

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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FILLING THE VOID

6A McDaniel up next for Bucks after schedule gets shuffled again



Pendleton will play without tailback Payton Lambert

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — For the second time this season, Pendleton football coach Erik Davis found himself without a game.

Last week, La Salle Prep informed Pendleton Athletic Director Mike Somnis that it would be finishing the season with a junior varsity schedule because of a lack of players. It didn't take Somnis long to fill the void.

The Bucks will play at McDaniel High School on Thursday, Oct. 7. The Mountain Lions play in the 6A Portland Interscholastic League.

"Hats off to Mike Somnis, he beats the streets to make it happen," Davis said. "He's getting us games. We spent 6 hours without a game before he found one. He asked if we wanted the forfeit or if we wanted to play? I told him we wanted to play. Happy to have a leader like that."

It's the second 6A team the Bucks will play this season. They played Southridge in their first game of the season after La Grande

had to back out because of COVID precautions. Pendleton won that game 27-26.

The Mountain Lions (2-2) are coming off a 55-0 loss to Jefferson, but Davis said they have some talent.

"We shared a couple of films with them," Davis said. "They are pretty athletic. I just don't know much about them. Playing a team we have never played before, the best thing is to do what you do, and not reinvent the wheel. They create some matchup problems and they have some speed."

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Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Pendleton's Gavin Clark runs the ball Sept. 30, 2021, during a 70-6 win over The Dalles at the Pendleton Round-Up Grounds. The Bucks could face a tougher matchup Oct. 8 against the 6A McDaniel Mountain Lions.



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

Hermiston quarterback Isaac Corey looks for a receiver during a game Sept. 24, 2021, against Richland, Washington, at Kennison Field in Hermiston. The Bulldogs fell to the Bombers 48-0.

Speedy Suns could be a problem for Dawgs

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — It's homecoming week for the Hermiston Bulldogs, who on Friday, Oct. 8, take on Southridge in a Mid-Columbia Conference game.

The Bulldogs (0-5 overall, 0-4 MCC) are coming off a 56-14 loss to Walla Walla, while the Suns (2-3, 1-3) are licking their wounds from a 39-6 loss to Kamiakin.

"There's always room for improvement," Hermiston coach David Faaeteete said.

"Last week against Walla Walla was not our best showing defensively. Walla Walla played pretty inspired. Credit to them, they stopped us defensively. We just have to get better."

The Bulldogs opened the season with several key senior players on the injured list. With just seven juniors on the team, Hermiston has been forced to go with a young lineup.

"You have to find those small moral victories," Faaeteete said. "It's the little things we have to continue getting better as a group. Eighty percent of our starting players don't have a driver's license, and most aren't old enough to get one. Our seniors, Caden (Hottman), Sam (Cadenas) and Chase (Elliott) play through a lot and they show up. Those guys and others are trying to keep it together. You learn a lot about yourself when you lose. We just need to execute."

Hermiston senior receiver KJ Ramirez is waiting to hear some good news on his foot, but according to Faaeteete, he's still at the doctor's mercy.

Senior linebacker Koi Mikami had knee surgery and is lost for the season.

"It's one of those years when you have injuries in your senior leadership and that's tough," Faaeteete said.

Hermiston is hoping to turn things around as the second half of the season gets under way Oct. 8.

The Suns, under new head coach Matt Johnson, have a Mid-Columbia Conference win over Pasco, and a nonleague win over Davis.

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Riverside up next for top-ranked Heppner



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian
Heppner's Brock Hisler runs the ball Friday, Oct. 1, 2021, during a 39-0 win over the Weston-McEwen TigerScots in Athena.

Mustangs have won 23 consecutive games

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

HEPPNER — The top-ranked Heppner Mustangs make a point of playing a tough preseason schedule.

They have been challenged by the likes of Toledo, Warrenton and Kennedy, so by the time they get to Blue Mountain Conference play, they are well-seasoned for whatever comes their way.

Riverside rolls into Heppner on Thursday, Oct. 7, for a conference game. The winless Pirates (0-4, 0-3 BMC) have been outscored 190-46

this season, while the Mustangs (5-0, 2-0) have allowed an average of eight points a game.

The Mustangs are coming off a 39-0 win over Weston-McEwen last week, while the Pirates are recovering from a 56-6 loss to Grant Union.

Regardless of the opponent, Heppner coach Greg Grant said preparation each week is the same.

"We approach every game the same with preparation," said Grant, whose team has won 23 consecutive games dating to 2019. "We are working on fundamentals that we have seen lacking in play. We are trying to clean up our play and avoid penalties."

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SPORTS SHORT

Gonzaga on EOU men's basketball schedule

East Oregonian

LA GRANDE — Eastern Oregon University men's basketball and coach Chris Kemp announce the team's 2021-22 regular season schedule. In all, the Mountaineers have 32 games on tap for this upcoming year.

Of the 32 games scheduled, 13 will be played at home at Quinn Coliseum, with 11 of those contests being conference match-ups.

The unofficial start to the Mountaineers' season begins with their annual Alumni Game, which takes place Saturday, Oct. 9, at

7 p.m. at Quinn Coliseum.

The Mountaineers' non-conference portion of their schedule has nine games on the docket and two of them will be exhibitions against NCAA Division I opponents in NCAA runner-up Gonzaga University and Idaho State University.

The Mounties will play Gonzaga on Oct. 31. It will be just the fifth ever match-up between the two schools and the first since the 2001-02 season.

Eastern also will face a pair of NCAA Division III schools in Whitman College and Linfield University.

Making up the rest of Mount-

ies non-conference slate of action are Montana Tech Carroll College, and Montana Western. From California, Eastern is scheduled to play William Jessup, Menlo College, and Cal Maritime.

EOU will play its season opener at the Comfort Suites Classic the weekend of Oct. 23-24 in Helena, Montana. The Mounties open up against Montana Tech on Oct. 23, before taking on host school Carroll College on Oct. 24.

The Mountaineers home opener will be the following week on Oct. 30 against Montana Western.



Samantha Flett/Eastern Oregon University Athletics

Guard Max McCullough (15) returns for Eastern Oregon University this season. The Mountaineers open play Oct. 23, 2021, against Montana Tech at the Comfort suites Classic in Helena, Montana.