

Heppner Mustangs win first round

-Continued from PAGE ONE



The Heppner Mustangs - Photo by Tylynn Cimmiyotti

field to the Pirate 8-yard line but were unable to score and they turned the ball over on downs as the first quarter ended.

The teams traded punts and then Cameron Proudfoot had a 12-yard punt return to give the Mustangs good field position. Orem then had two long pass completions. The first one was to Caden George for a 33-yard gain and then he connected with Nick Wenberg on a 39-yard pass play that took the ball to the one-yard line. Caden George blasted into the end zone for a Mustang touchdown to make the score 14-0 midway through the second quarter.

Bandon/Pacific went on a long drive that the Mustang defense stopped at the five-yard line when Caden George stepped in front of a Pirate pass and intercepted the ball. That ended the first half with Heppner leading by the score of 14-0.

The teams traded possessions early in the second half. The Pirates then scored their lone touchdown of the game near the end of the third quarter to make the score 14-7.

After the Pirate kickoff, Heppner went on a 10-play drive that ended with another score. They were all running plays that saw the Mustang offen-

sive line control the line of scrimmage and give the running backs lots of room to run. The Mustangs moved the ball 60 yards before Hayden McMahon ran the ball in from 5 yards out. The score of the game was now 20-7 with just over eight minutes left.

The Heppner defense stiffened and forced the Pirates to turn the ball over on downs near midfield. The Mustangs scored another touchdown eight plays later when Orem connected with Caden George on a perfectly placed pass. Caden made a great catch over the defender's outstretched arms on the play that covered 24 yards for the score. Orem passed the ball to Caden George for the 2-pt. conversion to make the score 28-7 with two minutes left in the game.

On the next Pirate possession, Caleb George intercepted a pass to stop the driver. The Mustangs took over and Caylan Proudfoot came in at quarterback and took a knee two times to end the game with Heppner winning by the score of 28-7.

Heppner totaled 17 first downs and Bandon/Pacific had 10. The Mustangs finished with 307 total yards in the game and the Pirates 193. The Mustangs rushed the ball for 211 and had 96 passing yards.

Orem was 3-5 passing the ball for 96 yards and a touchdown. Caden George caught 2 balls for 57 yards and a touchdown while Wenberg had 1 catch for 39 yards.

Leading the team in rushing was Caden George who had 98 yards on 23 carries and scored 1 touchdown. Hayden McMahon ran for 57 yards on 9 carries and scored 2 touchdowns. Cameron Proudfoot rushed for 29 yards and Orem had 27.

The tough Mustang defense was led by Caden George with 9 tackles. Jaime Cavan was next with 8 and with 6 tackles each were Orem and Landon McMahon. Cameron Proudfoot and Wenberg followed with 5 tackles in the game and with 4 tackles each were Hayden McMahon and Caleb George. Owen Guerra had 3 tackles and with 2 tackles each for the Mustangs were Martin Medina and Tripp Stewart.

This week Heppner will travel to Stayton to play for the Regis Rams in the quarterfinals. The game will be played at Regis High School on Saturday at 1 p.m. There are no stands for the visiting team's fans so you should take chairs or be prepared to stand. The game will not be broadcast on NFHS.

Ione/Arlington volleyball girls win Big Sky League district title



The Ione/Arlington volleyball team won the Big Sky League district title on Saturday, Oct. 21st, 2023, at The Dalles High School. Team members include(L-R) front row Analisa Valdez, and Calli Troutman, back row, Noelia Ramirez, Savannah Blagg, Najiah Knight, Victoria De La Torre, Grace Cloughton, Jolene Serrano, Phegley Padberg, Novalee Campbell, Lizzy Doherty, Kaitlyn Hooper, and Kelly Doherty. - Contributed Photo

ODOT region manager talks progress

-Continued from PAGE ONE

he said. "It's kind of nice to have that transit improvement to come with the population growth in Morrow County."

While Patterson and Lani covered a lot of ground in a relatively short presentation, much of the conversation centered around a familiar government theme—money, or the lack of it.

He admitted that maintenance has been an issue for ODOT and put it down to funding. He said the region's construction budget was about \$200 million this past year, with a much smaller maintenance budget of \$19 million "in a good year."

"We're now starting to shrink our budgets up based on inflation, and it's getting to be a little smaller than that," he said.

"The last four years, we've had about 70 percent inflation affecting our project development," he added. "What that's meant, is we have less purchasing power for our maintenance activities, so we're having to tighten our belts accordingly."

Patterson also talked about ODOT funding, both where ODOT's money comes from and funding programs that can be used by cities and counties.

For instance, seven projects in Eastern Oregon recently received funding through the Small City Allotment, which targets towns and cities with populations of less than 5,000.

He said ODOT often receives questions as to why stimulus money and other federal funding isn't trickling down to maintenance projects.

"Maintenance activities cannot be funded by the federal government," he told the commissioners. "It has to be state-funded."

That leaves ODOT dependent on income from sources like the state gas tax and registration fees. With vehicles becoming more fuel-efficient and more electric vehicles on the road, some of that funding is shrinking.

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Chair David Sykes asked if considering the state's mandated goals to switch to electric vehicles, anyone at the state level had been talking about how to meet that funding shortfall.

