

The Heppner defense was diving for the St. Mary's running backs all afternoon in the Mustang's 14-6 loss. Here Jim Stormberg (33) is escorted by the Heppner defense by a group of Crusader offensive linemen.



Runningback Jim Stormberg (33) tries to elude Heppner's Steve Marlatt (44).

St. Mary's wins 14-6

Heppner football team loses chance for state title

The Heppner Mustangs' football team lost its chance for the Class A state title when St. Mary's beat the home team 14-6 Saturday.

It looked like Heppner was going to dethrone the defending state champions when the Mustangs marched in from 14-yards out after a St. Mary's fumble early in the game. Four plays later John Murray scored on a one-yard run. Placekicker Jim Parker hit the ball off to the left so the score was 6-0.

An interception by Doug Holland and a 37-yard return put Heppner knocking on the door to score again on the 19-yard line but the drive stopped on the 11-yard line when a fourth down play came up short and the momentum of the game quickly changed.

The defensive battle continued into the second period when St. Mary's drove the ball methodically down the field on short runs. Heppner stopped St. Mary's and forced them to punt but an off sides penalty

gave the ball back to the Crusaders.

St. Mary's went in for the score plays later as Jim Stromberg plowed in from four-yards out.

The kick by Brian Mangold was good and the score was 7-6 with St. Mary's leading.

Heppner began to move the ball through the air on a 13-yard pass to Dale Holland and a 14-yarder to Brett Sherer from quarterback John Bier but the drive stalled and Heppner was forced to punt.

A high snap from center forced Parker, the punter, to try to run the ball so the kick would not be blocked. He was stopped short of the first down so St. Mary's took over. Heppner missed out on the possibility of pinning St. Mary's deep in its end zone.

Despite the good field position, St. Mary's could not move the ball past the Heppner defense so the score at halftime remained 7-6.

In the second half, Heppner lost a chance at having great

field position when the offensive captain refused a penalty that Coach John Sporseen wanted to take. The 15-yard penalty would have forced the Crusaders to punt from deep in its own end zone.

Instead, Heppner had the ball on its own 40-yard line. After three plays, Heppner actually lost yardage and it looked as if they were going to be in trouble but Parker boomed a 60-plus yard kick into the Crusader end zone.

Later in the game, Murray

threw an interception on the halfback option play. Gary Dugan picked off the pass.

Heppner got a big break plays later when Brian Brush scored on a 29-yard romp but the touchdown was brought back because of a motion penalty.

But the break was short lived when Todd Sherer was called for pass interference giving St. Mary's a first down on Heppner's 14-yard stripe.

Bob Gregg scores from a yard out and with Mangold's kick the score mounted to 14-6.

down so St. Mary's took over and virtually ran out the clock.

St. Mary's, 11-0, was led by the rushing duo of Stromberg and Brush. Stromberg gained 94 yards on 18 carries and Brush gained 74 yards on 19 carries. The Crusaders had 227 yards rushing while Heppner's usually potent rushing attack gained only 36 yards.

St. Mary's had 16 first downs while Heppner had just five.

Heppner ran off just 42 offensive plays while St. Mary's had 63.

St. Mary's gained all of its 227 yards on the ground while Heppner had 36 yards rushing and 48 passing yards.

St. Mary's fumbled twice, losing one, and Heppner fumbled once but regained it. St. Mary's had six penalties

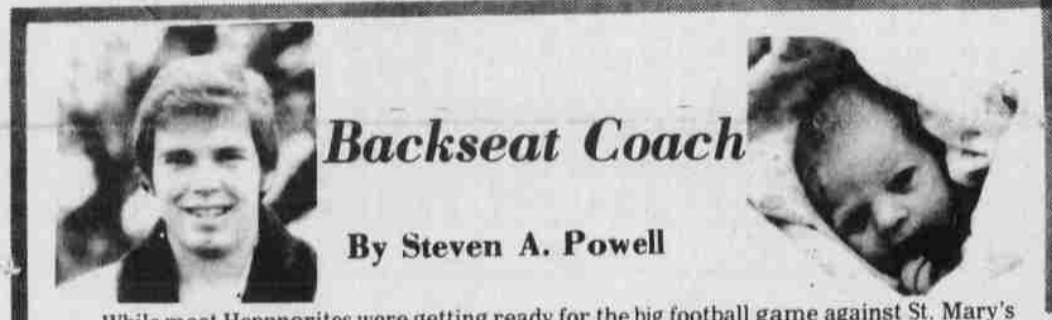
for 50 yards and Heppner had four for 29 yards.

