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MEMORIES OF HAYWARD FIELD | PART 4

HIGH SCHOOL meets at HAYWARD

By **NEIL BRANSON**
 For *The Daily Astorian*

Local high schools have had a good number of athletes compete in the state meet at Hayward Field. My apologies to the many athletes that I don't remember. So many of you have had stellar performances at Hayward.

High on my list of memories was watching Seaside High School's Shawn McCord win the javelin in 2000 and 2001.

He threw very early in the day, one of the first events, so spectators were sparse save for all the Seaside kids who got up early in order to watch McCord put on a show.

His vocals were on fine display after each throw.

In McCord's second year, Adrian Anderson won the 3,000 meters. He was the first state champion I coached. That same year Alix Daggatt thrilled her teammates and the fans with her last jump for a come-from-behind victory in the long jump spanning 17 feet, 5¼ inches.

The 2010 boys 1,600-meter relay team of freshman Brett Willyard and seniors Cory Rice, Henry Broderick and Zeke Smith stunned league rival Banks, which came into the meet with a time five seconds faster than the Gulls, as the lads ran wild to pick up the win.

Willyard netted another four titles in two years, winning the 3,000 and 1,500 in 2012 and repeating in the 3,000 and adding the 800-meter title in 2013.

It was not so much that he won, but the way he dominated. In his first 3,000 victory he ran with the field until 900 meters remained, then he simply left his competitors in arrears like the roadrunner when

being chased by Wile E. Coyote.

Observing Jackson Januik win his third consecutive state title in the 800 was thrilling, not only for the win, but the way he took the measure of the field and executed a plan that made victory possible.

This year it was a joy to watch Gretchen Hoekstre, in her second trip to Hayward, picked up a win and a second in the shot put and discus, respectively.

Bridgette Blakesley from 2012 through 2015 ran the 1,500 four times and the 3,000 twice, and medaled four of those times. It was her 2014 season that sticks in my mind because, although she also qualified for both the 1,500 and 3,000 that year, she gave up her spot in the longer race so teammate Josie Smith could compete at state.

Fresh in my mind are the Astoria High girls, powered by so many athletes, with their three-peat of state championships in 2015, '16 and '17, racking up an amazing 109.5 points in 2016. The Cummings girls, Natalie and Gracie, brought in big points.

Though they did not win this year, I would say the Astoria girls were every bit the team as those of the past three years in that they scrambled for every point possible. Watching Darian Hageman in the vertical and horizontal jumps was a sight to behold. It was rewarding to see her earn the girls' high point athlete of the meet at this year's state championships.

Over the years I have watched amazing races on all levels where an athlete simply overpowers the competition, as Rory Coon of Tillamook did in last year's 100 and 200 meters, or Maya Rayle of Catlin Gabel, bound for Harvard, as she posted the fastest time in the state, all classifications, in the 3,000 and handily won the 1,500 in dominating fashion.



Gary Henley/The Daily Astorian
 Former Astoria thrower Nathan Stinnett gets ready to launch the javelin on the Hayward Field infield during the 2006 state meet.

It was not just the winners at Hayward who were thrilling. It was kids who got a personal record to take a spot on the podium.

This year I served as a volunteer umpire at state, and in the distance races helped separate eighth-place runners to the podium, from ninth place and no medal.

In one of those races, a young lady, exhausted from her effort, was beside herself with joy when we told her "keep moving toward the podium."

Between efforts to get some air in her lungs, she announced and/or asked over and

over again, "I got eight? I got eight?"

Because of construction at Hayward, the venues for the state high school championships next year are in the process of being decided.

No matter where they go, the meets will be well-orchestrated. Yet I am a bit sad for those kids who do not get to compete at Hayward Field — the Taj Mahal, the Louvre, the Mecca of track and field in the United States.

Neil Branson is a longtime cross-country and track coach at Seaside High School.



COLLEGE FOOTBALL PREVIEWS



OREGON STATE

Coach Smith a feel-good story for Beavers after tough year

By **ANNE M. PETERSON**
 Associated Press

Jonathan Smith is a feel-good story for an Oregon State team that really needs one.

The former Beavers quarterback filled the head-coaching vacancy left by Gary Andersen, who abruptly parted ways with the program last October after a 1-5 start. Cornerbacks coach Cory Hall served as interim head coach for the rest of the season, and the Beavers finished 1-11. Oregon State won just seven games during Andersen's 2½-season stint.

It was a markedly different Oregon State team from the last one Smith played for.

Originally a walk-on, Smith was a four-year starter and helped lead the Beavers to a Fiesta Bowl victory following the 2000 season under coach Dennis Erickson. Smith was MVP of the bowl.

He returns to Corvallis after a stint at Washington, where he was an assistant to head coach Chris Petersen. He followed Petersen to the Huskies from Boise State.

