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SPORTS



Jeff Ter Har/For The Daily Astorian

Under pressure all night, Seaside quarterback Payton Westerholm completes a pass to Levi Card.

NO. 2 BANKS HOLDS OFF NO. 1 SEASIDE IN COWAPA THRILLER

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — Call it “The high school football Game of the Year, Part I.”

With luck, Part II will be Nov. 24 in Hillsboro, between the same two teams. Because there’s every reason to believe that the Banks Braves and Seaside Gulls will meet again, on a much bigger stage.

The two best teams in 4A football put on a barn-burner Friday night at Broadway Field, where the No. 2-ranked Braves scored a thrilling 10-7 win over the No. 1-ranked Gulls in one of the biggest regular-season showdowns in Cowapa League history.

The win guarantees Banks at least a share of the league title, but that’s about it.

Both teams remain ranked in the top two, both teams will be home throughout the playoffs, and odds are that one or both will play for a state championship in late November.

Banks coach “Cole (Linehan) and I talked before the game, and we still feel like we’re two of the better teams in the state,” said Seaside coach Jeff Roberts.

Besides, if the Gulls fulfill their destiny and win their first state title since 1994, they must lose at least one game.

“I reminded the kids tonight that in 1994, that team was 11-1,” Roberts said, with the only loss coming to Astoria. “So it’s not the end of the world. We’ll regroup and finish the season. I’m confident that we’ll be ranked in the first few spots. We’re in the playoffs, and that’s the bottom line.”

In a season full of lopsided scores and teams rolling up 60 to 70 points per game, Friday’s low-scoring, defensive battle was a nice change of pace for area high school football. Two great teams can indeed play a close game. Not even a partial power outage to the Broadway Field lights could stop it.

“It fit the billing,” Linehan said. “No. 1 versus No. 2. Seaside’s a great team. They’re so disciplined and they’ve got some great players. We knew it would be a great matchup.”

Likewise, Roberts said, “hats off to Banks. They played a heck of a football game. They were able to do some things to our offense that hasn’t happened to us.”

Mainly, they “limited” Seaside running back Alexander Teubner to 127 yards rushing and one touchdown. The Braves also held the state’s highest-scoring team scoreless through three quarters.

A 32-yard field goal by Banks kicker Jacob Slifka with 30 seconds left in the third quarter represented the game-winning points, while Seaside’s potential game-winning drive in the fourth ended at the Braves’ 9-yard line as time expired.

As for Slifka’s game-deciding kick, “We’ve been waiting for one of those for years,” Linehan said. “We’ve recruited soccer players in the past, but he’s a football guy. He’s an outside linebacker and a receiver, and he also kicks the heck out of the ball.”

The two teams couldn’t have been more evenly matched.

Seaside finished with 259 yards in total offense, to 227 for Banks. Both teams had 13 first downs, with no turnovers.

The Braves were the victims of a few key penalties — one of which wiped out a 67-yard

punt return for a touchdown and another that erased a 40-yard run.

“We did not play a perfect game, by any means,” Linehan said. “I’ll have to watch the film and see what we can clean up.”

Meanwhile, Teubner’s longest carry of the first half was just 10 yards. Seaside had no first downs in the first quarter and just one in the third.

Teubner finally broke free for a 50-yard run early in the third quarter, but the Gulls were unable to capitalize.

“The plan was to take away Teubner,” Linehan said. “He’s having a great year, so we had to stop him.”

Seaside’s Wing-T offense is “something you have to start prepping for early,” he said. “You can’t simulate it in practice. We knew this game was coming, and it just so happens that we have two Wing-T’s back-to-back with Molalla (this) week. It’s very fitting that our defense played so hard all night. It was their opportunity to win it for us.”

Four of Seaside’s first five drives ended with punts, and the Gulls were stuffed on a fake punt run on the other.

The Gulls had just three offensive possessions in the second half, and they scored on their second, a 13-play, 63-yard drive highlighted by a 21-yard carry from Payton Westerholm on a fourth-down play. Teubner capped the drive with a 6-yard scoring run.

Trying to run out the clock on the ensuing drive, Banks went for it on a fourth-and-two, only to have Seaside’s Travis Fenton tackle Blake Markham for a 10-yard loss.

