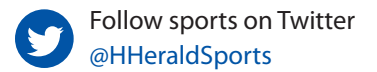


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SOCCER

Hermiston drops pair of MCC games

By HERMISTON HERALD

The frigid winter winds did not blow in Hermiston's favor on Tuesday night.

The Bulldogs boys suffered a 3-1 loss to the visiting Walla Walla Blue Devils to open the season at Kennison Field.

The game served as their debut in the Mid-Columbia Conference, a league where boys soccer is played in spring instead of fall. It was their first game in 18 months.

"You could tell it's been a while since we've been together as a program," said coach Rich Harshberger. "We're still getting our legs under us."

Walla Walla's net was left untouched for the entire first half. Junior midfielder Cristian Sanchez-Cuellar, senior midfielder Agustin Arceo, and junior forward Julio Tapia all knocked down goals for the Blue Devils.

Hermiston was held scoreless and went into the half down 3-0.

"We knew (Walla Walla) would come out and give us their best game possible, and we respected that," said Bulldogs senior goalie Juan Navarrete. "I tried to help my team the best that I could. Walla Walla was tough."

Navarrete toughed the game out with an injury after rolling his ankle in a physical education class earlier in the week.

"Sometimes, life doesn't go your way," he said. "But I wanted to come out and start over with a clean slate. I think the wind was in our favor in the second half. We played a better game."

You could call it the wind, or you could call it bad luck for the Blue Devils, but Hermiston got their lone goal two minutes into the second half. Junior midfielder Coleman Solano launched the ball toward Walla Walla's goal and Blue Devils sophomore midfielder Juan Segovia-Cruz deflected it into his team's own net.

Solano and senior midfielder Emilio Leal both got penalty kicks for a chance to reduce their deficit, but missed the net. Neither team posted another goal as the clock wound down and signaled Walla Walla's win.

"This game showed us our team's deficiencies," Harshberger said.

"We need to tighten up our touch and get our passes where they need to go. Walla Walla presses as a team really well. They didn't give us a lot of time on the ball. We'll see more of that when we play these upper-league teams this season."

RICHLAND 3, HERMISTON 1 — Junior midfielder Oliver Parades scored the first goal Friday night to put the Bulldogs up 1-0, but the Bombers rallied with three goals in the second half to pull ahead for good.

The game marks Hermiston's second consecutive home loss.

Arstein steps away from boys program

By ANNIE FOWLER
STAFF WRITER

Hermiston boys basketball coach Casey Arstein has never been one to seek the limelight, preferring the focus be put on his players.

All that changed when Arstein turned in his resignation at the end of the season.

"It was a tough decision," said Arstein, who teaches at Sandstone Middle School. "It came down to what was best for our family. It will be a good change, but I will miss the competition and the relationship with the kids."

The Hermiston boys job is one of three openings in the Mid-Columbia Conference. Steve Davis stepped down from the Chiawana girls job after 18 years, and Walla Walla boys coach Mike Patterson is out after one season, citing personal reasons. Patterson will continue to coach the boys golf team.

Arstein, 36, said the decision to step aside was made in July after he and wife found out they were expecting their first child in February.

Arstein and his wife Jen welcomed their daughter, Aliyah, on Feb. 28.

"We both work full time, and my wife is in grad school," he said. "We didn't want our daughter in day care from 7 to 7."



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Hermiston coach Casey Arstein, right, celebrates with Jordan Ramirez after a 50-46 win over Pendleton in 2018. Arstein has stepped down after three seasons with the Bulldogs.

Arstein took the reins of the boys program at the start of the 2016-17 season. He had been an assistant for the better part of 10 years.

Arstein coached under Larry Usher and Adam Strom (now the women's coach at Yakima Valley), but once Strom left,

the Bulldogs went through five head coaches in five years before Arstein took over for Dave Ego.

"It was very inconsistent," Arstein said. "I got the opportunity to be the head coach, and it was challenging and rewarding. The kids deserve to have

someone who will help them be competitive and win games."

Over the course of three seasons, Arstein's teams went 43-28.

His first season, Hermiston finished second in the Columbia River Conference. They lost a state play-in game to Parkrose 65-50 and finished the season 16-8.

The following year, the Bulldogs won the CRC title with a 7-2 record (12-12 overall), then lost a state play-in game to Crater 51-43.

This season, the Bulldogs jumped the river to the Mid-Columbia Conference. In their first year, they finished 10-6 in MCC play and 15-8 overall. They were the top seed for the 3A teams at regionals, but fell short of state.

"I thought we would be competitive," Arstein said of the MCC. "We have the kids and the coaches who put in the work. We have committed players who were willing to play fall ball and in the summer."

The Bulldogs were led by a talented senior class that included Andrew James, Jordan Ramirez, Ryne Andreason, Cesar Ortiz, Adrian Mendez and Cole Smith.

"I definitely had committed seniors," Arstein said. "They were sophomores when I took over and I got them for three years. I will miss the kids coming up."

