

High school fall sports 2019

Sunday, September 1, 2019

Injury is no crutch

Hockinson sets out for three-peat even with star on sidelines

Page 2

Inside:

Preview stories, projected lineups for 24 area football teams

Preview features, storylines for all other fall sports



*A Special Section
of The Columbian*

■ **Stories by Meg Wochnick,
Joshua Hart, Micah Rice,
Tim Martinez and Jeff Klein.**

■ **Cover photo
by Nathan Howard**

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Nothing easy about three-peat bid

**Injury to Racanelli
adds wrinkle to
Hockinson's plans**

By MEG WOCHNICK

Columbian staff writer

Two consecutive football state titles. A state-best 27-game active winning streak. The team oppositions aim to beat.

That's the current resume' of the Hockinson Hawks. Over the past five seasons, the program is in the midst of its best run in program history, forming into a small-school power.

Is state history next? Only six schools have won three or more consecutive football state championships. Lynden, another Class 2A team like Hockinson, was the last to do it from 2011-13, as part of winning six titles in eight years.

On the biggest stage the past two seasons, Hockinson shines brightest. And if there's pressure to three-peat, the Hawks don't show it. Past success and key pieces have them set up for another championship run — albeit without its best player in full uniform for 2019.

When Sawyer Racanelli tore the ACL in his right knee at a June scrimmage, it prematurely ended a memorable high school career with 72 total touchdowns, a Class 2A state player of the year honor, and on the cusp of becoming the state's all-time leader in receiving yards.

But well before the season-ending injury to the future Washington Husky, his influence and impact was established program-wide, including his best friends, quarterback Levi Crum and receiver Peyton Brammer.



NATHAN HOWARD/The Columbian

Hockinson players Sawyer Racanelli and Peyton Brammer show off their state-championship rings.

That same duo flanked Racanelli when he announced his verbal commitment to Washington in May.

The best friends say they often have no plans yet, somehow, always end up together. But they are making plans for another big football season — the sport that best brought them together.

**Football now fun for
Brammer**

Ask any coach of a successful program what the key to sustainability is, and answers may range from hard work to tradition. Maybe some luck is included, too.

The Hawks feel lucky Brammer stuck with football.

When Brammer scored

50 points in a basketball game on Feb. 6, he set the school's single-game record. It came during a stretch run when the Hawks won two of their final three games to reach districts.

A broken foot suffered in last season's state quarterfinal prematurely ended Brammer's junior year in football, but not before he rose to help form one of the state's elite receiving duos.

It's the same kid who, eight years ago, hit countless free throws inside a Battle Ground gymnasium that grabbed Sawyer Racanelli's attention when they were 9 year olds.

"What kind of third grader can make 10 free throws in a row?" Racanelli said.

How Brammer got

hooked on football is the same reason Racanelli plays basketball: for each other.

But it didn't start that way.

Football for Brammer became an afterthought until eighth grade. He gave it a try in sixth grade, but quit. Four years later, the breakout game at Woodland during his sophomore year put others on notice: 10 catches, 123 yards, two touchdowns.

In two varsity seasons, Brammer has grown to 6 feet, 5 inches, become a go-to option at wide receiver and developed into a lock-down cornerback. Before breaking his foot against Steilacoom in last November's state quarterfinals, Brammer held Steilacoom's Emeka

Egbuka, considered the state's top recruit for 2022 and ranked by 247Sports as the nation's top athlete, in check for three quarters.

Football, Brammer said, is now fun.

"I never knew I had the sport in me as much as it is right now," Brammer said.

Brammer and Racanelli were each 1,000-yard receivers in 2018. Brammer admits he's still learning the game — "I feel I haven't gotten to be the best I can be," the senior said — but the pure athleticism from basketball is what head coach Rick Steele sees most.

Steele has coached at Hockinson in all but one season since the school opened in 2004. He said he

HAWKS, Page 3

From Page 2

can't recall when, if at all, a dropped pass came from Brammer. What he does best, the coach said, has to do with his hands first, then legs: catching the ball at the high point and deceptive speed running after the catch.

"I haven't seen many kids like him," Steele said.

Crum the leader, playmaker

Hockinson is 56-5 the past five seasons. One of those losses came against Woodland in 2016. No 2A Greater St. Helens League team the past two years has kept the margin of Hockinson's victories as close as the Beavers both years.

Glen Flanagan spent the past 23 years as defensive coordinator for Woodland under four head coaches. He's now coaching defensive backs for first-year coach Garrett Lutgen.

Flanagan said Hockinson is unique when it comes to game-planning. And opponents like that make for a great game of chess.

"Those are the best games," he said, "because you're challenging yourself. They have more talent, and you have to find their strengths, their best players and try to eliminate them and make them beat you with the other ones.

"At the 2A level," Flanagan continued, "they're a hard matchup... Those special kids make the difference."

One of those special kids who has blossomed into a playmaker and leader is Levi Crum, a quarterback unproven to most before his first varsity start last September who is also Racanelli's cousin.

Long before Crum's breakout junior season, when he threw for 3,836



Hockinson players (from left), Levi Crum, Sawyer Racanelli and Peyton Brammer in Hockinson's weight room. "Peyton and Levi have been through everything with me," said Racanelli.

NATHAN HOWARD/The Columbian

yards and 56 total touchdowns, he grew up in small-town Kalama surrounded by the best fishing holes on the banks of the Kalama River. His family uprooted to Clark County before Crum's freshman year.

Two future teammates who helped move boxes and furniture? Sawyer Racanelli and Peyton Brammer.

Josh Racanelli, the Hawks' offensive coordinator and Sawyer's father, never coached his nephew before Crum entered high school.

A gangly runner whose feet were too big for his body is now a strength in an offense that's churned out two all-state quarterbacks.

As a sophomore under study, Crum sat behind eventual 2A state player of the year Canon Racanelli.

But Crum didn't just fill the shoes left behind; he did so in his own style and flare.

Last season's 42-13 win over Archbishop Murphy — a team Hockinson plays again Sept. 13 — is the game Josh Racanelli watched his nephew come into his own as a playmaker and leader.

"Watching Levi walk up and down the sidelines blew me away," Josh Racanelli said. "He was there as far as willing his teammates into successful spots."

Sawyer Racanelli has watched Crum blossom, and points to his scrambling abilities and keeping plays alive as a notable strength.

What has Crum learned most playing alongside his cousin?

On-field poise.

"Nothing is too big," Crum said.

Through football, Crum and Racanelli's relationship has evolved to more than cousins. They're best friends. Crum traveled to Seattle when Racanelli had reconstructive knee surgery at the University of Washington Medical Center. He was the first to learn of Racanelli's injury when the two were at an Oregon church camp in July.

Friendship formed

"We literally know everything about each other," Crum said. "How we act under pressure, how we deal with stuff on and off the field. We got closer in every way seeing each other and being around each other that much.

"It's as good as it gets playing with your best friend and cousin. It doesn't get much better than that."

On the morning of May 17 inside Hockinson High School is where Sawyer Racanelli announced his verbal commitment to Washington. The program has shown full support through his knee injury and plans to honor his full scholarship. In the meantime, Racanelli plans to be a de facto coach this season during his rehabilitation.

When Racanelli signs his National Letter of Intent during December's early-signing period, he'll become the second Hockinson football player to sign with a Pac-12 school (Nick Cody, Oregon in 2008).

Few people in Racanelli's inner-circle knew he'd pick

UW's hat over UCLA at his commitment ceremony, but he wanted to be flanked by his two best friends — Brammer on his left, Crum on his right — as the trio revealed in unison Racanelli's college choice.

"Peyton and Levi have been through everything with me," said Racanelli.

That includes consecutive state titles and a state-best 27-game winning streak.

And a three-peat — a three-time state champion — has a nice ring to it.

"It's not about how good we are," Crum said, "it's about how much fun we have. When you win with our brothers, it makes it that much better."

Said Brammer: "It's a small group of guys doing such big things."

