

NEAL:

Continued from 1B

would be called into action to replace Neal when an ankle injury ended his season prematurely.

With the position once again vacant coming into this season, it was assumed a healthy Neal would be in the Bulldogs’ plans. Faaeteete even listed him among the players trying to win the starting job during the preseason, which was actually the first Neal had heard of it.

“I saw that in the news too, he said there was like a four-way battle going on for quarterback and he said my name, and I was like, ‘Wait? No, nice try,’” he said.

What Faaeteete was keeping under wraps was that Neal was finally getting his wish with a full-time move to wide receiver.

In fact, Neal had been catching passes from sophomore Andrew James all summer long, and the offseason progress of the young quarterback was one catalyst for Neal’s position switch.

“We worked on that a lot in 7-on-7’s this summer, we went to tournaments, we played here a lot against Tri-Cities teams, just through that we’ve kind of developed a chemistry I guess,” Neal said. “He knows where I’m going to be, and if he’s throwing it to me I know where it’s going to be.”

That rapport was evident in Hermiston’s first game when Neal hauled in 12 passes for 212 yards and three touchdowns in a 36-27 loss to Union (WA) in James’ varsity debut.

“He just runs solid routes,” James said. “He knows how to get past people.”

Coming into the final week of the regular season Neal leads all 5A receivers with 43 receptions, is tied for first with 11 touchdowns and is second in yards with 766 (Thurston’s Tyson Haas leads with 791). He’s added three more 100-yard games and caught a season-high four touchdowns in a 54-0 win over Ridgeview. He’s also averaging 17.8 yards a catch with a long of 71.

When asked if he knew Neal was poised for such a breakout season, Faaeteete couldn’t help but chuckle.

“Yeah,” came the reply. “He’s a natural receiver, catches the ball well, when he’s focused it’s always good.

“He understands where to be when the ball is thrown. He understands the route concepts that we’re running, and Andrew does a good job of putting it on the money.”

Neal said he definitely didn’t come into the season thinking he would be among the state’s top receivers.

“I wouldn’t say I expected it, but I’m going with it. I mean, it’s fun,” he said. “First game I came out pretty hot. I was like, ‘Alright, I like where this is going.’ There’s ups and downs, but you’ve just got to keep rolling.”

Neal will join the rest of the Bulldogs as they look to keep rolling in their rivalry series with Pendleton on Friday. Hermiston has won the last four games in the annual meeting, and the teams will kick-off for the 91st time at 7 p.m. at Kennison Field in Hermiston.

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Prep Football

Three teams with a chance to advance

East Oregonian

The Umatilla Vikings, Echo Cougars and Arlington Honkers all face must-win scenarios in the final week of the high school football regular season.

However, only the Cougars and Honkers are guaranteed another game with a win on Friday.

Here’s a quick look at this week’s games for local 3A-1A teams:

UMATILLA (6-2, 2-2) at NYSSA (4-3, 3-1), 6 p.m. — The Vikings have struggled against the top teams the Eastern Oregon League, but will need to beat second-place Nyssa and hope Irrigon can beat Burns to earn a playoff game.

Umatilla rushed for 359 yards in a 33-13 win over Irrigon last week, and another game like

that would go a long way toward extending the Vikings season.

VALE (5-3, 4-0) at RIVERSIDE (1-7, 0-4), 7 p.m. — The Pirates closed their season with a stunning win over Nyssa last year, but No. 3 Vale is on a roll since edging Irrigon in overtime and has won its last two by a combined margin of 53 points.

IRRIGON (2-6, 1-3) at BURNS (5-3, 2-2), 7 p.m. — Irrigon lost its shot at the playoffs last week, but No. 12 Burns needs to win in order to have a chance at an at-large berth that will be awarded based on OSAA ranking.

It is the first time the schools have played each other in football.

PILOT ROCK (0-7, 0-3) at STANFIELD (7-1, 3-0), 7 p.m. — The Tigers won’t want a letdown after securing their first

league title in 59 years, and should be able to find some room to run against a Pilot Rock defense that has allowed and average of 35 points a game this season.

CULVER (2-5, 1-2) at WESTON-MCEWEN (2-5, 1-2), 7 p.m. — Weston-McEwen needed an 84-yard hook and ladder to provide the difference in a 13-8 win over Pilot Rock two weeks ago. Culver demolished the Rockets 61-18 last week. The TigerScots are coming off a bye.

IONE (1-7, 1-4) at SOUTH WASCO (2-5, 1-4), 7 p.m. — Whichever team wins will finish fifth in Special District 4, and both were blown out by Dufur their last time out.

Ione lost to the Rangers 62-0 last week, and South Wasco was beat 74-0 two weeks ago.

The Redsides didn’t play last

week because Mitchell/Spray/Wheeler forfeited their game.

JORDAN VALLEY (3-2, 1-2) at ECHO (4-3, 3-2), 7 p.m. — The winner earns a playoff berth and the loser ends their season in one of two big 8-man match-ups this week.

Echo has scored 52 points in three of its last four games, all wins. Jordan Valley has topped 50 just once all season.

PERRYDALE (4-3, 3-2) at ARLINGTON (5-2, 3-2), 7 p.m. — It’s rematch from last season’s finale in Perrydale where the Pirates claimed a playoff berth and ended the Honkers’ season with a 62-14 win.

Arlington will be hoping to return the favor this year as the teams battle for the third and final playoff spot out of Special District 4.

WORLD SERIES: Teams head to Chicago for Game 3

Continued from 1B

manger Theo Epstein.

