

Tigers football faces new opponents this fall

Special district changes add teams to La Grande's 2022 football schedule

By RONALD BOND
For The Observer

LA GRANDE — All the La Grande High School football fans who were getting tired of seeing the same ol' teams on the schedule are in for a treat this fall.

The Oregon School Activities Association's restructure of football has the Tigers facing five league opponents — two of them schools who are traditionally on the schedule, while the other three are new faces to the regular slate for La Grande.

LHS has a nine-game schedule this fall, including five contests in the new 4A Special District 5. The Tigers start league play at home Sept. 30 against Baker, the school's biggest rival. A week later, La Grande travels to face Madras on Oct. 7, with the White Buffaloes being one of four new teams in the district for football. LHS, in fact, meets the new district opponents in four consecutive weeks.

La Grande's regular-season home finale comes on Oct. 14 against Crook County, before matching up on the road with Pendleton on Oct. 21. It's another traditional opponent for La Grande, though it will be the first time the Buckaroos and Tigers have met in a league battle since the old Intermountain Conference days.

The Tigers wrap up the regular season Oct. 28 on the road against The Dalles, in the first matchup on the gridiron between the schools since the 2019 4A semifinals, a 68-0 win for



La Grande's Brody MacMillan (11) fends off a Burns defender Friday, Oct. 1, 2021, at Community Stadium in La Grande. The Oregon School Activities Association's restructure of football has the Tigers facing five league opponents — two of them schools who are traditionally on the schedule, while the other three are new faces to the regular slate for La Grande.

La Grande on its way to the state championship.

La Grande's nonleague slate includes an opponent the Tigers played annually until 2015, but haven't met since — Weiser. LHS opens its season Sept. 2 at the Idaho school for a 6 p.m. kickoff.

The last time the teams met, in 2015, was also in Weiser, and La Grande served the host Wolverines a 41-7 beatdown.

Former league rival Ontario, which dropped to 3A for football, hosts La Grande at 6 p.m. on Sept. 9. A week later, the Tigers wrap up a three-

game season-opening road trip against a team they played twice a year ago — Estacada. The squads meet at 6 p.m. Sept. 16.

LHS's final nonleague game is Sept. 23, as it hosts Molalla in its home opener.

Powder Valley, Adrian will meet again in 2022

At the 1A level, a key matchup to watch is the rematch between last year's state championship game contenders, Powder Valley and Adrian. The Badgers host the Antelopes at 7 p.m. on Oct. 21, hoping to exact a little revenge for two victo-

ries from 2021, including Adrian's 46-38 win in the state title game. Other key dates for the Badgers include a season-opening contest against Camas Valley at 4 p.m. Sept. 2 at the Dufur Classic, a home matchup against Dufur on Sept. 30, and another home date against Enterprise Oct. 14.

The Outlaws, meanwhile, visit Imbler for an early-season nonleague matchup on Sept. 9, and host Pilot Rock on Sept. 23.

Imbler, in addition to

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Powder Valley's Reece Dixon (7) wraps up Adrian's Jace Martin (13) for a tackle at Baker High School on Saturday, Nov. 27, 2021, during the Antelopes' 46-38 win in the OSAA Class 1A state championship game. The two teams will meet in North Powder during the 2022 regular season.

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