Seaside took over at its own 44 with 1:40 left, and following Westerholm passes to Duncan Thompson and Teubner, and a 16-yard run by Westerholm, the Gulls had a first down at the Braves’ 10-yard line with 36 seconds remaining.

Two penalties pushed the Gulls back to the 26, and Westerholm’s pass to Teubner was the final play, with Teubner tackled at the 9-yard line as time ran out.

“We haven’t really had to run the two-minute drill this year,” Roberts said. “They put a lot of pressure on us, and we didn’t do a very good job of picking that up. We’ll watch the tape, clean it up and fix it. They stopped ‘Teub’ tonight.”

Meanwhile, Banks had just one first down in the second quarter, and two in the fourth. The Braves used Markham effectively in the second half, as the senior receiver lined up at quarterback and rushed for 57 yards, all in the second half.

Martial Stegemeier had the Braves’ only touchdown, a 1-yard run in the first quarter.

It was just the first of many Banks vs. Seaside battles that will continue into basketball and baseball.

“These kids have been playing against each for so long, I think Seaside and Banks have a lot of respect for each other,” Linehan said. “It’s just fun to get out here and have a game like this. They treat us like that in every sport.”

Knappa downs Gaston and the ’Hounds, 34-14

GASTON — Coming off their first league loss in three years, the Knappa football team was back in familiar form Friday night at Gaston, where the Loggers built a 34-0 halftime lead on their way to an easy 34-14 win over the

Greyhounds.

Knappa scored at will early, with Eli Takalo running 62 yards for a touchdown, followed by a scoring run from Kanai Phillip, and the Loggers capped the first quarter with an 81-yard pass from Takalo to Phillip.

The two hooked up again late in the second quarter on a 68-yard pass play, as Knappa scored twice in the final minute of the first half.

The Loggers rolled up nearly 300 yards in offense in the first quarter alone, and Knappa finished with 389 yards on the ground for the game. Takalo had 197 yards and two touchdowns, while Luke Goozee rushed for 163 on 19 carries.

Phillip caught four passes for 174 yards (43.5 yards per reception) and two scores, and Takalo averaged over 10 yards per carry (13 for 135).

Knappa hosts Nestucca Friday.

Neah-Kah-Nie edges Warrenton, 16-14

ROCKAWAY BEACH — No. 2-ranked Neah-Kah-Nie converted a pair of two-point conversions, and that was the difference Friday night in a 16-14 win over Warrenton in a key Northwest League football showdown.

Warrenton quarterback Jacob Morrow — who rushed for 299 yards in a victory over Vernonia the previous week — was held to just 38 yards on the ground in Friday’s loss.

Still, Morrow completed a 49-yard touchdown pass to Austin Little for a 14-8 lead in the fourth quarter.

But Neah-Kah-Nie rallied, with Mychal Kelly tossing a 33-yard TD pass and Josh Elinsky running for the two-point conversion to give the Pirates the lead.

“It was a hard-fought game by both teams,” said Warrenton coach Ian O’Brien. “I am proud of the effort our kids gave. They proved they could compete with a top-ranked team.

“We had some missed opportunities and were up midway through the fourth quarter,” he said. “Neah-Kah-Nie was able to complete two big passes and we threw a late interception that allowed them to run the clock down.”

Morrow passed for 134 yards, Devin Jackson rushed for 62, and Hordie Bodden returned a kickoff 80 yards for a first-quarter score.

“Offensively we did some good things and moved the ball well at times,” O’Brien said. “Jake (Morrow) threw some great balls and our receivers came up with some crucial catches. Austin Little made some clutch catches on third and fourth down, as well as his TD catch.

“Our defense played outstanding,” he added. “Kale’o Kapua, Devin Jackson, Sam Irwin (12 tackles), Gio Martinez and Nic Pior all had big nights.”

The Warriors nearly had a go-ahead score in the second quarter.

“We thought we had a defensive touchdown late in the first half when we tackled their player in the end zone and thought it was a fumble,” O’Brien said. “The officials called it an incomplete pass. That would have been a big momentum changer heading into the half.”

The Pirates “are a physical football team and play downhill,” he said. “It was an exciting high school football game. We had quite the crowd make the drive down 101.”

The Warriors host Gaston for Senior Night this week.

Astoria wins at Molalla

The Daily Astorian

MOLALLA — The Astoria Fishermen are tuning up for what they hope will be a big run in the state playoffs, as they scored their second straight win Friday night, 21-12 at Molalla.

