

Mid-Willamette

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as starting QB

The Foxes are in capable hands at quarterback with returning starter Levi Nielsen, who also started four games as a freshman. Nielsen, a 6-foot-3, 188-pound junior, knows what it's like to play in big games.

In the Foxes home opener last season on the new turf field, he passed for 309 yards and four touchdowns in a 41-35 victory over Redmond.

"He's incredibly coachable and humble," Craig said. "That's hard to find in a quarterback that's had success at such a young age."

5. Woodburn enters final season as independent before moving to Class 4A

Woodburn will play an independent schedule for the second straight year before moving down to 4A next season, likely in the Tri-Valley Conference.

The Bulldogs won three games last season after going winless in 2015, so they're trending in the right direction.

"Our team goal is a winning season and that's 5-4," coach Nick Federico said. "It has to be a season that is gonna propel us into 4A. It's a very exciting year for us."

Woodburn will build around senior quarterback Hunter Conlon, a three-year starter.

Federico wants his players to have fresh legs in the fourth quarter, so no players will start on both sides of the ball.



ANNA REED / STATESMAN JOURNAL

Dallas must replace Tanner Earhart, left, who was named the Class 5A state offensive player of the year.



GARY HOROWITZ / STATESMAN JOURNAL

Silverton coach Josh Craig, in his first season, talks to his team during practice. Silverton was 7-3, 4-2 in the Mid-Willamette Conference last year.

CENTRAL FOOTBALL

Head coach: Shane Hedrick, 17th season

Last season's record: 7-5 overall, 4-2 in the conference, advanced to the OSAA Class 5A state semifinals

Key players: Pete Mendazona (Sr., QB); Marcos Cedillo (Sr., H/SS); Braden Fuszek (Sr., C); Jess Cable (Sr., WR/FS); Isaiah Abraham (Sr., WR/FS); Juan Ruiz (Sr., OT/DT); Xander Bailey (Sr., DE/TE); Shun Talmage (Sr., DT).

DALLAS FOOTBALL

Head coach: Tracy Jackson, sixth season

Last season's record: 9-3 overall, 4-2 in the conference, advanced to the OSAA Class 5A state semifinals

Key players: Treve Earhart (Sr., TE/LB); T.J. Dimick (Sr., TE/LB); Evan Courtney (Sr., RB/S); Tristan Evans (Sr., RB); Jaret Stewart (Sr., QB); Justin Ingraham (Sr., OL/DL); Carson Unger (Sr., OL/DL); Brycen Grillo (Sr., LB/Wing).

SILVERTON FOOTBALL

Head coach: Josh Craig, first season

Last year's record: 7-3 overall, 4-2 Mid-Willamette Conference, lost in the first round of the 5A state playoffs

Key players: Levi Nielsen (Sr., QB); Hunter Meissner (Sr., RB/LB); Collin Zollinger (Sr., RB/LB); Ben Willis (Sr., OL/DL); Zachary Milstead (Sr., OL/DL); Spencer Clements (Sr., WR/S); Kobe Garcia (Sr., WR/DB)

WOODBURN FOOTBALL (INDEPENDENT)

Head coach: Nick Federico, sixth season

Last year's record: 3-6, independent schedule

Key players: Breyann Gutierrez (Sr., DT); Marc Orta (Sr., S); Hunter Conlon (Sr., QB); Luis Guerrero (Sr., RB); Luis Rodriguez (Sr., RB/WR); Jonathan Serrano (Sr., LB)

Tri-River

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do Dela Cerda, who ran for more than 1,500 yards last season. Look for junior Justin Herberger and sophomore Saul Martinez to keep the running game strong.

With one of the lowest enrollments in 2A, St. Paul likely will back down to 1A beginning with the 2018-19 school year. A final decision by the OSAA is expected in October.

4. Santiam loaded with experienced players

Santiam returns eight starters on offense and seven on defense from its state playoff team of 2016, making another playoff run likely with so much experience.

"We're returning a good chunk of our guys," coach Dustin McGee said. "We lost a couple really key guys, but we think we can replace 'em with some good talent that we have coming up in our junior and sophomore class."

The Wolverines will look to seniors Devin Whitmire and Colton Craigmyle, three-year starters on the offensive and defensive lines, senior Jordan Lanham, the leading returning receiver, and senior Sean Horning, a three-year starter at defensive back.

McGee calls junior Trevor Tinney, who rushed for more than 1,000 yards last season, "probably one of most hard-nosed running backs you'll see in our league."

"He's the kind of guy that will go north-south, pick up four or five yards at a time," McGee said. "But it's gonna be a bruising four or five yards every time he



MOLLY J. SMITH / STATESMAN JOURNAL

Kennedy must replace Bishop Mitchell, who was the 2A Offensive Player of the Year last season.

runs it."

