

# Bulldogs pull away after halftime

## Hermiston boys soccer outlasts defensive Bucks

By **MATT ENTRUP**  
Staff Writer

Facing a determined Pendleton defense, the Hermiston Bulldogs proved they were the team with lasting power in Monday's Columbia River Conference finale between the cross-county rivals, and scored six goals in the second half to pull away for an 8-0 win in Pendleton.

After surrendering 12 goals its last time facing its rival, Pendleton (1-11-2, 0-6 CRC) came out looking to minimize the damage this time around and dropped nine or 10 white jerseys back on defense for most of the game.

"We knew that we had to play more defensively and we had to be smart," said Pendleton coach Jeremy Talbot. "As much as we possibly could we wanted to defend."

The strategy was producing the desired result for the most part, and Hermiston (10-3-1, 4-2) led just 2-0 after one half of play. A goal by Isaac Munoz in the ninth minute and one just before halftime by Noe Silva weren't nearly enough to make the playoff-bound Bulldogs content with themselves.

"(Pendleton) just kind of sat in and defended and we had a hard time breaking them down," said Hermiston coach Rich Harshberger.

The Bulldogs were quickly back in front of Pendleton's net once the second half started, but Bucks' goalkeeper An-

draw Wolotira made save after save to turn them away. Hermiston had eight corner kicks in the first 10 minutes, but didn't break through until Munoz scored his second goal of the game on a give-and-go at the top of the box in the 63rd minute.

That was where the floodgates opened as Joel Mendez scored from about 10 yards out in the 64th minute, then Mark Mejia bicycled in a loose ball on the back side of the goal in the 65th minute. Noe Silva, Emilio Leal and Freddy Rodriguez also added goals.

"We just really have to continue to just develop our mental toughness," Talbot said. "It was great for about 50 minutes, but we just have to get over that mental hump ... giving the same effort no matter what the score is."

The loss ended the season for the Bucks. Over-all youth and a few key injuries put a damper on Talbot's second season as head coach, but he said the team took some important steps forward despite winning just one game.

"This season I feel like just having them buy into more complicated defensive principles, that was something that was great," he said. "We had a lot of injuries, so something that I really enjoyed about this year was we had guys from the JV team come up and contribute, and although they were inconsistent at times, they definitely progressed."

"We'll be young and inexperienced next year but they've played in some tough games here at the end of the season so we'd like to build off of that so we can be competitive next season."

# Hermiston looking to continue their dominance over Pendleton

## Bulldogs have won four straight in rivalry series

By **ERIC SINGER**  
Staff Writer

When Hermiston and Pendleton hit the practice fields for the first time on August, there was much excitement surrounding both teams as three months and nine games stood in front of them and a postseason trip.

But since that day, the Bulldogs and Buckaroos season trajectories have gone in different directions.

After a sluggish non-league performance, Hermiston (4-4, 4-2 SD1) has won four of its six games so far in Special District 1 play and secured a postseason spot for the sixth straight season.

Pendleton (3-5, 2-4) has been up-and-down all season and dealing with numerous injuries. The Bucks are on the outside looking in on the postseason for the second straight year.

But both teams' prior eight games go out the window on Friday night, when they play under the lights at Kennison Field for the 89th all-time meeting.

Last week, Hermiston lost 26-14 on the road at Redmond, while Pendleton fell 22-7 on a muddy field at the Round-Up Arena.

### Scouting Pendleton

Offensively, the Buckaroos try to stay as balanced as possible, but at times they have to lean on the pass game as the offensive line has been inconsistent at times.

Quarterback Nick Bower has thrown for 1,592 yards and 12 touchdowns, but has completed just over 48 percent of his passes



(112-231). He is coming off of his worst performance of the season, completing 5-21 passes for 37 yards and an interception.

Pendleton will be without its top two wide receivers, junior Shaw Jerome and sophomore Cam Sandford, as both suffered season-ending injuries in Week 7 against Hood River. The Bucks will have a strong backfield, though as Deven Page and Gabe Walker, both seniors, will be hungry to leave a mark in their final game. Page leads the team with 382 rushing yards and five touchdowns, while Walker will be playing in just his second game this season after missing the first seven games due to a preseason knee injury.

On defense, the Buckaroos have been susceptible to the run game all season long and have struggled to contain it, allowing an average of more than 250 yards over the past four games.

Other storylines for Friday's game:

**CAN BULLDOGS KEEP STREAKING?:** Pendleton holds the advantage in the all-time series between the schools, 76-13, but the Bulldogs have been the dominant team over the past five years.

Hermiston is 4-1 against Pendleton since 2011, and has won four straight in the series by an average margin of 47-17. Pendle-

ton's last win came in 2011 when the Bucks took down the Bulldogs 26-12 at Round-Up Arena.

The Bulldogs won last year 49-14, which clinched the Columbia River Conference title.

**FIGHT OFF THE TURNOVER BUG:** When Hermiston recently won three straight games against Hood River, Ridgeview, and Bend, a big key for offensive success was the drastic decrease in turnovers. The Bulldogs went from averaging roughly two turnovers per game to totaling just two turnovers in those three

games combined. However, Hermiston was unable to keep that success going last week when the Dawgs racked up five turnovers that contributed to a 26-14 defeat at the hands of the Redmond Panthers. Hermiston's offense will need to fix that issue to beat Pendleton, which forced a pair of fumbles last week against Bend.

**PLAYOFF STANDING AT STAKE:** With the Bulldogs loss to Redmond last week, Hermiston fell to the fourth-and-final playoff spot in Special District 1. Hermiston will make the playoffs, but the team needs to win over Pendleton as well as a loss or two from either Bend or Redmond ahead of them in order to earn the chance to host a first-round playoff game at Kennison Field.

Redmond travels to Ridgeview and Bend will host Mountain View this week.

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# Panthers hold off Bulldogs

## Hermiston turns it over five times in loss

Hermiston Herald

Despite a disastrous first half, the Hermiston Bulldogs were in position to win against Redmond on Friday after Andrew James ran into the endzone from 5-yards out to take the lead for the first time with 10:54 left in the fourth quarter.

Redmond had other designs, though, and added two more touchdowns before the game was over to hold on for a 26-14 win in Special District 1 play.

After turning the ball over just twice in the last three games, the Bulldogs (4-4, 4-2 SD1) coughed the ball up five times in the first half — twice on interceptions and three fumbles.

Hermiston's defense made the most of a bad situation, though, and kept the Bulldogs in the game at 13-0 at halftime.

Redmond's first touchdown came on a 67-yard pass from Bunker Parrish to Colton Mortenson with 3:09 left in the first quarter, and the Panthers' other touchdown in the first half was set up when Hermiston fumbled the kickoff and Redmond (4-4, 4-2) recovered at the Bulldogs' 24-yard line.

James got Hermiston on the scoreboard in the third quarter with a 46-yard run, and Dayshawn Neal added the point after on each of his runs.

Redmond went up for good with 6:51 left in the game on a 21-yard pass from Parrish to Tyson Hester.

James finished 14-of-27 passing for 118 yards, and ran 12 times for 76 yards.

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