

Colbray not practicing with the team

A broken jaw and concussion issues likely to keep Colbray away from gridiron

By SAM BARBEE
Staff Writer

Entering the 2015 football season, the defending 5A state champion Hermiston Bulldogs had just five returning starters from last year's team. Currently, they have just four.

Running back/defensive tackle and wrestling standout Sam Colbray, a senior, is currently not participating in fall football camp because of a broken jaw suffered over

the summer while wrestling, and a potential concussion problem.

"We hope for good news and his recovery's speedy," first-year head coach David Faaeteete said after practice Thursday. "We can always use a great athlete like that on the field — a returning All-State kid, tough, tough competitor and just a physical specimen that makes teams have to gameplan for him."

In two seasons, Colbray rushed for 1,088 yards on 215 carries, an average of 5.1 yards per, and scored



FILE PHOTO
Hermiston's Sam Colbray avoids the grasp of a defending Pendleton Buckaroo in the rivalry War on 84 last season at Kennison Field. An injury over the same has kept Colbray from fall football practice.

21 touchdowns. Last season was his best by far, coming two yards shy of 1,000 on 198 carries (5.0

average) and scored 18 times. Colbray also had four catches for seven yards last season.

Colbray, in addition to having the broken jaw, sustained a serious concussion last season during Hermiston's 31-27 loss at Coeur d'Alene last fall, and teammate, and fellow senior, Bob Coleman said Colbray's history of concussions jeopardizes his desire to wrestle collegiately.

"We knew coming into the season that Sam was a wrestler first and football player second," Faaeteete said.

The news comes as a blow to the Hermiston Bulldogs who have just one returning starter from last year's offense: receiver Ethan Snow. The quarterback battle is still a two-man race between senior righty Nathan Hun-

saker and sophomore lefty Dayshawn Neal. It was assumed that Colbray would be joined by either of the them, but Colbray's vacancy just forces Faaeteete and staff to replace yet another body.

That said, Colbray isn't barred from the team. Though he declined to attend a team barbecue freshly from having his jaw wired shut, Faaeteete made a point to leave the possibility open for Colbray to return.

"If he wants to come out, he can come out," Faaeteete said. "There's no closed doors. Our policy is: everyone's welcome. It's just when we'll see him in action depends on his ability to move."

Hermiston Super Oval has big, fun night

SAM BARBEE
FROM THE SIDELINES



The smell of burnt rubber isn't something I'm used to. The force of the sound from the massive engines pounding against my chest took some getting used to, and the noise tickled my ear strangely.

It's Saturday night at Hermiston Super Oval, and the stands are packed for the figure eight trailer races set for that evening. Beforehand, mini-stock, bomber and super stock races are holding court, giving a good show to the anxious crowd.

A couple weeks ago I spoke with Dan Nelson, director of operations, and Bryson Tarr, the owner, about their endeavor to get younger fans out to the race track by using novelty races, such as bus races, trailer races and an upcoming demolition derby, to get that younger audience not only to the race track, but also get them excited about racing.

The night began with some trophy sprints. Three cars from each class raced three laps for a trophy, and it was exciting enough. Then we moved into some heat races that saw some aggressive driving and close calls. One car failed to navigate Turn 3 and ended up in the sand bank, and another time a car got loose coming around Turn 1 and was spun out. Each time smoke billowed from a car's tires, the energy in the crowd rose just enough to sense it. They wanted to see carnage.

Next on the docket was the spectator drag races. Every race day, fans are given the opportunity to take their daily drivers onto the track and set a lap time. A diesel pick-up truck tried a lap, so did a Mini Cooper, a Volkswagen Golf (which had the fastest lap), and even a mini-van. It was an interactive segment as the crowd would guess the lap times amongst themselves and laugh when they were close and tease when a friend wasn't. It was good fun.

An intermission followed the fan laps, and children were loaded into buses and driven around the track. This greatly excited a couple little guys to my left who kept wondering about the bus that had "Free Rides" painted in red across one side. When they heard the

announcement they would get their free rides, they hustled to the bus and were two of the first aboard. Children filled three buses, which performed probably three or four figure eight laps with kids waving wildly out the windows like they were on a cruise ship at the turn of the century. They were excited.

After the main events, it was time for the actual main event.

With the sun long down, vehicles with all sorts of things behind them took the track. One car had a little skiff with no trailer attached, another car had a trailer with only one wheel, yet another had a boat on a trailer that no one cared about. A bus even took the track for a time.

