

Lions cruise to victory

Cottage Grove football delivers dominant senior night performance against Junction City

By Zach Silva
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It was over as soon as it started.

Dominant from the first whistle, the Cottage Grove football team jumped out early scoring five touchdowns on the first nine offensive plays as they rolled past winless Junction City 57-12 in the final regular season game of the season. The victory secured a spot in the playoffs for the Lions.

"I gave a pregame talk and I told the team, I don't care if they're 0-7, we're going to go out and run them out of the stadium," said quarterback Dylan Graves who recorded all his stats in the first half going 10-for-12 for 208 yards passing with five touchdowns through the air and two rushing scores. "We knew that we just had to go out there and execute and be able to move on because if we were to lose this game then we weren't going anywhere."

In the opening quarter, it was a whole host of Lions making their way to the end zone: Jacob Dunn (20-yard reception), Jaden Doolittle (25-yard reception), Erick Giffen (9-yard reception), a Graves three-yard run and Logan Husk (65-yard reception).

"We didn't want to come out and play flat, we wanted to come out in the first quarter and just, honestly, end it there. And I feel like we did good on doing that," said Giffen.

Cottage Grove kept up the scoring in the second quarter as Graves rushed for another touchdown and found Matt Zumwalt for a 42-yard passing touchdown. The offense was continually set up by the team's defense that allowed just six yards in the first quarter and 34 in the first half.

The second-half didn't start any better for the visiting Tigers as the Lions came away with a safety on Junction City's opening drive followed by a Giffen 68-yard run out of the wildcat formation for Cottage Grove's final score of the day. The Lions finished with 414 yards of offense on the day and no turnovers.

"I think we did a really good job of making plays. I think that's the biggest thing, we did the little things right," said Cottage Grove head coach Gary Roberts. "We were in the right spots on defense and we made plays on offense. Kids did a good job."

The Lions dominated the game in what felt like a throwback to last season and the seniors took it all in, in their final home game in Cottage Grove.

"It was really emotional pregame. All of us seniors just huddled up before the game and talked about how this could be our last game at Herald White and how we need to lay it all on the line and make sure we have no regrets," said Giffen.

17th ranked Cottage Grove will now travel to Newport on Friday night to take on the 16th ranked Cubs (6-2). Newport started

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Talley takes top time to districts



PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

Cottage Grove's Jimmy Talley races through last week's Country Fair Classic. Heading into tomorrow's district meet, Talley has the fastest time in all of 4A.

Jimmy Talley and Annah Nyburg lead Lions into Sky-Em district meet

By Zach Silva
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In a race with competitors coming from 1A to 6A schools, it was a pair of Cottage Grove runners standing out.

At the Country Fair Classic held at Richardson Park last Wednesday, Cottage Grove junior Jimmy Talley took third in the boys' varsity race while sophomore Annah Nyburg was sixth on the girls' side. It is the last race until Thursday's Sky-Em League District meet.

"This was more like a road run in that a bunch of it was on the concrete and on the asphalt and couldn't wear their racing spikes. But man, what a great outcome," said head coach Jim Settlemeyer. "It was a wonderful day and lots of people are ready to go to the district meet and do good things."

Entering the race, Talley held the fastest

time in all of 4A at 16:04. On Wednesday, he was able to extend his lead among 4A runners as he recorded a time of 15:50. Early in the race, Talley was at the front with the leaders as he attempted to run a set pace of 5:05 per mile. After a 4:56 first mile, he wanted to continue to his pace but not lose sight of the lead pack.

"I also didn't want to lose the first two so I tried sticking with them. I lost them a little bit and then caught up with them and then kind of lost them at the end of race," said Talley who was passed by Jedaiah Wasson of East Linn Christian in the final half mile. Vincent Mestler of Sheldon took first in a time of 15:42.

With his time of on the day, Talley came within one second of breaking the Cottage Grove High School 5K record that was set by Ken Scoggin in 2005.

"(Jimmy is) making strides every week. To run a crazy 16:04 on Saturday and follow it with 14 seconds faster," said Settlemeyer. "I just told him, if every week he knocks off 14 seconds, he's going to be doing great."

As a team, the Lions finished 9th of the

25 schools that were competing. Paesen Timm took 28th in a time of 17:14 while Konrad Raum was 32nd in a time of 17:20. Jaden Thuesen (129th, 19:42) and Justin Francis (146th, 20:08) completed the team's top five.

On the girls' side, it was Nyburg who jumped out with the leaders from the start.

