

Middle school Viking football team tears through 2017 season



The 2017 Siuslaw Middle School football team

The team of 7th- and 8th-graders has outscored its opponents 224-28 heading into today's final game of the season.



Siuslaw Middle School's football team of 14 eighth-graders and 13 seventh-graders has only suffered one loss as it heads into today's final game against Reedsport, with wins over Powers (53-6), Azalea (35-0), Myrtle Point (30-0), Sunset (62-6) and Riley Creek (36-0) in a special 8-man game.

Most have been playing together since the fifth grade, with several — Henry Rankin, Josh Heckathorn, Mason Buss, Noah Dotson and Victor Ayala — looking up to older siblings who have played for Siuslaw's varsity Viking football

team in the past.

Last year, the team finished 5-3. At 5-1 so far this season, the team has had 15 different players score en route to a total of 224 points — with the defense accounting for 32 of those points.

The team, coached by Dan Rankin and John Rose, has outscored opponents 224-28 as it takes on Reedsport today.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SMITH

Jonathan Rose (far left) reaches for a pass with blocking from Abraham Dejesus; Avery Hart (right) takes down an Azalea runningback



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Little

from 1B

The parent coaching their own son's or daughter's team will likely select their own child and believe me, spectators and the all-star coach will quickly determine if the "coache's pick" was justified and the players selected will gain valuable competitive experiences for future baseball

seasons.

Over 25 years ago, I coached a Babe Ruth all-star team. One coach sent his son instead of his stud catcher and the players asked me why?

I honestly didn't know.

Our team lost in the state quarter-finals from a passed ball and the best pitcher did not have the catcher he had all season.

Carl West, from Mapleton,

and I each played in the 1970 Shrine All-Star Football Game. We were both from small schools — and I still believe Carl and I could name at least one player from our respectful teams who could have taken the place of a player there.

We learned that all-stars are not always the best players on teams.

In 1993, I coached the 3A high school Shrine All-Star Baseball Game. Unlike my opposing coach, I played all players in every game.

After all, they were all-stars! We won the series 2 games to 1.

After the game, a parent thanked me for letting her son go up to bat. She said her son's coach always had used a designated hitter for him in every game. In this case, he drove in a run with his first hit of the year.

In my opinion, the only professional all-star game worth watching is baseball. That's because their incentive is home field advantage in the "World Series." Football and basketball all-star games... they're just showcases.

So when the all-star choices are made, make sure you, as coach, choose the deserving player to represent your team.

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Camping

from 1B

"The \$2 rate increase aligns with the views expressed in past park surveys that show visitors prefer smaller rate increases on a more frequent basis than a large fee increase in the future," says Lisa Sumption, director of OPRD. "We do not receive tax dollars for operation of our parks. Nearly all our funding comes from visitors, a portion of RV registration dollars, and the Oregon Lottery."

Oregon's state parks attract 2.7 million campers and 51.5 million day visitors every year, consistently ranking in the nation's top 10 state park systems. OPRD last raised its camping rates in 2014, and the state park system is not funded by taxes.

Visitors, voter-approved funding from the Oregon Lottery, and a share of recreational vehicle registrations fund the Oregon state park system.

Visit www.oregon-stateparks.org for a list of all state parks and campgrounds.