

Bulldogs look to leave lasting legacy

Hermiston football preparing for final OSAA season

By **ERIC SINGER**
STAFF WRITER

The Hermiston Bulldogs begin their final athletic year as members of the Oregon School Activities Association this fall and the football team is not shy in letting know what their goals are for the farewell season.

"We definitely want to leave on a high note," Hermiston senior Joey Gutierrez said confidently after practice Friday at Kennison Field. "We want to leave our mark on the state of Oregon and that's what were going for this year."

The Bulldogs have the personnel to put together a successful 2017 season, as the team brings back numerous big-time contributors including QB Andrew James, star WR/DB Dayshawn Neal, a solid DB/WR in Gutierrez, RB/LB Jonathan Hinkle and a host of solid offensive and defensive linemen.

With that returning core plus a Special District 1 that could be a little more wide open this season with teams like Summit, Redmond, and Bend hit hard by graduation, things on paper set up very well for the Bulldogs here in preseason.

However, it is only late August and Hermiston knows there is still a lot of work left to do.

The Bulldogs squad wrapped up its first week of practices with full gear and full contact last week on a warm Friday afternoon. Gutierrez said he was ecstatic to get back into the swing of things.

"It's good to get a group of guys together who have put in the work in the summer and now come out and chase a common goal," Gutierrez said. "Now we have to pay attention to small details in practices in order to get these big



STAFF PHOTO BY ERIC SINGER

Hermiston junior QB Andrew James throws a pass during a drill at Friday's practice at Kennison Field in Hermiston.



STAFF PHOTO BY ERIC SINGER

Hermiston's Dayshawn Neal wraps up a Bulldog ball carrier with Tyler Rohrman close by while running a drill during Friday's practice at Kennison Field in Hermiston.

goals ... when you're starting small and getting those down, you can work toward those big things."

Third-year head coach David Faaeteete said he's pretty pleased with the effort and results from the

team for the first week, as they continue to build on the hard work put in throughout the summer in the weight room, in 7-on-7, and other team workouts. The Bulldogs changed up their off-season goals to get a better



STAFF PHOTO BY ERIC SINGER

Hermiston senior DB/WR Joey Gutierrez returns a kick during Friday's practice at Kennison Field in Hermiston.

start on the season, after Hermiston went 1-3 out of the gates in 2016 before finishing on a 4-1 stretch to make the playoffs.

"We wanted to get bigger, faster, stronger and develop leadership," he said. "That's a big focus for us, we have a good group of seniors that want to be leaders and leave a legacy. We're focusing on revolving our group around our senior class and it'll take a lot of effort from the juniors and sophomores, but it'll be fun."

Faaeteete said that he has about 100 kids in the program this season, and one thing that stands out to him about the group is a "strong desire to be successful."

"There's a lot of guys that talk about (desire) and there are some great seniors that have been working hard and they know what it takes," Faaeteete said. "They saw it their freshman year what putting it all together looks like (for the state title) and they want to do it this year as well. They want to leave a legacy."

Their chance to leave the legacy the Bulldogs desire starts on Sept. 1 when they travel to Vancouver, Washington, to take on Union, a team that beat the Bulldogs 38-27 at Kennison Field last season.

"If we can play together as a team, we'll go farther than we did last year," Gutierrez said. "It's more of an everybody type of team now, not just the 11 guys on the field and that's good."

New sports reporter hired for Hermiston office

HERMISTON HERALD

A new Hermiston-based sports reporter has joined the *Hermiston Herald* and *East Oregonian* sports staff.

Alexis Mansanarez, a recent graduate of the University of Washington, joined the staff this week. She fills the slot formerly held by Matt Entrup, who recently left the company after 10 years as a sports reporter.

"I have received a warm welcome over the past few days," Mansanarez said. "I look forward to bringing my knowledge and experience to the EO and the *Hermiston Herald*."

During her time at the University of Washington, Mansanarez worked as a reporter, sports editor and news editor at the student-run newspaper, *The Daily*. While there she traveled with the football team and was the lead

men's basketball reporter during Lorenzo Romar's last season as head coach. She also covered the baseball beat during her time in Seattle.

From the Hermiston office, Mansanarez will cover prep sports for both the *Hermiston Herald* and *East Oregonian*. She also will cover athletics for west Umatilla and north Morrow counties, including Hermiston and surrounding communities.

She joins Eric Singer covering sports for the two papers. Singer has worked here since August 2015, and is based out of the Pendleton office.

Coaches, parents and athletes can contact Alexis Mansanarez at amansanarez@eastoregonian.com or (541) 564-4542. You can also follow her on Twitter @almansanarez or follow other social media sports posts at @HHeraldSports and @EOsports.



Mansanarez

IN BRIEF

Tee-off for Campus Life

There are still some openings for the Campus Life Golf Tournament.

The two-person scramble format is Saturday at Big River Golf Course, Umatilla. The cost is \$50 per person and the fee includes green fees, lunch, prizes and a raffle.

Last year's inaugural event raised \$10,000 for Campus Life. The faith-based organization supports local youths.

For more information or to register, contact info@campuslifegolf.com or visit www.campuslifegolf.com. To reserve a cart, contact Megan Olsen at 541-922-3006 or megan@golfbigriver.com.

Hoops for Heart scores for heart association

A benefit basketball clinic will raise money for the American Heart Association.

Heart & Stroke Hoops for Heart is Saturday from noon to 2 p.m. at the Boardman Pool & Recreation Center, 311 N. Olson Road. Girls and boys ages 7-18 will participate in shooting, dribbling, scoring and speed contests. Sponsored by Mad Skills Sports & Fitness Academy, there is a suggested \$15 donation.

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