

Mustangs take thrilling 14-6 victory

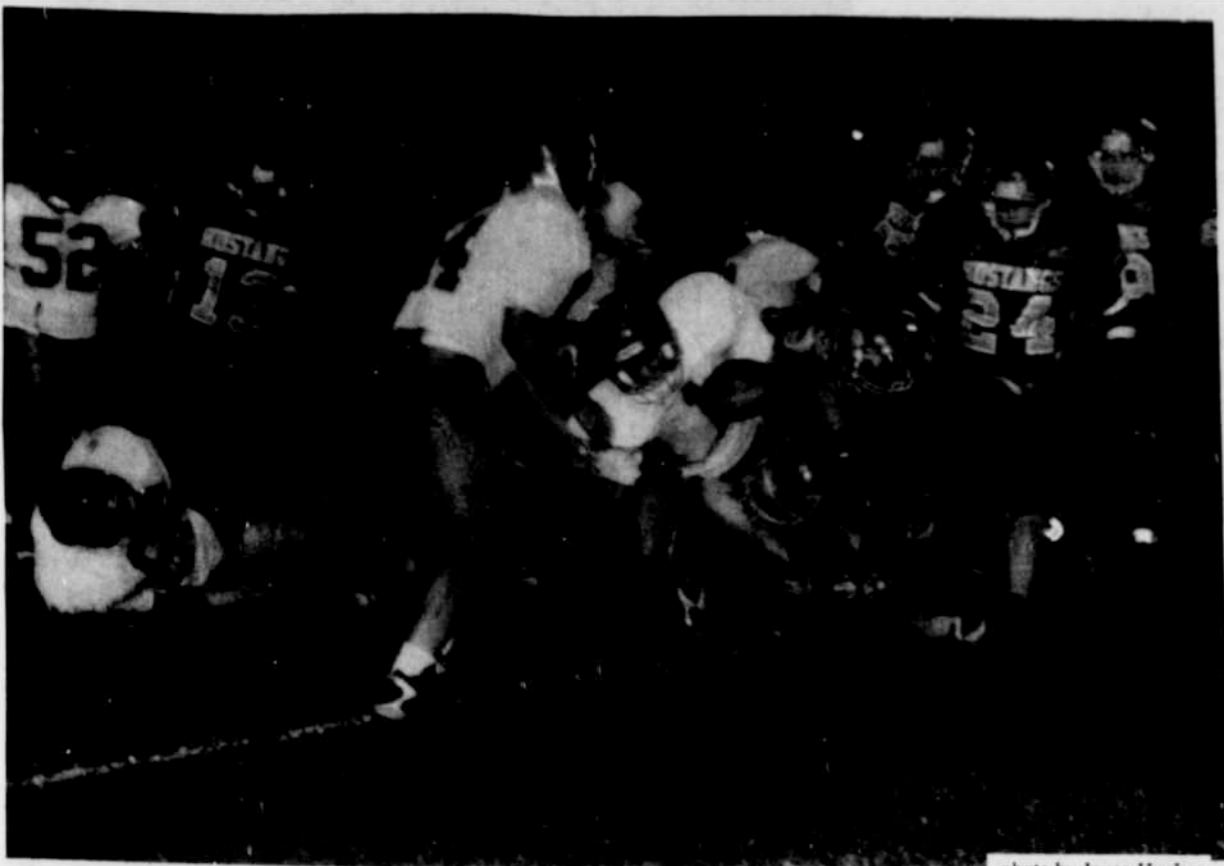


photo by Joyce Hughes

Heppner defenders bring down Viking ball carrier

By Rick Paullus

The Heppner Mustangs got a thrilling 14-6 win over the Umatilla Vikings in a big Columbia Basin Conference showdown last Friday night, Sept. 26. The Vikings came into the game with a 4-0 record and were ranked the first team in the state. But they ran into the same "bend but don't break" defense that Weston-McEwen had trouble with the week before.

Heppner received the opening kick-off and started out at their own 27 yard line. After an encroachment penalty on the Vikings, Mustang junior quarterback Shane Matheny picked up a first down on a sneak. Umatilla held from there and after a short punt that bounced off the top of the press box, took over at the Mustangs' 37 yard line.

The Mustangs' defense gave an indication of things to come by stopping the Vikings and forcing a fourth down and eight. Sophomore linebacker Levi Geer made an incredible interception by batting the ball up and then diving and catching it.

The Mustangs were unable to move the ball and after a much better punt, put Umatilla at their own 31 yard line with 4:23 left in the first quarter.

After a short gain on a run, junior Casey Evans and sophomore Clint Bellamy tackled Viking running back Jeremy Moe for a loss on a screen pass. Junior Royal Robinson then recovered a fumbled snap out of the shotgun formation at Umatilla's 20 yard line.

The Mustangs moved the ball down to the 16 yard line but Umatilla held from there and took over with 1:42 left in the first quarter. The Mustangs' defense again held and forced the Vikings to punt. After a penalty on Umatilla, the Vikings punted the ball a second time and junior Derek Gunderson returned the ball 15 yards to the 32 yard line of Umatilla.

