

Herald Sports



HERMISTON AT PENDLETON | FRIDAY, 7 P.M.

AFTER DOMINANT WIN AT HOME, BULLDOGS SET SIGHTS ON RIVALRY

Bulldogs prepare to face the Buckaroos for what could be the final time

By ALEXIS MANSANAREZ
STAFF WRITER

HERMISTON — This year's matchup between Hermiston and Pendleton is shaping up to be one of the best yet, which is fitting seeing that the two teams will end their 95-year rivalry Friday. At least for the near future.

With Hermiston's move to the WIAA next year, it's highly unlikely the Bulldogs (6-2 overall, 5-1 Special District 1) will have time in their schedule to extend the War on 84, making this week's game all the more exciting.

The regular season finale for both teams has also gained national recognition as the Great American Rivalry Series announced Monday that the contest will be featured in the Series' 11th weekend of the 2017 season. With bragging rights and a playoff berth already on the line, the winning team will also claim the Great American Rivalry Series Champions trophy.

Both teams are coming off big wins, as Pendleton defeated Bend on the road 39-20 and Hermiston celebrated its seniors with a dominant victory in the Bulldogs' regular season home finale.

The 62-14 win over Redmond was a salute to the solid season of the Class of 2018. Senior Joey Gutierrez was one of five Bulldogs to score, and his two-yard rush put Hermiston up 55-7 half way through the third quarter. By that point the Bulldogs' fate was sealed behind a commanding first half.

Junior Youbani Razon opened the game with a 82-yard punt return, and put fellow junior Andrew James and the rest of Hermiston's offense in the red zone for their first drive. Seconds later senior Jonathan Hinkle ran eight yards to the end zone to give Hermiston an early 7-0 lead.

The Bulldogs put one more touchdown on the board — another short eight-yard rush from senior Dayshawn Neal — before breaking through in the second quarter.

Hermiston scored in rapid fire before halftime — three touchdowns in a five-minute span and two more just two minutes apart.

Hermiston's defense had one of its better outings, and held the Panthers to only 180 yards on the ground, and 31 in the air — its fewest allowed of the season. The last time the Bulldogs allowed fewer yards on the ground was the 34-14 win over Summit (where the Storm was held to 64 rushing yards).

The Bulldogs only allowed two scores, both from Redmond senior Jack Taylor off a 78-yard run in the second quarter and another run for 49 yards in the third.



STAFF PHOTOS BY E.J. HARRIS

Hermiston's Jonathan Hinkle rushes the ball chased by Redmond's Cooper Browning in the Bulldogs' 62-14 win against the Panthers on Friday in Hermiston.



Hermiston defenders Cole Campbell (81), Tayler Arnold, and Keaton Mikami wrap up Redmond's Jack Taylor in the Bulldogs' 62-14 win against the Panthers on Friday.

Redmond's second quarter score was sandwiched in between five Hermiston touchdowns. A 39-yard connection from James to senior Luke Walchli started things off. Neal and Hinkle took care of the rest. Both

of Hinkle's touchdowns in the second quarter were on the ground — a 36-yard rush followed by a 12-yard run — and Neal would once again be James' favorite target and bring home a 39-yarder and a 16-yard reception

with no time left on the clock.

All sides of the ball were clicking, and that continued well into the second half with some No. 2 and 3's in. Senior Garron Anderson would be the last Bulldog to score. His 6-yard run put the nail in the coffin and secured Hermiston's 48-point victory.

Next up: The big game

With the Bulldogs fresh off their biggest win, they will head 30 miles up the highway with the hopes of sealing their postseason fate.

"I just think we're ready," Gutierrez said after Friday's win. "We're excited, even more excited after this."

Defeating the Buckaroos (5-3, 4-2) will be no easy task as their postseason hopes are also riding on a win Friday night. Pendleton is having one of its better seasons since its last playoff berth in 2014, winning four of its last five games. Its only hiccup during that stretch was against Mountain View at the beginning of October, which seemed to have lit a fire under the Bucks as they have gone on to defeat their last two opponents 71-26.

Leading their efforts is senior quarterback Nick Bower. Bower has completed 64 percent of his passes for a total of 1,563 yards and 19 touchdowns. But he's thrown seven interceptions, and can't afford any more turnovers against a Hermiston defense that is known for big plays and catching quarterbacks off guard. The Bulldogs have picked off quarterbacks 10 times this season, and set up a number of Hermiston's scoring drives.

Hermiston's defense continues to progress and seems to clean up mistakes one game at a time. Bower and Pendleton's offense, which has many play makers of its own, have been able to control the pace of play and most recently ate up almost 30 of the 48 minutes against Bend.

One of the Bulldogs biggest struggles this season has been stopping the run. Between Bower and juniors Shawn Yeager and Aiden Patterson, Hermiston's defensive line will be tested once again.

