

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian, File
Heppner quarterback Landon Mitchell looks to pass the ball during the first half Saturday, Nov. 13, 2021, against the Weston-McEwen TigerScots in the quarterfinal round of the Oregon School Activities Association Class 2A state football tournament at Les Payne Field in Heppner. The Mustangs won 40-0 and next play the Coquille Red Devils on Nov. 20 in the semifinals in McMinnville.

COQUILLE UP NEXT FOR TOP-RANKED HEPPNER

Mustangs and Red Devils to meet in 2A semifinals on Saturday

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

H EPPNER — While Heppner is a familiar name when it comes to deep runs in the 2A state football playoffs, Coquille is at the other end of the spectrum.

The Red Devils, who will square off against the top-ranked Mustangs on Saturday, Nov. 20, in the semifinals, have not been to the semifinals since 2013, when they were at the 3A level. Before that, it was 1970 when they won the AA state title with a 10-7 win over Junction City.

Coquille coach David Thomason's team beat Jefferson 48-8 in the quarterfinals to advance. The road to the title doesn't get any easier.

"It's like going up against the giant," Thomason said of playing the Mustangs. "They are Heppner. They are a well-coached team and they have the record to prove it. I've never faced them as a player or coach. I haven't had the pleasure yet. You want to be the best, you have to play the best."

The semifinal game will be played at noon at McMinnville High School. Only electronic tickets will be accepted at the gate.

Heppner coach Greg Grant appreciates the compliment but said the past has nothing to do with the Nov. 20 game.

"What we have done in the past has created a reputation," Grant said. "Our job this year is to live up to that. It's all about the next game. All the others don't matter. Another game after this is the goal. They love football and we are having a good time. It's a real pleasure to be practicing and playing football this time of year and they are having a blast together. When you work hard, the paycheck is at the end of the day. Let's invest it and see how it pays off."

The Red Devils (8-1) feature a wing-T offense with a couple of running backs that have done their share of damage this season.



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian, File
Heppner's Caden George runs the ball for a touchdown Saturday, Nov. 13, 2021, against the Weston-McEwen TigerScots.

Coquille's bruiser up the middle is Brock Willis, who has run for 800 yards and seven touchdowns, and speedster Gunner Yates has dashed for 1,500 yards and 28 touchdowns.

"They are a very solid team with an outstanding running back, and their other skilled players are very good," Grant said. "The Yates kid is a true breakaway threat. Tackling him and containing him is the goal."

The Red Devils are averaging 29.6 points a game, with the majority of that coming on the ground.

"We are mostly a ground team, but we can throw," Thomason said. "We get ahead and get out of there as soon as we can. We haven't had the need to throw much, but our quarterback (Bruce Poston) can when he needs to."

The Mustangs (11-0), who have won 29 games in a row, beat Blue Mountain conference rival Weston-McEwen 40-0 to advance.

Grant said he's excited to see how they match up with Coquille come game time.

"That's the exciting part when you match up with someone you know nothing about," he said. "We will find out on Saturday that we will have our hands full. They are a very dangerous team. They are very fundamentally sound on offense and defense. What they do, they do extremely well."

Heppner averages 32 points a game, and has allowed just 66 points all season.

Most every game has been a runaway in the second half, limiting an offense full of weapons to minimal time.

"We got some film on them," Thomason said. "I think they are an extremely well-coached team, the best we have seen all year. They will create some problems for us. Defensively, I think it will be a good game. I think we match up well. We are similarly sized on the lines. It will come down to execution and schemes. There will be mistakes, but it will be how we react to them."

Running back Brock Hisler has run for 1,114 yards — nearly half of the Mustangs' 2,323 yards — and 12 touchdowns. Sophomore quarterback Landon Mitchell has thrown for 1,001 yards and 16 touchdowns, a good portion of both going to Jace Coe (447 yards, 6 TDs).

The Mustangs will get receiver/defensive back Kason Cimmyotti back for the Nov. 20 game. He missed last week with a knee strain.

Mitchell has grown into his role as a starter, and with a veteran group of players around him, the Mustangs' offense is diverse and efficient.

