

Prep Football

# Key games fill Week 6 slate for local small schools

Several teams immersed in league, playoff battles

East Oregonian

It may be hard to believe, but the 2017 prep football regular season is already halfway over.

Five weeks are down and just four weeks remain for Oregon schools, which means that races for league championships and playoff spots are heating up. A few local 4A-1A teams are in the thick of postseason races that are bringing up some key games on Friday night.

Here is a quick look at Friday's 4A-1A matchups:

**ONTARIO (3-2) AT MAC-HI (3-1)** — It's been nearly five years since the Mac-Hi Pioneers last won a game inside Greater Oregon League action, dropping 13 straight since a 42-8 win over La Grande on Oct. 19, 2012.

The Pioneers will try to snap that streak on Friday night as they host the Ontario Tigers, a team that has dominated them in recent years. Ontario has won each of the past 10 meetings easily by an average score of 53-17, most recently a 53-0 shellacking in 2016. But this has the feel of a different Mac-Hi team, one that has reached the three-win mark for the first time since 2012.

Mac-Hi comes into the game off a bye week, having extra time to prepare for the Tigers who defeated Baker 48-20 last week. The Tigers have a solid offense, averaging 37.2 points per game, but have a susceptible defense that allows nearly 35 points per game.

Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. in Milton-Freewater.

**RIVERSIDE (2-2, 0-1) AT UMATILLA (3-2, 0-1)** — Riverside and Umatilla both had forgettable starts to their Eastern Oregon League slate last week, with Riverside getting blanked by Irrigon 50-0 and Umatilla getting pushed around by Burns 42-13.

Both teams will get a chance to right the ship this week as they renew the rivalry on Friday night. Umatilla has won eight of the past 11 meetings, including a 34-0 shutout in 2016. Riverside's last win came in 2014 when the Pirates ran away with a 38-13 victory.

Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. at Umatilla High School.

**VALE (2-3, 0-1) AT IRRIGON (3-1, 1-0)** — Last season, Irrigon made the trip to Vale and nearly upset the league-champion Vikings but instead came home with a 34-28 defeat.

This year the Knights hope to return the favor as they host the Vikings. Irrigon is riding some momentum behind three consecutive wins, including last week's 50-0 thumping over the Riverside Pirates. The Knights' defense has been the team's backbone, allowing 43 points in four games, an average of just 10.7. Meanwhile, Vale comes in off a 18-12 loss to rival Nyssa.

Irrigon's offense has started to click as well, with running back Josue Aguilera turning in 200 yards and four touchdowns last week.

Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. at Irrigon High School.

**WESTON-MCEWEN (1-3, 0-1) AT STANFIELD (1-3, 1-0)** — With two playoff spots up for grabs in the Columbia Basin Conference and just three league games, each one is crucial in the four-team league. Stanfield has the leg up on Weston-McEwen heading into Friday's meeting after last week's 22-20 win over Culver, while the TigerScots were clobbered by Heppner 52-12.

Stanfield will try to get running backs Adrian Renner and Justin Keeney — who combined for 307 yards last week — free on a TigerScot defense that can struggle to consistently stop an opponents rushing attack. Meanwhile the TigerScot offense aims to re-establish its speed rush attack with quarterback Brett Speed and running back Jacob Speed against a Tigers defense that has also been inconsistent.

Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. at Horyna Athletic Complex.

**POWDER VALLEY (1-3, 1-1) AT ECHO (3-2, 1-1)** — After a strong start to 1A Special District 1 play in Week 4 against Pine Eagle, Echo had a setback last week as they lost in a shootout 88-68 to Wallowa.

The Cougars want to get back on track this week against a Powder Valley team fresh off its first win of the season. The Badgers took down Joseph at home 26-8 last week. It was the first time the Badgers offense had scored more than 12 points in a game, as they dropped the first three games of the season by a combined score of 144-30.

Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. in Echo.