4A GREATER ST. HELENS LEAGUE

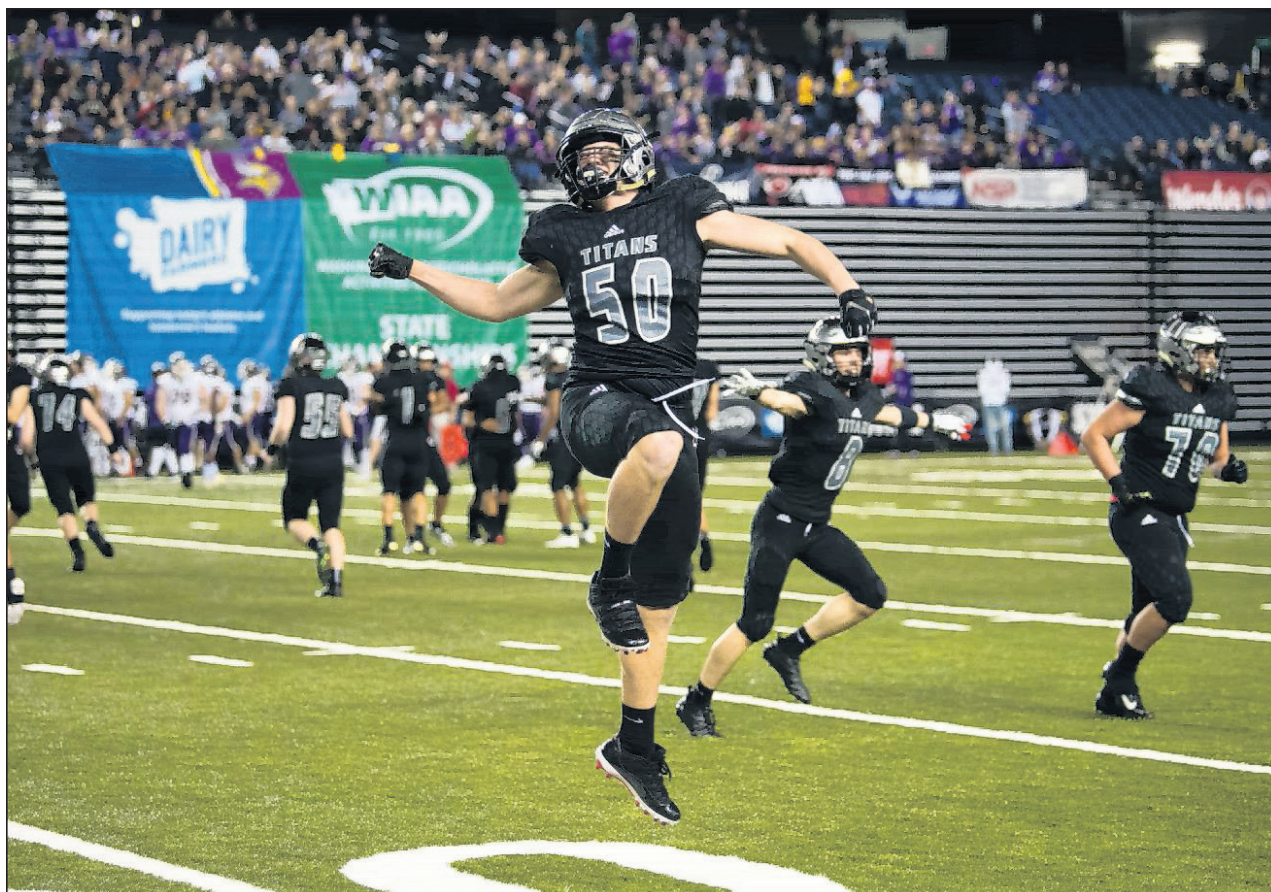
PROJECTED FINISH

Picks by Columbian sports staff

- 1  **CAMAS:** Hearty offensive line could pave way for Papermakers to do big things this season.
- 2  **UNION:** Defending state champs have a lot left in the tank from a 2018 undefeated season.
- 3  **SKYVIEW:** Second time in three seasons Storm have this much experience on both sides of ball.
- 4  **HERITAGE:** New coach Dennis Moody, senior class poised to get program moving in right direction.
- 5  **BATTLE GROUND:** Tigers hope Year 3 under coach Mike Kesler leads to more league wins.

BIGGEST GAMES

- OCT. 10**  vs. 
7 p.m., McKenzie Stadium
- OCT. 11**  vs. 
7 p.m., McKenzie Stadium
- OCT. 24**  vs. 
7 p.m., Kiggins Bowl
- NOV. 1**  vs. 
7 p.m., Doc Harris Stadium



ALISHA JUCEVIC/The Columbian

Union's Tarek Jabakhanji (50) celebrates during the Titans' victory in the 2018 Class 4A state football championship game. Union will be tested not only on a statewide level, but by strong league rivals Camas and Skyview.

Strong league brings out the best in its top teams

For a league that arguably has been one of the state's elite in recent seasons, there are plenty of positives for gearing up to face playoff-caliber teams each week.

"They bring out the best in you as a staff," fourth-year Union coach Rory Rosenbach said. "It's fun when you play teams you have to get to know; they're going to have something for you."

Rosenbach should know. During Union's run to an undefeated 2018 Class 4A championship season, six wins came by seven

or fewer points, including a six-point victory over Skyview and edging Camas by a touchdown. Games like that helped the Titans in their run to their first state title.

Since 2016, teams from the 4A GSHL are 14-5 in the postseason, including two state championships.

Don't expect much of a dropoff — or much separation between these three teams — this fall.

Union might have graduated 14 all-league honorees from its state title team, but the Titans hope to ride the wave of momentum

created from 2018 and a stout defense behind seven returning starters.

Camas' offensive line is the largest in Clark County behind 6-foot-6 Caadyn Stephen at left tackle and 6-foot-4 right tackle Rush Reimer (Montana State commit). Four of their five offensive linemen are returning starters.

Skyview might be thin up front, but have a core nucleus of seniors and depth at skill position players. Running back Jalynnee McGee is the team's most experienced starter — one of nine returning

all-leaguers — along with quarterback Yaro Duvalco, a Utah State commit.

Dennis Moody takes over at Heritage with new offensive and defensive schemes, new numbers and a new outlook. Sophomore quarterback Nikki Scott returns after an early-season knee injury ended his freshman season in Week 2.

Coach Mike Kesler praises the senior leadership of his Battle Ground squad, looking to make strides off its 3-6 season in 2018. Player turnout is the highest it has been in Kesler's three-year tenure.

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SEPT. 28

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PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Reid Schneider	6-0	170	Jr.
RB	Steven Hancock	6-2	195	Sr.
WR	Jordan Minor	5-10	160	Sr.
WR	Dylan Fisher	5-9	165	Sr.
WR	Lane Landas	5-9	160	Jr.
TE	Brody Smith	6-1	235	Sr.
OL	Mason Wann	6-0	270	Sr.
OL	Maksym Bahnyuk	6-0	210	Jr.
OL	Brody Brown	6-0	250	Sr.
OL	Brock Naillon	6-0	235	Jr.
OL	Hunter Wooldridge	6-2	275	Jr.

DL	Steven Hancock	6-2	195	Sr.
DL	Mason Wann	6-0	270	Sr.
DL	Brody Smith	6-1	235	Sr.
DL	Hunter Wooldridge	6-2	275	Jr.
LB	Colt Stepard	5-10	175	Jr.
LB	Chris Dunne	5-11	175	Jr.
LB	Richard Lara	5-9	175	Jr.
DB	Jordan Minor	5-10	160	Sr.
DB	Lane Landas	5-9	160	Jr.
DB	Jason Johnson	5-9	160	Sr.
DB	Dylan Fisher	5-9	165	Sr.

Coach: Mike Kesler (third year)



District Stadium

at Battle Ground HS
400 W. Main St.,
Battle Ground

2018 RECORD: 3-6, 1-3. Fourth in 4A
Greater St. Helens League

BEST STATE FINISH: First round in 1979,
2015

Lifelong bonds give Tigers chemistry as progress continues

Mason Wann and Brody Smith aren't the only Battle Ground football players who have played together since age 8.

That cohesiveness not only boosts the Tigers' senior class, but the program as a whole.

"It makes everything go smoother," said Wann, a starting offensive guard and defensive end.

