

# Trophy Time at State

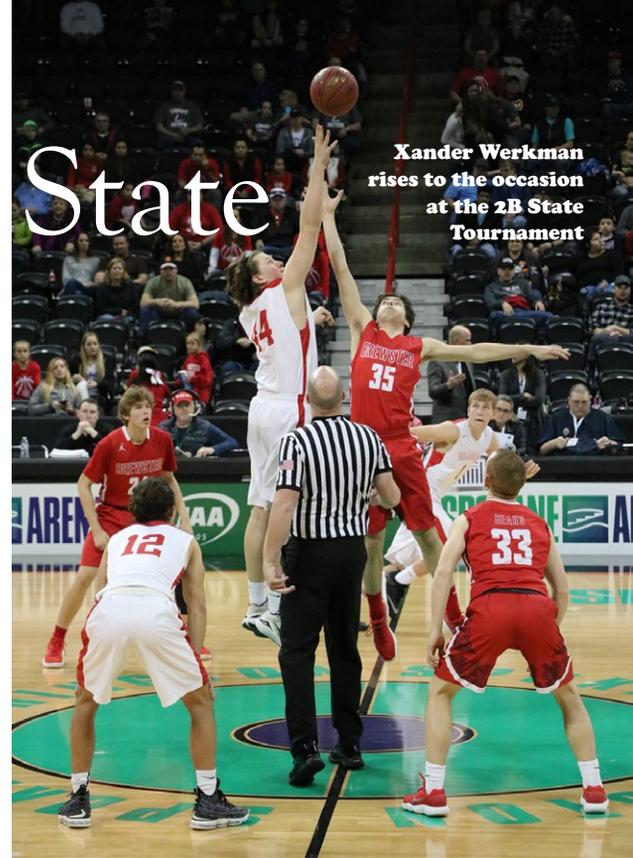
## Boys Basketball

This season will go down as one of the best seasons in SGS Boys Basketball History. A 26-1 record, finishing 2nd at the State Tournament, having the second longest winning streak in school history, and loading the school's all-time scoring list with 8 players with likely more to come. The 2017-18 group was so different than any team we have had to this point. In the current climate of sports, many fans look for the ones who stand out. In this group, we had different players stand out in almost every game. We had so many offensive weapons and such great basketball IQ, many teams keyed on different personnel on a game to game basis. Very few teams had the horsepower to stay with us.

We won our games this year by an average of 21.1 points per game, third best in Dragon history. What makes that number so impressive is we had several players miss 20 combined games, and still we powered through with tough defense and timely offense. Having 10 players with the potential of scoring over 10 points in any given game is such a powerful weapon to have as a coach. Combine the scoring skills with unselfish play and great passing and you have everything you need for a successful team.

This year's team was statistically the 2nd best defensive team in the last 17 years. Defensively, we controlled games with our pressure package. Teams struggled to get the ball up the court and into offense. We turned teams over in almost a third of their possessions, an average of over 20 turnovers per game. If teams didn't even get a shot up in a third of their possessions, it was going to be tough to beat us. Combined with our opponents not getting shots, we used our opponent's turnovers to score over 20 points per game.

We finished the season banged up and sore with multiple injuries. With so many missed games, and practices, the 26-game winning streak we went on was so much



Xander Werkman rises to the occasion at the 2B State Tournament



Erik Farias at the line



Dan Rigsby drives on Kittitas



Cheering on the Dragons

more amazing. Our team trusted each other on both ends of the court and with their basketball IQ, seemed to be one step ahead of our opponents. The ultimate goal this year was to win a state championship. We fell short of winning the championship game, but not in our resolve and effort. We ran up against a very good team, but I believe it is a team we could have beaten.

This group of seniors - Cade Peplinski (1st Team All-League), Mitchell Ward, Noah Halliburton-Link, Zach Steele, and Alex Watkins - combined for 2209 points, 77 wins, three trips to state, and two state trophies. The thing I will remember most about this group is how much they celebrate each other's successes. Our juniors - Erik Farias (1st Team All-League & All-State), Ben Adams, Xander Werkman, Ethan Johnson, and Yao You - will return with some amazing experience, as will sophomores Dan Rigsby and Marcus Manson and freshman Nick Watkins.

Winning a championship takes a little luck down the stretch, and being healthy is a big bonus. Our team showed some true grit, fighting through some painful and serious injuries to give everything we had. I could not have been prouder of the team on their march through the season.

— Ryan Peplinski, Boys' Basketball Coach

# Girls Basketball

Some of the most rewarding seasons are those in which a team's resolve is tested relentlessly and it responds with grit, resilience and grace under pressure. That was our Lady Dragons basketball team this year.

With so many strong returners from our 6th place trophy campaign from a year ago, including seniors Ceci Bergquist, Kate Tender and Olivia Osborne, junior Abby Jones and sophomores Lydia Bergquist, Mia Smith, Daysha Melendez, Shayla Melendez, Grace Harrill and Sydney Lennemann, we certainly had lofty goals. We were then fortunate enough to add a very strong dual-threat at point guard with freshmen Cambrie Rickard and Izzy Boring.

Needless to say we were supremely confident that we could return to the Spokane Arena and this year make a strong push for a state championship. Ultimately we achieved our goal of getting back to playing on the arena floor, but not without adversity. It appeared that we were at our best when our backs were against the wall. Three times between the district and state tournaments we found ourselves in loser out/winner advance games and three times we found a way to survive, including victories over Northwest Christian, Liberty, and Mabton. But perhaps the highlight of the season was our overtime victory over number one ranked Ilwaco in the state quarterfinals, 62-54. In winning that game we accomplished something no other 2B team had the entire season against the Fishermen.

We came up short against the eventual state champion Colfax Bulldogs in the state semi-finals the next day, but as we had done all season, the Lady Dragons once again



**Lydia Bergquist powers through the Colfax defense**

found the energy and determination to take home the 3rd place state trophy, beating the perennial powerhouse Napavine, 50-44.

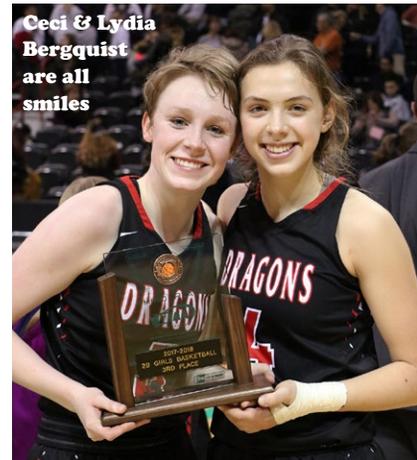
We ended the season with a team record of 21-8 and the 12th state trophy in school history, the most among 2B schools. Eight players scored 130 or more points over the season. Our leading scorer guard Ceci Bergquist scored 315 points, finishing with over 1,000 for her career. Ceci was voted 1st Team All-League and 1st Team All-State, while Mia Smith was voted as 2nd Team All-League.

They say that sports does not build character, it reveals it. I would say that this season, this journey, revealed a team with a tremendously strong character and an undaunted will to compete. As their coach, there is nothing that could make me more proud of this team and these girls. Go Dragons!

— Mark Rickard, Girls' Basketball Coach



**Melendez twins trade off**



**Ceci & Lydia Bergquist are all smiles**



**Dragons defeat Napavine for 3rd in State**

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