# Gronk-less Patriots hold off Buccaneers

By FRED GOODALL  
Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Tom Brady threw for 303 yards and one touchdown, and New England's porous defense showed signs of improvement Thursday night in a 19-14 victory over the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

The Super Bowl champions rebounded from a last-second loss to Carolina, despite Brady turning the ball over twice — on his first interception in eight regular-season games and a fumble on one of Tampa Bay's three sacks.

Neither of the mistakes led to points for Tampa Bay (2-2), which was unable to do much offensively until the fourth quarter.

Brady threw a 5-yard TD pass to Chris Hogan in the second quarter, and Stephen Gostkowski



New England QB Tom Brady (12) throws a pass against Tampa Bay during Thursday's game in Tampa, Fla.

AP Photo/Chris O'Meara

kicked field goals of 27, 23, 45 and 48 yards for the Patriots (3-2).

Jameis Winston rallied Tampa Bay late with an 18-yard TD pass to Cameron Brate that trimmed New England's lead to 16-14 with 2:09 remaining. He marched the Bucs from his 25 to the Patriots 19 before throwing an incompletion on the final play.

It might not have come down to a last-second drive if not for another poor performance by Bucs kicker Nick Folk.

Folk missed two field goals and an extra-point before beating the New York Giants on a last-second

kick last week. He missed three more field goals Thursday night, including a 31-yarder that would have cut a nine-point deficit to six in the closing minutes.

With his 186th career regular-season win as a starter, Brady tied Brett Favre and Peyton Manning for the most by a quarterback in NFL history. He also has 25 postseason victories, including five Super Bowls.

Defensively, the Patriots entered the night on pace to yield more than yards than any team in league history.

And, Winston and a young

Tampa Bay offense that's progressively gotten better since he was selected first overall in the 2015 draft was hoping to be the latest beneficiary of New England's struggles.

Running back Doug Martin provided a lift in his return from a suspension for violating the NFL's policy on performance enhancers with 74 yards rushing and one TD.

But one week after throwing for 332 yards and three touchdowns without an interception and overcoming a pair of fourth-quarter deficits to beat the Giants, Winston was unable to move the ball consistently until the fourth quarter.

The Bucs didn't have a third-down conversion until late in the third quarter, and Martin's 1-yard TD came on a drive the Patriots kept alive with a hands-to-the-face penalty on third down.

Winston finished 26 of 45 with 334 yards and zero interceptions. DeSean Jackson had five receptions for 106 yards.

Playing without injured tight end Rob Gronkowski (thigh), Brady finished 30 of 40 with one interception.

# MUSTANGS: Remain in tie for first place in conference



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pilot Rock's Brielle Howland prepares to spike the ball into Heppner's Morgan Correa in the Mustangs' 3-1 win against the Rockets on Thursday in Pilot Rock.

Continued from 1B

speech by Wilson and came out for the second set looking like a different team.

"Coach totally picked us up," Heppner senior Sophie Grant said. "She told us she believed in us and that we needed to believe in ourselves and it really helped boost our spirits. We rallied back, picked ourselves up out of the hole and got better."

Heppner again won the first point of the set, but this time kept pushing forward. Standing at a 6-6 tie, a block-kill by Jenna McCullough and two straight aces by Grant gave the Mustangs a 10-6 lead. But every lead the Mustangs would get, the Rockets would chip away. Heppner led 20-15 with momentum heading toward their first set win, but a kill by Rhyanne Oates helped Pilot Rock get within 20-18. However, the Mustangs were able to finish off the set.

By the time the third and fourth sets rolled around, Heppner was holding all the momentum and had Pilot Rock scrambling on both sides. Heppner wasn't beating them down with thundering kill after thundering kill, but instead were relying on great defense with big digs and quick hits to force mistakes by the Rockets.

"We told them you have to get low and move quick," Wilson said. "(Pilot Rock) is going to push you short and push you long and to do that you have to get low and play hard, with lost of

communication with each other, too. Because if you stop doing those three things, it'll take you all the way out of the game."