Leadership quality is a big strength for head coach Mike Kesler — "The group of kids are showing by example," he said — relying on Wann, Smith and others to pave the way in turning around the Tigers' fortunes. Last season's 3-6 season was a step up from a 1-8 campaign in Kesler's inaugural year.

Now in his third season, Kesler said things are on track for where he wants the program to be.

Are they there yet? Not quite, but it's progressing nicely, he said.

"I always tell them," the coach said, "the successes will come more this year." When the successes come, the wins will take care of themselves."

Those same leadership qualities from Wann, Smith and others in the senior class not only is an improvement, but helped attract nearly 100 players, the program's largest spring and summer turnout under Kesler. It led to big growth at the



MEG WOCHNICK/The Columbian

Battle Ground's Steven Hancock, an all-league defensive end, will also be a starting tailback for the Tigers in 2019.

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Team's first two non-league games are against new opponents from 2018 (3A Seattle Prep, 2A Burlington-Edison).
- Program had highest turnout numbers in Mike Kesler's tenure.
- Coach states leadership is the team's biggest strength.

team's George Fox team camp, as a unit.
learning trust and how to play Smith, a linebacker and

fullback, gave a simple, yet effective in-house recruiting pitch in attracting new players: Why not?

"It's the only time you're going to be playing football in your high school career," Smith said.

Said Wann: "Even if they don't like it," he said, "they can see if they like it. And most of the kids do."

FRI., SEPT. 6



at Seattle
Prep
7:30 p.m.

SAT., SEPT. 14



Burlington-
Edison
3 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



Mountain
View
7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



Prairie
7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



at Skyview*
7 p.m.

THU., OCT. 10



at Heritage*
4:30 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



Camas*
7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



Union*
7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



at South
Kitsap
7 p.m.

*-denotes 4A Greater St. Helens League game

PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Jake Blair	6-2	180	Jr.
RB	Jacques Badaloto-Birdsell	5-10	195	Jr.
WR	Jackson Clemmer	6-6	185	Sr.
WR	Charlie Bump	5-9	170	Sr.
WR	Dante Humble	5-10	165	Sr.
TE	Titan Phillips	6-4	220	Sr.
OL	Caadyn Stephen	6-6	295	Sr.
OL	Tristan Souza	6-2	270	Sr.
OL	Tai Tumanavao	6-0	275	Sr.
OL	Josue Espinoza	6-2	260	Sr.
OL	Rush Reimer	6-5	290	Sr.

DL	Robert Silva	5-11	245	Jr.
DL	Colby Stoller	6-1	215	Sr.
DL	Cade Bateman	6-0	240	Sr.
LB	Sebastian Harb	5-11	190	Sr.
LB	Tyler Forner	5-9	190	Sr.
LB	Jack Gibson	6-3	220	Sr.
LB	Jackson Preston	6-0	190	Sr.
DB	Gabe Guo	5-9	195	Jr.
DB	Dante Humble	5-10	165	Sr.
DB	Jacques Badaloto-Birdsell	5-10	195	Jr.
DB	Kolby Broadbent	5-10	175	Sr.

Coach: Jon Eagle (12th year)



Doc Harris Stadium

1125 NE 22nd Ave., Camas

2018 RECORD: 5-5, 3-1. Second in 4A GSHL; lost to Bothell 36-35 in state preliminary round

BEST STATE FINISH: Champions in 2016

Offensive line is a BIG reason Camas should contend for league title

There's big, and then there's Camas big.

When you look at the Papermakers' offensive line, what stands out? Experience and depth? How about size and athleticism?

Starting center Tai Tumanavao isn't fazed by larger linemen at college team camps or showcase events. He's accustomed to it at Camas.

"You don't feel small," he said, "because we practice next to 6-6 and 6-4 all the time."

Tumanavao is talking about senior tackles Caadyn Stephen (6-6, 285 pounds) and Rush Reimer (6-5, 285). As a whole, the offensive line averages 6-2 and 280 pounds.

Four of Camas' five linemen are returning starters, including left guard Tristan Souza (6-2, 280) as a three-year starter. He started at left tackle his sophomore year and will start his second season at left guard.

He's been part of an annual progression that he hopes turns into a new level this season: dominance. Josue Espinoza (6-2, 260), the expected starter at right guard, gained a lot of experience in 2018, and another multi-position lineman, Tyler Criddle is 6-0, 240 pounds.

"I feel like the past two years," Souza said, "we've been a good O-line. ... I take a huge accomplishment in how close we are and how we've grown



ALISHA JUCEVIC/The Columbian

Camas' Jackson Clemmer (83) breaks away from Bellevue defense to score a touchdown.

together over the past four years."

Coach Jon Eagle compares this offensive line to another — the 2016 state championship team with a pair of future FBS or FCS linemen.

Souza takes great pride how the offensive line is an integral

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Camas' starting offensive line averages 6-foot-2, 280 pounds.
- Last season's 5-5 record marked the first time in eight seasons the Papermakers didn't reach state.
- Five of the team's opponents reached the postseason in 2018.

ers relied heavily on its run game from Jacques Badaloto-Birdsell and now-graduated

part of every offensive play from keeping the quarterback up right to clearing lanes for ball carriers. The Papermak-

Shane Jamison in its 36-35 state preliminary round loss to Bothell last season, rushing the ball 56 times.

Their success, like team success, starts up front.

"Everybody knows their assignment and trusts each other to do their job," Souza said.

Added Tumanavao: "You're fighting every single day together, and you want to put through it with everyone next to you. You have the same goal in sight."

FRI., SEPT. 6

FRI., SEPT. 13

FRI., SEPT. 20

FRI., SEPT. 27

FRI., OCT. 4

FRI., OCT. 11

FRI., OCT. 18

THU., OCT. 24

FRI., NOV. 1



Lincoln

7 p.m.



at Hazen

7 p.m.



West Valley (Yakima)

7 p.m.



at Bellevue

7 p.m.



Heritage*

7 p.m.



Sumner

7 p.m.



at Battle Ground*

7 p.m.



at Skyview*

7 p.m.



Union*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 4A Greater St. Helens League game



PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Nikki Scott	5-9	160	So.
RB	Isaac Roa	5-10	180	Sr.
RB	Anthony Kee	5-11	185	Sr.
RB	Nickelson Datel	6-0	180	Sr.
WR	Kaleb Lamere	5-9	160	Jr.
TE	Andrew Gray	6-1	190	Jr.
OL	Cade Gardner	6-2	260	Sr.
OL	Solo Vercher	6-3	300	Sr.
OL	Zephyn Zabik	6-0	185	Sr.
OL	Isaiah Malaulau	6-0	180	Sr.
OL	Eddie Gonzalez	5-11	280	Sr.

DL	Isaiah Malaulau	6-0	180	Sr.
DL	Jorge Rubio	6-0	195	Sr.
DL	Ricardo Cortez	5-10	150	Jr.
LB	Andrew Gray	6-1	190	Jr.
LB	Zephyn Zabik	6-0	185	Sr.
LB	Andre Cowley	5-11	180	Jr.
LB	Skylar Scoggins	6-2	190	Sr.
DB	Kaleb Lamere	5-9	160	Jr.
DB	Isaac Roa	5-10	180	Sr.
DB	Anthony Kee	5-11	185	Sr.
DB	Nickelson Datel	6-0	180	Sr.

Coach: Dennis Moody (first year)



McKenzie Stadium

Near Evergreen HS,
2205 NE 138th Ave.,
Vancouver

2018 RECORD: 2-7, 0-4. Fifth in 4A GSHL

BEST STATE FINISH: State preliminary round in 2007.

New coach has history of turning programs into winners

Early in his head-coaching career, Dennis Moody took a California school that won four football games in six seasons and turned it into a back-to-back sectional champion and state qualifier by Year 2.

That's when he learned things can quickly turn for the better.

"It can be done," he said.

Moody, Heritage's new head coach, isn't predicting a whirlwind turnaround in one season for the Timberwolves, but think small to start, he said, and the turnaround will come.

"It's the little things," the coach said. "It takes time to create a whole new way of how you're doing things and that's what it takes here."

This is Moody's second season at Heritage after coaching the defensive line in 2018. Back now as a head coach, he's implementing his system that goes back to before the season began. Heritage's off-season work included attracting 35 freshmen — a high number for the program — and stretching out its 20 allowed spring-ball practices over five weeks to install new offensive and defensive schemes.

