

Game on: Sports making a rebound in Grant County

Football, volleyball teams face opponents in March

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

High school sports are making a comeback in Grant County, but the work continues on shaping the unorthodox season.

Grant Union High School Principal Ryan Gerry said there is a schedule already set up for the season two sports — volleyball and football — and the school is currently working on getting confirmations from teams they scheduled to play to see if their district can participate.

Gerry said, out of eight teams originally scheduled for games, six of them have responded and are committed to the scheduled competitions.

“Football started this week with conditioning, and our first contest for football is March 5, and our first contest for volleyball is March 3,” Gerry said.

Gerry said the school paired up with Pixellot, a company supported by the National Federation of State High School Associations, to install motion tracking cameras at the gym and football field. This will allow games to be live-streamed online.

“If there are people who are not able to attend because of capacity limits or their own safety, they will be able to login so they can watch the game from home,” Gerry said.

Administrators from Prairie City, Dayville and Long Creek school districts said the ability to play is a great start for sports, but they are currently working on how the season will play out for their respective districts.

Prairie City Athletic Director Billy Colson said their volleyball team will be playing games against local teams (Burns, Crane, Dayville/Monument, etc.) with games starting in March.

However, football is still up in the air. As of Feb. 11, Colson said the high school is waiting to see if they have enough students inter-



Eagle file photo

The Dayville/Monument Tigers celebrate a successful rally. From left, Katie Barker, Miranda Cook, Aubrey Bowlus, Denali Twehues, Aubreiana Osborne and Brooklyn Near.



Eagle file photo

Grant Union Prospector wide receiver Jordan Hall catches a long pass from Prospector quarterback Devon Stokes in a previous game against Heppner. Football games will soon be allowed in Oregon.

ested in forming a football team. He said they are also waiting to see who their competition will be.

“For us it’s about how many kids we have that turn out to do it (football) and also which schools plan to participate,” Colson said. “Some schools are allowed to play football but are deciding not to because their field is under a foot of snow.”

“We’re trying to provide opportunities for kids, and I hope the kids

take advantage of them,” Colson said.

Dayville Athletic Director Tiffnie Schmadeka said Dayville will now be offering football and volleyball for this season.

She said some of the difficulties with the upcoming season are educating people on mask wearing during practices and games.

The Dayville/Monument volleyball team is currently practicing at the



Ryan Gerry



Billy Colson



Eagle file photo

Prairie City/Burnt River Panther Emmanuel Stephen caught Triangle Lake’s kickoff at midfield in a game against Madras.

Monument gym, where home games will also be hosted, while Dayville’s gym is being seismically retrofitted.

Schmadeka said their football players started conditioning, and their volleyball players will begin practice on Feb. 22. The first football and volleyball games for Dayville/Monument are scheduled for March 5 in Monument against Wheeler County.

“The staff at Dayville School and

the students are very excited for the opportunity to play and support athletes in this season,” Schmadeka said.

Long Creek Office Manager Jennifer Garinger said, at this time, sports are currently on hold at Long Creek. However, if changes were to be made, the school board would have to meet to make any decision regarding sports since Long Creek does not have a superintendent.

“A formal discussion of it hasn’t happened,” Garinger said. “We’re going to have to sit around and figure it out.”

On Feb. 8, the Bend Bulletin reported that the executive board of the Oregon School Activities Association approved the start of soccer, cross country and volleyball during a Zoom meeting on Feb. 8.

“Soccer and cross country are allowed to start practicing Feb. 22, while questions remain about what the postseason will entail,” the Bulletin reported. “Those questions will likely have more clarity following a Feb. 17 OSAA executive board meeting.”

The Bend Bulletin also reported on Feb. 10 that Gov. Kate Brown said high school football will be allowed to resume after being postponed last fall.

According to the governor, outdoor contact sports in lower and moderate risk counties can practice and have games. Those in high or extreme risk counties will have the option to also resume contact sports, but with additional safety measures.

Brown also stated in her release that indoor contact sports, basketball, wrestling, swimming, etc., continue to be prohibited in all counties due to the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

In an email with the Blue Mountain Eagle, OSAA Assistant Executive Director K.T. Emmerson said that volleyball was not a contact sport.

“It is a minimal/medium contact sport as defined by OHA and is allowed in counties that are high, moderate or lower risk,” Emmerson said. “Volleyball competitions are not allowed in extreme risk counties at this time.”

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