

BAKER FOOTBALL

Bucks corral Bulldogs, 49-26

By Corey Kirk
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Baker came away with good experience, but also a loss, after traveling to Pendleton on Friday, April 2 to take on the Buckaroos at Round-Up Stadium.

Pendleton (4-1) topped Baker (2-3), 49-26.

It wasn't clear until earlier in the week who the Bulldogs would play in their penultimate game of this pandemic-shortened season, or even if they would play at all after a contest with Milwaukie was canceled.

But the match up with Class 5A Pendleton came together quickly.

"We were just happy to have a game," Baker coach Jason Ramos said. "It worked out well that we were able to play. It was a good challenge, they were the best team we've seen all year."

The feeling was mutual, as Pendleton coach Erik Davis told the East Oregonian.

"There was zero hesitation to play us and I appreciate that," Davis said of Baker.

"They have some good football players. They had a good tailback and a couple of linemen who were tough to block. They are a good 4A program."

Preparing for Pendleton was a tough task, Ramos said, as multiple players missed practice due to illness.

The Bulldogs stayed with the Buckaroos early on.

After Pendleton took a 7-0 lead in the first quarter, Baker senior quarterback Gabe Gambleton ran in from seven yards to cut the lead to 7-6.

After another Buckaroo touchdown, Baker senior running back Gauge Bloomer, who led all rushers with 173 yards on 25 carries, scored from three yards out, and Baker trailed just 14-12.

"We were very effectively running the ball for most of the game," Ramos said. "It was nice to have (Bloomer) back full strength, he ran the ball hard and the guys up front did a nice job blocking.



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

Baker's Gauge Bloomer (5) gains some of his 173 rushing yards on Friday, April 2 against Pendleton at Round-Up Stadium.

Gauge did some good work on the ground."

Led by Bloomer, Baker outgained Pendleton on the ground, 186 yards to 151.

Pendleton dominated much of the rest of the way, scoring twice more in the second quarter to lead 28-12 at halftime, then tacking on two more scores in the third quarter to push the lead to 42-14.

Baker senior Kaden Myer caught a pair of touchdown passes from Gambleton in the fourth quarter, from 11 and 29 yards, to narrow the final margin.

Ramos said that despite Pendleton's two touchdowns in the second quarter, he felt good about Baker's position, trailing 28-12 at halftime.

"We just felt like if we went out and put another score on the board, we can get back into the game, so it was just a matter of adjusting a little bit to their defensive adjust-

ments and how we were going to attack that, and try to clean up our defensive alignments and miscues," Ramos said.

In the loss was a lesson, he said.

"We have to play clean and we have to execute within our gameplan in order for us to be in a ballgame with a team like Pendleton," he said.

Pendleton senior quarterback Brogan Biggerstaff had 297 yards passing and four touchdowns, and senior Tyas-in Burns had 250 all-purpose yards for the Buckaroos.

Baker concludes its season this Friday, April 9 at 7 p.m. at La Grande.

"We got some work to do on the defensive side of the ball this week, so we are going to try to get better this week," Ramos said. "Offensively we are just going to be fine-tuning what we are already doing. We are familiar with La Grande in terms of what

they do. We will get a good look at them on film and see what we need to do this week, and just have a good week of practice."

Baker	6	6	0	14	- 26
Pendleton	14	14	14	7	- 49
P	3 run (kick good)				
B	Gambleton 7 run (kick failed)				
P	15 pass (kick good)				
B	G. Bloomer 3 run (two-point conversion failed)				
P	13 pass (kick good)				
P	7 run (kick good)				
P	2 run (kick good)				
P	21 pass (kick good)				
B	K. Myer 11 pass from Gambleton (two-point conversion failed)				
P	60 run (kick good)				
B	K. Myer 29 pass from Gambleton (Gambleton run)				

Individual statistics (Baker only)
Rushing — G. Bloomer 25-173, Gambleton 10-25, Freeman 2-4.
Passing — Gambleton 5-21-103-2.
Receiving — Myer 3-95, Delarosa 2-8.

Annie Fowler of the East Oregonian contributed to this story.