Change happened almost overnight, said seniors Cade Gardner and Skylar Scoggins.

The seniors know their class may not reap the benefits as much as future teams, but Gardner and Scoggins want to



NATHAN HOWARD/The Columbian

Heritage's Nikki Scott (7) returns at quarterback after suffering a season-ending knee injury.

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Head coach Dennis Moody spent last season as Heritage's defensive line coach.
- QB Nikki Scott returns after a season-ending knee injury last September.
- Coaching staff features three ex-head coaches (Mark Hasart, Mark Greenleaf, Will Ephraim).

be the first to pave the way.

"This is so mind-blowing to me," said Scoggins, an

all-league linebacker. "I'm not used to this ... I'm really excited for it and for the future

of Heritage."

Gardner and others have embraced the incoming freshmen, and sold them how change is happening for the better.

And it starts with the small things.

"I've always felt reaching out to the younger kids is definitely the big part," said Gardner, a two-way linemen. Getting that bond and getting everyone closer will help us in general and on the field."

FRI., SEPT. 6



at Evergreen

4:30 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



Hudson's Bay

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



Kelso

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



at Mountain View

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



at Camas*

7 p.m.

THU., OCT. 10



Battle Ground*

4:30 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



at Union*

4:30 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



Emerald Ridge

4:30 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



Skyview*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 4A Greater St. Helens League game

PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Yaro Duvalco	6-3	180	Sr.
RB	Jalynnee McGee	5-11	190	Sr.
WR	Mason Wheeler	5-10	170	Sr.
WR	Gavin Baskette	6-0	185	Sr.
WR	Xavier Owens	5-10	165	Jr.
TE	Micah Baylous	6-2	195	Sr.
OL	Josiah Cochran	6-5	215	Sr.
OL	Jake Miller	5-11	200	Sr.
OL	Jack Nitschke	6-3	290	Sr.
OL	Lorenzo Lombardi	5-11	260	Jr.
OL	Brett Gray	6-4	235	Jr.

DL	Micah Baylous	6-2	195	Sr.
DL	Lorenzo Lombardi	5-11	260	Jr.
OL	Jack Nitschke	6-3	290	Sr.
DL	Josiah Cochran	6-5	215	Sr.
LB	Cooper Barnum	6-2	195	Sr.
LB	Jake Miller	5-11	200	Sr.
LB	Ahmami Williams	6-1	210	Sr.
DB	Xavier Owens	5-10	165	Jr.
DB	Gavin Baskette	6-0	185	Sr.
DB	Michael Stromberg	5-10	160	Jr.
DB	Mason Wheeler	5-10	170	Sr.

Coach: Steve Kizer (16th year)



Kiggins Bowl

Near the campus of Discovery Middle School, 800 E. 40th St., Vancouver

2018 RECORD: 6-5, 2-2. Third in 4A GSHL; lost to Woodinville 34-21 in first round of state

BEST STATE FINISH: Second in 2011.

With a wealth of experience in key positions, Skyview has big goals

The Skyview Storm aren't interested in writing the same script. A number of similar plot lines from 2017 — loads of returning experience, high expectations, among others — are also that of this year's Storm.

But if anything, senior Mason Wheeler said, it's not last year's 6-5 record in which the Storm reached the first round of the Class 4A state playoffs that he draws from most when looking at 2019.

It was two years ago when Skyview had returning experience on both sides of the ball only to have its season end without a playoff run.

"You see what happens when you have the talent but don't work," Wheeler said. "That experience has prepared us to this point."

3 THINGS TO KNOW

■ Skyview has reached the postseason in 12 of the past 13 years.

■ Jalynnee McGee (starter since 2017) is the team's most experienced player.

■ Skyview' last 4A GSHL title came in 2011.

That's what has this year's Skyview team poised for bigger things beyond reaching the playoffs for the 12th time in 13 seasons.

Much of the 21 new faces in starting position a year ago are back, including three receivers, much of the defensive line, and a healthy set of running backs and tight ends. Senior Jalynnee McGee, a returning all-leaguer, is the team's most experienced as a soon-to-be three-year starter. His junior season ended prematurely with a foot injury in Week 8 before Skyview made its playoff run.

A plus with so much experience at various positions is adding more components on offense and defense,

longtime coach Steve Kizer said.

"There's good stuff there," the coach said.

That's why there's no excuses now," senior quarterback Yaro Duvalco said. Week 1 will be his, and many others' 12th game as a starter.

"We've been everywhere we've wanted to go," said Duvalco, a Utah State commit. "All the stuff on paper we need to do, we've done, except win a state championship."



ALISHA JUCEVIC/The Columbian

At starter since 2017, Skyview's Jalynnee McGee (11) is the most experienced player for the Storm.

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FRI., SEPT. 6



at Yelm

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



Columbia River

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



at Mount Si

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



Rogers-Puyallup

5 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



Battle Ground*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



at Union*

7 p.m.

THU., OCT. 17



at Olympia

6 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



Camas*

7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



at Heritage*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 4A Greater St. Helens League game



PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	CJ Jordan	6-3	195	Sr.
RB	Isaiah Jones	5-10	200	Sr.
WR	Daron Ulrich, Jr.	5-11	265	Sr.
WR	Justin Chin	5-11	180	So.
WR	Tobias Merriweather	6-4	175	So.
TE	Jake Bowen	6-3	195	Jr.
OL	Manaiia Fuertes	6-4	305	Jr.
OL	Tumua Sosene	5-11	290	Sr.
OL	Jack Grimsted	6-2	280	Jr.
OL	Payton Jackson	5-11	250	Sr.
OL	Rocky Mataia	6-3	285	Sr.

DL	Rocky Mataia	6-3	285	Sr.
DL	Jack Grimsted	6-2	280	Jr.
DL	Levi Harms	5-11	220	Jr.
LB	Justin Chin	5-11	180	Sr.
LB	Logan Wilson	5-11	215	Sr.
LB	Jack Eggleston	6-0	190	Sr.
LB	Tyler Summers	6-2	200	Sr.
DB	Daron Ulrich, Jr.	5-11	265	Sr.
DB	Jake Bowen	6-3	195	Jr.
DB	Aiden Hoyt	6-0	160	Sr.
DB	Malaki Campbell	5-11	165	Sr.

Coach: Rory Rosenbach (fourth year)



McKenzie Stadium

Near Evergreen HS,
2205 NE 138th Ave.,
Vancouver

2018 RECORD: 14-0, 4-0. First in 4A GSHL; defeated Lake Stevens 52-20 for the 4A state championship.

BEST STATE FINISH: State champion in 2018.

Titans embrace higher scrutiny that comes after winning state title

For the first time in program history, the Union Titans are the defending state champions.

But added pressure and larger targets don't faze the Titans.

In fact, they're embracing it. "Everybody is looking at us," free safety and receiver Daron Ulrich, Jr. said.

Winning football state titles might be new for Union, but isn't for fourth-year coach Rory Rosenbach. He won two Oregon 3A titles at Eugene's Marist Catholic, and what he's telling his team, as a defending state champion, is simple: last year is last year. Go set your own legacy.

"Your story," the coach said, "is just getting started."

What the Titans know is the road won't be easy. State titles seem to make already-large targets widen, and they saw it as early as this summer. From scrimmages to team camps, teams wanted a piece of the Titans.

Expect nothing less for 2019. "Everyone is going to give us their best each and every game," Ulrich said.

Make no mistake: this isn't the same Union team that went undefeated winning the school's first football state championship behind 14 all-league departed seniors. On its way to winning its first state championship, Union won five



ALISHA JUCEVIC/The Columbian

Union's Justin Chin (9) celebrates a tackle during the Class 4A state football championship game. Despite graduating many key players, the Titans return several who contributed to the title run.

games by seven or fewer points and the defense went through a five-game stretch allowing just two second-half touchdowns.

