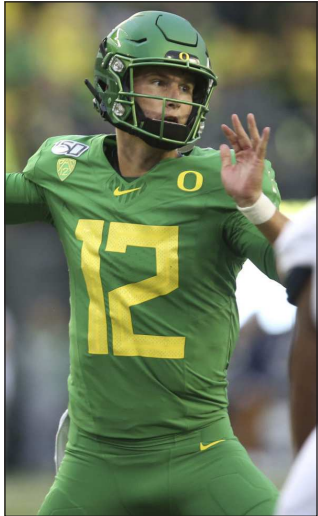


College Football



The Associated Press file photo Oregon quarterback Tyler Shough throws a pass against Nevada during the third quarter of an NCAA college football game Sept. 7, 2019, in Eugene.

QB's will run for the Ducks

■ Oregon OC Joe Moorhead says quarterback will be a ‘viable threat’

By James Crepea
The Oregonian

EUGENE — Rejoice Oregon fans, your prayers have been answered: Ducks quarterbacks will run once again.

That was far and away the most persistent criticism of Marcus Arroyo’s offense. But new offensive coordinator Joe Moorhead is known for running his signal callers and the plan is to do just that in 2020.

“To me when you have an offense that you’re going to be balanced and you have a thrower that can run rather than a runner who can throw, to me like 10 times a game maybe,” Moorhead said. “That’ll go up and down. We’re planning to run the quarterback and make him a viable threat because when he does that’s an extra number in the run game for the defense to defend. But by no means are we going to be plowing quarterback power into the line 25 times a game. That’s just not what we’re going to do.”

This comes as little surprise as there was arguably only one direction for Oregon’s QB run numbers to go. Justin Herbert ran just 58 times for 50 yards and four touchdowns last season, with nearly half of those being sacks, and 16 carries for 49 yards and three touchdowns in the Pac-12 Championship Game and Rose Bowl.

Of course, Arroyo, now the coach at UNLV, and Oregon coach Mario Cristobal would be quick to point out that Herbert barely missed a snap at all last season due in large part to his staying in the pocket behind one of the best offensive lines in the country.

But those old philosophical arguments are for the past. It’s been evident even during the first few days of spring practice watching the quarterbacks and running backs work on hand-offs and options that changes are coming under Moorhead.

However, an underlying issue behind Oregon’s rationale in not running Herbert, who had numerous injuries during his college career, is

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Class 4A Girls State Tournament

Tigers set for battle with Astoria

■ La Grande High banking on solid bench play at state tourney

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

LA GRANDE — How the La Grande girls basketball team handles the nerves of being in the state tournament may well dictate how the Tigers fare Thursday when they take the court in the 4A state quarterfinals in Forest Grove.

The Tigers, fresh off Friday’s 52-46

home playoff win over Cascade, will take the court in La Grande’s first state tournament game since 2016 against Astoria, which rolled over Junction City in a dominant 73-34 victory to secure its state tournament spot.

“None of those kids have played in the tournament,” head coach Brian Wright said. “Are we relaxed? If so, we’ll be OK.”

In Friday’s win over the Cougars, Ella Dunlap turned in one of her best games in a Tiger uniform with 27 points and nine rebounds.

The key, though, for La Grande (18-7) to have success at state — and against the Fishermen (22-3) — won’t necessarily be from just a big game from Dunlap or from point guard Camryn Collman, but in what the Tigers get from their role players and their bench.

