

Viks from 1B

has had less time to build its chemistry in the pre-season.

They have only had a couple of weeks to practice as a full team. According to senior running back Skyler Loomis, "Going into the game, I think we all felt pretty confident about how we were going to do and were really excited to get back out there and play after 16 months of not being able to do anything football-wise."

However, La Pine came out with hopes just as high, which was reflected in the Hawks' game play. Said Lacouture, "First quarter, they came out with some fire. I'm not going to say it surprised us, but it's been a while since we've played with that intensity," he said.

"It's been over a year since we played a football game. So, we had to get locked in, do it pretty fast — and it took us a second."

The Viks pushed back, finding their groove by the end of the first quarter and continuing to gain momentum later in the first half — including Loomis grabbing a pick just before halftime.

But unfortunately, the break may have forced the Vikings to lose a bit of their momentum.

"Going into the second half, we didn't come out strong; we kind of just came out flat," Loomis said. "I think that's why we didn't play as well in the second half."

Lacouture agreed, saying that the third quarter is what really changed the game for La Pine, with the Hawks retaining possession for nearly eight min-

utes of the period.

"Our defense was on the field for a long time, getting really tired," Lacouture said.

It was a clear challenge for the Vikings, roster is in large part made up with players contributing on both offense and defense.

"So, we were definitely all really tired," said Lacouture. "[When] we got back to offense — being tired mentally and physically — things started to not really line up for us late in the third, and into the fourth quarter."

But with five minutes left in the game, the Vikings had a flash of hope.

In a third-and-20 situation, Siuslaw earned a first down, then scored on the next play before grabbing a two-point conversion that put the Viks ahead by four.

"That gave us a little bit of light there," said Blankenship.

However, the Hawks responded by driving downfield and ending up within five yards of the end zone with 1:30 remaining. But on the next play, the Hawks were called on a hands-to-the-face penalty, pushing them back another 15 yards.

It was a lucky break for the Viks which, unfortunately, didn't pan out.

On the next play, La Pine drove into the end zone to score and take a two-point, 26-24 lead that proved to be the final score.

"We ran the ball pretty good," said Junior lineman Henry Rankin, "but our passing game needed a little work. Our offensive line needs a little more work on blocking. As a team, I feel like we

stayed together, and we rallied and didn't bicker at each other."

The Vikings did have some clutch plays throughout. Aside from Loomis's pick before halftime, junior Isaac Garza had a pick early on, Blankenship scored on a one-yard QB sneak on the second drive, Braydon Thornton had a touchdown on a 15-yard fly sweep, and Loomis had a touchdown from 10-yard run. Loomis also scored three 2-point conversions for the Viks.

Despite the loss, Siuslaw seems to know exactly what needs to be done to improve its game play.

"I know that we can be

something really good this season. With COVID and everything, it's been a tough ride, but we're getting closer as teammates," said Lacouture. "The chemistry as friends and as a brotherhood is coming together, and the chemistry on the field is getting better as we go."

The Vikings will host their first home game this Friday (March 12), when they take on Santiam Christian beginning at 7 p.m.

As with all sporting events this season, no spectators are allowed to attend. However, the game will be broadcast live on KCST 106.9 FM, beginning at 6:45 p.m.

Fishing from 1B

is typically the peak for Siletz steelheading.

The 4-mile bridge (aka Steel Bridge) in the Siletz gorge is open to motorized vehicles on the weekends only. Anglers can walk/bike in the road during the weekdays. There is a parking area located at the 1-mile gate where anglers can walk/bike upstream

from there.

WILSON RIVER: Steelhead

The Wilson dropped into shape late last week and actually had decent fishing Thursday and Friday. The bite slowed over the weekend but has been slow to fair the last couple days.

