

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

WEEKEND, OCTOBER 31-NOVEMBER 1, 2015

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Sports shorts

Mariota to miss second straight game

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Quarterback Marcus Mariota is close to a return from his knee injury, just not this week for the Tennessee Titans.

The Titans announced Friday that they will hold Mariota out for a second straight game Sunday. Zach Mettenberger will start at Houston.

"He made a lot of progress this week," coach Ken Whisenhunt said. "I think he's close, but we're not going to play him this week. I think that's the best decision for him, and that's what we're going to go with."

Japan's Uchimura makes case for best ever at worlds

GLASGOW, Scotland (AP) — This isn't about history for Kohei Uchimura. This is about national pride, the perpetual chase of perfection and respect for his own considerable gifts.

Whether the Japanese star is the greatest male gymnast ever remains up for debate, though perhaps not for much longer. The sixth world title he won Friday night came with as much ease as any of the five that came before it.

There was never a doubt. Not from the near flawless opening floor exercise at the start of the night to the slightly watered down high bar routine that ended with Uchimura nailing the landing as if his feet were suctioned to the mat.

When his final score of 92.332 points was posted — more than 1.6 better than Cuban teenager Manrique Lardue and China's Deng Shudi — the relentlessly self-controlled 26-year-old held up six fingers and flexed.

"It's a combative game played by combative people. I don't know that those are red flags in the game of football."

— **John Fox**
Chicago Bears head coach discussing the release of DT Jeremiah Ratliff on Oct. 22, a day after he threatened team staff and reportedly said "I am the devil" and that he "felt like killing everybody in the building" according to a police report released Friday. Fox said there had been no prior incidents with Ratliff, who started Chicago's last two games at nose tackle after serving a three-game suspension for violating the NFL's substance abuse policy.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1987 — Jockey Chris Antley becomes the first rider to win nine races in a single day. He has four winners in six mounts at Aqueduct and five winners from eight tries during The Meadowlands' evening program.

1999 — Tim Couch completes a desperation 56-yard touchdown pass to Kevin Johnson with no time on the clock to give the expansion Cleveland Browns their first victory, a 21-16 win over New Orleans.

Contact us at 541-966-0838 or sports@eastoregonian.com

WAR ON 84

Bulldogs beat Bucks for crown

Hunsaker, defense lead Hermiston over Pendleton to win league championship

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — For the fourth-straight season, the Hermiston Bulldogs are Columbia River Conference champions.

And for the fourth-straight year, the Bulldogs defeated the Pendleton Buckaroos in the 'War on 84' to do so, defeating the Bucks 28-12 on Friday night.

"It feels great," said Hermiston quarterback Nathan Hunsaker after the game. "Way better than earlier this season. We're digging ourselves out (of the hole.)"

The road the Bulldogs (4-5, 3-0 CRC) took to get here wasn't the one most traveled, but this season it was one that still worked.

On Oct. 2, Hermiston suffered a 42-10 loss to Coeur d'Alene to drop the Bulldogs to an 0-5 start to the season and made a playoff spot near impossible. Now fast-forward 28 days later and the Bulldogs rattled off four-straight wins to wrap up the season and gives the team some steam heading into the postseason.

"It keeps momentum building and confidence for players," said Hunsaker. "We were pretty inexperienced players coming into the season, and confidence helps and keeps our streak alive."

Hunsaker's performance at quarterback was what lifted the Bulldogs to victory, carrying the ball 13 times for 158 yards and three touchdowns as well as tossing for 145 yards and one touchdown.

"He did a great job, we're really excited about him," said Hermiston coach David Faaeteete. "He did a great job running the offense and had some big running touchdowns, it was beautiful."

While Hunsaker had a big game offensively in the first half, the Buckaroo defense clamped down on the Bulldogs run game in the second half, limiting them to just 75 yards on 18 carries, and limiting the Bulldogs offense to zero points as well.

"I think it was just gut check time for them," said Pendleton coach Erik Davis. "The things were already in place for them to be successful, and I think they just executed much better. I think our kids just showed a lot of guts defensively in the second half."