Last year, Oregon legislators passed a law requiring that any car sold in the state be 35 percent battery-electric, hydrogen-powered, or plug-in hybrid (PHEV) by 2026. The percentage increases annually, reaching 100 percent in 2035. That has serious implications for funding received through a gas tax.

Patterson said Sykes had "hit the nail on the head."

"It's not a mystery. This has been something that we've seen coming for a long time," said Patterson. "And it's just a natural

implication of that policy decision."

He said ODOT had been discussing with the legislature the need to come up with more sustainable funding that is in line with current policies.

"If we want these kinds of policies to encourage clean air and efficiency, we still have a transportation system to fund, and we need to figure out how to fund that accordingly," he added.

He said some discussions had already started about tolling, especially in metro areas, as well as a road usage charge. There is already a pilot project called OReGo in which participants pay by the mile versus paying the gas tax.

"They're looking to diversify that funding," he said.

CDA Update

At the same meeting, the commissioners also heard an update from Columbia Development Authority Administrative Assistant Debbie Pedro regarding the status of the long-sought land transfer.

The CDA maintains offices in Boardman but includes representatives of Morrow and Umatilla counties, the Port of Morrow and Port of Umatilla, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR).

The CDA acquired 9,500 acres of land from the Umatilla Army Depot in March of this year, the culmination of decades of preparation.

"We're just thrilled that we were able to complete this task. It had taken many, many years in order to transfer this property over," said Pedro, "but a great opportunity for development in the future out at this property."

She also said it was their understanding that this was the fourth-largest base realignment and closure transaction that has happened in the history of the U. S. Army.

"So that's really exciting," she said.

Of the land acquired from the Army, Pedro said they are working to transfer 4,019 acres to CTUIR. That transfer is due to a memo of understanding between the CDA and the tribes so the CTUIR can form a wildlife refuge on the land. She said she believed that transfer would happen sometime after the first of the year.

She said the CDA had also been working on developing agreements for electricity and water rights, as well as working with planning departments in both counties to move toward marketing and developing the former military land.

Plans for an internal road are in the works with ODOT, to the tune of \$7 million, and the CDA is also looking at solar power opportunities.

"I think this will be really exciting to see how the outcome will be on that," she said.

Heppner cross country at state

-Continued from PAGE ONE



Heppner Boys Cross Country pose for a picture at state meet. - Contributed Photo

his own personal best and season record of 15:51.8, which he set in Vernonia, he did cement his place in high school cross-country history with another first-place win. His time of 16:12.9 gave him an impressive 10.3-second lead over senior Eli Williams (16:22.6) of Union.

Nichols is no stranger to the spotlight, but she fell slightly short of her best in Eugene. Her time of 19:32.5 didn't match her personal record of 18:39.4, also set in Vernonia, but it

did give her what she needed to place fourth behind Jaya Simmons of Valley Catholic, Daisy Lalonde of East Linn Christian, and Sophie Schoolmeester of Banks.

Mustang cross country will feel the loss of three strong runners when seniors Grady Greenwood, Arianna Worden, and Irelynn Kollman graduate next year. However, lots of young up-and-comers promise plenty of victories in the future as several sophomores and freshmen come into their

own.

Full stats from the state meet are:

Men's 2A/1A 5,000 Meters

1. Grady Greenwood 16:12.9
33. Carson Greenwood 18:38.3
41. Jake Wilson 19:04.7
62. Walker Lathrop 20:34.8
67. Quaid Jensen 21:20.2
71. Max Wilson 21:49.7

Women's 5,000 Meters 3A/2A/1A

4. Lily Nichols 19:32.5
19. Arianna Worden 20:45.3
27. Riley Archer 20:56.1
47. Hailey McDaniel 21:37.0
55. Brooklyn Hendricks 22:02.4
76. Irelynn Kollman 23:30.4

Greater Idaho border discussions

-Continued from PAGE ONE

to further comment but received none. No action needed to be taken at the meeting.

Also at the meeting, Lexington Town Councilor Katie Imes and Lexington Town Recorder Veronica Ferguson provided an update on Lexington projects. Similar to the City of Heppner, Lexington is currently focused on updating and improving its water system, as well as creating a sewer system for the town.

Imes told the commissioners that the town's water and sewer feasibility studies are complete, and Lexington is in the process of finding funding so it

can move forward with its plans. Planning has been underway since 2022.

The Lexington Town Council plans to hold a one-stop meeting with state agencies. A one-stop meeting is one in which several different state agencies gather and present different funding scenarios and options.

Ferguson added that they hope to gather as many agencies as possible. The meeting will be on Nov. 14 from 2-3:30 p.m. at Lexington Town Hall or via Zoom.

"It's really just a great way, an opportunity, to learn more about our needs in Lexington," said Imes.

In other business, the board also voted to pursue funding for a new all-terrain vehicle (ATV) for county park maintenance. If received, the funding would be used to purchase a Polaris Ranger to replace the county's aging ATV, which was purchased with a previous grant.

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department has funds available through its all-terrain vehicle grant program. The grant requires a 20 percent cash match from the county, which is estimated to be around \$9,500 based on quotes received last month. However, the vehicle would not be purchased until summer of 2024, and new quotes would be gathered at that time.

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