

# Gazette Times

## Mustangs win it all - 2A state champs



The team celebrates their win over the Kennedy Trojans on Saturday, making them the 2A Oregon state champions. -Photo by Kirsti Cason.

The Heppner Mustangs are the "Best of the Best", the Champions of 2A Football for the state of Oregon. The Mustangs won the 2019 OSAA 2A State Football Championship by defeating the Kennedy Trojans by the score of 12-7 last Saturday afternoon.

The Heppner team capped their perfect 13-0 season record with the state championship in front of a large crowd of Mustang fans. There were so many Heppner fans from all over the area that they filled the designated visitor stands, packed the sidelines and were even sitting in the home teams' section of Kennison Field at Hermiston High School.

In the battle for the state title, it didn't take long for the Mustangs to score. Kennedy kicked off to start the game and on the first Heppner possession they took the lead. Quarterback Jayden Wilson kept the ball and headed around the right end of the Mustang line. The field opened up for him right in front of the Kennedy bench and he turned on the jets. After taking a few hits and breaking a few tackles he scored on a 56-yard touchdown run. That gave the Mustangs a 6-0 lead less than a minute into the game.

The first Kennedy drive ended with a three-and-out as they lost three yards and had to punt. The Heppner defense, which has been outstanding all season long, continued their outstanding play and frustrated the Trojan offense all day long.

The teams stopped each other on their next two possessions of the first quarter and the score remained 6-0 as the second quarter began.

It was a tough defensive battle in the second quarter as the teams traded possessions two times before the Mustangs started a drive at their own 35-yard line. They marched 43 yards in six plays and reached the Kennedy 22-yard line before a Trojan player made a great play on a Heppner pass and intercepted it at the



Mustang cheerleaders lead the Heppner fans in cheering for the football team on Saturday. -Photo by Damon Brosnan.

seven-yard line. He took off for what looked like would be a Kennedy touchdown but there were several Mustang players in hot pursuit. Jackson Lehman finally caught and tackled him at the 13-yard line after a run of 80 yards. That was the last play of the first half and the Mustangs still led the game 6-0.

The third quarter was another defensive battle as the teams traded possessions four times. The Mustangs did get deep into Trojan territory at the six-yard line but couldn't score and turned the ball over on downs. The third quarter ended with the score 6-0.

When the Mustangs got the ball early in the fourth quarter, they finally put together a scoring drive. The outstanding offensive line would open up holes for Heppner runners to get through. Blake Wolters had six carries for 39 yards on the drive and Wilson packed the ball for 26 yards. Wilson then finished the nine play, 67-yard drive that ate up nearly five minutes of the game clock when he scored on a run from two yards out around the right side of the offensive line. That made the score 12-0 with just over five minutes to go in the game.

Kennedy then turned to a no-huddle, fast paced passing game to try and score. They put together a 13 play, 73-yard drive that led to a touchdown on

a 13-yard pass play. The score was now 12-7 with just forty-five seconds left in the game.

The Trojans attempted an on-side kick that bounced around and was touched by several players on both teams before Jackson Lehman finally secured it for the Mustangs. Heppner lined up in the victory formation and Wilson took a knee to end the game and give the Heppner Mustangs the win by the score of 12-7.

The Mustangs had 161 rushing yards and passed for 79 yards for a total of 240 offensive yards in the game. Kennedy rushed for only 48 yards and passed the ball for 114 for a total of 162.

Wilson, who was named the OSAA MODA Health Player of the Game, was 6-12 passing the ball for 79 yards. His long pass of the game was for 32 yards and he had one pass intercepted. Mason Lehman caught five passes for 75 yards in the game and Jace Coe had one reception for four yards.

Leading the team in rushing was Wilson with 94 yards on 14 carries and two touchdowns. Wolters packed the ball 18 times for 82 yards.

The outstanding defensive effort was led by Mason Lehman and Brock Hisler who had eight tackles each. With five tackles each were Wolters, Jackson Lehman and Jace Coe.

## Glen Diehl appointed as Justice of the Peace

Glen Diehl has been appointed by Governor Kate Brown to the position of Justice of the Peace for Morrow County, filling the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Annetta Spicer. His appointment is effective Jan. 1, 2020.

Diehl, who has been a community service work crew supervisor in the Morrow County Sheriff's Office since 2016, has worked in law enforcement for his entire career. He previously served as a law enforcement officer for the Pilot Rock City Police Department, the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office, the Morrow

County Sheriff's Office, the Umatilla Tribal Police Department, and the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Enforcement Department. A leader in the law enforcement community of eastern Oregon, Diehl has served as chair of the Oregon State Sheriff's Association Command Council and as president and chief steward of the Umatilla County Sheriff's Association, SEIU Local 503.

"Glen Diehl brings more than three decades of public service in the area of criminal justice to the position of Justice of the Peace," said Governor Brown. "His record of commitment to the law, in



Glen Diehl

addition to his balanced and fair-minded approach, will serve Morrow County's justice system well."

Active in his community, Diehl has volunteered as a Scoutmaster, a Cubmaster, a 4-H Leader, and as a security officer for the Pendleton Roundup.

## Heppner fire chief to retire

Rusty Estes, age 61, has announced he will retire from the Heppner Fire Department in January after serving for 45 years. Estes told the Gazette he started with the fire department as part of the junior fire fighter program in 1975, while a senior in high school. He was named fire chief in 1994.

Estes was born in Joseph and moved to Heppner when he was 10 years old. He graduated from Heppner High School in 1976 and is married to his wife, Cyde.

When asked how it feels to leave, he said, "Bittersweet." He then added, "What am I going to do with my time?" He said he will miss responding to the emergencies and will miss the magnificent fire fighters he works with. "It's time to let the young boys take over," Estes said when he was asked his reason for retiring.

The Heppner Fire Department and Rural Fire District covers 675 square miles and the rescue area covers 1,300 square miles and has the only rescue equipment in south Morrow County. There are currently



Rusty Estes

21 volunteer fire fighters, male and female. Some fire fighters are currently part of the junior fire fighter program which is still in existence and some started as junior fire fighters.

He reported it was a pleasure to work with some of the finest men and women in this community who volunteer to protect and serve as rescuers. He noted, "It has been a source of pride and joy to be a part of this wonderful organization."

Estes is employed by the Morrow County Health District as the EMS Coordinator for Morrow County and will continue his work there. He began working for the health district in 1997 and became the EMS Coordinator in 2005.



Fire Chief Rusty Estes will retire from the fire department in January. -Photo by Giselle Moses.



The Mustangs bus is escorted out of town as it heads to Hermiston for the championship game. -Photo by Damon Brosnan.

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