Staff photo by Ronald Bond

La Grande's Alexyss Chamberlain drives during Friday's playoff win over Cascade. The Tigers meet Astoria in the quarterfinals of the 4A state tournament Thursday in Forest Grove.

TIGERS

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Also in double figures in that win were Brooklynn Hankwitz (16 points) and Kelsey Fausett (12) points.

Wright said the Tigers will start in a man-to-man defense — their primary defense this season as they've allowed 38.6 points per game — to try to counter the Astoria offense, which enters averaging 56.8 points per game, but he would not be opposed to switching to a zone.

"We worked on a matchup zone some the last month," he said. "If we have to make some adjustments and show some 1-3-1, we'll do that."

La Grande's offense, which has averaged 52.6 points per game, will be working against a 1-2-1-1 full-court press that Wright said he expects Astoria will run "the whole game," and he noted that is how Astoria generates most of its own offense.

"They normally get the majority of their points off of turnovers," he said.

Wright said as long as the Tigers can handle the pressure and get into their half-court sets — where they would likely see a 2-3 or a 3-2 zone — they'll have a good shot.

The winner of the 3:15 matchup Thursday afternoon will play the winner of the early game, which could be Philomath, the top-ranked team in the state. Astoria actually held a double-digit fourth quarter lead on Philomath when the teams played previously this season, but the Warriors stormed back late for a 51-50 win.

The semifinal game Friday will be played at 1:30 p.m. The championship game is set for Saturday at 5:45 p.m.

"Our goal as a team is we want to play on Saturday," Wright said. "If you're playing on Saturday, you have a really successful season."

Tournament schedule

All Games at Forest Grove High School

THURSDAY

At Viking Gym

Quarterfinals

No. 1 Philomath vs. No. 8 Cottage Grove, 1:30 p.m.

No. 4 Astoria vs. No. 5 La Grande, 3:15 p.m.

No. 3 Hidden Valley vs. No. 6 North Marion, 6:30 p.m.

No. 2 Baker vs. No. 7 Valley Catholic, 8:15 p.m.

FRIDAY

At Joe Moran Court

Consolation Semifinals

Philomath/Cottage Grove loser vs. Astoria/La Grande loser, 9 a.m.

Hidden Valley/North Marion loser vs. Baker/Valley Catholic loser, 10:45 a.m.

Semifinals

Philomath/Cottage Grove winner vs. Astoria/La Grande winner, 1:30 p.m.

Hidden Valley/North Marion winner vs. Baker/Valley Catholic winner, 3:15 p.m.

SATURDAY

At Joe Moran Court

Fourth-place game

Consolation semifinal winners, 8 a.m.

Third-place game

Semifinal losers, 1:30 p.m.

Championship game

Semifinal winners, 5:45 p.m.

BEAVERS

Continued from Page 7A

running with this thing, without any lulls or anything like that."

Gebbia won't be handed the starting position as there are five others competing for the spot. In addition to Gebbia, redshirt juniors Nick Moore and Aidan Willard and redshirt freshman Jackson Chryst return, while redshirt sophomore Chance Nolan and freshman Ben Gulbranson are also in camp for the first time.

Nolan and Gulbranson both signed back in December and have been on campus since the start of winter term.

"I'm just looking for them to keep improving every day," offensive coordinator Brian Lindgren said last Tuesday. "They made a bunch of mistakes out there and I think they're going to learn so much from practice."

Lindgren said he is challenging them to study the tape after each practice and come out the next time a little better.

"I think by the end of the spring, if we can stack a bunch of practices like that, those guys are going to be further along in a position to compete to play for us," Lindgren said.

Nolan admitted he has plenty to learn and has been doing all he can, through handouts, film study and breakdowns on the iPad, to get up to speed.

"I mean I think I've got to work on everything," Nolan said. "I think there's always parts of your game that you need to improve, especially at the quarterback position, it's such a critical position where a lot of things can happen. So I think you've got to be as sharp as you can all the time and I don't think there's ever a line where that stops. So I've just got to work on everything really when it comes to my feet, and then just work on understanding the plays so I'm more prepared to be able to do what I can do."

Nolan said that Gebbia, whom he is competing with to lead the Beavers come September, has been a tremendous help.

"Tristan's a great guy," Nolan said. "He's always trying to help me. I think we're both competitors so it's going to work out for the both of us."

DUCKS

Continued from Page 7A

no less true with the signal callers competing to succeed him: They're all lean for their height.