The first quarter ended there with the score, 0-0.

After Matheny kept the ball on the option for eight yards, sophomore Michael Schonbachler ran 12 yards for a first down at the 12 yard line. Matheny ran twice for four yards but the Vikings' defense stiffened and Umatilla took over at their own three yard line.

The Mustangs got a break on an illegal forward pass penalty that wiped out a 19 yard gain and forced a fourth down back at their own five yard line. Umatilla punted and Heppner took over at the 35 yard line of Umatilla. After a short gain, Gunderson ran for 11 yards and a first down to the 20. Senior Travis Wilhelm ran and picked up six yards. After no gain, Matheny kept the ball and got just inside the 10 for a first down. Wilhelm ran for six more yards to the four. Gunderson then took it the final four yards and a Mustangs' touchdown. Schonbachler's kick was blocked and with 4:28 left in the first half, Heppner had a 6-0 lead.

Umatilla then mounted their only good drive of the game. Moe ran the ball in from the 11 yard line for a touchdown. The extra point try was no good, and with 39 seconds left, the score was tied, 6-6.

Umatilla received the kick-off to start the second half and both teams' defenses forced a punt. Jared Eckman intercepted a Umatilla pass and returned it to Umatilla's 49 yard line. The Vikings' defense held from there and Heppner was forced to punt. After a good punt by Matheny, Umatilla took over at their own six yard line.

The Vikings got their running game going and drove the ball down to Heppner's 28 yard line. But after two penalties and good Mustang defense, Heppner regained the ball at their own 42 yard line to start the fourth quarter.

After three straight runs for a first down, Matheny called an audible and completed a 25 yard pass to Evans and a first down at the 26. An Umatilla offside penalty and two runs by Matheny

gave the Mustangs a first down at the 16. The Mustangs made their only turnover of the game as the ball was stripped from Geer. The loose ball was picked up and returned 62 yards to Heppner's 22 yard line.

The Mustangs' defense again came up big and held Umatilla on downs and took over at the 28 with 7:00 left in the game. After a Heppner punt, Umatilla had the ball at the Mustangs' 37 yard line, faced with a fourth down and six with 3:13 left. But Wilhelm made a big defensive play and tackled Moe for a loss and the Mustangs' took over at the 46.

A Matheny pass to Gunderson was good for 16 yards to Umatilla's 38 and a Matheny draw got it to the 30. After a procedure penalty, Wilhelm ran to the 30. A Matheny sneak took it to the 28 and a Heppner first down. Matheny then hit junior Tim Dickenson for a 28 yard touchdown pass. Dickenson had broken free when the defender slipped and fell down. Wilhelm ran in the two point conversion and, with 23 seconds left, Heppner had a 14-6 lead.

After a short kick-off, Umatilla took over at Heppner's 49 yard line, with 19 seconds left. With 12 seconds left, Matheny knocked down a pass. Moe caught a pass and Umatilla had one last chance with :01 second left and the ball on the 27 yard line.

The last chance pass to Troy Johnson in the end zone was knocked down by Matheny and the game was over.

With the win, the Mustangs improve to 2-0 in the league and 3-1 overall. Umatilla drops to 1-1 in the league and 4-1 overall.

The Mustangs' defense was led by inside linebackers Bellamy with 19 points and Wilhelm with 17 points. Matheny had 16 and Geer had 11 with an interception. Eckman and Robinson each had 10 points.

Matheny ended up completing three of ten passes for 58 yards with one touchdown and no interceptions. Matheny also led the rushing attack with 16 carries for 33 yards. Gunderson ran nine times for 28 yards and Wilhelm ran eight times for 24 yards.

Dickenson led the receivers with his one catch for 28 yards and the touchdown. Evans had one catch for 25 yards and Gunderson caught one pass for 16 yards.

The Mustangs will try to keep their league record perfect by traveling to Sherman County for a 2 p.m. game on Friday, Oct. 3.

Statistics:
Umatilla: 0-6-0-0 - 6
Heppner: 0-6-0-8 - 14
Second quarter: Heppner-Derek Gunderson, four yard run (kick failed); Umatilla-Jeremy Moe 11 yard run (kick failed).
Fourth quarter: Heppner-Tim Dickenson 28 yard pass from Shane Matheny (Travis Wilhelm run).
Individual rushing: Umatilla-Moe 13-41, Erevia 13-65, Johnson 2-5; Heppner-Matheny 16-33, Gunderson 9-28, Wilhelm 8-24, Schonbachler 6-8.
Passing: Umatilla-Johnson 10-20-2-94; Heppner-Matheny 3-10-0-58.
Receiving: Umatilla-Moe 4-62, T. Johnson 4-21, Erevia 1-7, Ford 1-4; Heppner-Dickenson 1-28, Casey Evans 1-25, Gunderson 1-16.

Ione netters victorious over Helix Grizzlies

By Kara Miller

Helix visited the Cardinals' Roost on Sept. 24, but the ungracious hosts sent the Grizzlies home in two games, winning 15-9 and 15-7.

