

Get down and give me 50!



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Keoni Piceno, left, encourages Logan Billman, Sydney Ball and Natalie Ball during a pushup drill at Western Oregon's speed camp on Friday morning. The camp welcomed around 45 kids who were split into two age groups: Youth (6-11) and Elite (12-18). The camp runs weekly every Monday, Wednesday and Friday through July 29. The youth group begins at 9:30 a.m. and the Elite group starts at 10:30 a.m. Cost is \$27.50 per week. Forms are available online at www.wouwolves.com/news/2016/7/1/athletics-speed-camp-begins-wed-july-6.aspx. For more information: Cori Metzgar, 503-838-8312.

Riddell: Pirates went 10-1 in '15

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Riddell, a member of Central's athletic hall of fame, has a long and storied career already, but he's about to add a new chapter. Perrydale will mark his first foray into eight-man football.

"Luckily, they have some great coaches there who have helped me a great deal," Riddell said. "Dan (Dugan) has also coached as well. We had a scrimmage against Falls City and I learned a great deal."

The Pirates finished 10-1 in 2015 and advanced to the OSAA Class 1A state semifinals. Riddell is eager to continue the Pirates' tradition of winning.

"Those kids at Perrydale are really good kids," Riddell said. "I've been really impressed. I had a chance to be around the student body. I think the team will be very aggressive. I'm really excited about learning, adjusting and progressing."

Perrydale's hiring of Riddell turned out to be in the nick of time. Not long after

accepting Perrydale's position, Riddell's son, Josh, became head coach at McKay High School. Getting to coach alongside your son would be a tempting proposition for anyone, but Riddell stayed firm.

"I can tell you right now that 99 percent of people would have said I'm resigning to go follow my son," Hedrick said. "Duane didn't do that. You don't get to coach with your son very often. Duane committed to Perrydale and made that promise to those kids and he's upholding it. That speaks to what kind of character he brings."

Riddell's coaching career has spanned decades, but he's just as excited as the day he first stepped onto the field as a coach. He hopes to bring a wealth of knowledge to Perrydale in its quest for a state title.

"I've always loved football," Riddell said. "I love being around it. I love watching it. I loved playing it. I admire the players a great deal."

LaCreole field receives new irrigation system

By Lukas Eggen

The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Jeff Hevener was ecstatic to be working on Saturday morning. Hevener, along with numerous volunteers, spent the weekend installing an irrigation system at the LaCreole Middle School football field.

That may not sound fun to many, but for Hevener, it was a moment three years in the making.

"It may sound weird to be so excited about an irrigation system, but I am pumped this is happening," he said.

Prior to the installation of the irrigation system, watering and caring for the football field was a laborious proposition.

"We would have to hook up these pipes and turn on the water," Hevener said. "Then, before games or practices we'd have to take apart the pipes and move them to the sidelines and then move them back after they were done on the field. We'd turn on the water and some pipes wouldn't be hooked up all the way and water would shoot out and we'd have to go fix it."

The process was taxing physically, and took time. It also led to the field's condition being uneven in spots.

"I had high school football players tell me that this field was always a joke to them," Hevener said.



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Volunteers both young and old helped install the new irrigation system at the LaCreole Middle School football field on Saturday morning.

That should no longer be the case.

Hevener has been involved with Dallas Pop Warner to try and get an irrigation system installed for the past three years.

In the summer of 2015, the group believed it was ready to install the irrigation system until plans had to be put on hold.

"Last year, we were ready to get started and at the last minute we found out that we

couldn't due to additional approvals needed," he said. "At that point, it was too late to move forward with the project."

Dallas Pop Warner wouldn't be denied this year, Hevener said. They began holding regular discussions of the project in January to ensure every detail, from the time of year to all needed approvals, would be accounted for.

"This year, we had all of the people needed to complete the project on board from the beginning, and we all had the motivation to get this done," Hevener said. "Our motivation was contagious and there was no way we were going to come up short again."

Work on the project began in earnest on Thursday.

Volunteers showed up in full force, whether donating equipment or time to help shovel ditches, install sprinklers or refill ditches.

Dallas High School football players came out on Friday to help dig trenches. Middle school players have pitched in, and volunteers from Morrison Plumbing, Fall Creek Logging, the Hofrenbredl family and a number of other individuals pitched in, Hevener said.

