

BULLDOGS: Hermiston to roll out new look with black helmets

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“The guys are just ready to hit other people and compete,” he said. But do the coaches feel that the team is ready to play at its best on Friday? Faaeteete said that’s yet to be determined. “I think our coaching staff is ready and the guys know what they have to do,” he said. “Are they ready? In some aspects, but in other aspects of course they’re not, but it’s the first game. The first games are played with penalties and turnovers and usually the team that gets less penalties and turnovers usually wins.” “We’ll find out after Thursday night’s practice if we’re ready.” Game week has also

brought its challenges for the coaches, however. This week was also the first week of school for Hermiston, which has led to some mental lapses on the practice field. “It’s been up and down so far,” Faaeteete said. “This is when you find out a lot about the guys and they’re ready to compete ... this group has some experience but they’re still pretty young and they make some mistakes like being late to class or not bringing enough energy at practice and sometimes it affects the whole team.” Hermiston needs to have the mistakes figured out by Friday night, as they will have their hands full against a solid Union squad. The Titans, a Class 4A school out of Vancouver, Washington, is coming off of a 4-5 record in 2015 but on paper

has the looks of a solid and improved squad. “We don’t have any film on them, but I know they’re young, but very athletic and pretty big,” Faaeteete said. “They’ve got an athletic quarterback, a couple big running backs and a new coach that’s excited about his group.” Faaeteete said he expects the Titans to come right out of the gate and try to smack his Bulldogs in the mouth with its run game, which is where Union may hold the advantage on Friday night. Along its offensive line, Union deploys four players that have an average height of 6-2 and an average weight of 306 pounds. Hermiston’s linemen will have their hands full as they try and get to Titans senior quarterback Nehru Faalevao and soph-

omore running back Jojo Siofele — whom averaged six yards per carry as the No. 2 tailback a season ago. The Bulldogs second-year coach said that the team hasn’t been putting together a specific defensive gameplan for the Titans attack and is sticking to its strengths, though defensive coordinator Scott Hammond has been throwing some different things at them throughout the week. “It’s been pretty business-as-usual so far, but we’ll throw in some stuff as we go,” Faaeteete said. “Our defensive coordinator (Scott Hammond) is doing a good job of getting them prepared for anything they might see.” As far as Hermiston’s offense goes, the Bulldogs are expecting to have a balanced attack, but will

stay with what works as the game goes along. First year quarterback Andrew James is ready for his varsity debut, but Faaeteete said that getting a run game going early with running backs Mitch Brown and Jonathan Hinkle behind all-CRC linemen Kaden Caldwell and A.J. Fernandez is vital to their success. “We need to gain 2-3, 3-4 yards on first down so second down is easier to call,” he said. “Also that helps loosen up the quarterback.” The game kicks off at 7 p.m. at Kennison Field and will also be broadcast on 1360 KOHU. “It’s going to be a fun Friday night,” Faaeteete said. BULLDOGBLACKOUT Hermiston fans will see one big change on the field this season, as the Bull-

dogs team bid adieu to the “Vegas Gold” helmets that have protected players for numerous years. The Bulldogs had the helmets repainted in the offseason and will now sport matte black lids with shiny purple facemasks this season. Faaeteete said the change was a big hit for the players. “The senior class really wanted to go with a different helmet color this year, and I’m an Oregon guy, so it’s innovative,” Faaeteete said with a smile. “We’ve been Vegas gold for a while and every now and then it’s good to change things up a bit. Contact Eric Singer at esinger@eastoregonian.com or (541) 966-0839. Follow him on Twitter @ByEricSinger.

BUCKS: Jamboree served as good springboard for diving into season

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season. Add in four returning all-conference offensive linemen, first-team dual-threat wide receiver Zach Jacobs and GOL Coach of the Year Harold Shannon entering his second season at the helm, and the Buckaroos are expecting to see a very similar Tigers squad come kick-off. “They return a few really good kids and we expect it to be a little bit of a shootout, it always has been over there,” said Pendleton coach Erik Davis, who is 3-0 against the Tigers since taking over at Pendleton in 2012. “I expect us to see a tremendous athlete in the Peasley kid. We saw him last year and he caused us fits last year. You can

gameplan all you want, it’s just really hard to simulate that kind of athleticism and speed in a practice setting. So we’re prepared for a battle.” Peasley (6-foot-2, 180 pounds) was the only 4A sophomore to make the all-state list in 2015 after throwing for 1,753 yards and a 21-3 touchdown-to-interception ratio for the 9-2 Tigers. He added 12 rushing touchdowns as well, and containing the dual-threat junior will be Pendleton’s first priority. “We’re really watching that QB and just keeping everything tight (on defense),” said senior linebacker/offensive tackle Cade Anderson, adding the defensive keys are, “Keeping him from rolling outside and staying close on our coverages.” The Tigers, which were