The Lady Cards led off serving with senior Kara Miller putting the first point over. Helix took the serve and tied the score, 1-1. Then the teams traded side outs which brought Ione's Brenda Burright up for the attack with her jump serve, increasing the Cards' lead to 3-1.

Helix failed to score and Katie Tworek was up for the Cards with another point. Helix made two before side out put Jenny Sullivan behind the line for one and Ione was still in the lead, 5-3. The Cardinals then had a streak of poor serving and Helix gained momentum, going ahead of Ione by three points and making the score 5-8 before a side out brought Tworek back up to serve for the home

squad. She landed five points, which pulled the Cards ahead by two. Sullivan served next for the red birds and nailed three, while Miller followed with one and Camie Burright put the game away, 15-9.

Helix led off the second game with one point before losing the ball to a side out and C. Burright took over serving for the home team, driving two points off her jump serve. The Grizzlies regained the serve and took the lead by two. Side out and B. Burright attacked for Ione with her jump serve, along with a quick put back by Sullivan, and Ione was up by one, 5-4.

Both sides traded single digits with Tworek adding Ione's point to keep the Cardinals ahead by one, 6-5. Side out right back to Ione and Sullivan scored four followed by three pointless turnovers. Then C. Burright again

struck with three hard serves and Ione led by eight, 13-5. The Grizzlies scored two but Nikki McElligott and B. Burright took the Cardinals to a 15-7 finish.

Heppner Colts win one, lose one

By Rick Paullus

The Heppner Colts won a thriller on Tuesday, Sept. 23, at Hermiston, beating Simplot 6-0 in double overtime.

Luke Murray scored the winning touchdown on a three yard run.

On Friday, Sept. 26, the Colts lost a close game to a much bigger Umatilla team, 6-0.

The Colts are back in action on Thursday, Oct. 2, at home against McDonald's at 6:30 p.m.

Ione Cardinals beat the Wheeler Falcons

By Kara Miller

On Friday, Sept. 25, the Wheeler County Falcons came to challenge the Ione Cardinals' winning streak and, after the feathers settled, Ione was still out in front, with two more games to the win side of their record.

Game one started with the Cardinals' Kara Miller at serve. She led off with three points, one off of a great kill from Jenny Sullivan. Two rotations without scoring found the Cards in the lead, 3-1. Brenda Burright pounded one across the net, then Ione turned the ball over to Fossil. The Falcons gave the serve right back to the Cardinals and Camie Burright stepped behind the line to begin a barrage of five intimidating jump serves that scored and the tally was Ione, 9-1.

Miller rotated into serving position and added another point for Ione, now 10-2. The Falcons hung

on and began a scoring streak of their own until stopped at the net. That brought Sullivan up to serve and the score was 12-7. Ione. B. Burright served two points before both sides again traded scoreless side outs. Miller finished the game by putting over the 15th and final point, ending the score, 15-9.

Game two, the Falcons got ahead of the Cardinals by two before Sullivan could tie up with the help of a kill by C. Burright. Fossil turned the ball right back to the Cards and B. Burright increased Ione's score by one, quickly followed by sister Camie with two. The Falcons pulled ahead by two with a score of 5-7. Sullivan tied the game, then put the Cardinals ahead, 8-7.

Wheeler County added three more to their score before Ione got the side out and C. Burright attacked again with her jump

serve, putting Ione ahead, 12-11. Niki Sullivan put the game away with three for a final score of Ione Cardinals, 15, Wheeler County Falcons, 11.

Ione will be on the road for their next four games, which started off with Arlington on Tuesday, Sept. 30. Then the Cards will be at Helix on Friday, Oct. 3, followed by an 11 a.m. meeting with the Dufur Rangers on Saturday morning, Oct. 4, in Dufur. Tuesday, Oct. 7, Ione travels to Condon before meeting Echo at home in Ione on Thursday, Oct. 9.

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Heppner JVs trounce Wahtonka

By Rick Paullus

The Heppner Mustangs JV football team evened their record at 1-1 with a convincing 32-0 win over the Wahtonka Eagles on Monday, Sept. 15.

Matt Baker got the Mustangs going with a 52 yard run for a touchdown on the Mustangs' first possession. The extra point run failed.

Quarterback Ryan Matteson then hit Nick Anthony for an 11 yard touchdown pass. The run again failed and, with 1:18 left in the first quarter, the Mustangs had a 12-0 lead.

On Wahtonka's next possession, Matteson intercepted a pass and returned it 21 yards for a touchdown. The run failed again and Heppner led 18-0.

Later in the second quarter, Baker ran seven yards for a touchdown. Darrin Ployhar completed a pass to Craig Scott for the two point conversion and at halftime, it was 26-0.

With 35 seconds left in the third quarter, Scott broke free and ran 35 yards for a touchdown. The extra point run failed and the Mustangs led, 32-0.

That's the way it ended, as the Mustangs' defense held Wahtonka's to very little yards in the game.

Joe Papineau, Mike Haugen, Corey Miller, Josh Hill and Scott were just some of the Mustangs that had good games on defense.

The JVs were back in action at Weston-McEwen on Monday, Sept. 22, and at Pilot Rock, Monday, Sept. 29.

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