

Volleyball Grizzlies start off well at Umatilla jamboree

East Oregonian

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UMATILLA — More prep volleyball teams swung into action on Friday afternoon, as the Umatilla Vikings hosted several local schools for a preseason jamboree — Riverside, Stanfield, Heppner, and Helix to be exact.

And although the games did not count, coaches and players were happy to get into game action and away from intrasquad scrimmages to see what they can really bring to the table. One of those was the Helix Grizzlies and first-year coach Dianna Anderson.

“It was nice to see us play against someone else since we had only been playing our own JV,” Anderson said. “It was really nice, too, to play teams out of our league and out of the (Class) 1A ... the girls played great and really battled.”

Helix played the Riverside Pirates first, and coasted to a two-set win 25-10 and 25-6 and then followed up with a tough win over Umatilla in two sets as well, 28-26 and 25-10. Helix then suffered its only loss of the day at the hands of the Heppner Mustangs 25-14, but rebounded for a 25-16 win over Stanfield.

No other scores from the

College Volleyball EASTERN OREGON 3, CARROLL 0 — At Butte, Montana, the Eastern Oregon Mountaineer volleyball team won a tough match against Carroll at the Big Sky Invitational on Friday afternoon.

EOU (4-1) won with scores of 25-17, 25-23, and 25-22. Junior Amanda Miller was the team’s high scorer on offense with 16 kills.

EASTERN OREGON 3, MSU-NORTHERN 0 — At Butte, Montana, the EOU stayed hot at the Big Sky Invitational with a clean sweep of MSU-Northern on Friday night.

The Mountaineers won 25-16, 25-14, and 25-20 on Friday, hitting .369 as a team to put MSU-Northern away. The offensive attack was spread throughout the lineup, as five players posted five kills or more led by junior Amanda Miller with 14.

Other stat leaders include senior Rachelle Chamberlain with 31 assists and sophomore Holli Mullins tallied 12 digs. With the win, EOU improves to 28-5 in the month of August dating back to the 2013 season.

MARINERS: Seager misses third straight game, expected back today

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that,” he said. Sale struck out six straight in the sixth and seventh innings, one shy of Joe Cawley’s team record.

Franklin Gutierrez hit a solo home run in the second and Adam Lind added an RBI double off in the fourth off Sale.

“Thank God we did it early because as everybody saw, when he gets on a roll it’s like lights out,” Mariners manager Scott Servais said of Sale. “He’s obviously one of the best pitchers in the league for a reason. We had no chance, really, after the fourth and fifth inning.”

Todd Frazier’s 32nd home run in the seventh was one of eight hits off Hernandez until he left with the bases loaded.

Diaz then struck out the side in the ninth for his 11th save in as many tries.

“I got like four days off and I was a starter before,” Diaz said of the extra work with Seattle’s short bullpen. “I got the starter’s mentality sometimes.”

Hernandez, a six-time All-Star, entered leading the AL in ERA (2.95) since 2012. Sale, a five-time All-Star, was tops in that period in strikeouts (1,065).

Sale started for the AL in the All-Star Game this year after Hernandez did in 2015.



AP Photo/Kamil Krzaczynski

Seattle Mariners’ Franklin Gutierrez celebrates with teammates after hitting a home run off Chicago White Sox’ Chris Sale during the second inning of a baseball game, Friday, Aug. 26, 2016, in Chicago.

Gutierrez sent Sale’s 97 mph fastball into the seats in right-center in the second and the Mariners added another run on a double play in the third.

Nelson Cruz singled and scored on Lind’s double in the fourth.

TRAINER’S ROOM

Mariners: Seager (foot) missed a third straight game, but said he was

“definitely getting better” and was expected back Saturday. Servais said when Seager returns they’ll switch out a position player for a 12th pitcher.

UP NEXT

Chicago’s Jose Quintana (10-9), holder of the AL’s third-best ERA at 2.84, faces fellow LHP Ariel Miranda (1-0, 5.49) on Saturday.

BULLDOGS: Will play central Oregon team for first time since 2012 season

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until the game was decided in the fourth quarter, losing 42-10 and falling to 0-5.

“It’s totally a mental thing,” Caldwell, an all-conference lineman as a junior, said. “We were in shape, we were ready, it was just all mental.”

The Bulldogs finished their next game, though, and picked up their first win in double overtime beating Sandy 13-7 after safety Vaemu Ena ended both the Pioneers’ overtime possessions with interceptions and senior fullback Omar Garcia plowed in from two yards out to begin what would be a four-game winning streak.

Despite all of their early-season struggles, Hermiston held on to its crown in the Columbia River Conference with a third-straight league title and qualified for its 12th-straight postseason.

But once there the Bulldogs couldn’t put a satisfying finish on the season and lost 49-14 to Wilsonville in a game that was never close.

Head coach David Faaeteete, who enters his second season after seven on former coach Mark Hodges’ staff, said the team has been emphasizing the “F” word since the start of off-season activities.

