

Dawgs taking next step

In his fifth year Mike Frink has a talented golf team, and he's hoping this season will be when they finally figure that out.

So far, the qualifying scores have been significantly lower than they were last year at the same time, which has Frink encouraged.

He also said their mental game is better than it's ever been.

Last year's, for lack of a better term, failure has motivated the six returning letterman, and the

team returns with the same goal of a top-four finish at state.

"One thing we're going to work on is team unity and building up team members instead of analyzing this as an individual sport. For us to get back to the state tournament, more than likely (it's) going to have to be as a team."

A year older and more mature, Frink said it is showing in the team's work ethic. Then there's Crafton, who's won a state championship in football.

"I think that brings an element of experience that the other kids haven't had yet," Frink said. "He's actually shared that with them."

Long off the tee, Crafton earned team medalist honors in 2013 with the lowest average score, and Zac Adams took it last year, But Paden La Coursiere was the only Bulldog to win a tournament last year.

"Team-wise, it was all there," Frink said of last year. "We just couldn't put it all together to bring home a bunch of wins."

Mustangs return key pieces

The OSAA has consolidated its conferences this season, going from six to four in Class 3A-1A boys golf and from seven to four in Class 4A-1A girls golf.

The increase in competition at the district championships shouldn't be too much of an issue for the Mustangs, however, which bring back three of their top four golfers on both teams.

The boys shot 45 strokes lower than any of their new conference foes at state last season, and return No. 1 Logan Grieb, as well as their No. 3 and 4. The team will look to fill its empty roster spot with junior Brian Rill, who comes over from the baseball team as he continues to recover from a football injury that wiped out his basketball season.

The girls lost their stalwart No. 1, and also have an instant challenger for their throne if Ontario can fill its holes around senior Riley Helmick, who placed sixth at state last year.

Heppner starts in better shape, though, and seniors Paige Grieb and Maddie Lindsay finished within three shots of each other inside the state's top 25 last year.

HEPPNER GOLF

Coach: Greg Grant, 25th year

Postseason story: The Mustangs won dual district titles to advance both teams to the state championships. The girls placed second and the boys placed eighth.

Key returners: (Boys), Logan Grieb, soph.; Jesse Corbin, sr.; John Prophet, sr.; (Girls) Maddie Lindsay, sr.; Emily Rea, jr.; Paige Grieb, sr.



2015 Schedule

Thu., March 19	at Willow Creek (Heppner)	2 p.m.
Fri., March 20	at Echo Hills (Echo)	10 a.m.
Sun., March 29	at Quail Valley (Banks)	10 a.m.
Mon., March 30	at Pumpkin Ridge (Portland)	Noon
Fri., April 3	at Pendleton CC	9 a.m.
Mon., April 6	at Wildhorse (Pendleton)	10 a.m.
Fri. April 10	at Wildhorse (Pendleton)	10 a.m.
Tue., April 14	at La Grande CC	1 p.m.
Fri. April 17	at John Day GC	10 a.m.
Thu., April 30	at Willow Creek (Heppner)	3 p.m.
Fri., May 1	at Buffalo Peak (Union)	11 a.m.
Fri., May 8	at Alpine Meadows (Enterprise)	11 a.m.
Mon. May 11	at Districts (Pendleton CC)	8 a.m.
Tues. May 12	at Districts (Pendleton CC)	8 a.m.

BULLDOG BOYS

Coach: Mike Frink, 5th year

Postseason story: The Bulldogs were left unsatisfied with a sixth-place team finish at the state tournament.



Key returners: Keegan Crafton, sr.; Paden La Coursiere, sr.; Zac Adams, sr.; JD Thacker, sr.; Jared Thacker, soph.; Anders Lind, soph.

2015 Schedule

Fri., March 20	at The Dalles CC	10 a.m.
Mon., March 23	at Blackrock GC (Grandview)	9 a.m.
Fri., April 3	at Eagle Crest/Ridge (Redmond)	9 a.m.
Mon., April 6	at Wildhorse GC (Pendleton)	Noon
Mon., April 13	at Bend CC	9 a.m.
Thu., April 16	at Pendleton CC	9 a.m.
Mon., April 20	at Tetherow GC (Bend)	10 a.m.
Fri., April 24	at Meadow Lakes GC (Prineville)	11 a.m.
Sat., April 25	at Big River GC (Umatilla)	9 a.m.
Wed., April 29	at Indian Creek GC (Hood River)	10 a.m.
Tue., May 5	at Big River GC (Umatilla)	10 a.m.
Mon., May 11	Regionals at Eagle Crest GC (Redmond)	TBD
Tue., May 12	Regionals at Eagle Crest GC (Redmond)	TBD

Welch leads attack on expanded district

The Hermiston girls return four players from last season's state team as they attempt to push to the top of the district leaderboard.