Colin Thurston, the JV quarterback last season, moves into the starting job. ghorowitz@StatesmanJournal.com, or [Twitter.com/ghorowitz](https://twitter.com/ghorowitz)

Kennedy

Head coach: Joe Panuke, fourth season

Last season's record: 10-2 overall, 3-1 Tri-River Conference, advanced to the 2A state semifinals

Key players: Nick Suing, jr., OL/DL; Daniel Moreno, sr, C/LB; Anthony Garcia, sr., RB/CB; Christian Reyes, sr., WR/DB; Christian Larios, sr., RB/LB; Emorej Lynk, so., QB; Bryce Vandervort, jr., RB/DL; Rocco Carley, jr., TE/DE

Regis

Head coach: Kyle McGrath, fourth season

Last season's record: 11-2 overall, 4-0 Tri-River Conference, 2A state champions

Key players: Brandon Piete, sr., RB/SS; Cole Olheiser, sr., WR/CB; Wyatt Koenig, jr., OL/LB; Jon Webb, jr., OL/DE; Sam Crowell, sr., WR/LB; Zach Morey, jr., RB/FS; Kirk Scott, jr., QB/WR/LG; Anthony Barboza, jr., QB/WR/LB; Spencer Gaul, jr., WR/CB

St. Paul

Head coach: Tony Smith, 10th season

Last season's record: 6-4 overall, 2-2 Tri-River Conference, lost in 2A state quarterfinals

Key players: Justin Herberger, jr., RB/LB; Holden Smith, sr., QB; Saul Martinez, so., FB/NG; Jaidyn Jackson, jr., WR/DB; Alex Dela Cerda, so., OL/DL; Zach Brentano, jr., OL/LB

Santiam

Head coach: Dustin McGee, third season

Last season's record: 7-4 overall, 1-3 Tri-River Conference, lost in 2A state quarterfinals

Key players: Devin Whitmire, sr., OL/DL; Colton Craigmyle, sr., OL/DL; Sean Horning, sr., WR/DB; Jordan Lanham, sr., WR/LB; Dustin Keys, jr., OL/LB; Trevor Tinney, jr., RB/DL; Colin Thurston, so., QB/DB

Class 1A teams

Falls City

Head coach: Laric Cook, fourth year.

Last year's record: 5-5 overall, 3-1 1A Special District 3, lost in first round of state playoffs.

Key returners: Jeremy Labrado, sr., QB/LB; Austin Burgess, jr., RB/DB; Noah Sickles, sr., RB/LB.

Perrydale

Head coach: Steve Mabry, first year.

Last year's record: 4-4 overall, 3-3 1A Special District 4.

Key returners: Cooper Butler, sr., RB/LB; Michael McGill, sr., OL/DL; Cooper Butler, sr., RB/DB.

1A Outlook: Falls City made a huge step forward last season by making the state playoffs for the first time since 1982 and has the pieces in place to go farther in the state playoffs this year. Perrydale missed the state playoffs last season and is young this season, its first with Mabry as head coach. But don't be surprised if the Pirates are back in the state playoffs this year.

Oregon State Fair welcomes back mother pig and her litter after a 4-year absence

COOPER GREEN
STATESMAN JOURNAL

For four long years, Oregon State Fair goers wondered at the fate of a mother pig and her litter. But coming this August, the curious and the pigless can rejoice: Mama Sow is back.

"It is kind of a fair tradition," said Caleb Forcier, the state fair agricultural programs manager. "It's something people look forward to."

The popular exhibit of a mother pig and her litter of 2- to 3-week-old piglets was last seen at the fairgrounds in 2013. The absence was triggered by nationwide concern about PEDV (porcine epidemic diarrhea virus), which can be particularly harmful to young pigs, Forcier said. Rather than risk an epidemic, fairs across the country suspended most



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pig competitions.

In the first year, Forcier was already hearing complaints and concerns about Mama Sow's absence.

"People not of the

swine industry did not realize, or were not of the knowledge of, the things that had been going on affecting the health of hogs nationwide," he said.

But Mama Sow and her litter are back this year -- sort of. Mama Sow never technically comes "back," because she's a different pig every year. The fair contracts with a breeder to have the newest Mama Sow ready by fair-time.

Robert Justice, this year's breeder, said he could tell people at the fair last year were ready for Mama Sow's return.

"That was probably the number one asked ques-



PHOTOS BY ANNA REED/STATESMAN JOURNAL

A sow and her piglets will be on display every day of the Oregon State Fair.

tion," he said. "Where are the baby pigs?"

Justice has a pig farm in Scio, which he maintains with the help of his family. He said part of the difficulty of raising piglets is the size difference: a full-grown sow can be up to 500 pounds, where her

young piglets might be 2-3 pounds.

According to Justice, Mama Sow and three pigs from her litter should serve as a cute attraction as well as an educational experience for Oregon State Fair visitors over the next few weeks.

"I think it's important and great to see the wide eyes in the little kids, and even some of the big kids, that get to see something they don't normally get to see," he said. "It's not just going in the grocery store -- they can see that there is a cycle of life."

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