

PEASLEY

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“Football-wise it is good. Everyone was super welcoming,” he said. “Coming from another Mountain West school (made me) a little nervous, (but) everyone (is) taking care of me.”

The biggest adjustment to Wyoming for Peasley has been to its pro-style offense, one that differs from the spread that he was in not only at Utah State, but also at LHS. Part of acclimating to the offense has involved a lot of studying, including, he said, learning longer play calls and the different protection sets the offensive line is supposed to be in.

“Obviously, there is always room to improve in whatever offense you are in,” he said.

Peasley’s trademark at La Grande, and where he also found success when he was on the field in Logan, was largely in his mobility. While with the Aggies, he threw for 830 yards on 55% passing with seven touch-

downs and five interceptions, and also rushed for 515 yards on 57 carries with three rushing touchdowns.

With Wyoming, he said he needs to improve his pocket presence, though he noted his ability to scramble and make plays with his feet will still be an option.

“There is a lot of variety. At the end of the day, we still have plays that allow me to make plays and do what I need to do when things aren’t perfect,” he said.

He answered in the affirmative when asked if that would mean plays with a quarterback rollout or a bootleg, but also said it would mean, too, being privy to when a play is breaking down.

“Just even drop back, pass, (and) everything is covered up, so gotta make something happen,” he said.

So far, it seems he is adapting well. He had a solid spring game for the Cowboys, completing 12 of 21 passes for 201 yards with two touchdowns and one interception, helping the Gold team to a 26-22 win.



Troy Babbitt/Contributed Photo
Wyoming quarterback and La Grande High School graduate Andrew Peasley drops back to pass during warmups prior to the start of the Cowboys' spring football game on April 30, 2022, in Laramie, Wyoming, at War Memorial Stadium.

He is also adapting to the culture, one that he said is positive not only within the team, but throughout Laramie and the state of Wyoming.

“Really, just overall, the state is all bought into one football team,” he said. “That is really special.”

And, he is healthy. Peasley missed the Aggies’ bowl game with a sprained right AC joint and has dealt with knee injuries in the past, including during his senior year at LHS. He said his knees are in good shape and his arm was cleared in February.

“I’ve gotten a lot of strength back,” he said.

As he approaches fall camp, which starts for Wyoming in a little more than a month, he said putting up consistent numbers and helping make the team better are his goals.

“My main goal is just to help everyone around me improve so we can win football games,” he said. “If my main goal was to be a starter, that could be a little selfish. My main goal is to help others and take the next step.”

The most important thing for Peasley as the team moves toward its season opener Aug. 27 at Illinois is being prepared.

“I’m excited. We get to go play a bigger school,” he said. “That is just an opportunity for Wyoming football to expose ourselves for

greatness for the season.”

One other game he is looking forward to is on Oct. 22, when his former team, Utah State, comes to Laramie.

He said he still has many good friends on the Aggies, but that four quarters will be different.

“We won’t be friends for three hours during that game. It’ll be fun,” he said. “I’m sure there will be some trash talking going on. The fans will be into it. It’ll be a good time.”

Peasley has two years of eligibility remaining, and he feels that in Wyoming he is in a good spot to pursue the ultimate goal of every college player — reaching the NFL.

“One of the first things they told me was Wyoming has the most players in the NFL in the Mountain West,” he said. “You look at Josh Allen, Logan Wilson, Chad Muma — that is inspirational. Obviously, that is my goal in the end.”

Seeing those successes shows the La Grande native that “it’s been done, (and) I can do it, too.”

DOG

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being investigated by Patricia Kelly, the animal enforcement officer for the Union County Sheriff’s Office. Kelly said she’s interviewed residents and people from businesses around the neighborhood. People recalled seeing the dog at large that day, but so far, no one reported seeing or hearing anything about the incident. Additionally, nobody reported hearing a gunshot.

During her investigation, Kelly said she’s received mixed messages about Waylon’s aggression. When the dog got out of the yard, he would bark at people and would hold his ground before running away. Some people considered this as aggressive, while others thought it was normal dog behavior.

“It depends on someone’s definition of aggressive,” she said.

Under Oregon law, dogs are considered personal property. According to

MORE INFORMATION

Anyone who has information on the case is asked to contact animal enforcement at the Union County Sheriff’s Office by phone at 541-963-1017 or by email at sheriff@union-county.org.

Kelly, if a dog is not being aggressive, it is against state law to shoot the animal. If a dog is acting aggressive or actively menacing, a person can shoot the dog in self-defense, but it is still against the law to discharge a firearm within city limits. The shooter is also responsible for proving the dog was actively menacing. It is not enough for the individual to just say the dog was aggressive.

Kelly said that if a perpetrator were found, he or she could be brought up on a number of charges, which would be decided by the sheriff’s office. In a situation like this, if the dog was not acting aggressively, the most likely charge would be aggravated animal abuse.



Renee Moseley/Contributed Photo

Jacob Moseley’s red heeler, Waylon, looks in a window in this family photo. Moseley found his dog bleeding from a gunshot wound on June 19, 2022. Waylon ended up dying from his injuries.



