

SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, AUG. 25
Boys Soccer: Dallas at Century Jamboree, 10:30 a.m.
Girls Soccer: Dallas at Century Jamboree, 3:30 p.m.
Volleyball: Dallas at Lebanon Jamboree, 1 p.m.

FRIDAY, AUG. 26
Football: Dallas at Cascade Jamboree, 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUG. 27
Boys Soccer: Central vs. South Albany, at Sweet Home Jamboree, noon. Central at Sweet Home, 1:15 p.m.
Girls Soccer: Central at South Albany Jamboree, noon. Dallas at Redmond, noon.
Volleyball: North Clackamas Christian at Perrydale, noon. Triangle Lake at Perrydale, 3:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, AUG. 30
Boys Soccer: Thurston at Central, 6 p.m.
Girls Soccer: Central at Parkrose, 4:30 p.m.
Volleyball: Falls City at Portland Waldorf, 5:30 p.m. Perrydale vs. East Linn Christian, at Delphian, 4:30 p.m. Perrydale at Delphian, 7 p.m.

QUICK HITS

Western Oregon tickets available

MONMOUTH — Season ticket packages and single-game tickets for Western Oregon's fall sports teams are now available for purchase.

Tickets for football, volleyball and soccer are available online at www.wouwolves.com/-sports/2013/11/1/GEN_1101135352.aspx.

Season tickets cost \$60 for volleyball, \$55 for soccer and \$50 for reserved or \$40 for general seating for football. Single-game tickets cost \$7 for volleyball and soccer and \$12 for general seating for football.

WOU volleyball picked eighth

MONMOUTH — The Western Oregon volleyball team was picked to finish eighth out of 11 teams in the Great Northwest Athletic Conference coaches poll on Thursday.

The Wolves finished in a tie for eighth place in the GNAC in 2015 with a 5-15 mark in conference play.

Western Washington, the defending West Region champions, was picked to finish first followed by Alaska Anchorage and Northwest Nazarene.

WOU opens the 2016 season at the Concordia Labor Day Tournament Sept. 1-3 in Portland.

Cross Creek men's club results

DALLAS — Cross Creek's men's club results for Aug. 17:

Low gross/low net
Gross: 1 Paul Disney, 39; 2 (tie), Rocky Kygar, Joe Johnson, Lee Gamaney, Kevon O'Brien and Kevin Moen, 40.

Net: 1 (tie), Pat Flanagan and Dennis Bergman; 3, Darrel Smedstad, 32; 4, Brian Halin, 33; 5 (tie), Donald Sprague and John Hopkins, 34.

Tuipulotu named preseason All-American

INDEPENDENCE — Central senior Marlon Tuipulotu has been named to the All American Family Insurance All-USA Preseason Football Team.

Tuipulotu, a 6-foot-2, 295-pound defensive lineman, had 78 tackles and 13 sacks in 2015.

He was named the OSAA Class 5A defensive player of the year and also the *Itemizer-Observer* All-Region Player of the Year.

CENTRAL BASEBALL

Miller steps down as head coach

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

INDEPENDENCE — Zach Miller announced last week he is stepping down as Central's head baseball coach.

Miller coached the Panthers for the previous six seasons and will move to Washington.

"The decision (to leave) was merely based on advancing forward for my wife's (and mine) career goals," Miller said. "I am fortunate to have been given the great opportunity to get my start here in a great community with parents and players who are

second to none. I earned two degrees from Western Oregon, met my wife and gained valuable experience coaching while being a part of some special sports teams and made great memories each year."

Under Miller's guidance, Central's baseball squad finished 12-14 overall and 10-11 in Mid-Willamette Conference play in 2016, placing

fourth in the league standings. The Panthers advanced to the state play-in round before falling to Eagle Point.

Miller's impact on the baseball team, and the athletics program in general, extended far beyond wins and losses, Central athletics director Shane Hedrick said.

"It was a real disappointment for me (to learn he is leaving)," Hedrick said.

"(Zach) did a real nice job with the kids. He was very committed to the program and the school. He volunteered for a position with no pay, and in the fall, he helped supervise events. As a landscaper, he did all the groundwork at the baseball field that often required late hours after practice or on the weekends."