Heppner remains tied with Culver for first place in the CBC and has already surpassed last season's win total (13). It has been a remarkable turnaround for a team largely comprised of the same players from the 2016 team that finished fourth in the CBC. However, Grant says that she believes a few tweaks with Wilson, in her first year as head coach, has made a big difference.

"We've completely changed our practices and I feel we're working harder every day," she said. "We have a different mindset and just all around we're a lot better team. It's awesome to come out every day, I love it."

Wilson says that the main reason for the improvement is simply a better team mindset.

"I think a lot of it is a little bit of heart and a little bit of passion," she said. "They're really jelling well as a team and it makes a big difference. We don't have any team issues. I have a bench that supports them 100 percent and they're all in it together and I think that makes a big difference."

UP NEXT

Heppner will take on St. Paul and Kennedy at Sherman County High School on Saturday. Pilot Rock will host Culver on Tuesday at 5:30 p.m.

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# PREP ROUNDUP: TigerScots battle, but lose at home to Bulldogs

Continued from 1B

**CULVER 3, WESTON-MCEWEN 0** — At Athena, the Weston-McEwen TigerScots battled hard but came up short against Culver in a Columbia Basin Conference match on Thursday night, with the Bulldogs winning 25-15, 25-17, 25-19.

"We started flat and then took awhile to get going," Weston-McEwen coach Shawn White said. "We got to get a little bit tougher and start to extend those moments when we're playing well. But Culver played a great game, and they didn't give up many points and made us earn every one.

There was some great volleyball tonight."

Alyssa Finifrock was Weston-McEwen's (13-9 overall, 2-3 CBC) leading hitter with seven kills, five aces and three blocks, while Hailey Weaver had six kills and three blocks. Bryce Thul tallied 16 assists and a pair of aces and Chelsea Quaempts finished with 11 digs.

Weston-McEwen next plays on Saturday against St. Paul and Kennedy at Sherman County High School.

**COVE 3, HELIX 1** — At Cove, the Helix Grizzlies had their seven-game win streak snapped at

the hands of the Cove Leopards on Thursday night, falling 25-23, 19-25, 28-30, 21-25. The loss drops Helix (15-6 overall, 6-3 OOL) into third place in the Old Oregon League standings.

Helix next plays on Saturday as they hit the road to take on Wallowa at 1 p.m. and Joseph at 3 p.m.

**POWDER VALLEY 3, NIXY-AAWII 0** — At North Powder, the Nixyaawii Golden Eagles dropped their fifth consecutive match on Thursday evening, falling to Powder Valley 25-11, 25-7, 25-14. Nixyaawii (1-8 overall, 1-8 OOL) next plays on Saturday at

Wallowa at 11 a.m.

## GIRLS SOCCER

**LA GRANDE 4, PENDLETON 0** — At Pendleton, the Buckaroos were shut out for the second consecutive game as the La Grande Tigers won 4-0 on Thursday evening in non-league action.

Pendleton (1-6-1, 0-2 CRC) next plays on Tuesday when it travels to Hermiston for a 4:30 p.m. start.

Coaches can report game scores and statistics by calling 1-800-522-0255 or emailing [sports@eastoregonian.com](mailto:sports@eastoregonian.com)

## SCOREBOARD

### Local slate

#### PREP FOOTBALL

**Friday**  
Mountain View at Pendleton, 7 p.m.  
Hermiston at Ridgeview, 7 p.m.  
Ontario at Mac-Hi, 7 p.m.  
Riverside at Umatilla, 7 p.m.  
Vale at Irrigon, 7 p.m.  
Weston-McEwen at Stanfield, 7 p.m.  
Powder Valley at Echo, 7 p.m.

#### PREP VOLLEYBALL

**Friday**  
Nyssa at Stanfield, 1 p.m.  
Union at Stanfield, Noon  
Powder Valley at Echo, 4 p.m.  
Sherman at Condon/Wheeler, 4 p.m.  
**Saturday**  
Heppner vs. St. Paul (at Sherman), 10 a.m.  
Nixyaawii at Wallowa, 11 a.m.  
Irrigon at Stanfield, Noon  
Weston-McEwen vs. St. Paul (at Sherman), Noon  
Echo at Joseph, 1 p.m.  
Helix at Wallowa, 1 p.m.  
Ione at Mitchell/Stray, 1 p.m.  
Ontario at Mac-Hi, 1:30 p.m.  
Helix at Joseph, 3 p.m.  
Weston-McEwen vs. Kennedy (at Sherman), 4 p.m.

