

Celebrating 100 days



A first-grader sports a new T-shirt marking his 100th day of classes at Warrenton Grade School. While the 100th day celebration is an annual event, "We felt it was essential to hold onto as many traditions as we were able," Vice Principal Sean O'Malley said.

Playing without spectators is whole new game

BY BRUCE DUSTIN
For The Columbia Press

Mia McFadden, a starting senior for this year's Warrenton High School volleyball team, hopes there will be a section in the stands set aside for students.

"It can affect the whole momentum of the game," she said, although she realizes it's unlikely to happen.

"They won't be able to open the stands to spectators like they have in the past," she said. "I'm feeling pretty good about this year's season, though."

The team was undefeated in league play last year and was league champ the last two years.

While the players long to have the stands filled with cheering fans, each player has only two tickets to give away.

"So, at least we'll have a small audience," Mia said.

When asked who would get those two tickets, several girls started laughing.

"Well see," Marlee Annat said. She also is a starting senior on the team.

"I think, despite this Covid thing, the team has stuck together really well. We've been

good teammates to each other," Marlee said.

After graduating, she plans to attend Linn Benton Community College and then transfer to Oregon State University to study animal science or zoology.

How has the pandemic affected her?

"I can't learn through online, but I pushed through," she said. "I had to, but it was really hard."

She then reflected on what Mia had said.

"The student section is why we push ourselves. So, it's



Mia McFadden



Marlee Annat

going to be difficult," Marlee said. "We'll push through. We have to. It's a team effort. But, it's still going to be pretty hard."

The JV team faces Seaside at 4:30 p.m. March 6 followed by varsity at 6. Games can be viewed at nfhsnetwork.com.



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Start of high school football a welcome relief

BY BRUCE DUSTIN
For The Columbia Press

Coaches as well as students are thrilled the state finally is allowing high school sports play to begin.

"When 35 other states have already successfully played football and volleyball, and are in the midst of finishing their winter sports season, you have to ask yourself why Oregon was shut out for so long," said Ian O'Brien, vice principal and head football

coach. "Safety of our kids has always been the priority, but forcing students to their homes with little social interaction has proven not to be the safest in terms of social-emotional health. Compound that with not being able to attend in-school learning and not being able to see their friends."

The Oregon Athletic Coaches Association and the Oregon School Activity Association have been working with state leadership to reopen high school contact sports.

"I'm just glad Oregon leadership finally followed the science and data," O'Brien said. "I'm also thankful to all the folks who are advocating for a safe return to play locally and statewide."

Lance Smith is a senior on the WHS football team. Wearing No. 12, he'll share the duties of quarterback with Hordie Boddin Boddin and then play some tight end and linebacker.

He talked about the season and what he missed about school.

"I think it's going to be kind of weird to not have spectators. The idea of no playoffs makes it just a matter of football, as in 'who likes football



Bruce Dustin

Quarterback Lance Smith prepares for a game.

and who doesn't," Lance said.

"In the beginning, the pandemic made school very challenging," he added. "The motivation often comes from the teachers and the setting, a motivation of competition with your friends, and I've missed that. Home is a location of rest and relaxation and it was hard to motivate me to study."

He'll join the Coast Guard after graduation.

"So this season of football is it; everything is on the line."

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