

HEPPNER

Mustang mission complete

Heppner caps dominant season with championship blowout

By ERIC SINGER
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — In an interview on Tuesday afternoon, Heppner Mustangs senior Weston Putman said all he wanted to do was give head coach Greg Grant a state championship.

On a cold Saturday night Kennison Field in Hermiston, Putman and his Mustangs teammates did just that — and in pretty convincing fashion.

The No. 2 seed Heppner squad dominated the No. 4 seed Kennedy Trojans from start-to-finish on its way to a 48-0 win to earn the OSAA Class 2A state championship — the school’s first title since 1992.

“We’ve had a mission all year long, and just to finally say we’ve done it is a crazy feeling, I don’t even know what to think right now,” Putman said with a wide grin. The game turned out to be the complete opposite of the 2014 state championship game, in which Heppner (12-0) was on the opposite side of a blowout, falling 49-0 to Burns.

But this was the perfect ending to what has been a completely dominant season for the Mustangs, who’s smallest margin of victory this year has been a whopping 20 points.

“My team showed up to play, they were really ready and they have been through the whole playoffs,” said Grant. “This is a special group. This is my 26th year here and we just haven’t had quite as dominant as a team as these guys were.”

Offensively, Heppner had its way with a really good Kennedy (10-2) defense — minus the first possession in which Heppner accrued a total of minus-6 yards and a quick three-and-out. But after that drive, the Heppner offensive line won the battle of the trenches, the running backs ran with ease, and quarterback Kaden Clark had an easy day throwing the ball.

The first scoring drive covered 68 yards on 10 plays that was capped off on a direct snap to running back C.J. Kindle who plunged three



Heppner coach Greg Grant gives a hug to senior Saul Erickson as time runs off the clock in the Mustangs’ 48-0 rout against Kennedy in the state 2A championship game Saturday in Hermiston.



Heppner’s Patrick Collins tackles Kennedy’s Angel Mendez in the Mustangs’ 48-0 rout against the Trojans in the state 2A championship game Saturday in Hermiston.

yards into the end zone to give the Mustangs an early 6-0 lead. Kindle — a senior — would go on to score four more touchdowns and gain 144 all-purpose yards in the game to earn game MVP honors.

“That was all due to the lineman,” said Kindle, “oh man those holes were big and all the room in the

world to run. We just stuck to the little things we need to do, did our jobs and they were great.”

The Mustangs really opened the game up in the second quarter, putting up 28 points to open up a 34-0 lead on Kennedy that the Mustangs would take into halftime. Defensively, the game was



Heppner’s Logan Grieb tries to break free from Kennedy’s Bishop Mitchell (25) and Dylan Arritola in the Mustangs’ 48-0 rout.

another showcase of what was arguably the best defense in Class 2A. The Mustangs were tasked with facing a pair of tough Kennedy

running backs in Bishop Mitchell and Jacob Lopez, as well as quarterback Brett Traeger, and handled

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MLS

Timbers to play for first title



Portland Timbers midfielder Diego Valeri, middle, kisses the trophy after winning the MLS soccer western conference championship Sunday in Frisco, Texas.

Portland advances to MLS Cup by edging FC Dallas

Associated Press

FRISCO, Texas — Defender Nat Borchers stepped up for the Portland Timbers with an MLS Cup spot in the line.

The Timbers had seen a three-goal

lead in their Western Conference finals dwindle to a lone goal, and FC Dallas’ Blas Perez had a shot to tie the series in stoppage time— until Borchers got in the way.

“It was just a reaction for sure,” Borchers said. “I just had to make a

quick decision, and somehow I made the block.”

Then at the other end, Portland’s Lucas Melano scored for a 2-2 tie in the match Sunday and a 5-3 series victory on aggregate goals.

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OUR VIEW

Football season a good one in Eastern Oregon

We can officially say ‘adios’ to the 2015 prep football season in Eastern Oregon.

Five of the six OSAA classifications played its championship games on Saturday, with the Heppner Mustangs finishing out the night with a blowout win over the Kennedy Trojans in the 2A title.

It was a complete script flip of the championship game just one year ago, when the Mustangs were the ones on the wrong side of the blowout, falling to Burns 49-0.

While the 2015 Mustang seniors were still proud of their second place accomplishment last season, they knew that for their senior year they needed to go the extra step and work the extra mile to become the ones holding the championship trophy.

That work started all the way back in June with various football camps and workouts — and one workout between seniors Weston Putman and C.J. Kindle that helped lay a foundation for success in



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Comment

2015. “In June we had a football camp and me and CJ were doing some tire flips and were going to stop one rep short,” said Putman following the game Saturday. “Then I looked at CJ and just said “state championship” and so we finished that rep and it’s that kind of work that paid off and we saw it today.”

The Mustangs carried that work ethic and mentality throughout the rest of the summer and into the season, and played out one of the most dominant seasons long-time Heppner coach Greg Grant has seen during his tenure.

“This is a special group,” he said following the game Saturday. “This is my 26th year here, and we just haven’t had quite as dominant as a team as these guys were.”

Heppner dominated on both sides of the football, averaging 52 points per game on offense — third most in the entire state of Oregon outside of 1A schools — and only allowed

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