

Mustangs vs TigerScots: Round Two



Mustang seniors (visible) Blake Carter (78), Conor Brosnan (56), Brock Hisler (32), Jace Coe (20) and Cody Fletcher (65) finish their final laps on Les Payne Field. Seniors not visible or not pictured include Derrick Smith (2), Brian Collins (3), Kason Cimmiyotti (18), Zander Fisher (35), Blane Mahoney (45), Kegan Steagall (64), Toby Nation (72) and Brian Lindsay (88).



Landon Mitchell (#1) runs the ball in for a score.



Blane Mahoney (45) sacks the quarterback.



Jace Coe (20), Conor Brosnan (56) and Caden George (24) lead the way for Brock Hisler (32).

By Blake Carter

The number one and two teams out of special district five extended their season as they both qualified for the 2021 OSAA Football State Championship Tournament. When the brackets were released, the two teams were stacked right on top of each other. The possibility of a rematch was speculated, but the two teams had to earn a round one victory before that could happen. As the first round concluded, both teams had gained a round one victory, Weston McEwen defeated Toledo 20-14, and Heppner defeated Regis 39-0. Sitting at 8-1, the TigerScots had one thing on their mind, revenge. After finishing the regular season at 7-1, with their only defeat to the Mustangs, the TigerScots wanted to reverse that defeat. Heppner, 10-0 entering Saturday, knew that this TigerScot team was going to be completely different than the game before, and had prepared rigorously for their second-round match-up. However, the Mustangs were able to advance with a 40-0 victory.

Heppner entered the game focused and energized. Weston matched that intensity, as they had one side of the Les Payne field grandstands filled in red and black. The TigerScots emerged from the Spur 'Em barn with their American flag, and black TigerScot flag in hand, and



The Heppner seniors exit Les Payne field for the final time. -Photos by Damon Brosnan.

ran through the sign their community had brought. The TigerScot fans roared with excitement as their team took the visiting sideline. As the captains met at center field, the electricity could be felt in downtown Heppner. The coin was flipped, and Weston McEwen won the toss. They elected to defer their option to the second half, and Heppner then elected to receive the first half kickoff. Jace Coe stood back at the Mustang 20, as Blane Peal struck the center of the ball and sent it down into Coe's hands. Coe returned the ball 21 yards to set the opening drive up at their own 43-yard line. Landon Mitchell, the sophomore QB, led the Mustang offense out onto the field. Heppner, anchored by an experienced offensive line including seniors Conor Brosnan, Kegan Steagall, and transfer Toby Nation. The O-Line also bolsters two well rounded juniors in Jake Lentz and Tucker Ashbeck. Brock Hisler, the veteran running back highlights the backfield as seniors Kason Cimmiyotti and Zander Fisher lead the charge through the air.

Senior leader Jace Coe highlights the Mustang offense along with sophomore Caden George.

A steady dosage of runs would lead the Mustangs right down the field. In nine plays the Mustangs used four minutes to score the opening touchdown on a one-yard score from Caden George, making it 6-0 early. After gaining an early first down, the TigerScot offense began to feel the heat from the relentless Mustang defense; sophomore Cade Cunningham sacked Blane Peal to force a long fourth and 17. The TigerScot punt would sail out of bounds, setting up the Mustang offense on their own 42-yard line. Another four minutes would wind off the clock as Heppner took six plays to find the endzone. The drive was highlighted by a 23-yard run from Jace Coe and ended on a one-yard run from Landon Mitchell. Mitchell then threw a pass to Brock Hisler to score on the two-point conversion, leaving the score at 14-0. The second quarter became a stalemate as both teams' defenses weren't giving an inch. The TigerScots punted two more times and

threw an interception. The Mustangs would also punt twice, while also throwing an interception right at the half. Both teams would head to the locker rooms as the score was 14-0 with the Mustangs in front.

After deferring in the first half, the TigerScots would elect to receive the ball to start the second half. After two first downs, Blane Mahoney would take down Peal to force yet another punt. Heppner drove 77 yards in nine plays to add another score, George took the ball 11 yards for the score as Heppner pushed their lead out to 20-0. After a 15-yard penalty and a Blane Mahoney sack, the TigerScots were pinned deep on a third and 47 as the third quarter clock expired. An incomplete pass would force the TigerScots to punt, however Hisler would blow through the line and block the punt, as Ty Boor jumped on the ball and took it back to the TigerScot 13 yard-line. On the very next play Hisler would score on a 13-yard run to widen the advantage to 26-0. The Mustangs would allow another first down on the next Weston McEwen

possession, but they would force a punt. Taking over on their own 40-yard line, Heppner would run two plays as Coe found green grass and exploded for a 58-yard score. Hisler would take a direct snap on the field goal and run into the endzone to all but seal the game as it was 34-0. Peal would take the ball on the next drive and throw a pass completion to the TigerScot tight end, however senior Conor Brosnan swooped in and laid the boom on the TigerScot tight end, forcing a fumble which he would recover, and scamper 25 yards for the finishing score. As the clock wound down, Heppner was able to secure a 40-0 victory.

As a part of Mustang football tradition, the seniors take a lap around Les Payne field after their final home game. As the semi-finals and state championship game will be held on neutral site fields, this was the seniors last time playing a football game in Heppner. The 13 seniors grabbed a Heppner Mustang flag, and took two laps around the field high fiving and hugging fans, teammates and family along the way. Each senior took their chance with the flag. After their laps the seniors gathered to present Coach Grant with a signed Mustang flag as a thanks for all the hard work he puts into each season of football. Coach Grant's coaching is unbelievable,

and all the seniors wanted to thank him for the commitment he shows every year.

Statistics for the game: Landon Mitchell threw the ball 11 times, connecting on six passes for 45 yards. Brock Hisler led the Mustangs on the ground with 110 yards and a touchdown. Jace Coe rushed for 81 yards as well as one touchdown, Mitchell ran for 40 yards and one score, while Caden George ran for 34 yards and two touchdowns. Coe and George led the way in receptions, hauling in two passes each, Coe gained 13 yards while George totaled 15. Zander Fisher and Ty Boor also had a reception each, Fisher snagged 10 yards while Boor brought in seven yards. Defensively Hisler led the way in tackles with eight, Brosnan was right behind him with seven to go along with his fumble recovery, Mahoney, Toby Nation and Tucker Ashbeck all had six tackles. Boor had five tackles, Coe and Cade Cunningham both brought in three tackles, while Cameron Proudfoot, Fisher and Steagall had two tackles. With one tackle were George, and Jake Lentz.

Heppner has solidified their spot in the 2A semi-finals, and the Mustangs will battle the Coquille Red Devils. This game will be played at McMinnville High School on November 20. Game time is set for 12 p.m.

OSAA Semifinal Football



#1 Heppner Mustangs

VS

#4 Coquille Red Devils

Saturday, November 20 - 12:00 pm
McMinnville High School

Join us in congratulating the Heppner Mustang Fall teams' great post-season success. The cost to have your name, family or business included on this special full color page is \$10.

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