

MUSTANGS: Finish season with 16-8 overall record

Continued from 1B

played solid defense against a talented Prospectors squad. Head coach Robert Wilson was proud of the growth the seniors showed in their career and the amount of leadership they showed this season.

"When I took over three years ago," Wilson said, "we were really young and this group embraced the situation they've had to deal with and have been leaders with the younger kids, keeping them engaged, a great team vibe."

Grant and Correa were in the starting lineup on Friday when the Mustangs (16-8) got off to a slow start in trying to meet Grant Union's fast tempo. Grant Union (22-4) scored the first nine points of the game and later opened up a 29-10 lead with 3:52 left in the second quarter, putting the Mustangs in early trouble.

Except Heppner wasn't ready to go away. The Mustangs ended the half on a 9-0 run, capped by a jumper from Gray, to head to the break trailing by just 10 points at 29-19.

"We never gave up," Grant said. "We knew we could play with each and every team here, and we knew if we kept trying and played our game we could be with every team."

That fight from the Mustangs continued throughout the second half. After Grant Union got the lead back to 17 points early in the third quarter, the Mustangs chipped away and back-to-back 3-pointers from Sydney Wilson and Gray made it a 43-33 game at the end of the third.

In the fourth, the Mustangs got the deficit to single digits



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Heppner's Jacee Currin flicks a pass to a teammate out of reach of Kaylee Wright (23), of Grant Union during Thursday's OSAA 2A girls consolation state tournament game in Pendleton.

on several occasions, coming as close as seven points after Jacee Currin nailed a short jumper with 6:28 to make it a 46-39 game.

But that was as close as Heppner could get. Each time the Mustangs would get the lead under double digits, Grant Union's pressure defense would answer to force a few turnovers that lead to easy baskets and get the lead back above 10.

"We knew Grant Union

was going to pressure us the whole game," Wilson said. "And we did really well at times, but when a team does that the whole time, there's moments whether it's fatigue or something that leads to little runs. But for the most part we did a god job of handling it."

Grant Union's offense was a one-girl show for the most part, with Kaylee Wright knocking in a game-high 30 points on 10-of-16 shooting

and going 8-of-12 from the free throw line. She also added seven steals, seven rebounds and two assists. The Prospectors will now play on Saturday morning at 9 a.m. at the Convention Center against the winner of No. 3 Oakland and No. 7 Gold Beach for fourth place.

Sydney Wilson, Heppner's standout freshman, led the team with 17 points on 6-of-9 shooting with seven rebounds and two assists. Junior Jacee Currin added 11 points with three boards, two assists, and two steals. Both players are part of nine contributors set to return for the Mustangs next season, which could mean some high expectations for the team next season.

"For us, our expectation is to be back here," Robert Wilson said. "We talked about soaking this up and enjoying it ... we need to understand the level of competition it takes to play here at this level because it's a different type of game than preseason and regular season."

And even though the seniors will be moving on, they are excited to see what the future holds for the team and will likely be keeping close tabs next season.

"I see great things," Grant said emphatically. "These young girls are awesome and we have so much coming up from the youth, it'll be great and I'm so excited for them."

HHS	7	12	14	13	-	46
GU	16	13	14	19	-	62
HEPPNER — S. Wilson 17, J. Currin 11, S. Grant 8, K. Gray 6, M. Correa 2, M. Corbette, M. Nichols, J. McCullough, J. Mahoney, M. Ashbeck, M. Mitchell.						
GRANT UNION — K. Wright 30, H. Wright 8, H. McCullough 8, T. Hudson 5, M. Moulton 4, K. Wells 4, M. Cully 3.						
3-pointers — HHS 4, GU 3. Free throws — HHS 16-23, GU 15-22. Fouls — HHS 15, GU 14.						

College Football

NCAA proposes kickoff fair catch inside 25 to be touchback

Also approved two play clock changes for 2018 season

By ERIC OLSON
Associated Press

The team receiving a kickoff would be allowed to make a fair catch between its goal line and 25-yard line and have it result in a touchback under an NCAA Football Rules Committee proposal.

NCAA secretary-rules editor Steve Shaw said the proposal is a counter to emerging strategy in which the kickoff team tries to execute a high, short kick to pin the receiving team deep in its territory. The opportunity for a fair catch and touchback should reduce high-impact collisions and risk of injury, he said Friday.

"Coaches have really looked at this and they want to do things to make this play safer in our game and keep it a viable play," Shaw said.

Before the 2012 season, kickoffs were moved from the 30-yard line to the 35 and the starting position on touchbacks from the receiving team's 20 to 25.

"The committee discussed the kickoff play at great length and we will continue to work to find ways to improve the play,"

said North Carolina coach and committee chairman Larry Fedora. "We believe making one change (this year) will allow us to study the effect of this change in terms of player safety."

The proposal will be sent to conferences for feedback before being considered by the Playing Rules Oversight Panel on April 13. If approved by the panel, the change would go into effect for the 2018 season.

The committee also proposed that offensive players not be allowed to block below the waist more than 5 yards beyond the line of scrimmage. Those blocks also would have to be from the front, except in the case of interior linemen.

The committee approved two pace-of-play proposals. After a touchdown, the play clock would be set at 40 seconds to expedite the extra point or two-point conversion attempt. Following a kickoff, the play clock would be set to 40 seconds to restart play more quickly.

Also, the committee approved the addition of a 10-second runoff when instant replay overturns the ruling on the field inside of one minute in either half and the correct ruling would not have stopped the game clock.

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