“It was actually brought up at our team camp when (senior linebacker) John Henry (Line) said, ‘Hey, guys we didn’t do a great job of finishing games last year. We’ve got to finish,’” Faaeteete said. “Everyone here on this field knows that we didn’t show up like we wanted to (last season), we never finished the games like we wanted to. We would start early and hang with teams and then pitter-patter at the

Hermiston football coach David Faaeteete addresses the team during a practice on Tuesday, Aug. 23 at Kennison Field in Hermiston.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris



end either because we’d run out of gas or guys not being into it. But this year’s a little different. There’s a lot of guys that want so bad to prove that they belong.”

Senior wide receiver Tucker Salinas, one of team’s top returning offensive threats who averaged 11.3 yards a catch and had three touchdowns as a junior, said he’s definitely noticed the difference.

“This year’s completely different from last year,” he said during an early practice. “Everybody’s showing up, we’re holding each other accountable. We’re wanting to be better this year.”

“I think we think we can do something good this year, like make a deep playoff run,” Line said. “I think it makes us want to work harder and show that we’re not just some Hermiston team from a weak conference. We want to compete and show everybody we’re a good team.” The Bulldogs will certainly get that chance this season as they move into the eight-team Special District 1 along with Pendleton, Hood River

and the five teams from the Intermountain Conference. The Dalles has not joined the league and will play an independent schedule.

It means more travel for the Bulldogs, who will thankfully only take the bus to central Oregon twice, although it’s in back-to-back weeks Oct. 14 and 21.

“I don’t know if I’m happy with the schedule, but it’s a good schedule,” Faaeteete said. “(Traveling is) part of what we’ve got to do in our league, but the league is great. Great teams, great coaches.

“We’ve always wanted more league games than not because we look at our RPI and it goes down because we’re not playing 5A teams. The first 5A team we play might have a losing record and then we’re at the bottom of the RPI list. It’s definitely going to help us in the rankings system.”

Hermiston hasn’t played a central Oregon team since the 2012 season, but transfer senior linebacker Damien McLeod comes to the Bulldogs from new SD1

foe Ridgeview and said he knows exactly what they should expect.

“Definitely ground and pound. The IMC teams (line up) double tight (end), they run the ball down the gut,” he said. “They’re tough teams, but I’ve played them my whole life and I have no doubt we can hang.”

Hermiston holds its intrasquad scrimmage today at Kennison Field from 9-11 a.m. The Bulldogs open the season on Friday, Sept. 2 when they host Union (WA) at 7 p.m.

A few more things to consider this season:

OFFENSIVE VARIETY: Sophomore quarterback Andrew James has earned the trust of his teammates, and should have no shortage of playmakers to get the ball to.

“We’re pretty comfortable with him because it seems like he knows what he’s doing,” said senior running back Mitch Brown, who is one of the team’s top returning rushers after averaging 6.8 yards per carry for 325 yards and four

touchdowns last season.

Faaeteete said Brown and junior Jonathan Hinkle should get the bulk of the carries from the backfield, but he’s also looking for a similar balance to last season that saw seven players record at least 20 carries.

Faaeteete said he expects the passing game to be just as varied. Senior H-back Jerry Ramirez averaged 12.3 yards a catch for 307 total and five touchdowns as a junior, and Neal could line up anywhere.

“We really do have size and speed and guys we can put in multiple spots,” Faaeteete said. “The ability to move Dayshawn around and not just be behind quarterback definitely gives us an advantage as well.”

EYE ON THE LINE: Two new starters on the right side of the offensive line will be under the microscope early.

“It all starts with the line. We’ve got to open our holes and we need to stick together,” Brown said.

“I think they’re going to come along,” Faaeteete said. “We’re coaching them pretty hard, getting after them a little bit and they’re better than sometimes we see in practice. We go back on film and they’re doing things right, we just want them to come along a little faster. But they’re young, there’s always a learning curve.”

EXPERIENCED DEFENSE: An all-state honorable mention last season, Ena (40 tackles, five interceptions) leads a defense that also returns starting safety Joey Gutierrez (42 tackles, one interception) and linebacker Line (55 tackles, 5.5 tackles for loss). Cornerback Tyler

Rohrman also saw starting duty at times last season, and McLeod joins the line-backing unit with starting varsity experience.

The big question mark is at defensive line, where the Bulldogs don’t return a single player that recorded a sack in 2015. Faaeteete said senior tackle AJ Fernandez has stood out in practices, though.

“Our linebacking core is strong,” McLeod said. “We’ve got a lot of heavy hitters in there. Our defensive line is getting there, we’re all getting smarter as a unit.”

PROGRAM GROWING: The Bulldogs are still riding the wave of their 2014 state title and Faaeteete said things are about to get very crowded on the Hermiston practice field.

