

# Herald Sports



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

College of Idaho tight end Keegan Crafton runs with the ball during a scrimmage with Linfield on Thursday in Hermiston.

## Hermiston grads return to Kennison Field during scrimmage

By WILL DENNER

For the Hermiston Herald

A sea of purple uniforms invaded Kennison Field Thursday afternoon, but only a select few had ties to Hermiston High.

Division III Linfield College and NAIA College of Idaho met in Hermiston for a scrimmage between the two squads that have three combined former Bulldogs.

Those players are freshman center Dylan Caldwell, who plays for Linfield, and freshman tight end Keegan Crafton and freshman defensive end Landon Clark-Gammell, both of whom are College of Idaho players.

The teams ran drills, including seven-on-sevens and trench matchups against each other for the first hour-and-a-half, before squaring off in an 11-man scrimmage for the last hour. Hitting was permitted for everyone besides quarterbacks, though the teams abandoned kickoffs and punts, instead starting on their own 35-yard lines.

The teams didn't officially keep score, but if they were, Linfield won 14-10. Linfield scored two touchdowns — both on long passes — to College of Idaho's one touchdown and field goal converted by Kyle Mitchell.

College of Idaho head coach Mike Moroski said the experience will help his team get up to game speed. After all, his program is entering only its third year following 37 years dormant, while Linfield is coming off a semifinals trip to the 2015 Division III playoffs and enters this season ranked No. 2 in most preseason polls.

"This was way better than what we can mimic (in practice)," Moroski said. "...This is so important for our young players and experienced players alike to get ready for game one."

Crafton saw little action during the scrimmage, but caught a couple of touch-

down passes from J.J. Hyde during seven-on-seven drills in the red zone. According to Moroski, Crafton is currently slotted as the third-string tight end behind senior Ringo Robinson and junior Marcus Lenhardt, who led the team with 573 receiving yards last season.

He lacks the experience of Robinson and Lenhardt, having only been on campus for two weeks, and only playing one year of high school football. Crafton is still making his way up to the speed of college football, but said his skills are comparable to the upperclassmen.

"I'm just as athletic and talented as they are, but they just have been there longer," Crafton said. "They know what to do in certain situations — cover 1, cover 2. I don't know that stuff yet. I've played one year of football my whole life."

Crafton and Caldwell met after the scrimmage to congratulate each other and take a picture together. Linfield coach Joseph Smith has Caldwell listed as a center on Linfield's roster, but took most snaps at defensive end during the scrimmage.

Clark-Gammell didn't make the trip to Hermiston in part because of an injury but also a "snafu" over his eligibility, according to Moroski.

Spectators included a mix of locals and fans of both teams who traveled in from out of town. College of Idaho fan and Sunriver resident Laurie Henberg met friends Sharron and Dave Hansen in Hermiston for the scrimmage. Dave has called Linfield games for over three decades, witnessing all four of their national championships. Henberg said she wanted to see College of Idaho test itself against a top program such as Linfield.

"For us to scrimmage a team like Linfield is a big deal," Henberg said.

## Dawgs seek finishing touch

Hermiston looking to leave it all on the field in 2016

By MATT ENTRUP

Staff Writer

When the Hermiston Bulldogs examined their 2015 football season they knew there was only one thing that could alleviate the regret that stemmed from a 4-6 campaign.

"Last year when we looked back on our season we realized in a lot of games we didn't finish," said senior offensive lineman Kaden Caldwell. "We had a lot of games where when it got to the fourth quarter or after halftime we kind of slacked off, we didn't finish games. We're going to push that this year because I feel like we could have had more wins under our belt if we would have finished."

The games Caldwell is referencing came in Weeks 1, 3 and 5 against Hanford (WA), Springfield and Coeur d'Alene (ID).

The Bulldogs were tied 13-13 after one quarter against Hanford, but didn't score again until the fourth quarter on their way to a 41-20 season-opening loss.

Then Hermiston was in position to get its first win trailing Springfield, 24-20, at halftime on the road, but was outscored 28-0 in the second half.

Against Coeur d'Alene the Bulldogs trailed 8-3 after one, but starting quarterback Dayshawn Neal broke his ankle and the team again didn't add any points until the game was decided in the fourth quarter, losing 42-10 and falling to 0-5.