ranked No. 8 in 4A in the Oregonian/OregonLive preseason media poll, will face a few more unknowns as most of Pendleton’s key offensive contributors from last season’s match-up won’t be on the field. Quarterback Kai Quinn (254 yards passing, 70 rushing) and receiver Trevor Sweet (six catches, 112 yards) are graduated, and running back Gabe Walker (68 yards, TD) starts the season on the injury list with an ankle sprain. It will be the first varsity start for junior quarterback Nick Bower, who also has three new starters in front of him on the offensive line. “I don’t know a whole lot about (La Grande) personally, but I trust the guys around me to help me make plays and be successful,” said Bower after

practice Wednesday. “I don’t really have a prediction for the game, we’re just going to go out there and execute the plays, do our job.” Davis is looking to get senior running backs Jamal Vann and Deven Page involved early to take pressure off Bower in his first start. “We have to allow Nick some time to adjust to the passing game,” he said. “We have two very, very capable running backs that are running hard right now.” Bower said the team was encouraged by its performance at a jamboree in Hood River last Friday that saw them play three different teams in scrimmages. “We’ve had a good week of practice and we’re going to clean everything up, just getting game-prepared. I

think the jamboree really helped us out getting up to game speed,” he said. “I don’t remember the scores because they didn’t keep it official but I had a good time. Offensive line did well, receivers did well, the whole team as a whole did well.” Davis said he also saw lots of positive things on the field in Hood River. “We started out slow, as expected. Just those first few snaps at varsity game speed, some of those kids’ eyes were a little bit big, but boy it didn’t take long to settle into a pretty good rhythm,” he said. “Defensively we flew around. I was really excited about where we are defensively.” Two more things Davis said could weigh heavily on the outcome Friday were

turnovers and penalties. “We’ve really cleaned up the turnover portion of it this last year, but the penalties still continue to haunt us,” he said. “So I think it’s been a focus with this group going into the fall that we’ve got to play clean and play hard. “We’re just trying to monitor that the best we can, but we’re not trying to pull the leash on these kids. We want them to fly around and be athletic. If things happen and we get flagged for it, we hope it’s going 100 percent and it’s not ill-intention, it’s just a matter of these kids trying to play hard.” Kick-off at Community Stadium is scheduled for 7 p.m. Contact Matt Entrup at mentrup@eastoregonian.com or (541) 966-0838.

BEAVERS: Teams last met in 1981

Continued from 1B

The Beavers were 2-10 last year, including 0-9 in Pac-12 play, and allowed an average of 37 points to rank 113th out of 127 FBS teams. Coach Gary Andersen overhauled the schemes on offense and defense, contributing to the growing pains. The best asset for the Beavers will be the passing game, with new quarterback Darell Garretson aided by a deep group of wide receivers. Garretson last played on Oct. 18, 2014, before a wrist injury ended his sophomore season at Utah State. That was two weeks after he engineered an upset of BYU, then ranked 18th in The Associated Press poll, on the road. Garretson completed 63 percent of his passes for Utah State. Three Beavers quarterbacks posted a collective 46.9 completion percent rate last year while Garretson sat

out as a transfer. “It’s a good feeling to have a guy that’s been in the moment,” Andersen said, adding: “I hope that it will be a calming feeling for some of the younger players who may be in the position to have a little more nerves than you’d want them to have.” Here are some key angles to know about the game: FAMILIAR FOE Minnesota and Oregon State have played only three times in history, last in 1981. Andersen was the coach at Wisconsin for two years before taking over the Beavers last season, though, so he’s well-versed in the Gophers and their style. “I don’t expect a whole lot of change. Tough, physical, play the game the right way. I think they’re well taught,” Andersen said, adding: “I don’t think a lot of people on the West Coast overall have an idea of how far that

program’s come.” TOP TARGETS Seth Collins has moved from quarterback to wide receiver after declaring his intent to transfer but ultimately staying put. Jordan Villamin led the Beavers last season with 660 yards and five touchdowns receiving. Speedy senior Victor Bolden is also back. “The receiving corps has to be a big part of who we are this year,” Andersen said. DEJA VU FOR DAMARIUS Minnesota safety Damarius Travis will take the field for his final home opener, for a second time. He played against TCU last season but hurt his hamstring and wound up with a medical redshirt. Travis was inspired by a recent drive by the stadium. “It kind of gave me chills just looking at it and thinking about playing in a game again,” he said.