But the Titans hope the title momentum built from 2018

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- The defending state champions also are back-to-back 4A GSHL champions.
- Team graduated 14 all-league seniors from last year's team.
- Union's last loss came in the 2017 state first round against Sumner 42-14.

starts put behind a defense that Rosenbach calls a strength of the team with five full-time returning starters. It includes Ulrich returning as a starting free safety

and linebacker Tyler Summers as the team's leading tackler last fall. Offensively, CJ Jordan, a transfer from Clackamas (Ore.), is expected to start at quarterback, filling the void left by reigning state player of the year Lincoln Victor.

"The culture is still the same," Ulrich said, "and we're making sure we're out grinding and doing our time. We're going to come out and shock everybody."

FRI., SEPT. 6



Mountain View

7 p.m.

THU., SEPT. 12



at Steilacoom

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



at Eastlake

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



Chiawana

4:30 p.m.

SAT., OCT. 5



at Puyallup

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



Skyview*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



Heritage*

4:30 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



at Battle Ground*

7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



at Camas*






7 p.m.

*-denotes 4A Greater St. Helens League game

3A GREATER ST. HELENS LEAGUE

PROJECTED FINISH

Picks by Columbian sports staff

- 1  **MOUNTAIN VIEW:** Thunder's senior class looking to make it four consecutive league titles.
- 2  **KELSO:** Hilanders have size, skill position players to make a league-title run.
- 3  **PRAIRIE:** Falcons have plenty of experience back from first playoff bound season in 7 years.
- 4  **EVERGREEN:** New coaches, team speed could have Plainsmen on the way up fast.
- 5  **HUDSON'S BAY:** Eagles are young, but poised to make noise in competitive league.

BIGGEST GAMES

- Oct. 10**  vs. 
7 p.m., District Stadium
- Oct. 25**  vs. 
5 p.m., Kiggins Bowl
- Oct. 25**  vs. 
7 p.m., McKenzie Stadium
- Nov. 1**  vs. 
7 p.m., District Stadium



MEG WOCHNICK/The Columbian

Mountain View head coach Adam Mathieson has his Thunder aiming for a fourth consecutive league title despite losing 21 starters to graduation.

Mountain View sets sights on fourth straight league title

Mountain View's senior class — in a program that's won three consecutive 3A Greater St. Helens League titles and hasn't lost a league game in that span — knows what expectations sit on their shoulders.

And they're lofty. It's no surprise the Class of 2020 wants to make it a perfect 4-for-4 for league titles in their high school tenure.

But what Mountain View lacks in varsity experience losing 21 starters to graduation, it makes up for in tradition. The program's unbeaten league streak sits at 15 straight games — and 20 consecutive 3A league games if you count the 2013 unbeaten 3A league season

that preceded two years in 4A.

It's not by accident Mountain View has won three straight league titles.

"Preparation everyday," senior tight end Dominic Stephens said. "And working hard toward the next game to be the best players we can be and hopefully, we can be the better team on the scoreboard."

In Steve Amrine's words, Kelso's head coach believes the league still runs through the champs. The Hilanders have reached the postseason five straight years, and are the only 3A GSHL team to finish second behind the Thunder since 2016. The final score in two of the previous three

meetings were separated by two touchdowns or less.

Second-year Prairie coach Mike Peck believes his Falcons can be in the mix to compete for a league title behind a large senior class fresh off a playoff berth. Prairie reached the postseason for the second time in 20 years in 2018 and boosted its first winning record since 2011.

Hudson's Bay isn't far removed from its 2017 playoff-bound team, but the Eagles are full of youth. Third-year coach Ray Lions said he could start a pair of freshmen and the quarterback position is still up for grabs between Fort Vancouver transfer Austin Real-James and sophomore

Dylan Damos, who started the 2018 season-opener.

Evergreen features one of the league's fastest and most dynamic players in senior Zyll Griffin, who leads an experienced receiving corps with first-year high school quarterback Carter Monda. The Plainsmen's new head coach, Christian Swain, led 2A Columbia River to three straight playoff berths before being hired at Evergreen this spring.

League member Fort Vancouver opted for an independent schedule for 2019. Fort will play one 3A GSHL team on its schedule — rival Hudson's Bay — in the annual Peace Pipe game on Oct. 11.

PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Carter Monda	6-4	200	Sr.
RB	Tyvauntae Deloney	5-9	185	Sr.
WR	Tae Marks	6-4	190	Sr.
WR	Zyell Griffin	6-2	195	Sr.
WR	Jaylen Fite	6-1	175	Jr.
WR	Jonathan Simon	5-10	165	Jr.
OL	David Grant	6-4	275	Sr.
OL	Josiah Kau	6-2	225	Jr.
OL	Gary McCulley	5-10	235	So.
OL	Angelo Salinas	5-10	255	Sr.
OL	Nate Lien	6-4	280	Sr.

DL	Gary McCulley	5-10	235	So.
DL	David Grant	6-4	275	Sr.
DL	Nate Lien	6-4	280	Sr.
LB	Cody Green	5-9	195	Sr.
LB	Derrick Webb	6-1	210	Sr.
LB	Tyvauntae Deloney	5-9	185	Sr.
LB	Tae Marks	6-4	190	Sr.
DB	Zyell Griffin	6-2	195	Sr.
DB	Cam Smith	5-9	165	Sr.
DB	Jonathan Landry	5-10	160	Fr.
DB	Jaylen Fite	6-1	175	Jr.

Coach: Christian Swain (first year)



McKenzie Stadium

Near Evergreen HS,
2205 NE 138th Ave.,
Vancouver

2018 RECORD: 3-6, 1-4. Fifth in 3A GSHL.

BEST STATE FINISH: State champions in 2004.

Plainsmen bring a fresh start and high expectations into season

Jaylen Fite and Zyell Griffin have plenty to be excited about, even well before Evergreen plays its first game of 2019.

For starters, the duo believe there's a new identity of sorts behind new faces: from a new coaching staff to a turnout of first-time high school football players.

That has Fite and Griffin, two returning receivers and defensive backs, feeling it's the start of something brewing.

"Evergreen, in general," Griffin said, "is going to be a lot better as a team."

And by team, added Fite, means playing better together as a unit.

"We play as one," the junior said. "Instead of for ourselves, we play for each other."

It starts, they believe, with what the new coaching staff brings to the program.

It's led by first-year coach Christian Swain, who spent the previous three seasons coaching 2A Columbia River to three straight playoff appearances.

Swain said Evergreen reminds him when he coached at Oregon 5A Roosevelt, turning around a winless program into a league champion and eventual state playoff team.

Fite and Griffin noted Swain and his staff's commitment not only to current players, but to new ones. The in-school recruitment of senior Carter



NATHAN HOWARD/The Columbian

Evergreen's Tae Marks is among a group that hopes to return to the postseason.

Monda to play quarterback is especially noteworthy. Monda last played football as an eighth grader, and Swain said he couldn't take the chance not to

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Evergreen is coach Christian Swain's third head-coaching gig (Columbia River, Roosevelt, Ore.).
- Senior Zyell Griffin is a two-time all-3A GSHL player.
- The Plainsmen's last winning season came in 2008.

convince Monda, a basketball and baseball standout, to give high school football a shot. Fite

quickly Monda is adapting.

"He's getting better every day," Fite said.

Evergreen last reached the postseason in 2016, via a league tiebreaker. Fite and Griffin were in the program, and are eager for that postseason taste again.

"Everyone wants to be good," Griffin said, "and everyone wants the team to be good."

and Griffin are impressed how

FRI., SEPT. 6



Heritage

4:30 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



at Centralia

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



Lakewood

4:30 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



at Rochester

7 p.m.

SAT., OCT. 5



at Bellingham

5 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



at Kelso*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



Mountain View*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



at Hudson's Bay*

5 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



at Prairie*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 3A Greater St. Helens League game



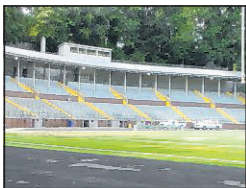
PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Dylan Damos	5-7	145	So.
RB	Mateo Varona	5-6	145	Fr.
WR	Joshua McDonald	6-0	165	Sr.
WR	Devontay Moore	6-2	160	Jr.
WR	Kevin Navarro	5-6	140	Sr.
TE	Justice Faylim	5-9	170	So.
OL	Hayden DeGrandpre	5-10	190	Jr.
OL	Malek Mabrouk	6-2	230	Sr.
OL	Gabriel Ortega	6-0	220	So.
OL	Levi Mikaele	5-8	170	So.
OL	Jaylen Salavea	5-8	190	Fr.