On the offensive side for Pendleton (3-6, 1-2 CRC), the Buckaroos could not get much going. The Buckaroos had just 68 yards



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Hermiston quarterback Nathan Hunsaker breaks out of the pocket and rushes the ball Friday in the Bulldogs' 28-12 win against the Bucks in Pendleton.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Hermiston's Hayden Simon dives through the line Friday in the Bulldogs' 28-12 win against the Bucks in Pendleton.

of offense in the first half, and quarterback Kai Quinn only completed six of his 19 pass attempts as the Bulldogs defense was constantly putting pressure on the Bucks' QB.

"That was one of our big keys of the game was to make him uncomfortable in the pocket," said Faaeteete. "He completed a fair share though and kudos to him."

Quinn finished the game 14-36 for 113 yards with two interceptions and one touchdown. The lone Buckaroo touchdown came on a four-yard pass from Quinn to Nick Lani with just 17 seconds remaining in the game to get the score to the 28-12 final.

"I've always been confident that we could put some points on the

board, and we just weren't able to do that until the last-second," said Davis.

The only other Buckaroos score came early in the second quarter, when Bucks' linebacker Marcus Taylor intercepted a pass from Hunsaker and ran it back 64-yards for a touchdown — Taylor's second pick-six of the season. The extra point was no good, which put the score at 7-6 in favor of the Bulldogs.

"I saw the left side of the line come across for the screen pass block," said Taylor after the game. "I've been studying it so hard this week, I jumped up and didn't even see the wide receiver come across, and just saw (the ball) bounce off his helmet right into my hands and it was just off to the races."

It appeared the interception might be a momentum changer for the Buckaroos, but Bulldogs quickly answered with an eight-

See BULLDOGS/2B

Prep Football

Mustangs win defensive battle for league title

Heppner shuts down Weston-McEwen to stay undefeated

East Oregonian

ATHENA — The Weston-McEwen TigerScots defense rolled out another strong performance, but it was the Heppner Mustangs defenders that had the final say in Friday's Columbia Basin Conference football finale.

The league-champion Mustangs held a team scoreless for the second time this season in a 20-0 win that saw the TigerScots gain just 118 yards from scrimmage.

The TigerScots (6-3, 3-2 CBC) ran just 34 offensive plays and gained just five first downs in the game. Weston-McEwen was held to 13 rushing yards.

"Credit goes to Heppner's defense. They did a phenomenal job," said Weston-McEwen coach T.J. Bailey. "Heppner is a great team, and for us to hold them to 20 points, and play them as tough as we did, it's tough to get the loss. After this game our boys were extremely



Staff photo by Kathy Aney
Three TigerScots, Lake Albert (15), Tyler Cain (16) and Ethan Reger, bring down Tommy Bredfield, of Heppner, during Friday's Columbia Basin Conference game in Athena.

disappointed, which is great because you know that they care.

"This shows us what type of team we are, but it shows how we have to improve to compete with a team like Heppner."

The shutout looked like it would

be a necessity as the teams headed into halftime with Heppner (9-0, 5-0 CBC) leading just 8-0.

Heppner took the lead with only 1:32 to play before halftime when Kaden Clark found Logan Grieb for a 26-yard completion, then C.J.

Kindle ran in the two-point conversion.

But Heppner coach Greg Grant said turnovers and penalties kept the offense stalled on its first five drives, which amassed just 23 plays and 75 yards and ended punt, fumble, downs, punt, punt.

"To their credit, every time we seemed to do something right we would have a penalty or a mistake, but (Weston-McEwen) played hard. I think they defended us better than anybody has this season," Grant said. "It felt like a game where, gosh our defense is going to keep putting us in position and we're going to keep screwing it up."

But Heppner's offensive line reasserted itself in the third quarter and the Mustangs scored a touchdown on their first drive in the second half which Kindle finished off with a one-yard run.

Then three runs later, on 3rd-and-20 Clark found Grieb on a 30-yard pass that Grieb took to the house for a 71-yard score. Both conversions failed to make it 20-0 with 6:56 left in the game.

"We stepped up in the second

See PREP FOOTBALL/2B