"Everyone benefits, and it did not cost our school district any time or resources," Hevener said. "Our football players will have a better field for practice and games, and our community has a nice field to be proud of."

Mid-Valley Pop Warner covered the entire cost of the project, which was about \$5,000, Hevener said. Dallas Pop Warner and volunteers will continue to maintain the field.

"The general feeling is relief that we have it done," Hevener said. "I was very proud. I love our community, and when you see people giving back, it's a great feeling."

Globe: Germany trip looms on Sunday

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The invitational attracts scouts and coaches from a number of international leagues and is one of many that Alexander looked at attending.

"Western Oregon coach Jim (Shaw) helped me with finding the right camps to go to," Alexander said. "There are a lot of camps that are misleading and are just out to get you to pay them money. This camp has proven to be very legitimate and has gotten college athletes a job overseas at a good percentage."

It will be a new experience for Alexander, but he's put in the hours working on strength, conditioning and fine tuning his basketball skills. Now, it's time to trust his training.

"I have to stay composed and enjoy the moment and the opportunity," Alexander said. "I get too far ahead of myself. You can't always go in guns blazing and be really anxious. You have to prepare the right way for it. I'm a little nervous, but not worked up. It's a good nervous."

No matter what happens in Vegas, Alexander won't be staying there for long. On Sunday, Alexander will begin traveling for another

Vegas, baby

• Devon Alexander will take part in the Mavericks Sports Invitational in Las Vegas.

• During the invitational, which began Tuesday after press time, players are put on teams and will play a series of games against each other. Scouts, coaches and agents attend the invitational from around the world.

• Alexander leaves for Germany on Sunday. He will compete alongside other players for a chance to get a contract playing professionally overseas.

opportunity.

This one is a little farther away from home — Frankfurt, Germany.

"It kind of surprised me because I got this gig a couple weeks ago," Alexander said. "I've never been overseas. I didn't even know my passport was expired. I had to figure that out and rush that a bit."

Alexander said he'll be practicing alongside eight other American players for three to four weeks with the hope of getting offered a contract.

"I'm not trying to pressure myself," Alexander said. "This is potentially a once-in-a-life-time op-

portunity and a chance to experience another culture. My family reminded me that worst-case scenario is you go to Germany to play basketball and then you're back."

With opportunities lining up quickly, the last month has been a whirlwind, Alexander said. But it's also meant rarely getting to see family and friends, as his focus has solely been on basketball.

"It's tough not seeing my family as much as I wanted to," Alexander said. "It's just not in the schedule right now to be able to see them and put so much focus and effort into preparing for these opportunities coming up. At the same time, I love it because I know it's what they want me to do."

As Alexander prepares for his first real shots at landing a professional contract, he's realized his journey will mean more than just self-satisfaction. He's doing this for others who may follow in his footsteps.

"It gives people coming from a small school more of a drive," he said. "I hope this gives them more of an inspiration to pursue their dreams after their four years of eligibility. It all comes down to how bad you want it and what you're willing to sacrifice to go for it."



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer file

Former Western Oregon men's basketball player Devon Alexander is taking part in an invitational in Las Vegas this week. He will travel to Germany on Sunday.

Dirtbags: Squad features talented mix of players

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"As long as you know baseball, you can get along with almost anyone," McBeth said. "When you have that common interest, it's pretty easy to have fun and when you're surrounded by baseball players."

Playing as a team is essential when each squad features a deep, talented lineup.

"I come out every time I step on the field with the intention to dominate and control the game as best I can," Weaver said. "The hit-

ters are better, so I have to be better at hitting my spots and being confident with each pitch. There's less room for mistakes. The competition is tougher, but so are we."

The Dirtbags are out to finish what they started in

2015, when the team advanced to the state semifinals.

The players may come from rival teams, but at least for a few months, these rivals stand together for a common goal.

"There's something mu-

tual there, since while you represent your high school, you also represent Post 20. That's a great thing to be a part of," Weaver said. "We know how bad we want it after what happened last year. Coming up just short the

way we did last summer is a great motivation tool. ... We're a dangerous ball club this year, and I'm really excited for what we can accomplish. I'm hoping this year we can make history and leave a legacy for this team."