Parker averaged 42 yards on each of his three punts while Crusader Jeff Fry averaged 27.8 yards on his four punts.

plus yard gainer, was held to just 38 yards on 14 carries. Chris Zita had four carries for 17 yards, Doug Holland had four carries for only three yards, John Bier had six carries for minus 24 yards and Parker ran the ball once from punt formation for minus five yards.

Bier passed the ball for 48 yards hitting 7-of-12 while Crusader Vinny Marlia was 0-of-4 with one interception.

Dale Holland caught two passes for 13 yards, Brett Sherer one for 14 yards, Parker two grabs for 12 yards, Doug Holland one catch for 11 yards and Murray one reception for minus two yards.



Backseat Coach

By Steven A. Powell

While most Heppnerites were getting ready for the big football game against St. Mary's last Saturday morning, I was in the Pioneer Memorial Hospital with my wife, Renita, where she was having our first child, Angela Marie.

Dr. Joseph Gifford warned us Nov. 15, the due date, that we probably would have the baby the end of the week, but he said she had better not have it Saturday because he wanted to go to the game. I agreed with him saying the people of Heppner would not like it if they did not get news coverage of the biggest game of the year.

So when Renita told me Saturday at 7 a.m. it was time to go to the hospital, I could not help but worry about who could cover the game. I was somewhat relieved when Gifford said when we got to the hospital at 7:30 that she should deliver sometime before noon.

And she did. Angela Marie was born at 9:44 so Dr. Gifford and I had plenty of time to go to the game.

With Angela Marie's inspiration and the timely quick birth, I was able to write a column this week, so I figured she deserved a picture in the story.

As for the game, it was a disappointing ending to a great year for most Heppner fans. The team played with a lot of desire but the offense just could not get going. The small St. Mary's defensive line took up all the blockers allowing the linebackers to move freely to the hole and make the tackles.

St. Mary's obviously had scouted Heppner very well. The defense knew better than to tackle John Murray high because they knew with his upper body strength that he can run over people. They consistently tripped him up for short gains.

The Crusaders also knew that Dale Holland is the only receiver Heppner has gone to effectively this year so they clogged up the middle and forced the Mustangs to try and pass to the outside receivers.

St. Mary's played a game much like Heppner usually does. They used a ground attack that usually went right up the middle for short yardage. But the Crusaders just did not let Heppner take advantage of their turnovers. When Heppner did not take advantage of the interception in the first period by Doug Holland, the momentum of the game changed.

But the two offensive teams were not as impressive as the defenses. Heppner's defense played almost the entire second half but still would not give up a score, despite the team's frustrations on offense and a few costly penalties.

St. Mary's small defense seemed to slant every play in the right direction to stop Heppner in an almost unbelievable fashion. It was as if there were a microphone in the Heppner huddle.

One thing that was really enjoyable about the last two games was the afternoon time. Beautiful fall afternoons are much better for football games than cold fall nights that can sometimes be so foggy that the players cannot see each other.

The possibility of playing all high school games on Saturday afternoons makes a lot of sense to me. It makes it easier for fans to see the game and it is usually warmer.

The players can see each other and the ball better because vision is so much better during the day. Although players may not admit it, they do notice the cold at night, so afternoon games would be better for the players.

Crowds at the last two games have been big so afternoon games should not hurt attendance and it could possibly help in some games.

The school district also would save some money if the games were changed to the afternoons. Only about \$15 is spent for electricity at the night football games but with the big energy problem the saving of any amount of energy is important.

Coach John Sporseen has shown some interest in getting new lights for better vision on the field but with afternoon games, they would not be needed.

Afternoon games also make it easier to take pictures of the games (notice the better photos the last two weeks.)

The only good reason to keep high school football at night is because it would have to compete with college football in some areas. Another argument is that night games give high school football a sense of identity because all other football games are played in the afternoon.

But in areas where there is no college football to compete with, it makes sense to play Saturday afternoon football games. When football is the only game in town, as in Heppner and most other Class A, AA and many triple AAA high school towns, afternoon games should be played, if at all possible, not only from an economic standpoint but also just for a better atmosphere for the players and the fans.