See MILLER, Page 11A



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

The city of Independence will celebrate the opening of Independence Sports Park, which features three soccer fields, on Saturday morning.

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

INDEPENDENCE — The city of Independence is ready to kick off the celebration of three new soccer fields.

The city will celebrate the opening of Independence Sports Park, located on Deanne Drive behind Riverplace Apartments Saturday at 10 a.m.

There will be refreshments, prizes, an honorary kickoff and a youth tournament to mark the occasion.

Desires for a sports park began nearly 20 years ago — though it took until 2014 for the current plan to pick up steam, Independence City Manager David Clyne said.

"That probably goes all the way back to 1996 when the city first identified it in the parks master plan," Clyne said. "It was the first idea of having some kind of sporting complex. It has changed and become more refined over time. We really focused the past couple of years largely in response to the parks master plan update in 2014, I believe."

The city conducted an online survey — which had about 500 people respond — and reached out to people at the Community Fiesta, the summer music series and other community events, and found soccer fields to be the greatest desire.

"We had lots of feedback from the community that it was a real gap we

Soccer tourney

- The city of Independence will host a youth soccer tournament Saturday morning to celebrate the opening of Independence Sports Park.
- The tournament will begin after the opening celebration at 10 a.m. Teams from the Academy FC and the YMCA will take part. The tournament is also open to all children who want to play.



JOE PENNA/for the Itemizer-Observer

Juan Navarro installs nets in the goals on Monday afternoon.

had in our recreation services," Clyne said. "We reacted to that. It's what the public wants and we had the means to get that done."

With the development of the Riverplace Apartments, the city worked with the owners to develop the land, Clyne said. The Army National Guard assisted on preparing the land, and volunteers worked to

make final preparations for the field's official unveiling.

Joe Penna was one of those who played a key role in preparing the fields.

"I assisted the city in trying to find a way to turn what had been agricultural land into a sports complex," Penna said.

See SOCCER, Page 11A

WESTERN OREGON VOLLEYBALL

New coach hopes to lead Wolves into contention

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — Western Oregon's volleyball program hopes a new coach leads to newfound success in 2016.

The Wolves finished 8-21 overall and 5-15 in Great Northwest Athletic Conference play — tying for eighth place — a season ago.

Since then, Tommy Gott was brought in as head coach.

"I've had dreams and goals of being a Division II volleyball coach," he said. "That's one of the big overlying things. Another aspect was I've coached in this region for seven years. I have some familiarity within the region. It's nice to have a lit-

tle bit of comfort and some more confidence."

Originally, Gott saw himself as a high school coach, but after playing at the collegiate level and becoming an assistant, he became addicted to competing.

"The longer I stayed working and climbing through the ranks, I appreciated and enjoyed the competitiveness," Gott said.

See WOLVES, Page 11A

WOU volleyball

Head coach: Tommy Gott (first season).
2015 record: 8-21 overall; 5-15 Great Northwest Athletic Conference.
Key returners: Alisha Bettinson, jr.; Amanda Short, soph.; Sydney Blankinship, jr.; Sheila Limas De La Cruz, jr.; Christie Colasurdo, sr.



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer file

Western Oregon finished tied for eighth in the Great Northwest Athletic Conference in 2015

DALLAS BOYS SOCCER

Jones hopes to change culture

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Dallas boys soccer coach John Jones stepped into a difficult spot last season.

He took over a program that had failed to win a game since 2011 and scored just seven total goals the season before he arrived.

The Dragons showed signs of improvement in 2015 — including earning a win over Redmond.

Now, Dallas has something it hasn't had in a while: consistency at head coach.

"It is so helpful to know the players this year," Jones said. "To know their attitudes and skills, it

helps me set expectations for the start of the season."

Jones enters his second year at the helm, but brings together an inexperienced team.

The Dragons saw nine seniors from last year's roster graduate.

He hopes for those players who are returning that the consistency at coach leads to a smooth transition.

"We have a wide variety of skill levels," Jones said. "The work of bringing a team together will require each individual to be willing to become better in some way as an individual, whether that be skills or improving attitudes."

Getting players up to speed on the field of play is easy compared to perhaps the bigger challenge: changing the team's culture.

See JONES, Page 11A