DL	Derek Barnes	6-1	250	Sr.
DL	Malek Mabrouk	6-2	230	Sr.
DL	Jaylen Salavea	5-8	190	Fr.
LB	Hayden DeGrandpre	5-10	190	Jr.
LB	Levi Mikaele	5-8	170	So.
LB	Justice Faylim	5-9	170	So.
LB	JP LeGuyader	5-10	170	Jr.
LB	Jaden Lewis	5-8	165	Sr.
DB	Joshua McDonald	6-0	165	Sr.
DB	Kevin Navarro	5-6	140	Sr.
DB	Devontay Moore	6-2	160	Jr.

Coach: Ray Lions (third year)



Kiggins Bowl

Near the campus of Discovery Middle School, 800 E. 40th St., Vancouver

2018 RECORD: 3-6, 2-3. Fourth in 3A GSHL

BEST STATE FINISH: Quarterfinals in 1999.

Eagles are young but eager to build a winning foundation

Looking on Hudson's Bay's wall of recent list of three-sport varsity athletes, Josh McDonald reflects on past players — from Myles Artis and Julio Vara to recent graduate Carter Morse — as football players he looks up to.

Now a senior, McDonald is the one many of the young Eagles look up to.

"I'm one of the older guys in the room," the receiver and defensive back said. "... I take that as I have to do what I have to do so they see it as this is what you're supposed to do."

Just because the Eagles are young — in third-year coach Ray Lions' words "super young" — doesn't mean they expect a down season.

In fact, Lions sees benefits rather than drawbacks behind the youth.

"You know in the future," the coach said, "you can utilize the experience when they're younger.

With a new face and younger blood, you can mold and create what you want."

And so far, they're hungry to learn.

Lions expects to start two ninth-graders — Mateo Vavera at running back and Jalen Salavea on the offensive line. More underclassmen are expected up front, in the secondary and at linebacker.

McDonald is part of the senior class that as sophomores



Hudson's Bay's Dylan Damos (grey shirt) talks with quarterbacks coach Tom Schroeder at practice Aug. 23. Damos started one game for the Eagles in 2018.

MEG WOCHNICK/The Columbian

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Young Eagles will be underclassmen-heavy at offensive line, linebacker and defensive back.
- Program last reached the postseason in 2017.
- Team is dedicating season to Xavion Moore, who died July 15 of complications from cancer.

two years ago, helped Bay reach the postseason for the

first time since 2001. A lack of varsity experience for 2019

doesn't mean the Eagles aren't going to try to prove something.

"I know for sure we're going to be a gritty team," McDonald said, "and we're going to come out there and give it everything we've got. That's who we are."

"We're here to fight to stay in the game no matter what and we have to do we want to get the job done and win."

FRI., SEPT. 6



at Washougal

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



at Heritage

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



W.F. West

5 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



Franklin

8 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



at Mountain View*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



Fort Vancouver

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



Prairie*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



Evergreen*

5 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



at Kelso*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 3A Greater St. Helens League game

PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Marshall Coleman	6-0	190	Sr.
RB	Josh Webb	6-1	180	Sr.
RB	Nate Lonner	5-10	220	So.
WR	Dillon Davis	5-9	160	Sr.
WR	Nick Miller	6-0	160	Jr.
WR	Braden Smith	6-1	155	Sr.
OL	Seth Sutherby	6-0	190	Sr.
OL	Cooper Lindberg	6-0	220	Sr.
OL	Colton Wise	5-11	225	Sr.
OL	Matt Nusbaum	5-11	240	Sr.
OL	Ian Merlo	6-0	195	Sr.

DL	Cooper Lindberg	6-0	220	Sr.
DL	Matt Nusbaum	5-11	240	Sr.
DL	Clay Lindberg	5-10	200	Jr.
DL	Eli Keithley	5-10	170	Sr.
LB	Seth Sutherby	6-0	190	Sr.
LB	Nate Lonner	5-10	220	So.
LB	Josh Webb	6-1	180	Sr.
LB	Hunter Letteer	5-10	165	So.
DB	Dillon Davis	5-9	160	Sr.
DB	Jaden Kay	5-9	170	Jr.
DB	Marshall Coleman	6-0	190	Sr.

Coach: Steve Amrine (seventh year)



Schroeder Field

Kelso HS,
1904 Allen Street,
Kelso

2018 RECORD: 8-2, 4-1. Second in 3A GSHL; lost to Rainier Beach 32-22 in the state preliminary round

BEST STATE FINISH: State champions in 1983

Consistency is key for Kelso, which returns talented skill players

As rich in tradition and culture as Kelso's football program is, there's never talk of a down season.

"There's really not much opportunity for that," head coach Steve Amrine said. "The expectations always are to play good, solid, competitive football and be in the hunt for a league title and get into the playoffs."

Players and coaches respond to that equally. Kelso has reached the playoffs five straight seasons and finished runner-up to league-champion Mountain View three straight years.

With the exception of Amrine's first season at Kelso in 2013 (2-7 overall), the Hilanders are 34-17 the past five seasons.

Kelso returns five starters on each side of the ball, and where the team's strength is for 2019 lies in its skill-position players.

"We have enough guys who've played a lot of football to hold us together as everybody else learns."

Two players Amrine speaks of are the all-league quarterback-tailback tandem of seniors Marshall Coleman and Josh Webb.

The duo combined for 33 touchdowns and nearly 2,000 yards of offense.

Amrine noted makes the duo special is their competitive nature.

"They play off each other,"



Longview Daily News photo

Kelso's Josh Webb combined with quarterback Marshall Coleman for nearly 2,000 yards of offense.

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Returning all-league QB, RB combined for 33 touchdowns in 2018.
- Kelso has reached the postseason five consecutive seasons.
- Hilanders have finished second in league to Mountain View past three seasons.

he said, "and care about winning and being successful."

Amrine projects the offen-

sive line to average between 220 and 230 pounds, led by Seth Sutherby, who had 10

sacks in 2018 at linebacker, and second-team all-leaguer Cooper Lindgren.

New faces might emerge every year, but the tradition and culture message remains the same.

"It's mattered here for a long time, and it will always matter," Amrine said. "Coaches and players come and go, but the blue jerseys and gold helmets always play hard."

FRI., SEPT. 6



at Mark Morris

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



R.A. Long

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



at Heritage

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



Aberdeen

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



at Prairie*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



Evergreen*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18

OPEN

FRI., OCT. 25



at Mountain View*

7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



Hudson's Bay*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 3A Greater St. Helens League game

PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Alec Cann	6-0	190	Sr.
RB	Isaiah Johnson	5-9	160	Sr.
WR	Kyle Chen	6-1	170	Fr.
WR	Davis Delmage	5-8	160	Jr.
WR	Kevin Chen	5-10	170	Jr.
TE	Dominic Stephens	6-3	210	Sr.
OL	Preston Collins	6-4	290	Sr.
OL	Eric Brown	5-10	180	Sr.
OL	Nakoa Dizon	5-10	180	Sr.
OL	Gage Rutherford	5-11	210	Jr.
OL	Gavin James-Dues	6-2	240	So.

DL	Preston Collins	6-4	290	Sr.
DL	Va Lli	5-10	220	Sr.
DL	Elijah Ferrell	6-1	200	Sr.
LB	Nakoa Dizon	5-10	180	Sr.
LB	Malikiah Batties	6-2	220	Sr.
LB	Dominic Stephens	6-3	210	Sr.
LB	Alex Drake	5-10	195	Jr.
DB	Kevin Chen	5-10	170	Jr.
DB	Alec Cann	6-0	190	Sr.
DB	Kury Santiago	5-10	170	Sr.
DB	Davis Delmage	5-8	160	Jr.

Coach: Adam Mathieson (12th year)



McKenzie Stadium

Near Evergreen HS,
2205 NE 138th Ave.,
Vancouver

2018 RECORD: 11-2, 5-0. First in 3A GSHL; lost to O'Dea 24-7 in the state semifinals

BEST STATE FINISH: Semifinals in 2001, 2002, 2018

Mountain View looks to reload after reaching state semifinals

Head coach Adam Mathieson got a gut-check during summer team camp at Southern Oregon University when, for the first time in a couple seasons, he taught more than refined.

