



# the HEPPNER GAZETTE TIMES

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## Mustangs overcome Raiders in thrilling quarterfinal, set sights on state championship during Grant's farewell season

The Heppner Mustang football team won their OSAA 2A State Football Playoff Quarterfinal game against the Lost River Raiders by the score of 16-12. With the win, the Mustangs, who are 11-0 for the season, will move on to the semi-finals where they will face the St. Paul Buckaroos. St. Paul is also 11-0 for the season and is the first-place team from Special District 3. They finished as the fifth ranked team in the OSAA football rankings. The game will be on Saturday, November 23 at 2 pm at Caldera High School in Bend.

Heppner kicked off to start the game against Lost River, and the Raiders got to the Heppner three-yard line before the Mustang defense stepped up and stopped them from scoring. Heppner took the ball but couldn't get much yardage and had to punt the ball back to the Raiders. Lost River got the ball near mid-field and went on a 12-play drive that ended in a score. That made it 6-0 in favor of the Raiders early in the second quarter.

The Mustangs were three-and-out on their next possession and had to punt the ball back to the Raiders. Another long and time-consuming drive by Lost River got the ball all the way down to the Mustang 22-yard line. Again, the Heppner defense stiffened and stopped the Raiders on downs as the second quarter ended.

Lost River controlled the first half of the game, and the Mustangs only were able to run a total of seven plays in the entire



Heppners Tripp Stewart jumps to make a catch in the third quarter of their quarter final match up against Lost River. -Photo by Tara Eakin Proudfoot

half. But after some half-time adjustments, the game flipped, and the Mustangs controlled most all of the second half.

Heppner got the ball to start the half and put together a nice drive to near mid field. They were forced to punt the ball to Lost River who would have to start their possession from deep in their own territory. The game of field position had finally turned in the Mustangs' favor. The Heppner defense forced the Raiders to punt the ball back, and that gave the Mustangs great field position at the Raider 44-yard line. Quarterback Mason Orem then threw a 26-yard pass completion to Tripp Stewart. Stewart had to jump high and twist his body in order to reach up and bring the ball into his chest as he

landed on his back for the completion. It was quite a catch and seemed to fire the Mustangs up. On the very next play Orem completed a pass to Alakae Rodriguez for an 18-yard touchdown. Rodriguez then ran the ball in for the 2-pt. conversion to give the Mustangs the lead 8-6, with just over five minutes left in the third quarter.

The Heppner defense forced a three-and-out punt by the Raiders on their next possession. Again, the Mustang got a great field position to start their next drive near mid field. The Heppner offensive line really started to take control of the game, and the Mustangs began to control the time of possession in the second half. Heppner went on an eight-play drive and got another score when Orem

handed the ball off to Zach Brown. Zach then powered his way in from 7 yards out for the touchdown. A direct snap to Caleb George saw him blast his way into the end zone for the 2-pt. conversion. That gave the Mustangs a 16-6 lead as the third quarter ended.

Lost River went on a 12-play drive that ate up half of the fourth quarter clock and saw them score a touchdown on a 13-yard pass play. That made the score of the game 16-12 in favor of the Mustangs.

Heppner started their next drive deep in their own territory at the 15-yard line. But they put together a drive of punishing runs that ate up five minutes of the game clock. Heppner got the ball out to the 49-yard line before they were

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## Heppner band prepares to boost Mustangs in semifinals clash



the Heppner Band practicing in the Greg Grant Stadium. -Photo contributed

Heppner, OR – November 17, 2024 – The Heppner High School Band, under the direction of Brook Baker, has been a driving force behind the Mustang football team's exciting run to the semi-finals this season. With their high-energy performances at every

home football game, the band has brought the crowd to its feet, creating an electric atmosphere that has helped propel the Mustangs energy.

Led by Baker, the band's commitment and passion have been evident -Continued to PAGE SEVEN

## HHS to honor students each quarter

We are excited to introduce a new initiative at HJSHS to honor our students for their efforts and achievements in the classroom. Each quarter, we will recognize Mustang Students of the Quarter.

Congratulations to our First Quarter recipients! These students will be celebrated at our end-of-semester awards assembly in January. Additionally, information about the first quarter will be shared on our school webpage and social media platforms.

Mustang Student of the Quarter  
The HJSHS Mustang

Academic Student of the Quarter award recognizes students based on various criteria. This award goes beyond just academic performance; it honors those who exhibit specific positive behaviors and a strong work ethic. As an educational institution, we value and celebrate the growth our students achieve through their hard work and dedication.

Students receiving an HJSHS Mustang Academic Student of the Quarter award may demonstrate one, or more, of the following characteristics:

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## New FEMA requirement creates even more hassles for floodplain development

By Andrea Di Salvo

Getting permits to build in the floodplain will be even more difficult thanks to FEMA and the Endangered Species Act, the Heppner City Council learned at its Nov. 12 meeting.

The City of Heppner will need a floodplain habitat assessment for all floodplain permits going forward—a huge lift, since most of Heppner's level ground is within the floodplain.

In July 2024, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) sent a letter to cities and counties in Oregon instructing them to make short term changes to how the city or county regulates development in flood hazard areas.

These Pre-Implementation Compliance Measures (PICM) are short-term actions that FEMA wants cities to adopt before FEMA fully implements long-term changes to the

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to comply with the Endangered Species Act.

Heppner City Manager John Doherty said the move by FEMA goes back to a 2016 biological opinion in which environmental groups stated that floodplain development does harm to endangered species. For Columbia River tributaries, that includes salmon and steelhead.

Doherty told the council that, under PICM, communities may choose one of three compliance measures. The first option is to prohibit all new development in the flood plain.

The second is to incorporate the Endangered Species Act performance standards into local flood plain ordinances through a model ordinance provided by FEMA.

Third, a city may use a permit-by-permit model that requires permit applications to develop a flood-

plain habitat assessment to show that proposed development in the flood plain hazard area will create no net loss. "No net loss" focuses on flood plain storage, water quality and vegetation.

"Whichever way we go, it will involve some changes to our zoning and flood plain ordinances at some point," he said.

Doherty said the Oregon League of Cities has challenged the move because the cities are being forced to alter course with little time to prepare and before a corresponding study is completed.

"This was sprung on us July 25, was the first email," Doherty said.

For now, though, cities are still faced with selecting one of the three options to move forward. The deadline is Dec. 1, and Oregon communities are trying to navigate the new requirements with little information to guide them.

"I have raised many questions. Other cities have raised many questions," said Doherty, adding that he had to read 300-400 pages of documents to try to figure it out. "It's very confusing."

Doherty said one of his big questions is why Heppner is included in the requirement, since Willow

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## Collaboration among local and state agencies leads to successful flood siren test in Heppner



The Heppner flood siren. -Photo contributed

Heppner tested its flood warning system on Thursday, Nov. 14, at 1 p.m. The coordinated effort involved the Morrow County Emergency Management, Hep-

ner Fire Department, the Operations Project Manager for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Oregon Department of Emergency Management, and the Morrow County Sheriff's Office.

As many Heppner residents likely noticed, the flood warning siren was tested and lasted for three minutes. This test was conducted to ensure the system's efficiency and preparedness in the event of an actual flood. According to Morrow County Emergency Manager Steve Freeland, who led the test, the

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