Although Bower isn't as much of a dual threat as James, he isn't afraid to leave the pocket and pick up yards when necessary. Bower has 71 carries for 235 yards and five touchdowns, while Yeager and Patterson combined for over 650 yards and eight rushing touchdowns.

A key for Hermiston on Friday will be to finish plays on defense, which is one of the main reasons the Bulldogs have given up so many yards on the ground.

"We had a couple lapses," head coach David Faeteete said of Hermiston's defense performance last week. "We had guys wrapped up, but didn't finish tackles. We have to get those things fixed."

The outcome of the game will depend on which team is able to clean up its mistakes, and for Hermiston that means a near perfect performance to keep its five-game winning streak alive.

PREP ROUNDUP

Local runners compete in last meet before districts



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Hermiston's Amanda Nygard crests the top of a hill while competing in the Kyle Burnside Wildhorse Invite on Thursday in Mission.

BY HERMISTON HERALD

The Hermiston girls made the podium against stiff competition Thursday at the Kyle Burnside Memorial Wildhorse Cross Country Invite in Mission.

More than 200 runners from 15 high schools across Eastern and Central Oregon gathered at Wildhorse Resort Golf Course for the annual race. The girls took third, while the boys finished fourth.

Union sat atop the leaderboard in the boys standings with 36 points, followed by Hood River Valley (65), The Dalles (79), Hermiston (145) and Baker (157) to round out the Top 5.

On the girls side, The Dalles (66) was first followed by Hood River Valley (66), Hermiston (68), Enterprise (72) and Union (123).

Individually, Union's Alex Graffunder (15:35.0) and Tim

Stevens (15:40.2) blew away the field in the boys competition to take the top two spots with a 45-second cushion. Heppner's Hunter Nichols finished third at 16:25.8 and Hermiston's Isaac Sanchez was fourth with a time of 16:32.1.

For the girls, Hood River's Josephine Dickinson (19:27.3) and Frances Dickinson (19:33.3) earned the top two spots with Hermiston freshman Amanda Nygard finishing in fourth with a time of 19:47.8.

HERMISTON — (BOYS) 4. Isaac Sanchez, 16:32.1; 22. Gregory Anderson, 17:33.4; 36. Emanuel Ibarra, 18:02.5. (GIRLS) 4. Amanda Nygard, 19:47.8; 8. Melany Solorio, 20:08.8; 17. Julianna Joyce, 20:47.0. STANFIELD — (BOYS) Sisay Hurty, 17:11.8; 33. Elias Esquivel, 17:59.4; 65. Garrett Wiggins, 19:29.1. (GIRLS) 36. Izabella Garcia, 21:59.8; 55. Chelsy Lemmon, 23:01.7; 59. Valerie Martin, 23:24.4. HEPPNER — (BOYS) 3. Hunter Nichols, 16:25.8; 30. Hayden Qualls, 17:52.5; 59. Leo Waite, 19:10.1. (GIRLS) 14. Madelyn Nichols, 20:39.5; 28. Mackenzie Heideman, 21:24.7; 82. Hannah Palmer, 26:07.2. RIVERSIDE/RRRIGON — (BOYS) 108. Andrew Barker, 21:14.7; 116. Brian Franco, 21:46.3; 118. Connor Graham, 21:47.4; 129. Darnell Woods, 25:21.7. UMATILLA — (BOYS) 23. Zayne Troeger, 17:35.4; 96. Trevor Reiner, 20:33.3; 117. Alex Ibarra, 21:46.7. (GIRLS) 54. Abigail Cardenas, 22:59.0; 57. Jacqueline

Brown, 23:14.7; 72. Cecilia Cardenas, 24:40.2.

Boys Team Results

1. Union, 36; 2. Hood River, 65; 3. The Dalles, 79; 4. Hermiston, 145; 5. Baker, 157; 6. La Grande, 191; 7. Stanfield, 221; 7. Ontario, 221; 9. Heppner, 230; 10. Enterprise, 252; 11. Pendleton, 277; 12. Nyssa, 300; 13. Helix, 348; 14. Elgin, 353; 15. Mac-Hi, 410.

Women's Team Results

1. The Dalles, 66; 1. Hood River, 66; 3. Hermiston, 68; 4. Enterprise, 72; 5. Union, 123; 6. La Grande, 155; 7. Pendleton, 193; 8. Helix, 208; 9. Baker, 218; 10. Stanfield, 256.

Echo earns playoff spot at league tourney

In the Old Oregon League volleyball district tournament on Saturday in La Grande, Joseph may have emerged as the district champions, but Echo and Helix both locked up postseason spots as well with upset victories.

The Cougars and Grizzlies both beat the No. 1 seed Powder Valley Badgers to clinch the final two playoff spots in the district. Echo, coming in as the No. 3 seed, swept Powder Valley 25-21-25-19, 25-

See ROUNDUP, A12