The Observer, File

Catherine Creek was nearly dry on Friday, Aug. 7, 2021, after a heat wave and extended dry conditions exacerbated the ongoing drought in the Grande Ronde Valley. The Grande Ronde Basin is prone to flooding and low streamflow, and the Oregon Water Resources Commission is enacting a plan to address both extremes.

WATER

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Bureau, Union County Soil and Water Conservation District, Union County Cattlemen’s Association, Grande Ronde Model Watershed, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and cities, plus many local farmers and ranchers.

The Upper Grande Ronde Basin is one of four in Oregon provided funding by the state commission to develop a plan for boosting its water quality and quantity as part of a pilot project. The plan for the Upper Grande Ronde Basin is the first to be completed. The basin sites for which other plans are being developed are in Harney County, a site on the Oregon coast and the

lower John Day River.

The Upper Grande Ronde Basin plan was developed with help from a \$250,000 grant from the Oregon Water Resources Department and a \$100,000 grant received from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

The executive summary of the plan states that it will provide strategies for meeting the water needs of communities in the Upper Grande Ronde Basin while adhering to all existing laws and policies.

Beverage said the intent of the plan is to address a long running problem in the Upper Grande Ronde Basin. “We have too much water in the spring and not enough in the summer,” she said.

The excess spring water frequently causes flooding

and the lack of water in the summer causes water quality issues. Beverage said low streamflow contributes to raising temperatures to unhealthy levels for fish and causes water to have higher concentrations of naturally occurring chemicals like nitrates.

Steps to improving water quality and quantity suggested in the plan include looking into accessing aboveground storage opportunities, such as expanding portions of rivers and streams to prevent the creation of ice jams in narrow stretches that can lead to flooding.

Options the plan calls for studying also include storage sites that would not impact stream channels. The plan sets the stage for investigative work to be done into the possibility of

having reservoirs to which water from streams could be diverted. Storage of the water would help prevent flooding in the winter and spring, and its release in the summer would boost low streamflow.

Another option could be pumping water from Catherine Creek into underground caverns in the spring when flows are high, and then pumping it out in the summer when flows are lower.

Water storage options will be discussed on Thursday, July 7, at a public meeting of those involved with the Upper Grande Ronde Watershed Partnership Place-Based Integrated Water Resources Plan. The meeting will start at 4 p.m. in the Misener Room of the Chaplin Building, 1001 Fourth St., La Grande.

CROP

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Tim Melville, who owns and operates Cornerstone Farms Joint Venture with his wife, Audry and sons Kevin and Kurt and their wives, said their farm has about 300 acres in alfalfa and about 250 in timothy grass in various fields around the county.

“It’s a little bit short and a little bit later than usual,” Tim Melville said. “It’s been colder and it didn’t grow as much as usual.”

But, he said, the slower growth will make for good quality because it won’t be too mature.

His son, Kurt, who is in charge of the farm’s hay harvest, got a bit more technical.

He said the alfalfa is “a little bit lighter than usual because we

haven’t had as many heat units, but it looks like a good window to knock it down. The forecast has about 10 days to take that first cutting.”

The timothy grass takes a bit longer, he said, adding that it should be another two or three weeks before it’s ready to cut.

Butterfield said his two types of hay were mixed.

“Alfalfa’s behind and timothy’s is ahead, but everything looks good,” he said.

Butterfield has about 1,900 acres east of Joseph evenly split between the two types of hay.

Market price

Most growers are expecting higher prices for their hay once it’s baled.

Butterfield was hesitant to predict the price.

“It’s a bit of a jinx to predict

hay prices,” he said. “It should be as high or better than last year.”

He said he sold his hay for \$190-\$290 a ton last year on the farm — where the buyer loads and hauls it from the farm.

Kurt Melville agreed it will likely be comparable to last year, but he said he hasn’t been keeping close track of the market.

“It’ll be a little bit lighter than normal,” he said. “Until we actually get some up, sometimes it’s a bit deceiving, but I think it’ll be about 20% less than usual, but I could be completely wrong until we start running balers through fields.”

Tyler Coppin, on the other hand, is quite optimistic as to the price this year.

“I’m thinking this is going to be highest prices we’ll get in anyone’s lifetime,” he said. “It’ll be

knocking on the door of \$350-\$400 a ton, maybe more.”

He attributes this to the fact that competitors in the Ellensburg, Washington, and Columbia Basin areas had trouble with their crop getting rained on.

“If we can get our hay in, it’ll be premium,” he said.

Premium quality is the highest with the largest nutrient percentage.

Coppin said his farm sells mostly as an export crop to Japan.

“I’m already selling hay from last year for more than last year,” he said.

Production cost

But it’s not all about the quality of the crop. Growers have to contend with the cost of production as well.

Every one of the growers

interviewed agreed the high cost of petroleum is affecting nearly everything.

“Fuel prices are terrible. Oil prices are terrible,” Coppin said.

This not only affects fuel used in farm machinery, but the cost of transporting crops to market. It also boosts the cost of fertilizer and other chemicals heavy in petroleum.

Tim Melville said it also affects the availability and cost of parts for farm machines.

“Some of the parts have doubled in price in the past 12 months,” he said. “Fertilizer’s double what it was last year.”

Coppin said the production costs are also seen in the availability of parts.

“Everything’s hard to get,” he said, estimating costs are up 30%. “I don’t know anything’s not hard to get.”

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