

## Pendleton beats Hermiston, Dawgs still advance

### Hermiston wins coin toss with The Dalles

BY ERIK SKOPIL  
EO MEDIA GROUP

It's not often that a team loses its final game of the year, a game that is a must-win for postseason eligibility, and still

continues to play.

That's exactly the situation Hermiston baseball team finds itself in after a 7-0 loss to Pendleton on Friday and a coin-toss win in The Dalles that will send the Bulldogs to the playoffs as the third seed out of the Columbia River Conference. It was good news to drown out an otherwise forgettable day.

"We competed," Hermiston head coach Lance Hawkins

said. "We beat Hood River. We split with Pendleton at home, we beat The Dalles twice, just to give ourselves a chance for tonight. By all rights, when you lose four league games in a row, you're in trouble."

As of Friday night, Hermiston (11-12, 4-8 CRC) will play No. 3 Mid-Columbia Rex Putnam in the play-in round.

Earlier this month, the Bulldogs found themselves playing for its postseason lives after five-straight league losses in the middle of the league slate. But back-to-back wins over The Dalles and Hood River gave Hermiston a shot to clinch a spot outright with a win in Pendleton. It wasn't to be.

SEE DAWGS/A9

## Faaeteete the right man for the job



SAM BARBEE  
FROM THE SIDELINES  
Sports reporter

There is a new boss of Hermiston football. Well, not entirely new. He's been in the program for seven years and has been groomed for this position. His name is David Faaeteete, and he is right for the job.

His football experience is well-known: four years at the University of Oregon, try-outs with a couple of NFL teams and an all-state career in high school.

He knows the game, and he remembers games vividly. Thursday, while we were talking in his office, our conversation moved to some games from this past season. He remembered everything. What a call was, how the play developed, where the weak point was in the opposition, how the Bulldogs wanted to attack it and how they eventually attacked it. It was like I was listening to a savant with games digitally recorded in his head. It was amazing.

But what is going to serve Faaeteete best is his ability to relate to players. It's what made Mark Hodges, his predecessor, so good.

"I see somebody who has all of the tools necessary," Bulldog radio voice Erick Olsen said of Faaeteete, adding his age is an asset when working with the athletes. "When you're three decades older than them, it's tougher than when you're a decade older than them."

Faaeteete is just about a decade older than most of his players, and it shows. His players love him at practice. He straddles this line between player and coach, friend and boss. It creates an environment of respect and love that only fosters closeness.

"It was a smart move by the administration to continue to keep things going in the same direction because the players are going to be loyal to him, and he's going to garner a great amount of enthusiasm, and people like him and he's smart and he's going to give his all to the program," Hodges said. "You're just talking about a quality person who's going to take over and continue to lead on into a new era."

Many people share those opinions. Olsen called him a "five-tool coach," referencing the idea of a five-tool baseball player. Hodges, obviously, thought Faaeteete could be a great head coach. After all, it was his idea. Blaine Ganvoa said Faaeteete, among others, is a good ambassador to Hermiston and its athletics teams and is excited to have him in a larger role.

When asking around when people thought of Faaeteete as the new coach, not a single person was dubious or hesitant or questioned the decision. All were for it 100 percent.

"I think of a lot of David," Hermiston football public address announcer and team alumnus Joe Thompson said. "Not only with his football knowledge, but the citizenship he brings and the type of person he is and the rapport he has with players and students. I think it was a very good move and the program is in good hands."

Faaeteete is a football guy. He looks it; he talks it; he acts it. I don't know if the school could have picked a better candidate out there for Hermiston. Sure, there might be better football coaches floating around the state, region or country, but if we're talking about the best coach for Hermiston, then Faaeteete is the guy. No doubt about it.

—Sam Barbée is the sports reporter for the Hermiston Herald and can be reached at (541) 564-4542 or sbarbee@hermistonherald.com

# A long road to Hermiston

## Bulldog football coach Faaeteete's journey began in Western Samoa

BY SAM BARBEE  
HERMISTON HERALD

Before moving here, David Faaeteete didn't know where Hermiston was.

In 2008, he was coming off his senior season at the University of Oregon, where he started 13 games, recording two sacks and recovering two fumbles. He signed contracts with the Chicago Bears and Oakland Raiders, but his pro-football career never took off. He was back home in Eugene, ready to enroll in graduate school and prepare for a career in law when a fateful call came through his cell phone.

It was Mike Kay, Hermiston's athletic director at the time, and Mark Hodges, the newly-hired head football coach. They asked what Faaeteete was doing. He said waiting for a call and staying in shape. They asked if he wanted to coach and teach, and Faaeteete agreed.