Leading the surge is senior Madison Welch, who placed 20th at state as a junior and dropped five strokes from her average over the summer.

"She's been consistent, right where she left

off," said head coach Josh Browning of practice rounds.

Welch is one of five seniors for Browning's first season as head coach after spending three as an assistant, but he said there are some talented underclassmen that won't let the team become complacent.

"We've got a couple younger kids that can push those (seniors) and

could possibly make the varsity team," he said.

Another factor that should keep the Bulldogs on their toes is the new district lines that have separated the state into two massive leagues. Along with nearby Pendleton, the Bulldogs will now have to contend with last year's No. 1 and 2 state finishers — Summit and Bend — at their district tournament.

BULLDOG GIRLS

Coach: Josh Browning, 1st year

Postseason story: Hermiston finished second at the district tournament, then sixth at state with a two-round team score of 820.



Key returners: Madison Welch, sr.; Taunie Brock, sr.; Saige Smith, sr.; Lyndsee Anderson, sr.

2015 Schedule

Tue., March 17	at Indian Creek (The Dalles)	10 a.m.
Fri., April 3	at Eagle Ridge GC (Redmond)	Noon
Mon., April 6	at Wildhorse GC (Pendleton)	Noon
Thu., April 9	at Pendleton CC	Noon
Sun., April 12	at Broken Top GC (Bend)	Noon
Mon., April 13	at Broken Top GC (Bend)	Noon
Tue., April 21	at Big River GC (Umatilla)	9:30 a.m.
Fri., April 24	at Wandemere GC (Spokane)	Noon
Tue., April 28	at Trysting Tree (Corvallis)	Noon
Thu., May 7	at Regionals/Eagle Ridge GC (Redmond)	Noon
Fri., May 8	at Regionals/Eagle Ridge GC (Redmond)	Noon

ECHO GOLF

Coach: Ernie Kern, 1st year

Postseason story: The Cougars did not have any players reach the state tournament last season.

Key to the season: The Cougars must find consistency under their second new coach in as many seasons.

2015 Schedule

Fri., March 20	at Echo Hills GC	10 a.m.
Fri., April 3	at Pendleton CC	9 a.m.
Fri., April 10	at Wildhorse GC	Noon
Fri., April 17	at Echo Hills GC	10 a.m.
Fri., April 24	at Big River GC	10 a.m.
Fri., May 1	at Union	10 a.m.
Mon. May 11	at Districts (Pendleton CC)	8 a.m.
Tues. May 12	at Districts (Pendleton CC)	8 a.m.

IONE TENNIS

Coach: Maureen McElligott, 11th year
Key returner: (Boys) Kai Arbogast, jr.

2015 Schedule

Tue., March 31	at Riverside	4 p.m.
Thu., April 2	at Stanfield	4:30 p.m.
Tue., April 7	at Umatilla	3:30 p.m.
Thu., April 9	vs Condon/Wheeler	4 p.m.
Fri., April 10	at Mac-Hi	3 p.m.
Tue., April 14	vs Helix	4 p.m.
Thu., April 16	at Weston-McEwen	4 p.m.
Tue., April 21	vs Riverside	4 p.m.
Thu., April 23	vs Sherman	4 p.m.
Fri., April 24	at Helix	4 p.m.
Tue., April 28	vs Stanfield	4:30 p.m.
Thu., April 30	at Condon/Wheeler	4 p.m.
Fri., May 1	vs Umatilla	Noon
Sat., May 2	Helix Tourney (at Hermiston)	9 a.m.
Tue., May 5	at Sherman	4 p.m.
Thu., May 7	vs Weston-McEwen	4 p.m.
Fri.-Sat., May 8-9	at Districts (Hermiston)	9 a.m.
Fri.-Sat., May 15-16	at Regionals (Kennewick)	9 a.m.

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