"It's totally a mental thing," Caldwell, an all-conference lineman as a junior, said. "We were in shape, we were ready, it was just all mental."

The Bulldogs finished their next game, though, and picked up their first win in double overtime beating Sandy, 13-7, after safety Vaemu Ena ended both the Pioneers' overtime possessions with interceptions and senior fullback Omar Garcia plowed in from two yards out to begin what would be a four-game winning streak.

Despite all of their early-season struggles, Hermiston held on to its crown in the Columbia River Conference with a third-straight league title and qualified for its 12th-straight postseason.

But once there the Bulldogs couldn't put a satisfying finish on the season and lost 49-14 to Wilsonville in a game that was never close.

Head coach David Faaeteete, who enters his second season after seven on former coach Mark Hodges' staff, said the team has been emphasizing the "F" word since the start of offseason activities.

"It was actually brought up at our team camp when (senior linebacker) John Henry (Line) said, 'Hey, guys we didn't do a great job of finishing games last year. We've got to finish,'" Faaeteete said.



Fall sports preview inside

Look for our annual fall sport preview special section inside today's paper for previews of local schools fall sports teams and schedules.

STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Hermiston's Dayshawn Neal (2) goes against Andrew James during a drill in football practice on Tuesday, Aug. 23, at Kennison Field in Hermiston.

"Everyone here on this field knows that we didn't show up like we wanted to (last season), we never finished the games like we wanted to. We would start early and hang with teams and then pitter-patter at the end either because we'd run out of gas or guys not being into it. But this year's a little different. There's a lot of guys that want so bad to prove that they belong."

Senior wide receiver Tucker Salinas, one of team's top returning offensive threats who averaged 11.3 yards a catch and had three touchdowns as a junior, said he's definitely noticed the difference.

"This year's completely different from last year," he said during an early practice. "Everybody's showing up, we're holding each other accountable. We're wanting to be better this year."

"I think we think we can do something good this year, like make a deep playoff run," Line said. "I think it makes us want to work harder and show that we're not just some Hermiston team from a weak conference. We want to

2016 Schedule		
Sept. 2	vs Union (WA)	7 p.m.
Sept. 9	at Lewiston (ID)	7 p.m.
Sept. 16	vs Mountain View*	7 p.m.
Sept. 23	vs Summit*	7 p.m.
Sept. 30	at Hood River*	7 p.m.
Oct. 7	vs Ridgeview*	7 p.m.
Oct. 14	at Bend*	7 p.m.
Oct. 21	at Redmond*	7 p.m.
Oct. 28	vs Pendleton*	7 p.m.

\*-League game

compete and show everybody we're a good team."

The Bulldogs will certainly get that chance this season as they move into the eight-team Special District 1 along with Pendleton, Hood River and the five teams from the Intermountain Conference. The Dalles has not joined the league and will play an independent schedule.

It means more travel for the Bulldogs, who will thankfully only take the bus to central Oregon twice, although it's in back-to-back weeks Oct. 14 and 21.

"I don't know if I'm happy with the schedule, but it's a good schedule," Faaeteete said. "(Traveling is) part of what we've got to do in our league, but the league is great. Great teams, great coaches."

"We've always wanted more league games than not because we look at

our RPI and it goes down because we're not playing 5A teams. The first 5A team we play might have a losing record and then we're at the bottom of the RPI list. It's definitely going to help us in the rankings system."

Hermiston hasn't played a central Oregon team since the 2012 season, but transfer senior linebacker Damien McLeod comes to the Bulldogs from new SD1 foe Ridgeview and said he knows exactly what they should expect.

"Definitely ground and pound. The IMC teams (line up) double tight (end), they run the ball down the gut," he said. "They're tough teams, but I've played them my whole life and I have no doubt we can hang."

The Bulldogs open the season on Friday, Sept. 2, when they host Union (WA) at 7 p.m.

