

Lee excited for Shrine Game

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**
The Observer

BAKER CITY — The state's elite prep football stars are heading to Eastern Oregon for the annual East-West Shrine Game. Fans of Eastern Oregon University football may recognize a familiar face, as one of its former recruits will take part in the game.

Tristan Lee, once part of Eastern's 2021 signing class, will compete in the East-West All-Star Football Game in Baker City along with 43 of the state's top players. Lee is now committed to play football for NCAA Division II Western Oregon University. The East-West Shrine All-Star Football game is making its comeback on Saturday, Aug. 7, after being canceled in 2020 due to COVID-19.

"I'm super excited for it," Lee said. "It's going to be fun to meet players from all around the state and compete in a good game for an even better cause."

The Mazama standout received an offer from Eastern Oregon head coach Tim Camp and the Mountaineers on Jan. 26 and officially signed with Eastern on Feb. 3. However, Lee decommitted just months later.

"I decommitted in April and just thought that Western was a better overall fit after thinking it over," he said.

Lee played quarterback and defensive back for the Klamath Falls high school. He is a three-year letter winner at Mazama and earned Skyline Conference offensive player of the year in 2019. Lee has earned first-team all-conference honors at both the quarterback and defensive back positions, making him a versatile talent for the Wolves next fall.

In the 2021 spring season, Lee led the Vikings to a 6-0 season and a non-OSAA sanctioned Class 4A state championship title. The senior quarterback threw for 643 yards with a 63.2% completion rate in his senior year. He launched eight passing touchdowns with zero interceptions and added four rushing touchdowns.

The East-West All-Star Football Game will kick off for the 69th time this year. The annual event typically involves week-long festivities including a visit to the Shriners Hospital for Children in Portland. The events are modified this year due to the pandemic.

Masking up for indoor sports

OSAA says indoor athletes must mask up during fall competition

By **RONALD BOND** and **DAVIS CARBAUGH**
EO Media Group

LA GRANDE — Masks are going to be required back in the classroom this fall.

And, for now, during indoor athletic events at the high school level.

Just hours after Oregon Gov. Kate Brown announced Thursday, July 29, that students and staff would be required to wear masks indoors in K-12 schools this fall — a move made following national mask guidelines and made with Oregon seeing a spike in cases — Oregon School Activities Association Executive Director Peter Weber said indoor athletes would be held to the same standard.

Weber admitted, however, that the OSAA is needing more details.

"We're trying to get clarification on that, but that is our understanding — any activities, anything inside involving a K-12



Corey Kirk/Baker City Herald, File

La Grande's Hayden Robinson and Izzy Kump go for a block in a volleyball match against Baker on Monday, March 8, 2021. On Thursday, July 29, 2021, the Oregon School Activities Association announced a mask mandate for indoor sports during the upcoming fall season.

school," he said. "We're waiting to see what the language says."

In the past, more specific guidance has come out from either the Oregon Department of Education or the Oregon Health Authority following an announcement.

"They (ODE) are working on the language with OHA," Weber said.

Weber said that as he currently understands the direction, the mask

requirements — as it is for the classrooms — are in place regardless of an individual's vaccination status. Fans in the stands would likely also be required to wear masks.

The only sport currently impacted by the ruling is high school volleyball. Cross-country, football and soccer are the only other fall sports in Oregon. The modified winter sports season in 2021 involved a number of modifications

that could likely still be in play during the fall. Athletes were required to wear masks during indoor sports and fans were allowed in attendance on a limited basis.

"I think by now our kids know what to expect," said Powder Valley Athletic Director Brad Dunten. "We want to do what we can to give them the best sports experience possible during their time in high school."

Dunten noted that OSAA mandates changed on a frequent basis last school year, which has led to his coaches and players being able to adapt quickly.

"We're going to go along with whatever OSAA tells us to do," La Grande Athletic Director Darren Goodman said. "It's what we have to do, so it's not like we're going to be against it."

Wallowa AD Marvin Gibbs was shocked at the news.

"Didn't know that yet. That's a new one. That is a bummer," he said. "I don't know how else to put it, but that is a bummer."

The announcement comes in the wake of a spike in COVID-19 cases across the state. Oregon Health Authority reported over 1,000 new confirmed and presumptive cases of COVID-19 on July 29. Union County's COVID-19 numbers have jumped up to 13 cases per day in the last week and 21 new cases were reported on July 29.

Nearby counties are also seeing a spike — particularly Umatilla County, which on July 29 had 110 news cases, more than any county except for Jackson (111).

Beavers have depth at QB, but who will start season?

By **STEVE GRESS**
Corvallis Gazette-Times

CORVALLIS — Oregon State head football coach Jonathan Smith believes that competition helps bring out the best in players.

He anticipates that will be the case in the quarterback room, where the Beavers have several candidates to take over the starting job for this coming season.