SCOREBOARD

Local slate

PREP FOOTBALL

Today

Waitsburg (WA) at Mac-Hi, 7 p.m.

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Today

Mac-Hi at Helix, 4 p.m.
Echo at Heppner, 4 p.m.
Sherman at Heppner, 5 p.m.
Nixyaawii at Irrigon, 5 p.m.
Union at Umatilla, 5 p.m.
Riverside at Helix, 5:30 p.m.
Echo vs Sherman (at Heppner), 6 p.m.
Mac-Hi vs. Riverside (at Helix), 7 p.m.

PREP BOYS SOCCER

Today

Pendleton at Milwaukie, 4 p.m.

PREP GIRLS SOCCER

Today

Milwaukie at Pendleton, 4 p.m.

PREP CROSS COUNTRY

Saturday

Umatilla at Tillamook, Noon
Pendleton, Mac-Hi, Helix, Heppner,
Weston-McEwen, Stanfield at Hermiston,
12:55 p.m.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Saturday

Southern Oregon at Eastern Oregon,
6 p.m.

COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

Today

Blue Mountain at Olympic, 6 p.m.
College of Idaho at Eastern Oregon,
7 p.m.

COLLEGE MENS SOCCER

Today

Eastern Oregon at St. Katherine (CA),
1:30 p.m.

Football

NFL

Preseason

Today's Games

Jacksonville at Atlanta, 4 p.m.
Tennessee at Miami, 4 p.m.
New England at New York Giants, 4 p.m.
New York Jets at Philadelphia, 4 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Carolina, 4:30 p.m.
Indianapolis at Cincinnati, 4:30 p.m.
Buffalo at Detroit, 4:30 p.m.
Chicago at Cleveland, 5 p.m.
Houston at Dallas, 5 p.m.
Green Bay at Kansas City, 5 p.m.
Los Angeles at Minnesota, 5 p.m.
Baltimore at New Orleans, 5 p.m.
Denver at Arizona, 6:30 p.m.
Seattle at Oakland, 7 p.m.
San Francisco at San Diego, 7 p.m.

Baseball

MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Wednesday's Games

Detroit 3, Chicago White Sox 2
Boston 8, Tampa Bay 6
Texas 14, Seattle 1
Houston 4, Oakland 3
Toronto 5, Baltimore 3
Cleveland 8, Minnesota 4
N.Y. Yankees 5, Kansas City 4, 13 innings

Thursday's Games

Chicago White Sox (Quintana 11-9) at
Minnesota (Santana 6-10), 5:10 p.m.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Wednesday's Games

Colorado 7, L.A. Dodgers 0, 1st game
San Francisco 4, Arizona 2
L.A. Angels 3, Cincinnati 0
Washington 2, Philadelphia 1
Atlanta 8, San Diego 1
N.Y. Mets 5, Miami 2
Chicago Cubs 6, Pittsburgh 5
L.A. Dodgers 10, Colorado 8, 2nd game
Milwaukee 3, St. Louis 1

Thursday's Games

San Diego (Cosart 0-1) at Atlanta (Fol-

tynewicz 7-5), 9:10 a.m.
Miami (Urena 2-5) at N.Y. Mets (deGrom 7-7), 4:10 p.m.
San Francisco (Samardzija 11-9) at Chicago Cubs (Montgomery 4-5), 5:05 p.m.

Wild Card Standings

AMERICAN LEAGUE

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Boston	74	59	.556	+2
Baltimore	72	61	.541	—
Detroit	72	61	.541	—
Houston	71	62	.534	1
New York	69	63	.523	2½
Kansas City	69	64	.519	3
Seattle	68	65	.511	4

NATIONAL LEAGUE

	W	L	Pct.	GB
San Francisco	72	59	.550	+2
St. Louis	70	61	.534	—
Pittsburgh	67	63	.515	2½
New York	68	64	.515	2½

Basketball

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	19	8	.704	—
Atlanta	14	13	.519	5
Chicago	13	13	.500	5½
Indiana	12	14	.462	6
Washington	10	16	.385	8½
Connecticut	10	17	.370	9

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	22	5	.815	—
Los Angeles	21	5	.808	½
Phoenix	13	14	.481	9
Seattle	11	16	.407	11
Dallas	9	19	.321	13½
San Antonio	6	20	.231	15½

Wednesday's Game

Seattle 78, Dallas 66

Thursday's Games

New York at Indiana, 4 p.m.
Los Angeles at San Antonio, 5 p.m.

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