A few more things to consider this season:

**OFFENSIVE VARIETY:** Sophomore quarterback Andrew James has earned the trust of

See FOOTBALL, A16

## JAMES MAKES THE JUMP

Hermiston sophomore wins quarterback competition

By MATT ENTRUP

Staff Writer

Hermiston quarterback Andrew James has left the kiddie pool, bypassed the lap lanes and stands with his toes hanging over the edge of the high dive.

The Bulldogs are confident what comes next won't be a belly flop.

Coming off an encouraging season on the freshman squad and a strong summer, James made sure Hermiston coach David Faaeteete didn't have to waver when naming him the varsity starter. He quickly seized the job after entering fall practices in a four-way competition.

"He's focused when he comes to practice and he wants to do well," Faaeteete said, adding two of his biggest strengths are his "competitive spirit and



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Hermiston sophomore Andrew James looks to pass the ball during an offensive drill recently at Kennison Field

attention to detail."

"It was a big deal, knowing that I'm going to be the quarterback this year," said James, whose varsity experience is limited to a few games on the sideline. "I come in with high expectations. Last year we fell below our expectations, but we have the guys this year, we've just got to get it going. We're starting off pretty good and

we've got some momentum but we've got to start getting game-ready."

Listed at 5-foot-10 and 165 pounds, James brings plenty of athleticism to the position, which should work perfectly in an offense that saw its quarterbacks carry the ball 172 times last season. He's not a "running quarterback" though, and has been getting high marks from his receivers when it comes to delivering a catchable ball.

"He gets everything, he gets the arm, he gets the strength," said senior receiver Jerry Ramirez. "He's mature as a sophomore. We've just got to get in there and feed off him, every ball he throws us we've got to catch. He throws really good balls. We've just got to pick him up and he'll feed off us, once we start making grabs."

James said the chemistry in the passing game seems to be improving with each practice.

"I've got some good

See JAMES, A16

### SPORTS CALENDAR

#### PREP FOOTBALL

Thursday

Waitsburg (WA) at Mac-Hi, 7 p.m.

Friday

Pilot Rock at Imbler, 2 p.m.

Pendleton at La Grande, 7 p.m.

Union (WA) at Hermiston, 7 p.m.

Army at Irrigon, 7 p.m.

Riverside at Tri-Cities Prep (WA), 7 p.m.

Union at Umatilla, 7 p.m.

Enterprise at Stanfield, 7 p.m.

Heppner at St. Paul, 7 p.m.

Saturday

Echo vs. Siletz Valley (at Dufur), 10 a.m.

Ione vs. Triad (at Dufur), 7:30 p.m.

#### PREP VOLLEYBALL

Thursday

Echo at Heppner, 4 p.m.

Sherman at Heppner, 5 p.m.

Nixyaavii at Irrigon, 5 p.m.

Union at Umatilla, 5 p.m.

Riverside at Helix, 5:30 p.m.

Echo vs Sherman (at Heppner), 6 p.m.

Mac-Hi vs. Riverside (at Helix), 7 p.m.

Friday

Stanfield at Echo, 2:30 p.m.

Saturday

Weston-McEwen at Heppner Tournament, 9 a.m.

Mac-Hi, Umatilla, Ione, Echo at Riverside Tournament, 10 a.m.

#### PREP BOYS SOCCER

Saturday

Riverside at Umatilla, 1 p.m.

Hermiston at La Grande, 2 p.m.

#### PREP CROSS COUNTRY

Saturday

Umatilla at Tillamook, Noon

Pendleton, Mac-Hi, Helix, Heppner,

Weston-McEwen, Stanfield at Hermiston,

12:55 p.m.

#### BOYS SOCCER

Saturday, Aug. 27

HERMISTON 4, Umatilla 0

#### GIRLS SOCCER

Saturday, Aug. 27

HERMISTON 4, Umatilla 0

#### Prep scores

VOLLEYBALL

Saturday, Aug. 27

Stanfield Tournament:

ARLINGTON def. Echo (2-0)

IRRIGON def. Stanfield 25-18, 25-22 (2-0)

Arllington def. IRRIGON 25-16, 25-17

(2-0)

STANFIELD def. Riverside 28-26, 23-25,

15-9 (2-1)

IRRIGON def. Umatilla 25-15, 25-21 (2-0)

Saturday, Aug. 27

HERMISTON 4, Umatilla 0

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