#### PREP BOYS SOCCER

**Friday**  
Umatilla at Nyssa, 3 p.m.  
**Saturday**  
Ontario at Mac-Hi, 2 p.m.  
Riverside at Irrigon, 3 p.m.

#### PREP GIRLS SOCCER

**Friday**  
Umatilla at Nyssa, 5 p.m.  
**Saturday**  
Ontario at Mac-Hi, Noon  
Riverside at Irrigon, 1 p.m.

#### PREP CROSS COUNTRY

**Saturday**  
Hermiston, Pendleton, Stanfield at Richland (WA) Invite, TBD  
Mac-Hi, Umatilla at La Grande Invite, TBD

#### COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

**Friday**  
Spokane at Blue Mountain, 6 p.m.  
Oregon Tech at Eastern Oregon, 7 p.m.  
**Saturday**  
Southern Oregon at Eastern Oregon,

1 p.m.

#### COLLEGE WOMEN'S SOCCER

**Friday**  
Blue Mountain at North Idaho, 2 p.m.  
Eastern Oregon at Southern Oregon, 4:30 p.m.  
**Saturday**  
Blue Mountain at Spokane, Noon  
Eastern Oregon at Oregon Tech, Noon

#### COLLEGE MEN'S SOCCER

**Friday**  
Blue Mountain at North Idaho, 4:15 p.m.  
Eastern Oregon at Southern Oregon, 7 p.m.  
**Saturday**  
Eastern Oregon at Oregon Tech, 2 p.m.  
Blue Mountain at Spokane, 2:15 p.m.

#### COLLEGE FOOTBALL

MSU-Northern at Eastern Oregon, 6 p.m.

### Baseball

**MLB Postseason**  
**DIVISION SERIES**  
(Best-of-5; x if necessary)  
**American League**  
**Houston 1, Boston 0**  
Thursday: Houston 8, Boston 2  
Friday: Boston at Houston, 11:05 a.m. (FS1 or MLB)  
**Sunday**: Houston at Boston, TBD (FS1 or MLB)  
xMonday: Houston at Boston, TBD (FS1 or MLB)  
xWednesday: Boston at Houston, TBD (FS1 or MLB)  
**Cleveland 1, New York 0**  
Thursday: Cleveland 4, New York 0  
Friday: New York at Cleveland, 2:08 p.m. (FS1 or MLB)  
Sunday: Cleveland at New York, TBD (FS1 or MLB)  
xMonday: Cleveland at New York, TBD (FS1 or MLB)  
xWednesday: New York at Cleveland, TBD (FS1 or MLB)

**National League**  
**Chicago vs. Washington**  
Friday: Chicago at Washington, 4:31 p.m. (TBS)  
Saturday: Chicago at Washington, 2:38 p.m. (TBS)  
Monday: Washington at Chicago, TBD

x-Tuesday: Washington at Chicago, TBD (TBS)  
x-Thursday: Chicago at Washington, TBD (TBS)

#### Arizona vs. Los Angeles

Friday: Arizona at Los Angeles, 7:31 p.m. (TBS)  
Saturday: Arizona at Los Angeles, 6:08 p.m. (TBS)  
Monday: Los Angeles at Arizona, TBD (TBS)  
x-Tuesday: Los Angeles at Arizona, TBD (TBS)  
x-Thursday: Arizona at Los Angeles, TBD (TBS)

### Football

#### AMERICAN CONFERENCE

**East**

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	3	1	0.750	73	54
N.Y. Jets	2	2	0.500	75	92
New England	3	2	0.600	148	142
Miami	1	2	0.333	25	57