"There was a small group ahead of me in the first mile and then they kind of broke off and we were spread out more," she said. "I prefer to have at least a couple people a few paces in front of me to keep me going. Give me something to push for."

Nyburg hung on with the pack and powered her way to a sixth-place finish. The team finished fifth of the 16 teams competing. Freshmen Evie Smith and Eternity Reimche finished 37th (21:37) and 38th (21:39) respectively. Kajsa Merz took 58th (23:00) while Kenzie Parsons was 77th (23:48).

Now the focus of the team locks into Thursday's district meet at Lane Community College. The top two teams make

it to the state meet in addition to the top five overall finishers. In a hypothetical meet based on each individual's personal record on the season, the Cottage Grove boys are projected to finish fifth and the girls fourth.

For Talley and Nyburg, they are looking to lock in a spot as individuals. Talley's top time is 25 seconds faster than the second fastest time in league.

"That is still close enough for it to be a competition," said Talley. "So basically just probably race second place and try to get first and rely on my sprint at the end."

On the girls' side, Nyburg has the fifth fastest time in the ultra-competitive Sky-Em League that accounts for six of the top 11 times in all of 4A.

"I'm hoping to definitely PR that meet and do really well. I want to get to state," she said. "I have a shot but I'd like to definitely confirm a spot."

The district meet is Thursday (Oct. 25) at Lane Community College. The varsity girls race will start noon while the varsity boys will begin at 12:45 p.m.

Nicki Derrick is back for North Douglas



PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

Nicki Derrick sends over a serve against Yoncalla in her second game back from injury.

After tearing her ACL in February, the three-sport star is back in action for the Warriors

By Zach Silva
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North Douglas was losing and Nicki Derrick went to make a play.

It was not unlike other times when the talented three-sport athlete would come up big for the Warriors. The starting setter for the always highly ranked volleyball team, an all-league basketball guard and the 1A softball player of the year in her freshman season had, time and time again, helped lead the team – all the teams – to victory.

But this time it was a win-or-go-home girls' basketball district playoff game – Derrick's sophomore year – and North Douglas was once again facing Elkton. It was the third time the teams had met throughout the season and after splitting the first two contests, the game to decide who went to state was, fittingly, in overtime. Down by one with less than 10 seconds to play, North Douglas needed the ball for a chance to win.

"I remember the ball bouncing around a couple times and then a girl just running down the court and the first instinct is: my season is going

to be over if I don't stop this play," said Derrick reflecting on a moment that she has replayed over and over again in her mind since it happened last February. She raced for the ball and was called for a foul but that was not the important, long-lasting impact of the play.

"I just kind of remember my knee moving in slow motion and as soon as I hit the ground – it was just one of those things that you just know this is not good," she said.

That pain in her knee was a torn ACL and meniscus.

The injury would soon come to mean surgery, weeks of pain and an arduous rehab process. It meant this standout varsity athlete with aspirations to play at the next level would be tested in new ways. But in the moment, on the ground in pain, it was simultaneously none of those things and all of those things at once.

"It was really hard for me because it felt unreal, like something you would see in a movie," said Derrick. "It took me months to comprehend that."

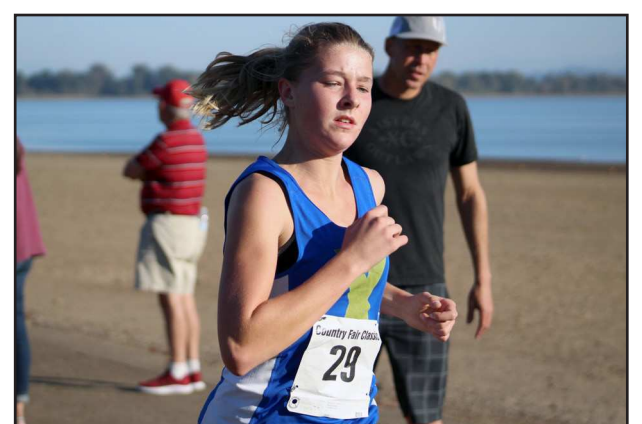
And after those months of big accomplishments that included first steps and being able to move laterally once again, Nicki Derrick is now back. She has recovered, is healthy and is once again ready to help the Warriors in every sport she plays.

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Athlete of the Week



This week's athlete of the week is Cottage Grove's Annah Nyburg. Heading into the district meet, Nyburg has the fifth fastest time in the Sky-Em league and the ninth fastest time in all of 4A.



Annah Nyburg races through the Country Fair Classic last week.
 PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL