

# Elks send Eagles flying in final 6-man game

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 COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

“I think we’re playing the best that we’ve played all year these last few weeks. And it definitely showed on the field. We took it to them for this game.”

Elkton’s football coach, Jeremy Lockhart, reflected upon the closing season after defeating Eddyville Charter in their final game, 66-39. The Elks finish the season 4-2 overall, and fourth in their league.

Elkton led off scoring with an early 15-yard touchdown pass from Jace Clevenger to Ben Bowen.

The Eagles answered on their next possession with a 40-yard touchdown pass, securing their conversion and taking the lead initially 7-6.

The Elks responded in kind on their possession with another touchdown pass from Clevenger to Bowen, this time for 18 yards.

“It was kind of like the Jace and Ben Show early on,” joked Lockhart.

After nailing the conversion play, the first quarter closed with the Elks ahead 13-7.

Early in the second quarter, Elkton scored another touchdown with a one-yard rush from Cooper Peters, bringing the score to 20-7.

Eddyville scored again with a successful pass on their next possession, taking it to 20-14.

On the next possession, following a false start penalty at the goal line, the Elks were able to get a pass off to freshman Jamal Lawton, catching the first touchdown pass of his high school career, and bringing the score to 27-13.

With a wonderful back-to-back moment, the next touchdown was secured by another freshman — Anthony Alimenti — who subsequently caught the first-ever touchdown of his high school ca-



reer. At this point, the Elks led 33-13. With 20 seconds left in the half, Eddyville threw the ball out of bounds, then on a fourth-and-seven play, landed a successful pass to run it all the way in. The Eagles scored with zero time left on the clock to end the half and make it 33-20 in the Elks’ favor.

At halftime, Lockhart made some adjustments. “We just told our guys, ‘Hey, you’re winning, you’re doing well, you’re executing. They are getting tired,’” said Lockhart. “I said, ‘We get the ball right away in the first half, let’s just go out there and score, take a three-score lead!’”

The very next touchdown was a scramble play, with Clevenger throwing a check-down to Cooper, who ran it all the way for a TD.

After the successful 57-yard pass, Clevenger already had a total of five touchdown passes in the third quarter, bringing the Elks in the lead 40-20.

On the Eagles’ first possession, they came back to score quickly, but after this point, the Elks switched into high gear.

“We basically put on the afterburners,” said Lockhart. “So, from this point on, we started to dominate the game.”

After getting the ball back, Nathan Rausch punched it in for a 22-yard touchdown run, putting

the Elks back up by three scores. Peters then had an interception, running the ball in for a 62-yard touchdown, and putting the Elks ahead 54-26.

On Eddyville’s next possession, Bowen stripped the quarterback, causing him to fumble. This was recovered by Clevenger, who then ran the ball for 47 yards, scoring another touchdown and putting the score at 60-26.

Eddyville then finally came back to score, ending the third quarter at 60-32 with Elkton ahead.

The Elks continued their push into the final quarter of the game.

“We got the ball early in the fourth quarter, and we just did our thing,” said Lockhart. “They really couldn’t stop our offense at this point at all.”

Elkton’s final touchdown was brought in by Peters and, after that, Lockhart was able to let more of his inexperienced players in for some play time. “Jayden Bickford made the highlight reel because he got to play defense on that series and did a good job,” said Lockhart. “Then he got to play offense in our next series, and he caught his first pass as a football player.”

Eddyville scored a final touchdown late in the fourth, and the final score was 66-39.

The Elks had a great game statistically. Peters had 15 carries for 165 yards, with three touchdowns on the ground and three conversions. Throwing, Peters was three for six for 63 yards, and receiving had three catches for 80 yards and one touchdown. “He’s definitely been a beast for us this year,” said Lockhart.

Rausch had five carries for 74 yards and a touchdown, as well as a conversion.

Particularly impressive this game was Clevenger, who was 14 for 19 passing for 244 yards, with five touchdown throws and two conversions through the air. Clevenger also played hard defense with 10 tackles and the fumble recovery for a score.

Bowen had seven receptions for 124 yards and two touchdowns. “He was awesome,” said Lockhart. “Everything we threw at him, he caught.”

Elkton’s defense in general was very strong this season. According to Lockhart, “One thing I was definitely impressed with, too, was that we only had one turnover in the game — that puts us at four turnovers for the entire year. We’ve been protecting the ball better.”

Overall, it was a memorable win and a successful final match, with Lockhart experiencing his own rite of passage as a coach.

“They dumped Gatorade on me! I did not know that was coming,” exclaimed the coach. “We were doing our sportsmanship, shaking hands and stuff at mid-field, and I’m talking to the coach and he backs away from me — and I’m just thinking, ‘What’s he doing?’ And all of a sudden, I just get crushed with a big wave of water. That’s the first time I’ve ever had a Gatorade bath.”

Ice bath aside, the coach was pleased with the end of the season and his team’s performance.

“It was a great group of kids,” said Lockhart. “Our seniors were fantastic, and I’m definitely going to miss all of them. They really made it a special year.”