“When I first got here I think we had 56 guys and it’s slowly building from there. It starts in the weight room, in the hallways to get them here,” he said. “Slowly but surely our numbers gets to 70, 80, 90, 100. I think our numbers right now are about 94 or 95 with another 10 to 20 kids coming out when school starts.”

“I don’t know if we have 20 more helmets to give out, but we’ll definitely find a way to get it done.”

2016 Schedule		
Sept. 2	vs Union (WA)	7 p.m.
Sept. 9	at Leviston (ID)	7 p.m.
Sept. 16	vs Mountain View*	7 p.m.
Sept. 23	vs Summit*	7 p.m.
Sept. 30	at Hood River*	7 p.m.
Oct. 7	vs Ridgeview*	7 p.m.
Oct. 14	at Bend*	7 p.m.
Oct. 21	at Redmond*	7 p.m.
Oct. 28	vs Pendleton*	7 p.m.

*-League game

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BUCKAROOS: Will travel more than 2,000 miles for their six away games

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junior Shaw Jerome (8 catch, 83 yards, 1 TD), Tanner Stephan (7 catch, 94 yards), Nick Lani (26 catch, 538 yards, 2 TD) and Sebatzian Corona (17 catch, 170 yards, 1 TD) that will keep opposing defenses busy.

To help Bower’s progression, Davis says the usually pass-happy offense’s goal early-on will be to establish consistent success with its ground game, and the Bucks have the talent in the backfield to do so. The Buckaroos return their backfield trio of seniors Gabe Walker, Devan Page, and Jamal Van, though Page is out for at least five weeks as he recovers from a foot injury suffered in practice last week. Page was the team’s leading rusher of the three last year, gaining 297 yards on 80 carries with five touchdowns, while Vann ran for 242 yards and three touchdowns.

I truly believe we have to get a running game going

to allow (Bower) some time to adjust,” Davis said. “We have plenty of weapons, and it’s just a matter of giving Nick time. It’ll be balanced early on, and if we run the football as good as I know we can, it may tilt more in that direction as the season goes on.”

Page says he and the other backs are looking forward to the opportunity of having increased touches, though the 5-9, 190 pounder says his goal is to be the main carrier in the backfield this year. He put in extra offseason work to try and give himself an edge, and is confident his work is paying off.

“Gabe and Jamal, they always had speed over me so that was one thing I wanted to fix,” Page said.

He showed off that increased speed at the Buck Bowl and BBQ on Thursday evening, breaking off several long runs and outrunning the defense on one touchdown early in the varsity portion of the scrimmage.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton quarterback Nick Bower throws the ball on Thursday during the Buck Bowl & BBQ in Pendleton.

Defensively, the Buckaroos expect to be solid with their front seven, led by Page and Vann at defensive end and linebackers Cade Anderson, Greg Lee, and Grant Kennedy lurking just behind. Kennedy and Vann remain the team’s top two pass rushers, but will need to contribute more to ground prevention, which is the area that hurt Pendleton the most last season.

The Buckaroos certainly will not have an easy path to reach their postseason goal, as they move into the new 5A Special District 1 that mashes the Columbia River Conference and the InterMountain Conference (Summit, Bend, Ridgeview, Mountain View, Redmond). Pendleton’s familiar with several of the IMC teams, having played the likes of Summit, Bend, and Ridgeview last season,

and knows what lies ahead.

“It’s going to be a grind ... there won’t be a week off,” Davis said. “But what’s good about that is that we’re in a true conference, one with the last two 5A state champs coming out of the league with Summit and Hermiston. A lot of coaches have been looking forward to getting in a true conference and I believe if you make the top four teams here, then you really did something and definitely deserve to be in the playoffs and we’re up for the challenge.”

Page echoed Davis’ beliefs.

“I like the challenge because it shows that if we can beat (those schools) then we can really beat anybody,” Page said. “But yeah, it won’t be easy.”

ROAD WARRIORS

Adding to the Buckaroos challenge of playing in a new conference, Pendleton will play just three of its nine games at home this season — with the first home game

coming on Sept. 30 against Redmond.

“We understand the situation we’re in,” Davis said. “A lot of the kids actually enjoy playing on the road and seeing new places. The fact is we’re not in a position to be excuse makers so we’ll take what’s in front of us and see if we can steal some wins in those first few games.”

When all is said and done, Pendleton will have traveled more than 2,000 miles round-trip for its six road games this season, with the farthest haul being nearly 500 miles to Summit in Week 3.

2016 Schedule		
Sept. 2	at La Grande	7 p.m.
Sept. 9	at Putnam	7 p.m.
Sept. 16	at Summit*	7 p.m.
Sept. 23	at Ridgeview*	7 p.m.
Sept. 30	vs. Redmond*	7 p.m.
Oct. 7	at Mountain View*	7 p.m.
Oct. 14	vs. Hood River*	7 p.m.
Oct. 21	vs. Bend*	7 p.m.
Oct. 28	at Hermiston*	7 p.m.

*-league game

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