

# Seaside: New owners of the Cowapa League?

By Gary Henley  
Seaside Signal

With state championships in boys basketball, cross country and golf over the last five years, the Seaside Gulls are looking to add another banner from another sport to the school gym. And football would be a logical place to start.

Seaside football spent almost all of the 2017 season ranked in the top 10, and entered the state playoffs ranked fifth before a 43-39 loss to Henley in the first round.

The Gulls are out to settle a few scores this season, including their loss to the Hornets. Seaside and Henley kick off the 2018 season this Friday, the Game of the Week on opening night at the 4A level.

The Seaside players? “They’re hungry,” said head coach Jeff Roberts. “We made it a point of scheduling Henley. That (playoff loss) left a bad taste in our mouth.”

Facing the same team that ended their hopes and dreams in 2017, the Gulls opened 2018 with a win over the Henley Hornets, 55-13, to avenge that loss and spark what they hope will be a state championship season.

Seaside’s win over the Hornets at Broadway Field will raise some eyes at the 4A level, as the Gulls overcame a couple of early turnovers and thoroughly dominated a team that finished 2017 in the state quarterfinals.

Ranked seventh in a pre-season coaches poll, Seaside put up 55 points against a team that had not given up that much since 2012.

Seaside senior Alexander Teubner ran over and around the Hornets, racking up 119 yards in the first half alone. He got stronger as the game progressed, and added 102 yards on just eight carries in the second half to finish with 221



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**Alexander Teubner eludes tacklers in the Gulls season-opening win.**

yards on 22 totes.

More importantly, Teubner was in the end zone six times, scoring on runs of 47 and 49 yards. He also had an interception on defense.

It doesn’t stop there for the Gulls, who traveled to Eugene in Week 2 and defeated Marist, 33-22, to be followed by a home game against Gladstone.

“We wanted to make the schedule as difficult as we could,” Roberts said. Mission accomplished.

## The Cowapa

With first-place Scappoose out of the picture (the Indians have moved to the 5A level), every team in the Cowapa League is free to move up one spot in the standings. For the Gulls, that means second to first.

Seaside’s only league loss of 2017 came to the Indians in week 1. That was followed by convincing wins over Astoria (40-0), Valley Catholic (62-0) and Tillamook (54-23), and ended with a 19-14 win over Banks at Broadway Field.

This year’s game vs. Banks (Oct. 12) will be the biggest league meeting of the season, and in a big scheduling break for the Gulls, the Braves will come to Seaside for the second year in a row.

“Banks will be hungry to get us,” Roberts said. “I’m just thankful that we get them at our place again. I don’t know that our schedule could have worked out any better for our home games. The Clatsop Clash and Banks are both here, so that worked out in our favor.”

The absence of Scappoose “certainly changes the dynamics of the league,” he said. “For a lot of years, teams were playing for second place. That’s not the case any more. The Cowapa can still be one of the most difficult leagues, from top to bottom, but I’d be lying if I didn’t think we were a contender for one of those guaranteed playoff spots.”

## The Gulls

The reason Seaside will be in contention: Eight all-league returners should have the Gulls winning right away in 2018.

Included are two all-league offensive linemen, and the return of possibly the league’s best quarterback/running back tandem. For an offense that runs the Wing-T, that could take Seaside a long way.

Alexander Teubner — one of three Offensive Players of the Year in the Cowapa last season — will take handoffs from all-league quarterback Payton Westerholm, and follow the blocks of Travis Fenton and Isaias Jantes.

“We’re excited to have a bunch of guys back,” Roberts said. “We finished the regular season ranked No. 5 in the state, and a lot of those kids are back. We have some skill players and we return three offensive linemen, so that’s good. Defensively we’re in good shape, so I’m excited about that. The kids worked their tails off in the weight room all summer.”

And there are players on the roster who know what it’s like to win state championships.

## SEASIDE FOOTBALL

**Coach:** Jeff Roberts, 2nd year (6th overall)

**2017:** 6-3 (4-1 Cowapa)

**Playoffs:** Lost to Henley in first round, 39-43

**All-league losses:** Michael Bailey, Dawson Blanchard, Cameron King, Garrett Kiser, Parker Moore, Skyler Yoshino.

**All-league returners:** Travis Fenton, Sr., Isaias Jantes, Sr., Brayden Johnson, Jr., Gio Ramirez, Sr., Alex Teubner, Sr., Duncan Thompson, Sr., Paxson VanNortwick, Sr., Payton Westerholm, Sr.

“I attribute a lot of our success last year to the basketball program, what Bill (Westerholm) has done, and that culture of winning,” Roberts said. “When these kids were sophomores, they got beat up pretty good on the football field.

“They’ve grown and matured a lot. They’re back in a system they’re comfortable with and excited about. This is a group that’s been running this offense since they were in the fourth and fifth grade.”

And, “we’re going to stay pretty true to what we do, but you’ll see some things with Alexander and Brayden Johnson, and with our stable of running backs and Payton, we have an opportunity to do some different things.

“One of our strengths is team speed, and I don’t want to have to rely on Alexander to carry the ball 25 times a game. We have a lot of other weapons.”

And if he has to, Westerholm can air it out.

“He threw for more yards last year than they gained in all of 2015,” Roberts said.

Of the linemen, “one of the kids who has really emerged as a leader is (center) Travis Fenton. He has really dedicated himself to being a leader in the program. All the guys on the offensive line ... those are the guys who are going to win it for us. Left tackle Derrick Bennett, left guard Dylan Meyer, Jantes at right guard, and Paxson VanNortwick at right tackle.”