“We had those three players come off the bench and score 17 points,” Wright said. “In order to be successful we’re going to have to have those kind of things. We’re not going to win this tournament on one player. We need everyone ready to play. We

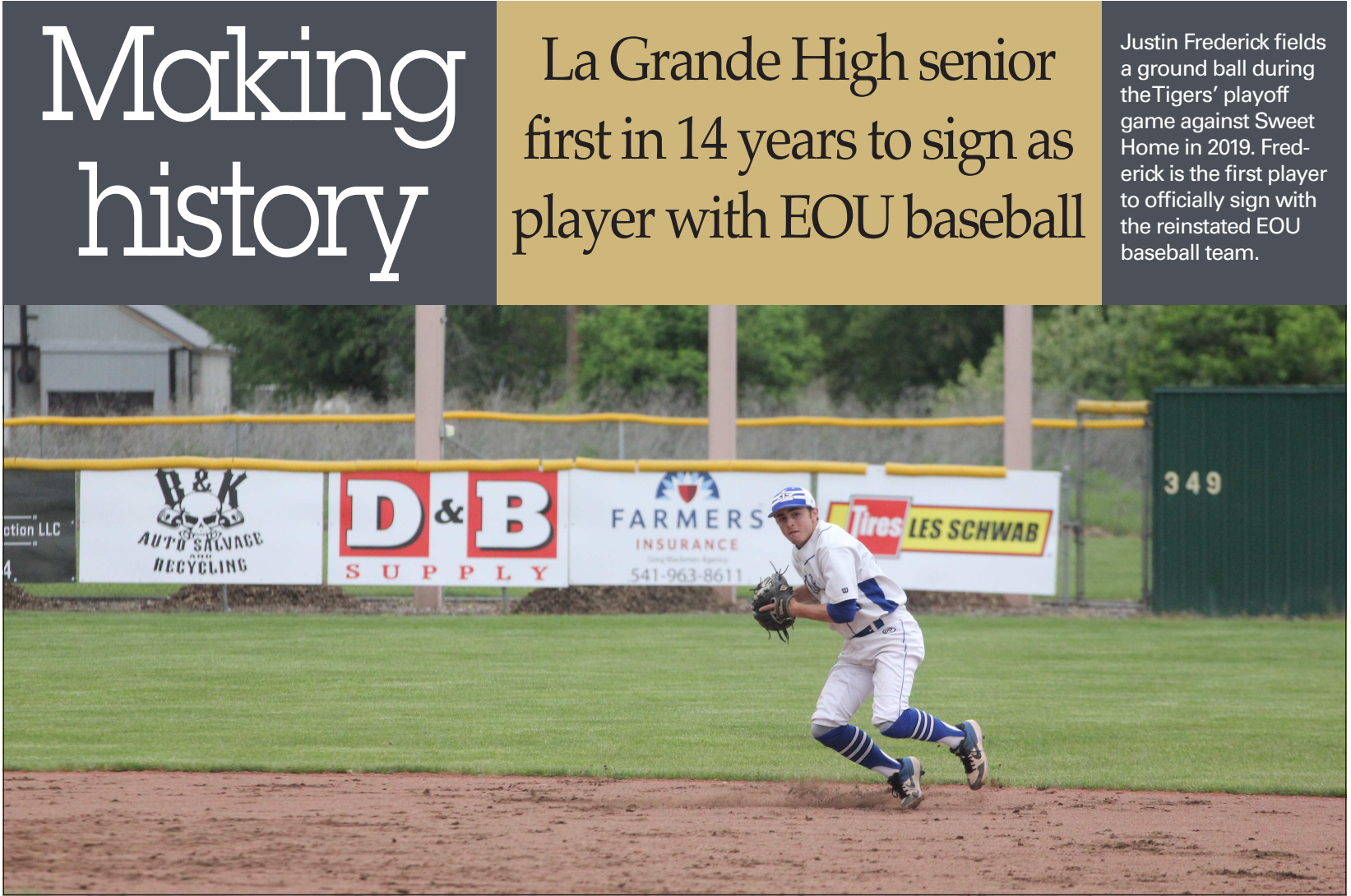
need energy off the bench.”

Astoria, which won the Cowapa League, and 12 of its last 13 games, has several players who can step up and score, according to Wright.

“We have six game films, and there isn’t one individual they have that really stands out,” Wright said.

According to The Astorian newspaper, Halle Helmersen had 26 points in the win over Junction City in a game that saw the her shoot 9-for-24 from 3-point range and just under 50% overall for the game.