SIGNINGS

Umatilla athletes to compete at the next level

Durfey to play football at Carroll College; Troeger will run at EOU

By ANNIE FOWLER
STAFF WRITER

Trent Durfey's love of football goes back to first grade and flag football. Tackle football began in the third grade with Grid Kids, and that's when Durfey came to life on the field.

"I like to hit people," the Umatilla senior said. "It's controlled aggression."

Durfey will take his game to the college level in the fall after signing to play for Carroll College in Helena, Mont.

"They were the only one that really showed interest," Durfey said of the Fighting Saints. "Western Oregon talked to me, but they weren't serious."

Durfey was one of two Umatilla athletes to sign a letter of intent to compete at the next level. Cross-country and track runner Zayne Troeger will attend Eastern Oregon University.

"Multnomah College showed a lot of interest, and I could have



Staff photo by Annie Fowler
Umatilla's Zayne Troeger (left) and Trent Durfey have signed letters of intent to play college sports. Troeger will run cross-country and track at Eastern Oregon University, while Durfey will play football at Carroll College.

walked on at Idaho," Troeger said. "It was a hard decision. I have friends going to Eastern. I know I can help the team a lot, and the distance coach (Ben Welch) has had a lot of success. There was a good connection from the start."

The 6-foot-2, 215-pound Durfey first caught the attention of Carroll College at a showcase camp at

Lewis & Clark College in Portland.

"They liked what they saw and invited me to Junior Day in July," he said. "I liked what I saw there. I went for a game day visit and that reaffirmed why I wanted to go there."

Durfey has a nice resume heading to college, which includes a second-team all-state honor at line-

backer, and he was named the Special District 3 Defensive Player of the Year. He also has been selected to play in the 67th annual Oregon East-West Shrine All-Star Football Game in August.

"This has always been a dream of mine," said Durfey, who will major in health sciences.

Durfey said the Carroll coach also liked the fact he participates in track.

"One coach told me he likes hurdlers who are linebackers," Durfey said. "They have speed and good hip mobility."

Durfey finished seventh at the 3A state meet last year in the 110 hurdles.

Troeger had a tremendous season in cross-country his senior year, finishing fourth at the 3A state meet in a time of 16 minutes, 56 seconds.

He also preformed well his junior year on the track. He was third in the 3,000, and fifth in the 800.

"My love for distance started in the eighth grade," Troeger said.

One bonus for Troeger attending EOU: The school is building a state-of-the-art indoor facility. It should be finished this summer.

Dawgs' Navarrete headed to BMCC for soccer

By ANNIE FOWLER
STAFF WRITER

Blue Mountain Community College soccer coach Austin Shick was on hand Wednesday when Hermiston's Juan Carlos Navarrete signed his letter of intent to play for the Timberwolves. He was not going to let this recruit get away.

"I'm pretty excited about it," said Shick, who made sure he left with the signed documents. "He reached out to me about this time last year, and we watched him play. We have loved the Hermiston kids we have had."

Navarrete, a goalie, said he is excited to join the BMCC team. "It's close to home, and I want

to stay close to my family," he said. "They have something going on up there that I really like, and I want to be part of that team."

Heading to college also is a sense of pride for Navarrete, who plans to major in agricultural business.

"I am the first one in my family to go to college," he said. "I was the first one in my family to speak English. My motivation to go to college is to give my family a better future."

Navarrete and the Bulldogs are coming off a 2017 season where they finished second in the Columbia River Conference with a 3-0-3 record. They lost in the Oregon 5A quarterfinals to Bend 3-0. They finished the season 10-4-3.



Staff photo by Annie Fowler
Hermiston goalie Juan Carlos Navarrete signed a letter of intent on Wednesday to play soccer for Blue Mountain Community College.

He was named a first-team CRC goalie.

With the move to the Mid-Columbia Conference this season, the Bulldogs have been idle for 18 months.

With a little time on his hands,

Navarrete played football in the fall, kicking and punting for the Bulldogs.

"I loved it," Navarrete said. "The atmosphere is awesome every game. I wish soccer would have been in the spring since I was a freshman so I could have played football. I really loved it."

And, it has helped his soccer game.

"We lifted weights, which I liked," he said. "It was discipline for me. I had to wake up at 6 to lift. I'm stronger and I can jump higher, which is good for me. I'm still lifting. I don't want to be weak. As a goalie, you need strength to jump and kick."

Shick also appreciates Navarrete putting in the extra work. "For

him, getting into football and staying active in the offseason was the best thing he did," Shick said.

A lifetime of soccer

Navarrete began playing soccer when he was 4 years old. He started as a defender, but moved to goalie when he was 12.

He and his mother, Lisandra Navarrete, moved to Hermiston from Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico, when he was in the eighth grade.

He did not play soccer his freshman year, but he has been a regular on the pitch ever since.

"I am enjoying my last season of high school soccer," he said. "We are playing a higher level of competition, and we could tell that yesterday (against Walla Walla)."