

Healthy Tigers off to a healthy season start

By **SAM BARBEE**
Staff Writer

A year ago, with a new football coach, the Stanfield Tigers never reached their potential. A talented team, but riddled with key injuries, the Tigers finished 4-5 and on the outside looking into the playoff picture window.

Now, with another new coach, but no key injuries, the Tigers have jumped to a 3-0 record, a plus-97 point differential and is one of three teams in the 2A Columbia Basin Conference to have similar numbers.



Sam Barbee
FROM THE SIDELINES

The difference? Dylan Grogan at quarterback.

With the lanky junior out most of last season with a broken collarbone, the onus was on classmate Tyler Monkus to shoulder the offensive load. He took all the snaps, acted as quarterback and running back, and took a pounding. He amassed 40 carries on more than one occasion and threw it another 10 or 12 times.

By the end of the season, he was worn down. He wasn't quite as explosive. His long touchdown runs were cut short. He broke fewer tackles. You could just see the wear and tear taking an effect on the young man.

But this year, but his backfield mate healthy and taking some of the carries, Monkus has returned to his old self. The junior running back — in just three games, mind you — has rushed for 572 yards and seven touchdowns. Grogan hasn't been a slouch, either, rushing for 193 yards and seven touchdowns, and throwing for 351 yards and a score.

Now, some of Monkus' success is most certainly due to another year of age, maturity, strength, all that. But even the threat of Grogan, who's careful finding holes and exploiting those he finds, and the added weapon of Justin Keeney, has freed Monkus to be the home-run hitter he is.

Then you add in Keeney, Makiah Blankenship and Abraham Gomez, the Tigers have five competent runners so they aren't relying on Monkus.

Head coach Davy Salas knew that. He tries to spread carries evenly so that Monkus and Grogan are fresh late in games if needed.

The return of Grogan has brought more to Stanfield than just simply yards and touchdowns. Grogan is the emotional leader of the Tigers. Salas said he's a fiery competitor who holds his own in tackling drills with any teammate from any position. Not having that emotional leader last year, Salas said, left Stanfield at a big disadvantage. They didn't have anyone to follow or energy to feed off. Now, with No. 4 under center, they have it. And the Tigers have made some statements, if small, with league play starting in Week 5.

"Last year was their first down year for a lot of 'em,'" Salas said. "A 3-6 season, those kids aren't used to a 3-6 season. It can't be a blessing to have them think, 'Wow, all we are is one injury away from a 3-6 season. We have to bring it every game. We can't take weeks off. We can't take plays off.'"

If the first three results are any indication, Stanfield hasn't been taking plays or weeks off, and they're healthy. For a small school with a small roster, health is key. Stanfield has it. For now. As long as Grogan, Monkus and company are keeping defenses guessing, Stanfield will be a load in the CBC.

Sam Barbee is a sports reporter for the Hermiston Herald and East Oregonian based out of Hermiston. He can be reached by email at sbarbee@hermistonherald.com or on Twitter @SamBarbee1. Follow Herald Sports @HHeraldSports.

Bulldog hoops team has an Ego — again

Retired coach returns to the sidelines for one more season

By **SAM BARBEE**
Staff Writer

It's been almost 30 years since Dave Ego coached high school basketball, and he isn't worried.

The 68-year-old Hermiston resident was hired last week as Hermiston's interim head basketball coach in the wake of Jake McElligott's resignation. But despite being away from the game for 27 years, Ego doesn't think that will be an issue.

"Ralph Miller said the game hasn't changed in 40 years, but I'd venture to say it hasn't changed in the last 40 either," Ego said. "You just gotta know what the other guy's doing."

The late-Ralph Miller was in-



Dave Ego

ducted into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame and spent 41 seasons as a head basketball coach at Wichita, Iowa and Oregon State. As coach of the Beavers, he had just two losing seasons out of 20 and is the all-time winningest coach in program history with 359 wins.

Ego said his age is not an issue either, citing Duke University coach Mike Krzyzewski, who is also 68. Krzyzewski has coached the Blue Devils since 1980 and has amassed a head coaching record of 1,018-310 (88-26 in NCAA tournaments) and five NCAA championships in 40 seasons.

Ego coached the Bulldogs from 1978-1988 before moving into the administration, where he retired as principal in 2003. In those 10 seasons as coach, Herm-

iston went 86-134 (65-95 Intermountain Conference) and 2-20 in his final year.