BAKER CROSS-COUNTRY

Baker sweeps district meet

By Corey Kirk
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Led by individual wins from seniors Sydney Keller and Justin Ash, the Baker/Powder Valley cross-country teams won the team titles at the district cross-country meet Friday, April 2 at La Grande.

"I am really impressed with both Justin and Sydney, they ran great individual races, ran with a lot of confidence," Cole said. "I'm happy with how the meet went, the way the kids ran, obviously we are super excited to have a district meet. It was the frosting on the cake so to speak."

But not the final layer.

Baker now prepares for a state meet — not sanctioned by the Oregon School Activities Association — on Saturday, April 10 at Eugene's Marist High School.

On Saturday at La Grande, Baker won the boys team title by the slimmest of margins, with 34 points to La Grande's 35.

The individual race was nearly as close, with Ash crossing the line in 16:51, just four seconds ahead of La Grande senior Cristian Mendoza.

Cole said she expected the team standings likely would come down to a single point.

Baker sophomore Thaddeus Pepera, who finished seventh, ran a key race, with "a great kick in the end which ended up being that pivotal point for us," Cole said. "That was super exciting."

Junior Gavin Stone placed fifth for Baker: Gabriel Bott was 9th, Jordan Mills 12th, Seth Mastrude 13th, and Ryan Hansen 23rd.

In the girls race, Keller defended her 2019 district title, winning in 20:48, almost 48 seconds ahead of runner up Emily Tubbs, a La Grande freshman.

Baker's Emma Baeth placed third, followed by Sydney Lamb in fifth, Salena Bott in seventh, Corah Downing in 8th, and Avril Zickgraf in 12th.

"Our girls' strength is they do a great job packing it up, and so they ran in a great pack," Cole said.

Although there won't be any statewide competition for some other sports to conclude this pandemic-shortened season for traditional fall sports, cross-country is an exception. Coaches have been planning the state meet, which normally takes place in November at Lane Community College in Eugene.

"We are super excited to be able to compete at state, we really appreciate our school district's support and letting our kids compete as much as they can," Cole said.

She plans to employ the same training philosophy in preparation for the state meet, but with less mileage to ensure the Bulldogs are well-rested.

"Ten days from state is when you start backing off a little bit and letting your legs recover," Cole said.

The girls race starts at 11:15 a.m., with the boys beginning about noon. Results are posted at www.athletic.net.

BAKER BOYS SOCCER

Baker tops Four Rivers in final match of the season

By Corey Kirk
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The Baker boys soccer team completed its season with a sound 4-1 defeat of the Four Rivers Falcons on Friday, April 2 at the Baker Sports Complex.

The win over Four Rivers, a charter school in Ontario, gave the Bulldogs a season record of 3-6.

"It was a good game, we took over from the start of the game," coach Victor Benites said.

After honoring Baker's two seniors, Clayton Dennis and Dakota Rilee, prior to kick-off, the Bulldogs took the lead and didn't look back.

Sophomore Diego Quintela scored first, followed later in the first half by goals by junior Isael Duran and sophomore Diego Bedolla.

With a 3-0 lead at halftime, Benites changed his lineup in the second to give his two seniors, Dennis and

Rilee, new opportunities.

"I moved the two seniors to play the striker position for about 20 minutes to give them a chance to experience how it is to play out front," Benites said.

Another change Benites made was taking junior goalkeeper Silas Carter out of goal to play on the field, giving freshman keeper Noah Lien more experience.

"He did an excellent job for being a freshman," Benites said of Lien.

Baker added a fourth goal in the second half, this one from sophomore Jordan Smith.

Benites was impressed with the Bulldogs throughout the match.

"I think that the communication was a factor, passing and helping each other," Benites said.

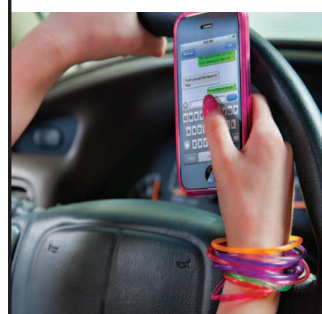
The Falcons scored late to avoid a shutout.

Benites said he will miss the leadership that Dennis

and Rilee provided to their younger teammates.

"I will miss their presence, leadership and hard work they did to improve their soccer skills," Benites said.

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