

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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W-M football honored as Les Schwab 2A Team of the Month

Award is based on performance, academics and service to community

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

ATHENA — If there's one thing Kenzie Hansell wants to see out of his football team, it's including the community that supports them.

The Weston-McEwen coach got that and much more as the Tiger-Scots were named the OSAA Les Schwab Tires 2A Team of the Month for April.

"This is very exciting," Tiger-Scots co-captain and quarterback Blane Peal said. "We are looking forward to next year. We are bringing back some older guys, and we are looking to take it to the next level."

Each winning team is chosen

based on performance on the field and in the classroom and service to the community.

"This award stands for everything our program is about," Hansell wrote in an email to the OSAA. "Forty-seven student-athletes participated this season, and our success is greatly due to the support of our administration, teaching staff, and maintenance staff. Without them, we would not have been as successful as we were."

Each winner of the Les Schwab Tires Team of the Month award receives a commemorative trophy and \$100 to be donated to the team's program. The Tiger-Scots accepted their award at a Tuesday, May 25, ceremony on the football field.

"It's pretty crazy," W-M senior and co-captain Isaac Wood said of the award. "We are a small community. We do what we are asked to do, and that brings success to the program. Now, we just need to

get some of the guys in the weight room. They do that, we could be a contender."

Weston-McEwen finished second in the Blue Mountain Conference with a 2-1 record, and was 4-2 overall.

"We played in every type of weather imaginable — from 16 inches of snow to wind and rain," Hansell said. "Though it didn't

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Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian, File

Hermiston's Alexis Leal (8) kicks the ball up the field during the second half of the Bulldogs' 2-0 win over the Kennewick Lions at Kennison Field in Hermiston on April 19, 2021. The Mid-Columbia Conference named Leal to its first team.

HERMISTON'S LEAL EARNS FIRST-TEAM HONORS

Bulldogs have 3 players selected to the second team

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The Mid-Columbia Conference boys soccer team was dominated by the Richland Bombers, but tucked into the mix was a handful of Hermiston Bulldogs, with midfielder Alexis Leal leading the way. The conference named Leal to the first team.

A senior, Leal had two goals and three assists, but his value went beyond goals, which conference coaches recognized.

"His vision of the field and ability to find passes was second to none and is why he received the most

MID-COLUMBIA CONFERENCE SOCCER

Player of the Year — Spencer Crithfield, sr., Richland.
Coach of the Year — Octavio DoValle, Richland.

FIRST TEAM

Forward — Clemente Esquivel, so., Pasco; Gabriel Delgado, jr., Southridge; Spencer Crithfield, sr., Richland. **Midfielder** — Jonas Olvera, jr., Pasco; Grady O'Neil, jr., Richland; Fernando Lopez-Vega, so., Chiawana; Javier Gomez, sr., Pasco; Alexis Leal, sr., Hermiston. **Defender** — Julian Ramirez, jr., Pasco; Trevor White, sr., Richland; Shane Kieffer, sr., Hanford; Damian Firkins, sr., Richland. **Goalkeeper** — Michael Kot, jr., Chiawana.

SECOND TEAM

Forward — Kadin Tasci, sr., Chiawana; Steven Ndayishimiye, sr., Chiawana; Sam Cadenas, jr., Hermiston. **Midfielder** — Joey Esquivel

Rodriguez, sr., Pasco; Brandon Mendez, sr., Kennewick; Abel Varela Lepe, sr., Hermiston; Cole Barry, so., Richland; Eric Berg, jr., Richland; Colby Kraft, sr., Kamiakin. **Defender** — Blake Tasci, so., Chiawana; Drew Axel, jr., Pasco; Brodie Wahl, sr., Richland; Brian Rosas, jr., Pasco. **Goalkeeper** — Josh Farias, sr., Hermiston.