When you replace 32 seniors, and 21 of whom started on Mountain View's 3A state semifinalist team, that's bound to happen.

"It hit us," the coach said. "When you have that many kids that have played (varsity) football. You're not teaching as much as you're doing.

"It's exciting to get back to teaching."

But going back to the drawing board doesn't mean a bare cupboard for a program that's won the past three 3A Greater St. Helens League titles, and four consecutive league titles at 3A program dating back to 2013. Last season's senior-heavy team lifted the Thunder to their first state semifinal berth since 2002, and expectations don't dip simply because of graduation.

"We're embracing it," tight end Dominic Stephens said. "Younger faces are stepping up, and wanting to play and are doing well. It's part of the Mountain View culture."

Stephens and his teammates are familiar with the rich culture that comes with suiting up for a program that's gone undefeated in its reign as the



NATHAN HOWARD/The Columbian

Mountain View's Alec Cann is taking over as the team's new starting quarterback.

3A GSHL champion. And players like senior Alec Cann are embracing a new role. If recent history is any indication, Cann is slated to be the starting quarterback. He

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- The Thunder's state semifinal appearance last season was its first since '02.
- Mountain View hasn't lost a league game since 2015.
- The team replaces 32 seniors, including 21 starters.

expected to be the third backfield player to go under center the past four seasons, joining eventual league

and Glen Perry ('17) who've made that transition.

Cann is up to the challenge, much like his teammates in new roles.

"Once our young guys get some experience under their belt," Cann said, "and feel the environment and game speed, there's no doubt in my mind it'll click and things will start rolling."

MVPs Andre Scheer (2016),

FRI., SEPT. 6



at Union

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



Juanita

4:30 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



at Battle Ground

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



Heritage

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



Hudson's Bay*

7 p.m.

THU., OCT. 10



at Prairie*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



at Evergreen*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



Kelso*

7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1

Open

*-denotes 3A Greater St. Helens League game



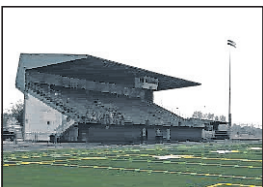
PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	AJ Dixon	6-2	175	Sr.
RB	Devante Clayton	5-10	205	Sr.
WR	Zeke Dixon	6-2	170	Sr.
WR	Treyce Teague	5-10	170	Sr.
WR	Ian Davis	6-4	190	Jr.
WR	Jimmie Barton	5-8	165	Sr.
OL	Brody Schlaefli	6-5	270	Jr.
OL	CJ Walker	5-8	250	Sr.
OL	Tim Banaszek	5-11	265	Sr.
OL	Connor French	6-3	305	Sr.
OL	Christian Lowry	6-4	280	Sr.

DL	Brody Schlaefli	6-5	270	Jr.
DL	Easton Lane	5-10	205	Jr.
DL	Devante Clayton	5-10	205	Sr.
LB	Ben Matson	5-11	190	Sr.
LB	Ian Davis	6-4	190	Jr.
LB	Duston Shelby	5-11	185	Jr.
LB	Garrett Anderson	5-11	205	Sr.
DB	Zeke Dixon	6-2	170	Sr.
DB	Nick Lawhead	5-11	170	Jr.
DB	Jimmie Barton	5-8	165	Sr.
DB	Dion Garrett	5-10	160	Jr.

Coach: Mike Peck (second year)



District Stadium

Battle Ground HS
400 W. Main St.,
Battle Ground

2018 RECORD: 5-5, 3-2. Third in 3A GSHL, lost to Lincoln 52-6 in state preliminary round.

BEST STATE FINISH: Quarterfinals in 1985, 1986 and 1989.

First postseason berth since 2011 has Falcons flying high

AJ Dixon takes pride in being part of three Prairie High School athletic teams that reached the postseason in 2018-19.

But what made Prairie's football playoff appearance so special is how that became a turning point for him and his teammates.

"It was a huge milestone for us," Dixon said. "It was cool to say our (junior) class was one of the reasons we made a push for the playoffs."

Dixon and the Falcons feel they're not done. They boast a large senior class and seven returning offensive and defensive starters from a team that reached the playoffs for the first time in eight seasons.

Prairie is aiming higher, but it didn't get there overnight.

The program has taken baby steps in recent years that led up to last season's breakthrough: reaching the 3A state preliminary round before falling to Lincoln (Tacoma) for the program's first playoff berth since going 6-4 in 2011.

Second-year head coach Mike Peck, in his third year overall at Prairie, calls this team a special group, and has it believing beyond competing for a league title. But that's first on the agenda as part of continuing to take steps forward after a big step in 2018.

"That's what we're working



MEG WOCHNICK/The Columbian

Prairie senior quarterback AJ Dixon expects to lead the Falcons' offense in 2019 after leading Prairie to the playoffs last year.

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Ex-Battle Ground head coach Larry Peck is Prairie's defensive coordinator.
- The Falcons reached the playoffs for the second time in 20 seasons.
- Prairie returns seven offensive, seven defensive starters.

hard for," Peck said. "Our kids are leading that vision and it's

cool to see them excited about where the program is progress-

ing to."

For Dixon, an all-league quarterback and an experienced at receiver, satisfaction doesn't end by reaching the postseason. Now, it's returning and winning.

"I feel like that sparks us a bit and makes us want to get better," he said.

FRI., SEPT. 6



at Parkrose

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



Washougal

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



at Black Hills

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



at Battle Ground

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



Kelso*

7 p.m.

THU., OCT. 10



Mountain View*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



at Hudson's Bay*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



at Ridgefield

7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



Evergreen*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 3A Greater St. Helens League game



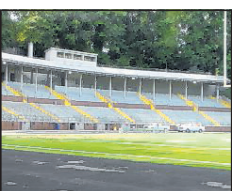
PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Trevor Narvasa	6-2	180	Sr.
RB	Niko Liufau	6-0	185	Jr.
RB	Mason Mongold	6-1	190	Fr.
WR	Eli Reynolds	6-0	170	Jr.
WR	Zeb Santa Cruz	5-11	165	Jr.
TE	Kaeleb Cvitkovich	6-2	175	Fr.
OL	Aydin Scharbrough	6-3	270	Sr.
OL	Luis Serrana Rosas, Jr.	5-11	210	Sr.
OL	Ethan Fletcher	5-11	205	Sr.
OL	Tony Bearden	5-10	190	Jr.
OL	Malachi Mongold	6-0	220	Jr.

DL	Aydin Scharbrough	6-3	270	Sr.
DL	Carlos Flores	6-0	185	So.
DL	Matt Harrison	5-10	210	Jr.
LB	Tony Bearden	5-10	190	Jr.
LB	Niko Liufau	6-0	185	Jr.
LB	Kevin Juarez	6-3	190	So.
LB	Luis Serrano	5-11	210	Jr.
LB	Amen Reed	5-11	200	Jr.
DB	Aryen Kumar	5-9	155	Jr.
DB	Brayden Vilendre	5-9	160	Fr.
DB	Trevor Narvasa	6-2	180	Sr.

Coach: Neil Lomax (second year)



Kiggins Bowl

Near the campus of Discovery Middle School, 800 E. 40th St., Vancouver

2018 RECORD: 0-9, 0-5. Sixth in 3A GSHL.

BEST STATE FINISH: Quarterfinals in 1973

By playing an independent schedule, Fort wants to get back to basics

Before it can take a step forward, Neil Lomax knows Fort Vancouver's football program must take a step back.

No matter how long it takes, Lomax said, the Trappers will stay independent in order to build up a program that's struggled with numbers and victories.

The decision, spearheaded by Lomax, to forgo a 3A Greater St. Helens League schedule in favor of an independent, non-playoff eligible schedule came in December.

Lomax's goal is simple: start being competitive against teams of smaller classification, which, like Fort, are struggling. And in turn, a win will come.

"Win a game," Lomax said, "we have to win a game for this team."