Herbert weighed 227 pounds at the Senior Bowl, which was less than three weeks after the Rose Bowl, and added nine pounds to reach 236 pounds at the NFL Combine. Being that size at 6-foot-6-plus is worrisome to most in the NFL, where the speed and size of defenders is even greater, and no less important in college.

Tyler Shough (6-foot-5, 220 pounds), Jay Butterfield (6-foot-6, 212 pounds) and Cale Millen (6-foot-3, 211 pounds) are all even leaner for their heights, though also young enough to add bulk throughout the offseason.

"To me it's all about their height, their frame, what can they carry and still be athletic?" Moorhead said. "You look at Lamar Jackson, you look at Pat Mahomes, you look at some other guys that have made it very far and those are guys who are beating you with their brains, their arms and their legs. I think you're seeing it trickle up (to the NFL) rather than a trickle down.

"We're not going to be like at Mississippi State, we ran Nick (Fitzgerald) I think 250 times one year but Nick was the all-time leading rusher (at quarterback) in the SEC and that's what he was best equipped for."

But Mahomes is 6-foot-3, 230 pounds and was the same listed weight while at Texas Tech in 2016 and Jackson is 6-foot-2 and 212 pounds. Meanwhile, Cam Newton is 6-foot-5 and 245 pounds and after eight seasons of hits in the NFL his durability has become a concern.

Moorhead sidestepped a question as to whether Oregon's quarterbacks need to add weight before the season, but he believes Shough is capable of being an effective rusher in his offense.

"He's probably quicker than fast but the mentality is touchdown, first down, get down," Moorhead said. "You get out into the open and you can score a touchdown, score it. But if it's a situation where you're running the ball and you need to get the first down, you do what you need to do to get it. All other cases, you find a way to get yourself on the ground. He's a guy that can make plays by design or improvisation. So are the other guys. I think he can definitely be a threat with his feet."

The presumptive favorite to win the starting job, Shough added one pound since last fall but is up 10 pounds from last spring and 16 pounds from the fall of 2018. If he can repeat his gain of last summer by fall camp it'll go a long way to helping his durability.

Contributed photo

A young Justin Frederick is shown with two members of the Eastern Oregon University baseball team before the program was cut in 2006.

HISTORY

Continued from Page 7A

attitude, perfect for the team."

Frederick had verbally committed to Blue Mountain Community College, Pendleton, but he said he began talks with BMCC before EOU announced the return of its program.

The opportunity to play at a four-year school in his hometown was too good to pass up, and he said BMCC coach Brad Baker was "understanding of the whole situation."

"I have a lot of respect for Brad Baker, and he's a great guy," Frederick said. "I like him for the respect he gave me as a prospect."

McInerney said that with Frederick, he's getting a player who has baseball talent as well as a strong work ethic, the kind of player who will fit well in the new program.

"I think toughness is something we're looking for (and) he kind of exudes that," McInerney said. "A trademark of everything is looking for selfless guys. Team-first mentality, really great teammates, really coachable, especially when you're going to start a team out. You want to get it going in the right direction as fast as you possibly can.

"It's all there," the coach added of Frederick's skill set. "The base is there. He was well taught in high school. Mechanically he's strong."

Frederick believes his defensive skills will translate best to the next level.

"I've always kind of been a defensive guy and work really hard on my defense," he said. "That's probably been the best part of my game. Throughout my next four years I'd like to develop my hitting. I'd like to become a more consistent hitter."

His coach at La Grande High School, Parker McKinley, called it "exciting" that Frederick is staying in town to play at Eastern and agreed with Frederick's own assessment of what he would need to grow in to excel at the college level.

"He's very strong defensively," McKinley said while also speaking highly of his work ethic. "Offensively any time you move to the next level of baseball the pitching gets better and better. You have to improve your offensive prowess."

He noted, too, Frederick will have one advantage in that he'll have played for four years at Optimist Field, which is not only the Tigers' home field but also will be the Mountaineers' home field in the early years of the program.

"Justin's comfortable on the field they'll be playing (on)," he said. "He's used to the hitting background, the fielding background (and) just in general, the atmosphere. It's a huge advantage to be comfortable."

Frederick also is sold on what McInerney is preaching for his vision of the program.

"He wants to be competitive the first year. Most first-year teams have a history of struggling, but he seems like he wants to be competitive, and I want to be competitive, too," he said.

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