HONORABLE MENTION

Forward — Sergio Ruelas, so., Kamiakin; Juan Segovia, sr., Walla Walla. **Midfielder** — Brady Bostic, so., Southridge; Alex Ortiz, jr., Southridge; Nathan Alvarado, jr., Kamiakin; Breyden Lane, sr., Kamiakin; Justin Hahn, so., Hanford; Edgar Meza, so., Walla Walla; Moises Lopez, sr., Hermiston. **Defender** — Santiago Chavez, so., Kennewick; Andrew Meek, sr., Southridge; Juan Perez, sr., Walla Walla; Dyson Hawkins, sr., Kamiakin; Tanner Mullins, jr., Richland; Miguel Moreno, sr., Hermiston; Mario Rincon, sr., Kennewick.



Cadenas



Farias



Varela Lepe



Leal

votes of any midfielder," Hermiston coach Rich Harshberger said. "He was the key to our midfield and building up play from the defense

to the offense. He worked tirelessly up and down the pitch to move the ball and create offense, and then worked just as hard to win the ball

back on defense."

Richland senior Spencer Crithfield was named MCC Player of the Year, while the Bombers' Octavio DoValle was named Coach of the Year.

Hermiston, which finished 5-4 in the MCC and 6-7 overall, also had junior Sam Cadenas (forward), senior Abel Varela Lepe (midfielder) and senior goalkeeper

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INDY 500

Can 'Captain America' save his season

Ryan Hunter-Reay needs a big showing at the Indianapolis 500 to jumpstart his season

By JENNA FRYER
AP Auto Racing Writer

INDIANAPOLIS — Ryan Hunter-Reay doesn't need to do the math. He is one of the oldest drivers in IndyCar as the series is trending toward teenagers. He has not won a race since 2018, and the start of this 18th season has been awful.

"Obviously, I have a lot less in front of me than I have behind me," Hunter-Reay said.

Not so fast, "Captain America."

Hunter-Reay is back in the familiar confines of Indianapolis Motor Speedway and is ready to flip his season with a second career Indianapolis 500 victory.

Nothing has gone right for Hunter-Reay since the opening lap of the season, when he was collected in a first-lap crash and IndyCar's cockpit-protecting aeroscreen likely saved his life when it deflected a tire away from his head. In the four races since, he has led four total laps, his best finish is 10th and he is 17th in the standings.

But the Indy 500 is an animal suited for Hunter-Reay and his analytic approach. The native Texan but Florida resident was the 2014 race winner, two years after he won his only IndyCar championship, and he is typically in the mix at Indy.

He opened practice last week with the second-fastest lap in a session led by three former race winners, but as temperatures warmed each day at Indy, his car struggled with speed. He didn't think he would have a chance in qualifying, and didn't believe he would hit 231 mph on his first attempt.

"I looked down at the dash and thought it was broken," he said.

Hunter-Ray joined teammate Colton Herta, who at 21 is nearly half Hunter-Reay's age, as the only two Andretti Autosport drivers to advance to the Fast Nine. Hunt-

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SPORTS SHORT

Bill allowing compensation for college athletes advances

The Oregonian

SALEM — Two amendments to proposed state legislation to permit college athletes in Oregon to be compensated for their name, image and likeness were adopted in committee and the bill has been sent to the Senate floor with a recommendation to pass it.

Senate Bill 5, which permits college athletes in Oregon to earn compensation for use of their name, image or likeness and to retain representation related to those opportunities, was heard in a work session of the senate rules committee on Tuesday, May 25.

If passed, the bill will go into effect immediately, with Oregon college athletes able to earn NIL compensation beginning on July 1, the same day similar laws are set to go into effect in five other states — Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and New Mexico — with 11 others also having passed similar laws.

Sen. Peter Courtney, D-Salem, a co-sponsor of the bill along with Sen. James Manning Jr., D-Eugene, explained to the committee that Amendment 7, which removes the unique and controversial royalty payments from "merchandising" deals, was done

last week after NCAA president Mark Emmert told state lawmakers the payments that provision called for would make athletes employees and thus ineligible to compete.

Both the University of Oregon and Oregon State University issued statements last week supporting the amended SB 5.

Federal lawmakers continue to craft a national NIL bill with the goal of passing it before July 1.

The NCAA Division I Council is expected to address NIL proposals, which had been tabled in January, during its June 22-23 meeting.



Leon Neuschwander/For The Oregonian

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