Ego is the father of Umatilla cross country coach Josh, former Beaverton girls basketball coach, Jay, and is the father-in-law of current Hermiston High Principal Tom Spoo.

Before arriving in Hermiston, Ego was an assistant at Parkrose High School in Portland for three years, where he helped the Broncos to a 69-6 record, a state championship, and coached numerous Division I players, including Ray Blume (Oregon State), Rick Osborn (Oregon), and Steve Woodside (Oregon State). Once in Hermiston, Ego led the Bulldogs to two league championships when Hermiston was a member of the 10-team Intermountain Conference.

Ego takes over a program that went 7-17 (4-5) and lost five seniors from last year's team. The

program, also, has been the focus of much turnover in recent years, with three coaches in as many seasons.

Athletic Director Blaine Gantvoa said Ego's familiarity with the area, program and school will be an asset.

"Mr. Ego will provide us a year of clear expectations and standards, giving stability to a program that has experienced substantial turnover in the past four years," he said.

"I think that the kids deserve something," Ego said. "Four coaches in four years isn't an envious position, and it's an interim position because I'm not interested in a long-term position. We need to be able to give the kids in the community something to be proud of."

"What I've seen so far is we've got some kids who are excited and want to be basketball players, and that path should be made easier."

Irrigon pulls away from Umatilla

After tight first half, Knights dominate second half

By **SAM BARBEE**
Staff Writer

At halftime of Umatilla's non-league football game against Irrigon, the Vikings had all the momentum. Jesus Ramirez hit Tristen Sanguino for a 14-yard touchdown pass in the back corner of the end zone with 27 seconds left in the second quarter to pull within six at 18-12.

But that was as close as they would come. The Knights scored 21 unanswered points in the second half to put away the pesky Vikings 39-12 Friday night in Umatilla.

"We had to face a little adversity," Irrigon coach Steve Sheller said. "Umatilla got just about every break in that first half. So I'm proud of the boys. I told them, I said, 'We're due for some bad. Let's see how we react to it. And in that second half, they reacted

to it pretty dang well."

Umatilla (2-1) did catch a lot of first-half breaks. Ramirez had a pass deflect off a Umatilla receiver right into the hands of Fabricio Garcia on third down to keep a drive alive, and Ramirez scrambled for a good 20 seconds before finding Sanguino all alone in the back corner late in the second quarter.

And every time Umatilla made a move, Irrigon (3-0) had a response.

After the Vikings took the opening kick-off and methodically drove the ball down the field in 14 plays ending in a Hunter Cook plunge, Irrigon came right back and scored in seven plays to tie it, then scored on two plays after Umatilla's punter whiffed at his own five yard line to take a 12-6 lead.

Irrigon then took its turn with a methodical drive, going 65 yards in 13 plays resulting in a Nate Verley touchdown pass to Austin Rice. It was Verley's only completion of the day and gave



STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE

Umatilla's Josh Dever (15) is tackled by Irrigon's Omar Vera (3) just short of the goal line early in Irrigon's 39-12 win Friday night in Umatilla.

See **KNIGHTS, A9**

Football: Millers overpower Bulldogs; Tigers win at home

SPRINGFIELD 52, HERMISTON 20 — At Springfield, the Bulldogs continued its disappointing start to the 2015 season with yet another loss on Friday.

Hermiston (0-3) kept it close in the first half as they trailed 24-20 at halftime before being shut-out in the second half.

Bulldog quarterback Dayshawn Neal was dangerous on the ground in the game, carrying the ball 27 times for 152 yards and two touchdowns. Neal only attempted seven passes, completing three of them for 27

yards.

Sophomore running back Johnathan Hinkle carried the ball 20 times for 82 yards while senior Hayden Simon added 15 carries for 83 yards and a touchdown.

The Bulldog defense struggled to contain the Springfield offense throughout, however, allowing 580 total yards—299 on the ground and 281 through the air.

Penalties were an issue for both teams as they combined for a staggering 34 penalties for 327 yards.

Hermiston hits the road again

this week to play Lewiston (ID) at 7 p.m. on Friday.

STANFIELD 32, GRANT UNION 16 — At Stanfield, the Tigers slugged it out with the Prospectors in an old-fashioned defensive battle on Friday.