#### South

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Jacksonville	2	2	0.500	109	74
Houston	2	2	0.500	110	88
Tennessee	2	2	0.500	100	126
Indianapolis	1	3	0.250	71	136

#### West

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Pittsburgh	3	1	0.750	90	59
Baltimore	2	2	0.500	60	80
Cincinnati	1	3	0.250	64	67
Cleveland	0	4	0.000	63	107

#### East

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Kansas City	3	0	1.000	93	57
Denver	3	1	0.750	98	74
Oakland	2	2	0.500	91	79
L.A. Chargers	0	4	0.000	72	93

#### NATIONAL CONFERENCE

**East**

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Philadelphia	3	1	0.750	103	92
Washington	2	1	0.667	71	60
Dallas	2	2	0.500	94	97
N.Y. Giants	0	4	0.000	60	95

#### South

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Atlanta	3	1	0.750	104	89
Carolina	3	1	0.750	78	70
Tampa Bay	2	2	0.500	85	83
New Orleans	2	2	0.500	93	78

Minnesota 2 2 0.500 79 76  
Chicago 1 3 0.250 61 104

#### West

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
L.A. Rams	3	1	0.750	142	105
Seattle	2	2	0.500	94	77
Arizona	2	2	0.500	74	91
San Francisco	0	4	0.000	66	94

#### Thursday's Games

New England 19, Tampa Bay 14

#### Sunday's Games

Arizona at Philadelphia, 10 a.m.  
Carolina at Detroit, 10 a.m.  
San Francisco at Indianapolis, 10 a.m.  
Jacksonville at Pittsburgh, 10 a.m.  
Buffalo at Cincinnati, 10 a.m.  
N.Y. Jets at Cleveland, 10 a.m.  
Tennessee at Miami, 10 a.m.  
L.A. Chargers at N.Y. Giants, 10 a.m.  
Baltimore at Oakland, 1:05 p.m.  
Seattle at L.A. Rams, 1:05 p.m.  
Green Bay at Dallas, 1:25 p.m.  
Kansas City at Houston, 5:30 p.m.

#### Monday's Games

Minnesota at Chicago, 5:30 p.m.

#### Top 25 Schedule

**Thursday**  
No. 24 NC State 39, No. 17 Louisville 25

#### Saturday

No. 1 Alabama at Texas A&M, 4:15 p.m. (ESPN)  
No. 2 Clemson vs. Wake Forest, 9 a.m. (ESPN2)  
No. 3 Oklahoma vs. Iowa State, 9 a.m. (FOX)  
No. 4 Penn State at Northwestern, 9 a.m. (ABC)  
No. 5 Georgia at Vanderbilt, 9 a.m. (ESPN)  
No. 6 Washington vs. California, 7:45 p.m. (ESPN)  
No. 7 Michigan vs. Michigan State, 4:30 p.m. (ABC)  
No. 8 TCU vs. No. 23 West Virginia, 12:30 p.m. (FS1)  
No. 9 Wisconsin at Nebraska, 5 p.m.  
No. 10 Ohio State vs. Maryland, 1 p.m. (FOX)  
No. 11 Washington vs. Stanford, 9 p.m. (ABC)  
No. 12 Auburn vs. Mississippi, 9 a.m.  
No. 13 Miami at Florida State, 12:30 p.m. (ESPN)  
No. 14 USC vs. Oregon State, 1 p.m. (PAC12)  
No. 16 Virginia Tech at Boston College, 4:15 p.m. (ESPN2)

No. 19 San Diego State at UNLV, 7:45 p.m. (ESPN2)

#### Pac-12 Schedule

**Saturday**  
Oregon State at No. 14 USC, 1 p.m. (PAC12)  
No. 11 Washington State at Oregon, 5 p.m. (FOX)  
Arizona at Colorado, 5 p.m. (PAC12)  
Stanford at No. 20 Utah, 7:15 p.m. (FS1)  
Cal at No. 6 Washington, 7:45 p.m. (ESPN)

#### NBA