Regarding playing six-man, Lockhart feels that it was definitely the right thing to do this year.

“It was a nice adjustment,” he said. “I think that we actually took to it quite well, and once we figured it out by about the third or fourth game, we really were clicking on all cylinders.”

# Lions’ boys soccer garners MVP, Coach of the Year nods

When coaches from the Sky-Em League gathered last week to decide which players from the boys soccer division were among the best of the best, a total of nine Lions made the cut — including the Most Valuable Player and Coach of the Year.

CGHS junior middle-back Jaden Cameron was named the league’s MVP, with coach Vern Stewart honored as Coach of the Year.

Honorable Mention Goalie went to Lions junior Ty Kishen. Players receiving First-Team

All-League recognition included another nod for Cameron at forward; and senior middle Evan Snauer.

Second-Team All League went to sophomore forward Aldo Rea.

Receiving Honorable Mention honors were juniors middles

Chase Williams and Sy Williams, along with senior wing Drew Chapmen.

The Lions finished the season at 5-3-1 overall.

# OSAA announces decision on Season 3 Culminating week events

The OSAA Executive Board met in a work session held March 31 to finalize decisions on Season 3 Culminating Week events.

The board recognized and gave its appreciation for all the hard work member schools and officials are doing on a daily basis to make activities happen for the students throughout Oregon.

The condensed, overlapping seasons, along with the variations in educational models, has tested the collective resolve of member schools this year but the commitment to provide opportunities for students is to be commended.

After lengthy conversation, discussion of feedback from schools and consideration of several different options, the OSAA Executive Board made the decision to return the sixth and final week of Season 3 (spring) to the schools to coordinate and execute local/regional Culminating Week events at their discretion, similar to Season 2 (fall).

The board said it believes that

providing local discretion for Culminating Week events allows schools to make the best decisions for their school and community.

During the meeting, the board discussed the current realities impacting schools and activities during the pandemic. While some schools have been in session for all or most of the year, the majority of schools have recently or will soon begin in-person or hybrid schedules.

Just as educational models vary throughout the state, the same is true for high school activities. Some schools and districts have set limitations on travel and transportation in playing a very localized schedule while others are competing in a more traditional league schedule which may involve more travel.

Season 2 has seen teams with full schedules and others only competing in a few contests. School teams around the state have had to pause programs due to COVID-19 exposures while

others have participated without issues.

The disparities outlined above impact the ability to establish fair and equitable qualifying procedures in order to crown a true state champion.

OSAA-sponsored state championship events would require travel across the state for many schools and potentially include overnight stays depending on the sport, thus creating the type of large-scale public events that the OHA and Governor continue to advise against at this time.

Additionally, returning this week to schools lengthens the already shortened season and provides additional participation opportunities for all students at all levels in a program.

The board directed staff to support schools in organizing these events at the local/regional level and help provide meaningful experiences for students.

OSAA staff will work with member schools to highlight

and promote these events, student-athletes, coaches and stories.

Participation limitations for Season 3 sports have been increased to allow for additional contests in each activity through the culminating weeks.

Baseball and softball will receive four (4) additional games, tennis will receive three (3) additional multi-match playing dates, track & field will receive two (2) additional meets and golf will receive four (4) additional nine-hole rounds.

The board also confirmed its support for virtual events for cheerleading, dance/drill, solo music, band, orchestra, choir and speech.

Potential Culminating Week events for Season 4 (winter) were discussed but no decisions have been made at this time.

The board plans to continue reviewing potential options as that season draws near.

**Note:** Game times and dates are subject to change

## April 16

- Elkton Baseball at North D/Yoncalla Noon and 2 pm
- ND Softball hosts Riddle 2/4 pm
- Yoncalla Softball at Oakridge 2/4 pm
- CG Baseball hosts Marist 3/5 pm
- CG Softball hosts Marist 3/5 pm
- Elkton Track/Field RCCS Spring Opener 4 pm
- Yoncalla T/F RCCS Spring Opener 4 pm

## April 17

- Yoncalla Softball at Oakridge 2 and 4 p.m.

## April 20

- CGHS Softball at J. City 5 pm
- CGHS Baseball at J. City 5 pm
- Elkton Softball hosts Lowell 4:30 pm
- Elkton Baseball at Ump. Valley Chr. 4:30 pm
- ND Softball at Oakridge 4:30 pm
- ND/Yonca Baseball at Riddle 4:30 pm
- Yoncalla Softball at Riddle 4:30 pm

## April 21

- Yoncalla T/F at Mapleton 4 pm

## April 22

- Elkton T/F at Riddle 4 pm

## Results:

### April 13

- CGHS Baseball lost to Siuslaw: 9-11
- CGHS Softball defeated Siuslaw: 17-3
- Elkton Baseball lost to Glendale: 0-17
- Yoncalla Softball defeated Glendale: 24-23

# Athlete of the Week

This week’s athlete of the week is Cottage Grove’s **Jaden Cameron**, who was named the Sky-Em League’s MVP for boys soccer



Cottage Grove High School junior Jaden Cameron is a forward for the Lions’ boys varsity soccer team