"My hope with a young quarterback, with experienced skill kids around him, it can become a solid offense," Grant said. "To his credit, he has stepped up. Those experienced kids around him made it easier."

And helped put the Mustangs back on the field for another week of football.

Pendleton lands 3 on IMC volleyball team

Garton, Yoshioka named to second team, Brown was an HM selection

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Pendleton had two volleyball players named to the Intermountain Conference second team, and another to the honorable mention team.

Senior Sauren Garton was named to the second team as a hitter. On the season, she had 63 kills, 17 blocks, 132 digs and five service aces.

Also named to the second team was senior libero Nora Yoshioka, who finished the season with 231 digs. She also had 16 aces and missed just 18 out of 107 serves.

The honorable mention team had senior Ashtyn Brown selected as a hitter. She finished the season with 53 kills, 61 blocks, 38 digs and nine ace serves.

The Bucks finished the season with an overall record of 7-11 and 3-7 in the IMC.

Ridgeview, which won the IMC title with a 10-0 record, and finished third at the 5A state tournament, dominated the all-conference team with seven players.

McKenzie Jonas of Crook County was named Player of the Year, while Katie Karcher of Redmond was named coach of the Year.



Brown



Garton



Yoshioka

INTERMOUNTAIN CONFERENCE VOLLEYBALL

Player of the Year: McKenzie Jonas, jr., Crook County.

Coach of the Year: Katie Karcher, Redmond.

First Team

Hitters — Jenna Albrecht, sr., Ridgeview; Aspen Bradley, sr., Redmond; Josie Kasberger, sr., Crook County; Madie Vaughn, jr., Ridgeview; Ellie Owen, so., Ridgeview. Setter — Jenny McKinnon, sr., Crook County. Libero — Jaycee Villastrigo, so., Crook County.

Second Team

Hitters — Kendall Maykut, sr., Crook County; Sauren Garton, sr., Pendleton; Rilea Mills, sr., Redmond; Kennedy Abbas, jr., The Dalles; Jayden Gustavson, sr., Redmond. Setter — Rachel Lester, jr., Ridgeview. Libero — Nora Yoshioka, sr., Pendleton.

Honorable Mention

Hitters — Paige Capitani, so., Ridgeview; Ashtyn Brown, sr., Pendleton; Reese Leblein, sr., Hood River Valley; Zoe Lebreton, so., The Dalles; Zoe Dunn, jr., The Dalles. Setters — Hayden Hamilton, jr., Ridgeview; Jeilane Stewart, so., The Dalles. Liberos — Kayla Sheasby, sr., Hood River Valley; Kiyarah Hicks, sr., Redmond; Kylee Rost, sr., Ridgeview.

ON THE SLATE

THURSDAY, NOV. 18

Prep girls bowling
Kamiakin at Hermiston, 3 p.m.

FRIDAY, NOV. 19

College cross-country
Eastern Oregon at NAIA National Championships, 10:30 a.m.
College men's wrestling
Simpson at Eastern Oregon, 7 p.m.

College women's wrestling

Simpson at Eastern Oregon, 5 p.m.
College men's basketball
Blue Mountain vs. Linn Benton at WWCC, 6 p.m.
College women's basketball
Edmonds at Blue Mountain, 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOV. 20

Prep football
2A state semifinals: Heppner vs.

Coquille at McMinnville High School, noon

College women's basketball

Eastern Oregon vs. Montana Western, Caldwell, Idaho, 2 p.m.
Lower Columbia at Blue Mountain, 5 p.m.
College men's basketball
Blue Mountain vs. Mountain Home AFB, 2 p.m.

SUNDAY, NOV. 21

College men's wrestling
Eastern Oregon at Spokane Open, Spokane, Washington, TBA
College women's wrestling
Eastern Oregon at Spokane Open, Spokane, Washington, TBA
College women's basketball
Clark at Blue Mountain, 2 p.m.

TUESDAY, NOV. 23

Prep girls bowling
Hermiston at Kennewick, 2:30 p.m.
TUESDAY, NOV. 30
Prep girls basketball
Hermiston at Davis, 5:45 p.m.
Prep boys basketball
Hermiston at Davis, 7:30 p.m.