"I kind of came in with all eyes wide open," Smith said about his first head-coaching gig. "Not doing it before, I knew I was going to learn a ton and experience it. So (I was) expecting the unexpected."

One of the first things he's been tasked with is helping the team forget the disappointment and upheaval of last season. Oregon State's



Andy Cripe/Corvallis Gazette-Times
 Jonathan Smith at a news conference announcing his hiring.

last game was a 69-10 loss to Oregon in the Civil War.

He said he hasn't dwelled too much on the bad parts.

"I wanted to come in with a message of, 'I've experienced it here. I've sat in those seats. I've gone through a coaching change when I was a player,'" he said. "It's been done before. We can do it again. So trying to be authentic that I've lived it, and I want to help them do the same."

Other things to know as Oregon State prepares to begin the 2018 season:

LOOKING TO LUTON: Oregon State had high hopes last season for quarterback Jake Luton, a junior college transfer, but his time as starter lasted just four games after he sustained a thoracic spine fracture in a 52-23 loss at Washington State. He finished the season with 853 passing yards with four TDs and four interceptions.

Darell Garretson stepped in and took over, throwing for 1,465 yards with six touch-

downs and eight interceptions. He's since graduated.

Luton is back this year and ready to pick the reins up again. He is being challenged in fall camp by Conor Blount, while Jack Colletto and Nick Moore push for playing time, but the job is Luton's to lose.

GOTTA RUN: Oregon State's running game is in rough shape with the departures of Thomas Tyner, Trevorris Johnson and Ryan Nall, who left school early and is now with the Chicago Bears. The top returner is Artavis Pierce, who ranked second on the team behind Nall with 323 yards rushing and one touchdown. Calvin Tyler is the only other rusher with experience. Freshman Jermar Jefferson impressed during a fall camp scrimmage.

RETRO BENNY: Much like Smith, the old Benny Beaver is making his return, too. Oregon State will revive the mascot with special homecoming uniforms on Oct. 20 against Cal.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Ducks clearly need to keep Herbert healthy this season

By **ANNE M. PETERSON**
 Associated Press

Just 12 months ago it was the start of the "Willie Taggart Era" in Eugene. Now it's Mario Cristobal's turn.

The team's former co-offensive coordinator is embarking on his first season at the helm of the Ducks. Taggart, meanwhile, is doing the same at Florida State after a one-year tenure at Oregon.

It's not quite Cristobal's debut. He led the Ducks in last season's Las Vegas Bowl, a 38-28 loss to Boise State. With a full season in front of him, Cristobal's clearly ready to move on from 2017's 7-6 finish.

"This season has nothing but opportunity in front of it, and we've got to do it. There is no way to sugarcoat it or try to dance around it, there is not. We've just got to get it done," he said.

Cristobal, who was an assistant at Alabama under Nick Saban for four years, has one of the league's top quarterbacks in junior Justin Herbert, who threw for 1,983 yards and 15 touchdowns last season — despite missing five games with a fractured collarbone. He also rushed for 183 yards and five scores.

He was replaced as starter by freshman Braxton Burmeister and the Ducks went 1-4 over the course of his absence. Burmeister threw for 324 yards with two touchdowns and six interceptions during the span, while



Andy Nelson/The Register-Guard
 Oregon head coach Mario Cristobal.

also rushing for 106 yards and three scores.

The key will be keeping Herbert healthy, while also making sure he has a backup who is ready to step in. And in this case, Burmeister took his lumps last season.

Herbert has done his part by bulking up over the off-season and now weighs in at some 240 pounds.

"It's not just how he looks. It's the mindset that comes with it, the confidence that comes with it," Cristobal said. "The ability to create a galvanizing effect for the guys in the locker room, because you know you're preparing and holding each other accountable."

The Ducks averaged 52 points with Herbert on the field last season, so the longer he stays there, the better for Oregon.

WHO'LL CATCH HERBERT?: With the departure of versatile WR Charles Nelson, a lot of attention has gone to Herbert's targets. The Ducks return their top receiver from

last season, Dillon Mitchell, who caught 42 passes for 517 yards. Then there's fellow wideout Brenden Schooler, who switched from safety, and tight-end Jacob Breeland, who caught five TD passes last season.

TWO-WAY PLAYER? Bryan Addison could also be a welcome addition to Oregon's receiver corps. He somewhat surprisingly joined the Ducks in July. Originally committed to UCLA, he was granted his release after his admission was delayed.

Addison, who is a 6-5 prospect out of Gardena, California, could see time at both wide receiver and defensive back — both positions where the Ducks could use some help.

Cristobal didn't hide his enthusiasm for Addison at the league's media day: "He's played both ways. He has special teams value. He is intelligent, he's tough, he's athletic. Great balance and body control. Explosive. Incredible ball skills."