The recent graduate had no idea how far east Hermiston was, however. He got to Hood River, called his future bosses and said he was almost there, maybe 20 minutes out. He got to Arlington, thought it was Hermiston, only to punch Hermiston into his GPS and find out he was still another 45 minutes or so from his destination.

"I had never driven that far before," he said.

### Coming to America

Faaeteete is no stranger to long journeys. As a boy, he and his family moved to San Francisco from their home in Western Samoa, where they worked a plantation on the South Pacific island and lived as sustenance farmers. His grandfather, who wound up starting a Seventh-day Adventist church in Medford, decided it would be best for the family if they moved to the States. He said there would be more opportunities for his family in America.

Faaeteete said he doesn't remember the transition well. He knew some English from American television programs — some Chuck Norris and MacGyver among others, he said — but largely he eased into the transition. It wasn't so for some of the adults in the family.

"I think the biggest challenge was not necessarily for me growing up — it was for our parents, our uncles getting accli-



SAM BARBEE PHOTO

David Faaeteete is officially the head football coach of the Hermiston Bulldogs, but he had quite the journey to get there.

mated to not having to go out to the plantation and harvest food to bring home," he said. "My uncle still to this day gets road rage because he can't understand why people cut him off."

Life in the big city was a difficult transition for Faaeteete's family, but once they moved to Oregon things quieted down. Medford was still relatively small and rural then, putting the Faaeteetes more at home. His grandfather bought a farm outside of town, and it provided a link with home, something to remember about Samoa.

After some time, Grandad, as

Faaeteete calls him, had to sell the farm to attend to business in Samoa. By then, Faaeteete was a rising star on the gridiron for the North Medford Red Tornadoes, with a certain high-energy offensive coordinator prowling the sidelines.

In Medford, he started working with children at Kids Unlimited of Oregon, a mentoring service run by North Medford girls basketball coach Tom Cole. He enjoyed it. He liked being a positive influence, guiding youngsters in a productive and positive direction. His senior project delved into behavioral modifica-

tion for special needs students, and it sat well with him.

"From there, I just felt like working with kids was the thing," he said. "Early on, I kinda knew that I would be teaching and coaching eventually, but like every other young kid (I had) aspirations to play in the Big Show."

### Football career

After an all-state career at high school, Faaeteete moved on to the University of Oregon

SEE FAAETEETE/A9

## Stanfield, Echo baseball teams sweep Umatilla

BY SAM BARBEE  
HERMISTON HERALD

The Stanfield Tigers wrapped up their 2015 regular season with two wins Friday, beating Umatilla 13-1 in the opener of a doubleheader and 16-2 in the back end.

Stanfield (18-7, 9-1 EOL) finished the season on a four-game winning streak and win-

ners of 10 of 12, good for the top spot in the Eastern Oregon League. Umatilla (1-18, 1-9), meanwhile, lost six straight to close out the year.

Stanfield did most of its work late in the first leg, although the Tigers plated three in the first two innings. Dylan Grogan drove in Tony Flores with a single in the first, Steven Allan scored on a wild pitch in the sec-

ond and Thyler Monkus scored on an error for the third run.

Umatilla got its run in the bottom of the first when Josh Dever tripled to the left field fence, plating Cory Landon from first.

It would stay 3-1 until the fifth, when Stanfield's offense broke through. Ryan Bailey and Grogan each had RBI singles, and Bailey scored on a passed ball to push the lead to 6-1.

Stanfield produced four more in the sixth when Makiah Blankenship scored on an error, Monkus scored on a wild pitch and Klay Jenson singled home Bailey for run No. 10. Stanfield got its final three in the top of the seventh. Flores hit a sacrifice fly, Bailey singled home another run and Grogan doubled home a

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### GO SEE IT

#### Saturday, May 16

##### Girls Tennis

Hermiston @ Districts @ Hermiston, 8 a.m.  
Umatilla @ Regionals @ Tri-Cities Court Club (Kenne-  
wick), 9 a.m.  
Stanfield @ Regionals @ Tri-Cities Court Club (Kenne-  
wick), 9 a.m.

##### Boys Tennis

Hermiston @ Districts @ Bend (Sunriver), 8 a.m.  
Umatilla @ Regionals @ Tri-Cities Court Club (9 a.m.)

##### Track and Field

Umatilla @ Districts @ Nyssa, 10 a.m.  
Echo @ Districts @ Sherman County, 10:30 a.m.

#### Sunday, May 17

No events scheduled

#### Monday, May 18

##### Boys Golf

Hermiston @ 5A Boys State Championships @ Emerald  
Valley (Creswell), TBD

#### Tuesday, May 19

##### Boys Golf

Hermiston @ 5A Boys State Championships @ Emerald  
Valley (Creswell), TBD

##### Softball

Echo @ Districts vs. TBD, TBD

#### Wednesday, May 20

No events scheduled  
(subject to change)