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Justin Frederick fields a ground ball during the Tigers’ playoff game against Sweet Home in 2019. Frederick is the first player to officially sign with the reinstated EOU baseball team.

Making history

La Grande High senior first in 14 years to sign as player with EOU baseball

By Ronald Bond, The Observer

LA GRANDE — There is a photograph of Justin Frederick from his youth with members of the Eastern Oregon University baseball team before the program was taken away 14 years ago.

Now, the La Grande senior infielder has a distinction no one will ever be able to take from him as the first player to sign with the school’s restored baseball program.

“I feel pretty honored,” Frederick said of the distinction. “It’s honestly perfect timing, being able to have this opportunity my senior year and being able to start the program off (next year).”

Frederick officially put pen to paper to ink his spot on the roster Feb. 19 as the first official signee for head coach Mike McInerney.

“I really like the idea of staying here in my hometown and playing for four years,” Frederick said. “I’ve always grown up going to (different sporting events) at Eastern. I always thought it would be cool to have a baseball program here.”

McInerney noted early in his tenure at EOU that he wanted to land a local athlete as the first player in the new program, and he said “that worked out perfect” with Frederick.



Justin Frederick takes a cut during a game against Baker in 2019. The LHS senior will play college ball in his hometown.

“(When) I initially got the position, I wanted to take advantage of the good players that are here. I wanted to get him as quickly as possible,” he said of the La

Grande High senior.

McInerney said he saw film of Frederick when he was still on the coaching staff at Western Oregon University, Monmouth, and because

of that — and the in-town connection — Frederick was “basically the first guy I recruited.”

“In the process of this job opening up and interviewing for it, I remembered him, and I knew that La Grande had a bunch of talented guys,” McInerney said.

When speaking of Frederick, the coach called him “a good player. (I) met him personally, really liked him. You can tell he’s really tough. He’s well spoken, soft spoken, got an awesome personality.”

McInerney said he met Frederick’s dad, Shane, adding “family is an important thing, especially when you’re getting a kid locally,” and said everyone he talked to about Justin spoke well of him.

“The final piece was everybody I talked to gave him the highest recommendation — everyone in the community, all his coaches, all his teammates,” McInerney said. “He can really play (and) he’s got a great

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College Football

Oregon State looking for a new starter at QB

By Steve Gress
Albany Democrat-Herald

CORVALLIS — One thing is certain when it comes to the quarterback position at Oregon State — Jake Luton will not be the Beavers’ starter when they open the regular season on Sept. 3 at Oklahoma State.

Luton, the opening-day starter the past three seasons, has used up his eligibility and is looking to be drafted by an NFL team

in late April.

Tristan Gebbia, who transferred in from Nebraska about 18 months ago, made his first start for the Beavers last year in the Civil War when Luton was unable to go. Gebbia completed 26 for 40 passes for 243 yards and did not have a touchdown or an interception in a 24-10 loss.

The 6-foot-2, 199-pound redshirt junior is the presumed front-runner to take

over for the 2020 campaign.

The playing experience last season, especially the start against Oregon, was crucial in Gebbia’s development.

“I mean anytime you step in between the lines, whether it’s a game or practice, you know there’s stuff that you can learn from now whether it’s good or bad or ugly, whatever it is there’s stuff that you could always work on,” Gebbia

said last week after the first day of spring practices.

“The quarterback position I will always say, I think to the day that I die, there’s no such thing as a finished product. You know everybody’s always working to get better at something.”

Having been in the program for most of the last two seasons, Gebbia’s comfort level is at an all-time high. He’s not the only one either.

“I felt like I picked up right where I left off,” he said after last Tuesday’s practice. “I told somebody earlier that I think that we might as well have played the Civil War game yesterday, it felt just like it did then. I talked to a lot of guys today and they all said that it felt just like that. You know we’re picking up right where we left off and we’re gonna hit the ground

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