"It was one of those defensive ball games where we just had to grind it out on the ground," said first-year coach Davy Salas. "Both sides had two turnovers, both sides were stiff on defense and both sides were strong against the run."

The Tigers (3-0) remained undefeated with running back Tyler Monkus' three touchdowns leading the way. He ran 26 times for 173 yards, and Justin Keeney added six carries for 60 yards. Quarterback Dylan Grogan was 10-of-16 passing for 128 yards and ran 10 times for 32 yards and a touchdown.

Jason Fitzpatrick led them in receiving with two catches for 51 yards.

Stanfield hosts Imbler this week in a non-league game at 7 p.m. on Friday.

Tigers fall short against Rockets

Rockets start slow, finish strong against much improved Tigers

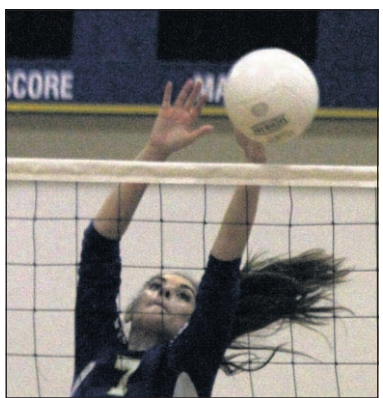
By **SAM BARBEE**
Staff Writer

Coaches don't generally believe in moral victories. They view wins as wins and losses as losses.

But while building a Stanfield volleyball program essentially from the ground up, first-year Tigers coach Angie Connell will take a moral victory after a close 3-2 (25-20, 19-25, 22-25, 26-24, 9-15) Columbia Basin Conference opening loss to Pilot Rock on Thursday in Stanfield.

"The girls proved that they are gonna be a team people have to compete with," Connell said.

Katie Burns led the Tigers with eight kills, and Brittain Braithwaite and Larissa Castellanos had two each. Abby Rigby led the match with 15 kills, and Kayla Deist wasn't far behind with 12. Maddie Griffin had four aces for the Tigers, was perfect from the serving line and had four assists, to boot. Tehya Os-



STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE

Stanfield's Katie Burns (7) goes for a block at the net during Stanfield's five-set loss to Pilot Rock at home on Thursday in both teams' league opener.

trom had 17 assists, and Megan Glynn had 15.

After winning Game 1, Stanfield (3-3, 0-1) found itself down 19-12 in Game 2. But the Tigers, with improved morale, according to Connell, fought back to make the set interesting. Pilot Rock (7-3, 1-0) scored the first six points of Game 3 as well — giving the Rockets nine straight points to end Game 2 and start Game 3 — before Stanfield went on a run of its own. The Tigers eventually

took a 10-9 lead. But Pilot Rock, also with a renewed volleyball vigor, played better down the stretch, taking Game 3 by three points.

"We've built our mentality this whole summer, and we've been to camps to build our mentality," junior Rockets setter Ostrom said. "The team last year would have let that (match) go. We really focused on keeping our mentality: 'So what? You made an error. We're gonna get the next one. And you better be ready.'"

Pilot Rock head coach Elaine Howland said her squad was shorthanded with some injuries and an illness, and complimented Stanfield on its improvement from a 4-19 record a year ago.

"Stanfield is quite a bit improved this year, I have to hand it to them," Howland said. "We saw that a bit in summer league that they were quite a bit improved this year. But for us, we've stepped up. Our game is a lot higher than it was last year. This is just a smidgen of what we have."

Down two sets to one, Stanfield needed to come up with a big fourth game, and they did. The Tigers almost gave the game

away after leading 22-18 and allowing a Pilot Rock run to push the set past 25 points. An accurate push winner from Maddie Griffin at the net gave Stanfield a 25-24 lead, and eventually the game, pushing the match to a deciding fifth set.

Pilot Rock all but owned Game 5. After taking a 5-1 lead to start the set, the Rockets never led by fewer than three points and led by as many as nine. Stanfield tried to make a run, but it was too little, too late.

Senior Stanfield outside hitter Larissa Castellanos said the team needs to keep pushing to improve.

"We can't take it for granted," she said, "because teams are gonna be working just as hard as we are. We have to fight for every point like we did tonight and just keep pushing, and keep our spirits up, and be mentally tough. That was big for us tonight."

Union 3, Stanfield 0

Coming off its exciting league opener against Pilot Rock, the Stanfield volleyball team couldn't keep the momentum on the road

See **TIGERS, A9**