Astoria climbs to No. 11 in the OSAA rankings, basically locking up a postseason spot. Molalla drops to 1-3 in league, while the Fishermen are 2-2 and host winless Valley Catholic (0-4) this Friday.

Both offenses struggled in the first half, which featured four punts, four failed fourth-down conversions and four turnovers.

Astoria scored twice in the second quarter on two touchdown passes from Bo Williams to Ian Hunt (23 and six yards), while the Indians scored on an 80-yard bomb from quarterback Damian Pingo.

There was more of the same in the second half, as Molalla turned the ball over three times on downs in the third quarter, and Astoria punted on four of its five possessions.

Ryan Stutznegger added a 2-yard scoring run midway through the fourth quarter. The Indians answered with a 62-yard touchdown pass, but Astoria’s Balan Kolee intercepted a pass on the next drive to secure the win.

SCOREBOARD

PREP SPORTS SCHEDULE

TODAY

Girls soccer — Astoria at Tillamook, 7:15 p.m.

FOOTBALL

	Banks 10, Seaside 7		
Banks	7	0	3
Seaside	0	0	7
First Quarter			
Ban: Martial Stegemeier 1 run (Jacob Slifka kick): :20			
Third Quarter			
Ban: Slifka 32 FG :30			
Fourth Quarter			
Sea: Alexander Teubner 6 run (Gio Ramirez kick) 5:57			

Team Statistics		
Banks	Seaside	
First downs	13	13
Rushes-yards	31-169	39-191
Passing yards	58	68
Total offense	227	259
Comp-Att-Int	8-16-0	7-20-0
Penalties	5-55	5-40
Turnovers	0	0

Banks Statistics

Rushing: Stegemeier 14-67, Markham 11-57, Vandehey 6-45. **Passing:** Vandehey 8-16-58-0. **Receiving:** Markham 3-24, H.Gobel 3-19, Turner 1-8, Cameron 1-7.

Seaside Statistics

Rushing: Al.Teubner 20-127, Westerholm 13-54, Ramirez 4-9, Johnson 1-2, Thompson 1-(-1). **Passing:** Westerholm 7-20-68-0. **Receiving:** Al.Teubner 3-29, Card 2-21, Thompson 1-13, Johnson 1-5.

Astoria 21, Molalla 12

Astoria	0	14	0	7—21
Molalla	0	6	0	6—12

Second Quarter

Ast: Ian Hunt 23 pass from Bo Williams (Taylor Palmberg kick)

Ast: Josh Olson 6 pass from Williams (Palmberg kick)

Mol: 80 pass from Damian Pingo (kick blocked)

Fourth Quarter

Ast: Ryan Stutznegger 2 run (Palmberg kick)

Mol: 62 pass from Pingo (run failed)

Knappa 34, Gaston 14

Knappa	22	12	0	0—34
Gaston	0	0	0	14—14

First Quarter

Kna: Eli Takalo 62 run (Takalo run)

Kna: Kanai Phillip run (pass failed)

Kna: Phillip 81 pass from Takalo (Takalo run)

Second Quarter

Kna: Takalo run (run failed)

Kna: Phillip 68 pass from Takalo (run failed)

Fourth Quarter

Gaston TD

Gaston TD

Neah-Kah-Nie 16, Warrenton 14

Warrenton	7	0	0	7—14
Neah-Kah-Nie	8	0	0	8—16

First Quarter

NKN: Mychal Kelly 4 run (Allen Pieper run)

War: Hordie Bodden 80 kick return (Kenz Ramsey kick)

Fourth Quarter

War: Austin Little 49 pass from Jacob Morrow (Ramsey kick)

NKN: 33 pass from Kelly (Josh Elinsky run)

Warrenton Statistics

Rushing: Jackson 12-62, Morrow 10-38, Bodden 5-36, Martinez 1-8, Greenawald 1-7. **Passing:** Morrow 7-18-134-2.

Receiving: Little 4-82, Martinez 2-57.

Neah-Kah-Nie Statistics

Rushing: Elinsky 16-93, A.Pieper 18-57, Kelly 10-25, K.Pieper 1-6. **Passing:** Kelly 4-10-84-0. **Receiving:** Elinsky 2-44, Porter 1-7, Kelly 1-3.