Lefthander John Bier fades back for a pass under pressure by a St. Mary's lineman.

Deadline nears for city basketball

The deadline is nearing for individuals and teams to sign up to play in the Heppner City Basketball League.

Sign ups are being taken at the Gazette-Times office by Steve Powell or by calling Frank Pearson at 676-5035.

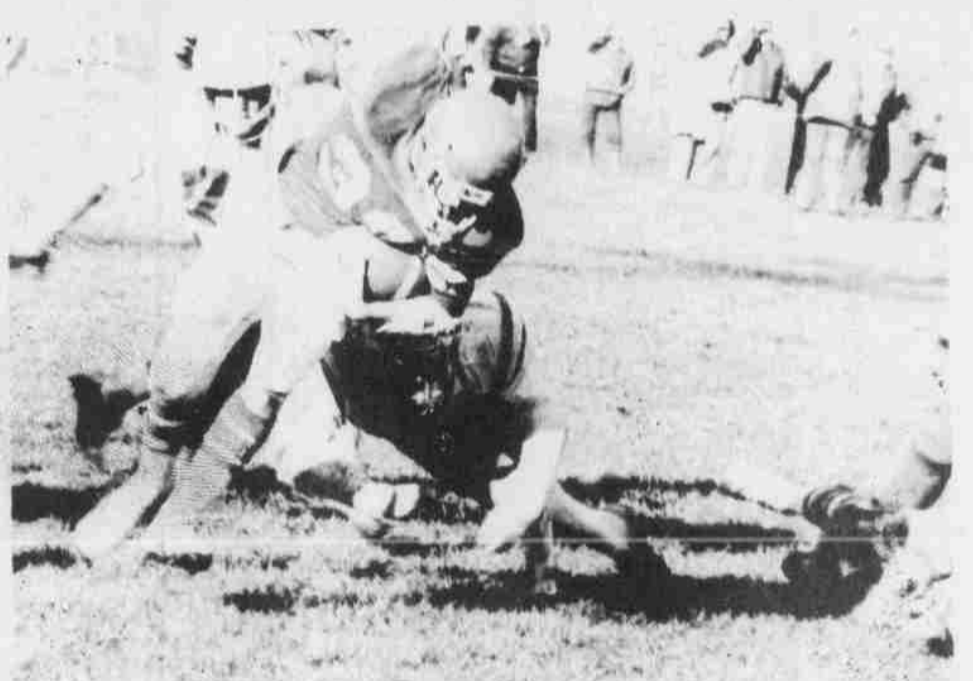
Four teams, out of the eight that are planning to be formed, have already signed up. The deadline is Nov. 28. Play is tentatively scheduled to begin Dec. 2 at the Heppner High School gym.

The games will be played Sunday evenings from 5 to 9 p.m. An organizational meeting will be held next week with rules and schedules available. The time and place will be in next week's paper.

Referees are still needed for the games. They will be paid \$5 a game with each referee doing two games a night.

The possibility of paying a team fee so trophies can be awarded at the end of the year will be discussed at next week's meeting.

SPORTS



Chris Zita (33) gets his feet chopped out from under him by a Crusader defender.

Bowling Sparetimer's League

The Morrow County Grain Growers are on top of the Sparetimers League with a 31½-12½ record and 22,573 total pins.

Coast-to-Coast, 29½-14½, and Peterson's Jewelry, 27-17, have knocked down more total pins, 23,484 and 23,249, but they have not won as many games so they are in second and third place respectively.

No other team has a winning record as Bucknum's Tavern is fourth at 20½-23½ and Centrai Market is fifth at 19-25. Centrai Market is fourth in total pins with 21,453 and Bucknum's is fifth at 20,101. Gardner's Men's Wear is in

sixth place in the standings at 18½-25½. Jerry's Mobil is 18-26 and Sears 12-32. That is the same order the teams come in for total pins with Gardner's having 19,858, Jerry's Mobil having 19,145 and Sears having 18,789 total pins.

Jackie Allstott rolled the high game of the week with a 184 and she also had the high series with a 510. Coast-to-Coast had the high team game at 777, and the high series, 2,224.

Phyllis Cole made the 6-7 split, Ramona Rountree made the 5-8-10 and Tonya Jones was successful on the 3-7-10 combination.



John Murray (34) grits his teeth in determination to gain some yards. Blocking are John Bier (2), Doug Holland (49) and Tim Jones (76).