Training camp gets started at the end of next week, and the Beavers will be looking to see which quarterback emerges as the leader of the offense.

The Beavers return two quarterbacks who saw extended action last season.

Tristan Gebbia started the first four games before suffering a season-ending leg injury. He completed 80 of 129 passes for 824 yards with three touchdowns and three interceptions and helped lead the Beavers to an upset of Oregon before he was hurt on the game-winning drive.

Smith said Gebbia should be ready to go when camp starts.

"I think he's got a great skill set," Smith said at the Pac-12's media day on Tuesday. "Understands the scheme, good leader. Has won games for us."

Chance Nolan took over for Gebbia and com-

pleted 46 of 91 passes for 537 yards and six touchdowns with two interceptions. He also rushed 30 times for 147 yards and one score, providing a dual threat at the position for the Beavers.

"We were really close the last couple (games) with him as the starting quarterback," Smith said. "Counting on him making huge strides in his game from Year 1 to Year 2."

Ben Gulbranson, who also saw a limited action last season, will not be ready for fall camp due to a shoulder injury, Smith said.

Knowing that Gulbranson would be out, the Beavers added former Colorado starter Sam Noyer, a grad transfer, to the fold back in June.

Noyer, from Beaverton, passed for 1,000 yards in the Buffaloes' five games last season, completing 80 of 137 passes with six touchdowns and five interceptions. He also rushed for 191 yards on 45 attempts.

"(Noyer) has a little bit different skill set, makes the game physical, moving his feet, bigtime arm," Smith said. "Anxious to work with him coming in August."

"(We have) three really good options there."

Noyer isn't the only Sam in the quarterback room as freshman Sam Vidlak from Hidden Valley High has



Oregon State quarterback Tristan Gebbia (3) looks for a receiver on Nov. 21, 2020.



Photos by Amanda Loman/The Associated Press, File
Oregon State quarterback Ben Gulbranson (17) hands off to running back Calvin Tyler, Jr. (2) during a game on Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020.

been on campus and participated in spring practice.

"Had a great spring," Smith said. "He's going to have an opportunity this August to go. We have four healthy guys."

If Gulbranson hadn't been injured, the Beavers may not have been as interested in Noyer, Smith said. But in need of another healthy body at the position, and Noyer's familiarity with some of the current players, as well as offensive coordinator Brian Lindgren, who was at Colorado before joining Smith's staff when he took over, made it an easier decision.

"Everything I've heard so far since he's been here has been great," Smith said. "You talk about a guy who loves the game, is unselfish. You can see his leadership capabilities even the short time he's been



Oregon State quarterback Chance Nolan (10) scrambles while looking for a receiver on Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020.

should help Noyer adapt quicker to what the Beavers want to do on offense.

"Schematically, some of the way we call plays, probably brought back what he remembers from his first couple years," Smith said.

There isn't a lot of time between now and the season opener — Sept. 4 against Purdue in West Lafayette, Indiana.

Regardless of who wins the starting job, the Beavers need to be able to rely on the other three to step in when needed.

"We feel like we've got a quarterback room that is full of some talent, it's going to be competitive this month in training camp," Smith said. "The cream rises to the top when you have that type of competition in August, but also it adds to our depth as the season goes."

with us.

"So I'm really excited to see him out there on the practice field with us, using the skill set that he has, not just throwing or running but also on this leadership side."

The familiarity with Lindgren and the system

SPORTS SHORT

Blazers acquire rights to Texas forward Greg Brown

By **ERIK GARCÍA GUNDERSEN**
The Associated Press

PORTLAND — The Portland Trail Blazers acquired the rights to Greg Brown, the No. 43 pick in the NBA draft, in a trade with the New Orleans Pelicans on Thursday, July 29.

Deputy Commissioner Mark Tatum announced that the Blazers sent a future second-round pick and cash to New Orleans, which selected the forward from Texas.

Brown started 24 of 26 games for the Longhorns last season. He averaged 10 points and nearly seven rebounds per game in Big 12 play.

The Blazers entered the night without any draft picks. The rights to their 2021 first-round pick were sent to the Houston Rockets in last fall's trade for starting forward Robert Covington.

After their fourth first-round playoff loss in five seasons, general manager Neil Olshey

hired former Clippers assistant Chauncey Billups to succeed Terry Stotts as head coach.

Stotts is the only coach star guard Damian Lillard has played for in the NBA.

Lillard led USA Basketball with 21 points in Wednesday's 120-63 victory over Iran at the Olympics in Tokyo.

Lillard has publicly stated he believes the Blazers must improve while denying reports that he is asking for a trade.



Charles Rex Arbogast/The Associated Press, File

Texas' Greg Brown III participates in the NBA Draft Combine Tuesday, June 22, 2021, in Chicago.