

Timberwolves escape Saints for season’s first home win

By BRETT KANE
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — It all came down to the final second.

On Saturday, Blue Mountain Community College sophomore Dylan Grogan’s jump shot at the buzzer helped the Timberwolves break the last of three ties to take down the visiting Mt. Hood Saints 83-81 in their season’s first home game.

The 6-foot, 4-inch forward from Stanfield poured in a game-high 28

points, grabbed 14 rebounds, and sunk two treys along the way to aid in the home court win.

The Saints jumped out to an early 4-0 lead off of back-to-back baskets from Jalen Smith and Tanner Scanlan, but Grogan and freshman point guard Shaw Broncheau quickly tied the score, and 6-foot, 6-inch freshman forward Craig Mueller’s basket put them out front.

Sophomore point guard Chris Butcher hit two free throws at 14:05 to give Blue Mountain a

14-7 advantage, but the Saints responded with five unanswered points. Not four minutes later, Mt. Hood’s David Fountain sank a 3-pointer, and then a jump shot to take over the lead for the first of two occasions in the half.

After freshman forward Levi Burke hit a 3-pointer that gave Blue Mountain a short lived 20-18 advantage, Fountain returned to tie the score with a pair of free throws, and Leonard Dixon’s trey with just 0:47 left in the half gave the Saints a 36-34 lead at the buzzer.

The Saints took a 13-point lead in the final half off of two successful free throws from Dixon. Dixon buried a 3-pointer with 6:08 remaining for a 70-59 game over the Timberwolves, but Blue Mountain rallied off 10 unanswered points in response.

Sophomore shooting guard Dedi Seme hit a 3-pointer to help the Timberwolves tie the game at 77-77 with just 2:32 left to play, and Grogan and Mueller both tied the score one more time each before Grogan’s victory-sealing basket

as the clock hit 0:00 to escape the Saints once and for all.

Davion Stringer led Mt. Hood with 22 points, three rebounds, and a 2-of-3 performance at the line.

The Timberwolves (1-3) got 17 points from Mueller, who also grabbed 15 rebounds. Seme finished the evening with 15 points, five assists, and went 6-of-8 at the line.

Blue Mountain is back on the road this Friday, where they’ll face Treasure Valley at the College of Southern Idaho at 3:30 p.m.

2A STATE CHAMPIONSHIP



Blake Wolters runs for 234 yards and 5 touchdowns for Mustangs in 55-18 win over Knappa

EO Media Group Photo/Hailey Hoffman
Gavin Hanna-Robinson (52), Matt Orem (71) and the rest of the Heppner Mustangs celebrate their win 55-18 win over Knappa in a 2A state football playoff game Saturday at Hillsboro Stadium. The Mustangs will play Kennedy for the state title.

By ALEX CASTLE
For the EO Media Group

HILLSBORO — For the fifth time under coach Greg Grant, the No. 3 Heppner Mustangs are headed to the Class 2A state championship game following a 55-18 blowout of the No. 7 Knappa Loggers in Saturday’s semifinal game at Hillsboro Stadium.

It will be the school’s sixth appearance in the state title game, and its first since going 13-0 and winning it in 2015.

“It’s really cool. To say that I didn’t think my kids deserved to be here, I’d be lying. I’m probably the most relieved person in the stadium right now,” Grant said. “I believed I had a team that could get to that game, and I just didn’t want to screw them up somehow. They’re a cool bunch of kids that have done everything we’ve asked of them ... I just couldn’t be happier for them.”

It didn’t take long for Grant to see the

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EO Media Group Photo/Hailey Hoffman
Heppner’s Jace Coe (right) breaks a tackle by Knappa’s Devin Hoover during their 2A state football playoff game Saturday at Hillsboro Stadium. The Mustangs beat the Loggers 55-18.

Heppner showcases championship standard in semifinal win

By ALEX CASTLE
For the EO Media Group

HILLSBORO — The 2019 Heppner Mustangs are on the cusp of something special.

In their past three games, all in the playoffs, the Mustangs (12-0) have out-scored opponents 136-25 and have forced 15 turnovers.

No team has yet to score more than 20 points on the Heppner defense, and since a season opening 27-20 win over 3A Clatskanie, the Mustangs’ closest game was a 23-point win at Grant Union.

And in another blowout victory, this time 55-18 over No. 7 Knappa in Saturday’s class 2A state semifinals at Hillsboro Stadium, No. 3 Heppner showed every reason why.

“We knew we had to play a perfect game to be in the ball game,” Knappa head coach Aaron Barendse said Saturday. “We didn’t, and they did.”

On Saturday, Heppner turned two first half turnovers into catalysts for the offense.

Mason Lehman’s interception ended Knappa’s opening drive and handed the ball to Jayden Wilson, and the offensive line led the way for junior running back Blake Wolters to rattle off four touchdowns on six consecutive scoring drives.

“We got going on them and our kids kept going on them,” Heppner head coach Greg Grant said. “We could smell that we could enforce our will.”

The Mustangs, averaging more than 200 rushing yards per game, have enforced their will all season and Saturday was no different, as Wolters totaled five touchdowns and the rushing attack went for 325 yards on 6.6 yards per carry.

“They’re the bigger, more physical team,” Barendse said. “And they do it the right way. They stuck to their game plan and they ran it well.”

But what made the Heppner offense deadly was its ability to take advantage of the big plays it opens up down the field for Wilson.

A capable runner in his own right, Wilson and the Mustangs RPO (run-pass option) offense kept Knappa off kilter all day. While he only carried the ball

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McCurry stays close to home to join the Timberwolves

By BRETT KANE
East Oregonian

IONE — Tresslyn McCurry’s brief time as a Cardinal won’t soon be forgotten.

The Heppner transfer, who spent her freshman and sophomore year as a middle blocker for the Mustangs, recently capped off her senior year at Ione High School, where she was one of the key players on their roster, averaging 12 kills and four blocks per match. And she’s showing no signs of slowing.

On Monday evening at Ione High School, with family, friends, teammates, and coaches in attendance, McCurry signed a letter of intent to

play volleyball with the Blue Mountain Community College Timberwolves for their upcoming 2020-21 season. While there, she will also pursue a degree in accounting.

“It’s close to home,” McCurry, 17, said of her choice to enroll at BMCC. “I’d get to stay closer to family, and I wanted to earn a two-year degree. Accounting runs in the family.”

McCurry’s final and only season as a Cardinal saw her team finish with a 9-10 overall record and 6-6 in the Big Sky League, earning fourth place in the conference standings.

“It was amazing,” she said of her final high school volleyball sea-

son. “I love the team, and I love the coaching. For me, it was a different kind of volleyball. Teren (Humphrey, head coach) really knows what he’s doing. He’s kind, funny, and pushes us to our best. He definitely sees the potential in each of us.”

Although the Cardinals didn’t earn a playoff appearance this year, the BSL couldn’t deny McCurry. Earlier this month, she was named the Big Sky League Player of the Year — an honor that McCurry is the first female athlete from Ione to earn.

“She’s always motivated, she

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Staff photo by Brett Kane
Ione senior middle blocker Tresslyn McCurry (center), surrounded by her team, signs a letter of intent to play volleyball at Blue Mountain Community College for the 2020-21 season.