It will fish through the weekend. Conditions won't be the best the next week, but there are fish and the opportunity to

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COOS RIVER BASIN: Marine perch species, steelhead

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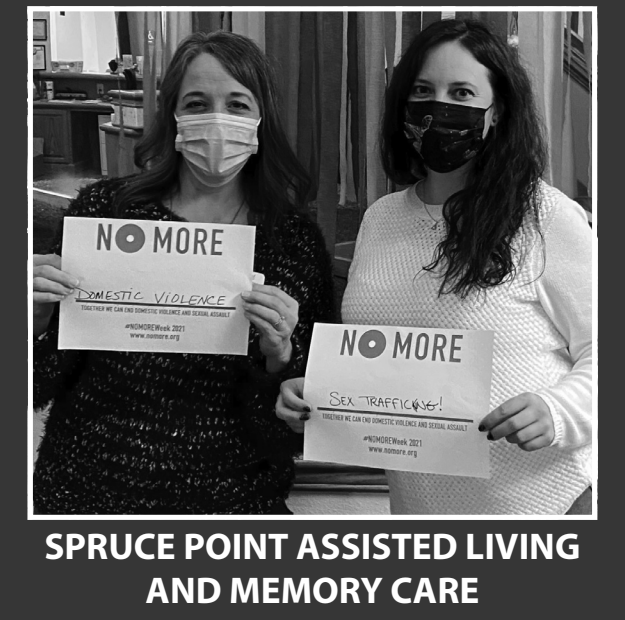
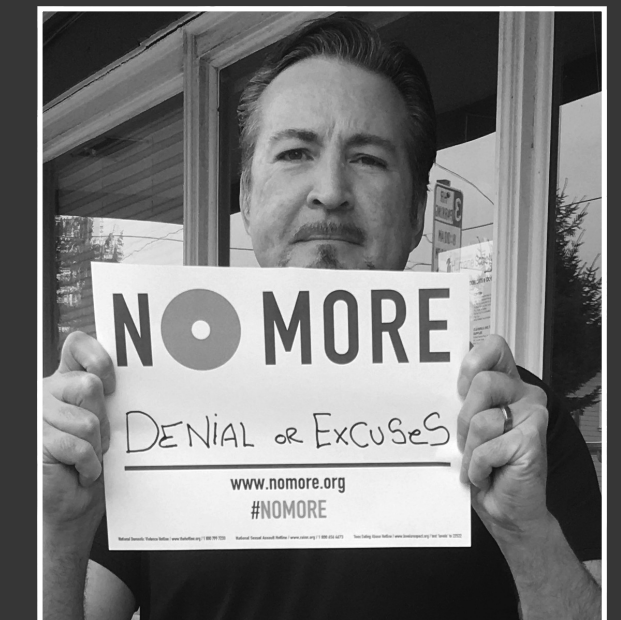
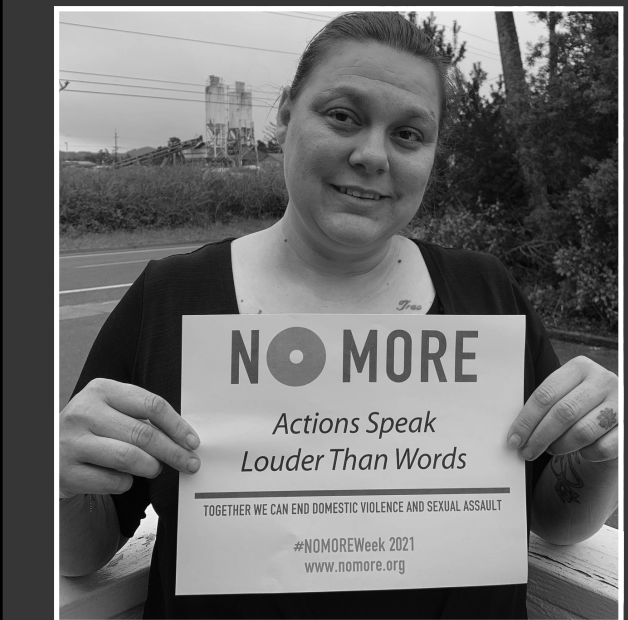
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