Things deteriorated quickly with cars going all over the place in the infield, kicking up blinding dust that made it hard for drivers and spectators to see. There were a few narrow misses there as some drivers plowed through the dust and some carefully picked through it.

But the clean didn't last long. The car pulling the boat-and-trailer combo got hung up with a truck pulling an empty trailer, rendering it crippled. The bus, though, decided it would have some fun. After lining itself up with the stationary boat, it reversed through it, sending fiberglass everywhere and a cheer throughout the crowd. It was the loudest of the night.

The truck continued around without a tire for the rest of the race, its wheel being ground to nothing. The sparks and red-hot metal were a sight to see.

Tarr and Nelson both wanted to reinvigorate the race track with a younger audience using these kinds of races to drum up new interest. Preliminarily, at least, it's working. After the anticlimactic end to the bus race during the rodeo (it's coming back Sept. 19 with trailers!), Hermiston Super Oval needed a big and fun night to stay on track, pun intended.

And it looks like they are. Let's see how the demolition derby goes this Saturday.

— Sam Barbee is a sports reporter for the Hermiston Herald and East Oregonian based in Hermiston. He can be reached by phone at 541-564-4542 or by email at sbarbee@hermistonherald.com. Follow him on Twitter @SamBarbee1 and follow Herald Sports @HHeraldSports.



STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE
David Faaeteete is handed a football while throwing swing routes last week at Hermiston football practice. He is in his first year as the Bulldogs' head coach.

Faaeteete easing into new role

After seven years as an assistant, David Faaeteete takes over Hermiston's football program

By SAM BARBEE
Staff Writer

David Faaeteete strolled from one end of the turf field at Kennison Stadium to the other. On the fourth day of fall practice under a hot sun, the first-year coach wasn't focused solely on the linemen and their position drills as he had been for seven season, under departed head coach Mark Hodges.

Now the University

of Oregon alumnus is the head coach of Hermiston's football program following the best season in school history. The Bulldogs went 12-1 last year and capped the historic run with a 34-12 waltz over the Silverton Foxes in the 5A state championship game in November.

"I got a taste of (head coaching) during spring ball," Faaeteete said, "going to Tri-Cities and what-

not. It was easy to plan a practice in the spring then go scrimmage. But fall camp is a whole different animal."

Faaeteete got a taste of that last week. He had to hand out gear, assign lockers, get new guys situated. It added yet another element to head coaching that he's had to learn since taking the vacant job in May. He's already ordered new helmets and new prac-

tice jerseys. But now, the fun starts. Now he gets to coach football.

"The football aspect of it's the same," he said. "It's fun coaching. It's just that there's a managing piece to it that I'm adjusting to. We've got veteran coaches to help out. One of the big things that Coach Hodges taught me was you gotta delegate responsibilities

See COACH, A11

Coaching positions open in Hermiston

Three vacancies at high school, including head basketball post

HERMISTON HERALD

For the second year in a row, Hermiston High School is searching for a new head boys basketball coach.

The school district first advertised the opening on its web site on Aug. 6.

The Bulldogs went 7-17 and finished third in the Columbia River Conference in what ended up being

Jake McElligott's only season at the helm.

McElligott had come to Hermiston off of a 2A state championship at nearby Irrigon. McElligott was placed on paid administrative leave Aug. 4 and is currently being investigated by the Teachers Standards and Practices Commission for a potential unspecified violation.

A ruling is expected to come regarding McElligott's status in "early fall," said Wade Smith, deputy superintendent for the district.

Hermiston is looking for a coach with success at a 4A/5A or equivalent level program as a head coach,

or an assistant from a successful 5A/6A program.

The listed yearly salary for the position is \$5,398-\$6,094.

In addition to the boys basketball position, the district is also still looking for new head softball and boys golf coaches.

Listed salaries for those positions are \$4,005-\$4,701 for softball and \$2,960-\$3,656 for boys golf. Applicants should have experience as head coach at the 3A-5A level or equivalent, or as assistant at 5A-6A level.

For more information on the job openings, or to apply, go to Hermiston.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx.

DON'T MISS OUT!

Subscribe to the Hermiston Herald E-Mail Newsletters and stay informed on the topics that matter most to you.

Visit www.hermistonherald.com/Newsletters and sign up today!

Update
To see complete list of stories, go to hermistonherald.com

Hermiston's Colbray not with the team
Entering the 2015 football season, the defending 5A state champion Hermiston Bulldogs had just five returning starters from last year's team. Currently, they have just four.