

# Volleyball:

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against Hermiston. "It's kind of wild," Lapp said of looking back at the rivalry. "It was a tough loss to have them leave the league. It was good competition just down the road. The gym was always packed. That will be a different aspect."

Hermiston got a good dose of volleyball in the COVID era on Saturday, March 6, at The Dalles.

Teams do not switch sides of the court, masks are worn at all times, the benches are spread out, there is no coin flip, no locker rooms to change in, and the officials have electronic whistles, which are hand operated.

"We had to stop the match at one point because the battery went out in the head official's whistle," Wadekamper said. "That was different."

## Hermiston Bulldogs

Wadekamper, who coached the Bulldogs from 2011-14, is back at the helm. She has been an assistant the past few years, and has been with the program the past 10 years. She replaces Amy Dyck, who stepped down after last season.

The Bulldogs have two returning seniors in Kendall Dowdy and Courtnee West, six juniors and four sophomores — a couple who made an impact in their first match. Brooke Turner had 14 digs, and Ayden Hagel added 18 assists.

Junior Kambree Baker led the Bulldogs with 12 kills and four blocks, while Grace Vertrees, a 5-foot-10 junior, added eight kills and had a passer rating of 2.33.

"Grace really settled our serve receive, and for her to be at that level (2.33) this time of year is impressive," Wadekamper said.

Hermiston also is working toward running a quicker offense than in the past, and getting its middles more involved.

"This is the tallest team we



East Oregonian, File

**Hermiston's Daisy Maddox tips the ball over Pendleton's Ellen Nirschl in the Bucks' 3-2 win against the Bulldogs on Oct. 3, 2017.**

have had," Wadekamper said. "Not only tall, but with great leaping ability."

One player Wadekamper is excited to see more of is 5-9 junior Eseta Sepeni, who plays middle and hits from the outside.

"She jumps as high as any of them," Wadekamper said. "She is one of the best overall athletes in the school. Her jump, strength and agility are all there. We just need to get her tuned into the skill set."

## Pendleton Bucks

No one on the Pendleton roster has played Hermiston at the varsity level, which makes the March 11 matchup interesting.

The Bucks return four players from last year's 10-9 team that lost in the first round of the 5A state playoffs.

Seniors Muriel Hoisington, DeLaney Duchek, Emma House and Josie Wilson lead the way, while juniors Daisy Jenness and Sauren Garton also are back.

"Daisy, Sauren, Muriel and Josie are very versatile," Lapp said. "They play middle and outside."

House is the Bucks' setter, while Duchek is the libero.

Pendleton added to the talent in its lineup with junior Ashtyn Brown, a transfer from Texas. She plays middle and outside.

"She is pretty decent," Lapp said. "She is 5-10, 5-11 and she jumps right in there. It's always nice to see a tall kid transfer in."

While it was nice to have a couple of matches over the weekend, Lapp said there still is work to be done.

"We haven't had much time to practice with Umatilla County being in extreme risk for so long," Lapp said. "Having a week and a half shortened things, but it was nice to see them come together Saturday."

The Bucks will play at Ridgeview on Tuesday, March 9, and will host Crook County on Saturday, March 13.

# ON THE SLATE

TUESDAY, MARCH 9-FRIDAY, MARCH 12

## TUESDAY, MARCH 9

**Prep volleyball**  
Pendleton at Ridgeview, 6:30 p.m.  
McLoughlin at Pilot Rock, 5:30 p.m.  
Stanfield at Irrigon, 5 p.m.  
Riverside at Griswold, 5 p.m.  
Nixyaawii at Umatilla, 5 p.m.  
Weston-McEwen at Heppner, 5 p.m.  
Bickleton at Echo, 5:30 p.m.  
Ione/Arlington at Mitchell/Spray, 5 p.m.  
**Prep slowpitch softball**  
Moses Lake at Hermiston (2), 3 p.m.  
**Prep girls soccer**  
Irrigon at Riverside, 4 p.m.  
McLoughlin at Stanfield/Echo, 4 p.m.

## Prep boys soccer

Irrigon at Umatilla, 4 p.m.  
**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10**  
**Prep cross-country**  
Pendleton at Redmond, TBD  
**THURSDAY, MARCH 11**  
**Prep football**  
Weston-McEwen at Umatilla, 5 p.m.  
**Prep cross-country**  
Umatilla at Stanfield Country Run, 3 p.m.  
**Prep volleyball**  
Pendleton at Hermiston, 7 p.m.  
Nixyaawii at McLoughlin, 5 p.m.  
Pilot Rock at Heppner, 5 p.m.  
Weston-McEwen at Riverside, 5 p.m.

Griswold at Umatilla, 5 p.m.  
Ione/Arlington at Echo, 5:30 p.m.  
**FRIDAY, MARCH 12**  
**Prep football**  
Walla Walla at Hermiston, 7 p.m.  
Heppner at Pendleton/Nixyaawii, 7 p.m.  
McLoughlin at Grant Union, 4 p.m.  
Heppner at Stanfield, 7 p.m.  
Echo at Mitchell/Spray/Wheeler, 1 p.m.  
Union at Ione/Arlington, 7 p.m.  
Pilot Rock at Adrian, 5 p.m.  
**Prep volleyball**  
Echo at Mitchell/Spray, 6 p.m.



James Cimburek/Contributed Photo

**Hunter Nichols, second from left, runs during the semifinals of the of the 1,000 meters at the NAIA Indoor Track & Field Championships in Yankton, S.D., last week. Nichols finished fourth in the heat to advance to the finals where he finished fifth on Saturday, March 6, 2021.**

## Nichols

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Nichols was one of five EOU athletes to earn All-America honors at nationals.

Tyler Davis finished seventh in the heptathlon, Michelle Hebres was fourth in the 1,000 meters, Darrian Walker was fourth in the pole vault, and Allex Kosel was eighth

in the long jump.

The EOU women's team finished tied for 36th in the team standings with 5 points, while the men tied for 24th with 12 points.

Nichols' top time of the season is 2:30.53, which ranks eighth all-time in the Mounties' record book.

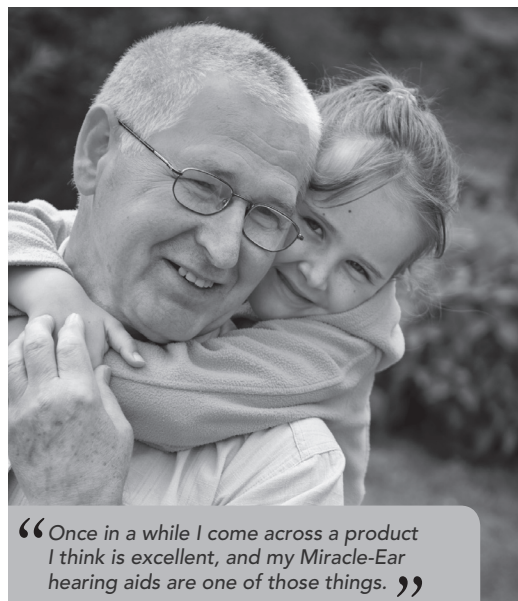
Up next for Nichols is cross-country. The Mounties have had a couple of meets, so he will be joining them mid-season.

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