points.

HMS seventh-grade boys
Before he joined the Homedale High School tennis team full-time, Mark Weekes concluded a season with the seventh-grade boys basketball team from Homedale Middle School.

The Trojans were 6-5 on the season, splitting their final two games in the Snake River Valley conference tournament.

Homedale beat Payette before losing to always-tough Fruitland.

“We had a great time,” Weekes said. “The athletes played hard and did all that was asked, including (wearing) ties on game days.

“We came a long way, and they showed a lot of improvement during the short time.”

Homedale girls named All-SRV

Hailey Hall is known as a basketball player who can take over a game from either inside or outside, and the coaches from the 3A Snake River Valley conference recognized that fact by voting the Homedale High School senior onto the all-conference first team.

“That’s just for being the caliber of player she is,” first-year Trojans coach Mike Greeley said. “She’s a good player. She can score at will.

“She has the ball-handling skills to drive and penetrate and has an outside game, too.”

Hall averaged team highs of 10.3 points and 5.5 rebounds per game during her final season in a Trojans uniform.

Hall was the only first-teamer for the Trojans. She’ll join all-conference second-teamer Cheyanne Andrade to represent Homedale in the District III all-star game at 6 p.m. March 9 at Fruitland High School.

“Everything is put on the floor with Cheyanne,” Greeley said. “She gives you the 100 percent effort.”

Using a tenacious, hard-nosed determination to get to the basket, Andrade average 7.4 points and grabbed 4.5 rebounds per game.

“She can make things happen when she puts her mind to it,”

Greeley said. “She’s great on the boards, and got a lot of rebounds for us.

“In clutch moments, she made shots and got rebounds for us.”

Greeley said the selection of Andrade and Hall to the all-star game was the ultimate compliment. While players’ coaches can lobby for inclusion on all-conference teams, they aren’t permitted to vote for their own players when it comes to the all-star game.

“Those two girls made an impression on the other coaches in the league as being major contributors to the game of basketball this year,” Greeley said.

Senior point guard Hailee Garrett, whose career was cut short by an anterior cruciate ligament tear in the first game of the 3A District III Tournament, was also nominated to the all-conference second team.

Garrett grew into the point guard position after inheriting the mantle when Jessica Stimmel graduated in the spring. The speedy Garrett had a team-high 59 steals.

“That’s just a nice feather in the cap for her,” Greeley said. “Hailee Garrett proved she could steal

the ball with the best of them and some good stats defensively.”

Seniors Jessica Mooney and Faith Brasher and junior Jordan Warwick were selected for the honorable mention list by the SRV coaches.

“They’re all good players, and they all have their areas of contribution,” Greeley said.

Mooney had an aggressiveness similar to Andrade’s and seemed to come up with key blocked shots during games. She average 4.3 points and 4.2 rebounds per contest.

“Mooney could drive to the basket and shot a nice little jumper from the outside when we needed it,” her coach said.

Brasher scored 3.9 points per game and grabbed 3.3 rebounds per night.

“Faith could play awesome defense and get clutch baskets and hit the boards in the clutch,” Greeley said.

Warwick came off the bench to help Homedale control the game when Garrett or another guard needed a rest. She averaged 2.9 points a game and had 11 steals.

“Jordan could change the tempo of a game in a heartbeat,” Greeley said.

— JB

PREP PLAYOFFS

Boys basketball

3A Real Dairy Shootout

Thursday

S. Fremont 92, Fruitland 84 (4 OT)

Friday

Consolation semifinal — Buhl 66, Fruitland 54 (Fruitland ends season at 19-5)

Saturday

Championship — Snake River 42, South Fremont 41

2A Real Dairy Shootout

Thursday

Kamiah 55, New Plymouth 54

Soda Springs 64, Parma 48

Friday

Consolation semifinals — Parma 58, Grangeville 31

Consolation semifinals — Wendell 68, New Plymouth 40 (New Plymouth ends season at 13-12)

Saturday

Consolation final — Wendell 51, Parma 42 (Parma ends season at 15-7)

Championship — Malad 52, Kamiah 40

1A Real Dairy Shootout

Wednesday

Sho-Ban 70, Horseshoe Bend 59

Troy 52, Council 38

Notus 67, Castleford 42

Thursday

Consolation — Carey 74, Horseshoe Bend 58 (Horseshoe Bend eliminated)

Consolation — Richfield 49, Council 45 (Council ends season at 20-6)

Quarterfinal — Cascade 59, Notus 47

Friday

Championship semifinal — Lapwai 55, Cascade 47

Consolation semifinal — Notus 57, Mackay 43

Saturday

Third place — Cascade 68, Sho-Ban 52. (Cascade ends season at 26-1).

Fourth place — Genesee 57, Notus 34 (Notus ends season at 24-4)

Championship — Lapwai 58, Troy 49

Oregon 1A State Tournament

Saturday

South Wasco County 49, Joseph 45. Joseph ends season at 20-6

Condon 67, Powder Valley 57. Powder Valley ends season at 15-12

Girls basketball

1A Oregon state tournament

At Baker HS, Baker City, Ore.

Wednesday

Joseph 44, McKenzie 39 (McKenzie ends season at 24-5)

Powder Valley 46, Elkton 36 (Elkton ends season at 20-6)

Friday

Crane 36, Joseph 31

Powder Valley 52, Mapleton 42

Saturday

Third place — Mapleton 45, Joseph 39 (Joseph ends season at 21-7)

Championship — Powder Valley 42, Crane 31 (Powder Valley ends season at 25-4)

PREP STANDINGS

Baseball

3A SRV	Conf.		All	
	W	L	W	L
Fruitland	0	0	0	0
Homedale	0	0	0	0
McCall-Donnelly	0	0	0	0
Middleton	0	0	0	0
Payette	0	0	0	0
Weiser	0	0	0	0

This week’s games

Today

Middleton at Emmett, 4:30 p.m.

Thursday

New Plymouth at Fruitland, 4:30 p.m.

Friday

Parma at Homedale, 4:30 p.m.

Bishop Kelly at Middleton, 4:30 p.m.

Nampa Christian at Payette, 4:30 p.m.

(Orofino Tournament, times MST)
McCall-Donnelly vs. Kellogg, 2 p.m.

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