Rizzo, the team’s longest-tenured position player, endured 101 losses in his first season with the Cubs in 2012, a six-month bout of misery that led to Chicago taking Bryant with the second pick in the 2013 amateur draft. Bryant’s arrival in the majors last spring helped propel Chicago to 97 wins and a spot in the NLCS, leading Zobrist — fresh off a championship with the Royals in 2015 — to

sign with the Cubs last winter.

There the three were in the heart of the order Wednesday, scoring four of Chicago’s five runs to move the Cubs within three wins of the franchise’s first World Series title in 108 years.

Bryant went hitless in his first Series game Tuesday night, though he was hardly alone as the Cubs managed little against Corey Kluber, Andrew Miller and Cody Allen.

The going wasn’t nearly as tough against Bauer, who pitched with the pinkie on his right hand still

recovering from a gash sustained while he was tinkering with a toy drone earlier in the playoffs.

Bryant ripped a single up the middle on a 2-2 pitch in the first and scored on Rizzo’s double. It was Chicago’s first run since the eighth inning of a Game 7 loss to Detroit in the 1945 World Series, a mere 44 years before Rizzo was born.

Rizzo walked and Zobrist singled in the third before Rizzo scored on a single by Kyle Schwarber to make it 2-0. In the fifth, Rizzo led off with a walk

and raced home on Zobrist’s hard triple into the right-field corner. Zobrist scored to make it 4-0 when Schwarber singled up the middle.

All of a sudden, an October night in Cleveland on baseball’s biggest stage felt like so many other games Chicago has played over the last six-plus months. Arrieta dominated, the lineup delivered and the crowd chanted “Let’s Go Cubs.”

All the way back to Chicago, where a chance to make history more than a century in the making awaits.

T-WOLVES: Hitters fare much better than last time against NIC

Continued from 1B

“It was pretty much in our control and there were just a couple hiccups here and there,” said BMCC sophomore Jordan Mix, who led the team with 14 kills. “(The win) was definitely attainable, we just fell a little short.”

Mix and her teammates were pleased with the improved effort they brought against the Cardinals, however, as the T-Wolves were swept 25-23, 25-15, and 25-12 in the team’s first meeting in September. In that match the Timberwolves hitting percentage was a lousy 0.082, while the team improved it to a respectful 0.201 on Tuesday.

“I don’t think anyone is hanging their head too much

over tonight,” Mix said. “I’m proud of the way we played and the energy we brought.”

The Timberwolves started off the match in a positive way Tuesday, battling through every point of the first set and not allowing the Cardinals to feed off of any momentum they were trying to grasp. Neither team held a lead larger than four points in the match, which was BMCC at 22-18 until NIC made its run to tie the match at 24-24.

The final stretch of the set saw eight set points — five for BMCC, three for NIC — until the Timberwolves finally finished off the win with a kill by Brooke Lomica for the victory. Lomica was second on the team with 13 kills — tied

with Kristin Williams.

After the Cardinals rallied to take the second and third set victories, the Timberwolves came out for the fourth set hungry to stay in it, taking its first lead of the set at 6-5 and then never relinquishing it the rest of the way to the 25-21 winner. It set up an exciting fifth set that played out just like the rest of the match — back-and-forth.

BMCC won two of the first three points until NIC started to gain some momentum with some powering kills from hitters Brooke Bell (16 kills) and Halle Hess (19 kills) to put the Cardinals up 6-4. BMCC was able to tie the game at 6-6 and 7-7 but then NIC went back and front

and kept the Timberwolves at bay for the rest of the set to earn the match victory.

BMCC will stay at home for its next match, when it hosts NWAC East leader Walla Walla on Friday at 6 p.m.

NIC (17-12, 12-2) 30 25 25 21 15 — 3
BMCC (17-16, 6-6) 32 19 22 25 12 — 2
Stat leaders
KILLS — NIC: H. Hess 19, B. Bell 16, K. Murray 16. BMCC: J. Mix 14, B. Lomica 13, K. Williams 13, S. Schreier 9, M. Perez 8.
ASSISTS — NIC: B. Gay 64. BMCC: K. Chavez 31, K. Cantu 28, J. Mix 1.
BLOCKS — NIC: S. Johnson 2, B. Bell 2, B. Gay 2. BMCC: K. Williams 4, S. Schreier 4, K. Buckner 3, M. Perez 2, B. Lomica 2, J. Mix 1.
DIGS — NIC: Z. Meenan 22, H. Hess 21, B. Gay 16. BMCC: A. Vreeland 21, M. Perez 15, J. Mix 13.

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PIGSKIN PICKERS

Week 8

Overall:
Last Week:
Pendleton at Hermiston
Umatilla at Nyssa
Jordan Valley at Echo
Perrydale at Arlington
Nebraska at Wisconsin
WSU at Oregon State
Washington at Utah
Seahawks at Saints
Chiefs at Colts
Packers at Falcons



Ron Gibbs
48-22
6-4
Hermiston
Nyssa
Echo
Perrydale
Wisconsin
WSU
Washington
Seahawks
Chiefs
Falcons



Mario Ramirez
46-24
7-3
Hermiston
Nyssa
Jordan Valley
Perrydale
Nebraska
WSU
Washington
Seahawks
Chiefs
Falcons



John Airoidi
45-25
7-3
Hermiston
Umatilla
Echo
Arlington
Wisconsin
WSU
Washington
Seahawks
Chiefs
Falcons



Kevin Fisher
45-25
8-2
Hermiston
Nyssa
Jordan Valley
Perrydale
Wisconsin
WSU
Washington
Seahawks
Colts
Packers



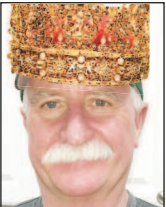
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