Fort's last victory came in 2016, and the program has dropped it last 23 games. So an independent status was a welcoming thought for returning lineman Aydin Scharbrough.

"I liked it," he said. "I thought that independent would put us against teams we have a better chance against."

It has. Aside from the annual Peace Pipe game against rival Hudson's Bay and Senior Day against West Seattle, all of Fort's opponents are 2A, 1A or 2B.

More than 30 players were cleared for practice the first week. Attracting incoming students who play football is



MEG WOCHNICK/The Columbian

Fort Vancouver senior Aydin Scharbrough runs through drills at practice Aug. 23. The Trappers will play an independent schedule in 2019.

a starting point for Lomax's building blocks. The program has just four seniors, including returning varsity player Trevor Navara, who sat out last season. Freshman Mason Mongold knows what's at stake, and choose to play for Fort.

His main reason: to help build the program from the ground up.

"I want to help them win," he said. "Coming here, I'm going to help someone win and help the team win — not just myself."

"By the time I get out of here, I want to be where we're not independent and were winning championships."

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Fort will play an independent schedule beginning this season.
- Program's last victory came in 2016.
- The Trappers have four seniors on their roster.

FRI., SEPT. 6



R.A. Long

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



at Winlock

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



Seton Catholic

8 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



at Cedar Park Chr. (Bothell)

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



at Rainier

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



at Hudson's Bay

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



at Ilwaco

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



NW Christian (Lacey)

8 p.m.

SAT., NOV. 2



West Seattle

1 p.m.

Fort Vancouver is playing an independent schedule this season; The Nov. 2 game will be played at Fort Vancouver HS

2A GREATER ST. HELENS LEAGUE

PROJECTED FINISH

Picks by Columbian sports staff

- 1  **HOCKINSON:** Two-time champs are much more than just Racanelli.
- 2  **WASHOUGAL:** Savvy, senior-led bunch is hungry for postseason.
- 3  **COLUMBIA RIVER:** Players have bought into familiar coach.
- 4  **RIDGEFIELD:** New coach, new offense give Spudders new life.
- 5  **MARK MORRIS:** Monarchs will sneak up on teams this season.
- 6  **WOODLAND:** New Beavers are an unknown under first-year coach.
- 7  **R.A. LONG:** The Lumberjacks are thin on numbers, experience.

BIGGEST GAMES

- SEPT. 20**  vs. 
7 p.m., Chieftain Stadium
- OCT. 11**  vs. 
7 p.m., Fishback Stadium
- OCT. 25**  vs. 
7 p.m., Nautilus Stadium



ALISHA JUCEVIC/The Columbian

Peyton Brammer (9) and his Hockinson teammates hope to keep their 2A Greater St. Helens League rivals out of reach.

Hockinson gets hype, but others have postseason dreams

Every coach in the 2A Greater St. Helens League echoed the sentiment: the league is tough. Buoyed by two-time state champion Hockinson, the 2A GSHL may be top-heavy but in a year of change and turnover — three teams have new head coaches and five teams have new quarterbacks — the league is undoubtedly competitive. With four playoff spots coming from the league this year, everyone feels Week 10 is in reach.

“We like the idea that no matter what, you’re in it,” Washougal coach Dave Hajek said.

Woodland, which finished second last season, graduated do-it-all quarterback Tyler Flanagan and

a bevy of seniors. They turn to junior-varsity coach Garrett Lutgen to take over the reins as head coach and Isaiah Flanagan, Tyler’s cousin, to helm the QB spot.

Columbia River, now with defensive coordinator Brett Smedley at head coach, brings in undersized junior quarterback Mason Priddy and an eight-year postseason run.

Washougal, which had injuries derail a promising season, returns its top pieces including quarterback Dalton Payne, tight end Jakob Davis and linebacker Brevan Bea. The Panthers are loaded with talent and feel the gap between them and Hockinson is smaller than most believe.

Ridgefield, too, has a new face as head coach. Scott Rice takes over the program after serving as a Skyview assistant the past five years. The Spudders have intriguing skill players, including track and field star Trey Knight — who is playing high school football for the first time — and bruising runner Hunter Abrams. The Spudders are a sleeper playoff pick after winning just one league game the past two years.

“I don’t see any reason why we can’t battle for one of the top three spots,” Rice said. “They want to be good, and I’ve been impressed with their hunger and excitement.”

In Cowlitz County, Mark

Morris turns to senior Cole Busch at quarterback. He’ll have plenty of weapons behind him and a big target in senior receiver Jack Shipley. R.A. Long graduated nearly its entire roster, including four-year starting quarterback Owen Enriquez. Second-year Lumberjacks coach Dave McDaniel will tinker with predominantly freshmen and sophomores in a quest to avoid another winless season.

And of course, Hockinson is the unquestioned favorite, even with the absence of Washington commit Sawyer Racanelli, who will miss the year with a knee injury. The Hawks are still loaded and 2A title contenders.

PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Levi Crum	6-1	190	Sr.
RB	Daniel Thompson	5-7	175	Jr.
WR	Makaio Juarez	5-7	150	Jr.
WR	Peyton Brammer	6-5	205	Sr.
WR	Liam Mallory	6-1	180	So.
TE	Jeremiah Faulstick	6-3	220	Sr.
OL	Nathan Balderas	6-4	320	Sr.
OL	Takumi Veley	6-1	235	Sr.
OL	Ki Haden	6-4	280	Sr.
OL	Jake Rogers	6-0	240	Jr.
OL	Troy Visnius	6-0	210	Sr.

DL	Jayden Hill	5-11	270	Sr.
DL	Nathan Balderas	6-4	320	Sr.
DL	Zach Brandt	5-11	230	Jr.
LB	Cody Wheeler	5-11	200	So.
LB	Cam Thelen	6-0	220	Sr.
LB	Daniel Thompson	5-7	180	Jr.
LB	Jake Talarico	6-1	200	Jr.
LB	Jeremiah Faulstick	6-3	220	Sr.
DB	Liam Mallory	6-1	180	So.
DB	Andre Northrup	6-0	175	So.
DB	Peyton Brammer	6-5	205	Sr.

Coach: Rick Steele (15th year)



Nautilus Field

at Hockinson HS.
16819 N.E. 159th St.
Hockinson

2018 RECORD: 14-0, 6-0. First in 2A GSHL

BEST STATE FINISH: Champions in 2017, 2018

Though skill players get attention, dominance starts in trenches

Lost amid two undefeated seasons highlighted by gaudy numbers from elite skill position players was how successful Hockinson has been in the trenches. This year should be no different.

Led by seniors Nathan Balderas, Ki Haden and Takumi Veley, the Hawks boast the size and strength to bully teams up front. The offensive line averages 260 pounds.

“What I noticed is as the season progresses, we focus on technique and fundamentals,” Veley said of what’s made the line consistently successful. “It’s more than just hard knocks and hitting each other.”

The high-flying spread offense of the Hawks takes a certain amount of discipline and awareness from its linemen. The boys up front are what makes the rest of the engine hum. That engine boasts plenty of talent in its own right. Levi Crum returns at quarterback after accounting for 4,300 yards and 56 touchdowns last season.

“Levi has definitely grown into taking leadership roles,” Veley said. “He’s more comfortable using his voice and directing the team. I’ve never seen him affected by anything.”

Crum will have 6-foot-5 Peyton Brammer, who hauled in 20 touchdowns and 1,000 yards last season, as his top



ALISHA JUCEVIC/The Columbian

Hockinson senior quarterback Levi Crum threw for 4,300 yards and 56 touchdowns last season.

target. Tight end Jeremiah Faulstick and receivers Liam Mallory and Makaio Juarez should also see more targets with Washington commit Sawyer Racanelli out with an ACL tear.

“We’ll have a lot of guys that will step up and show their talent.” Haden said. “We have a lot of guys on this team that not a lot of people know about.”

Defensively, Cam Thelen returns in the middle of the

field as a big-bodied linebacker and Balderas will wreak havoc on the defensive line. The two-time defending 2A state champions are certainly not done yet. The senior-heavy class is again the 2A Greater St. Helens League favorite, and a state contender.

“We still feel confident in what we can do,” Haden said. “I think there’s no doubt we still have a shot of going back there and winning it.”

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- The Hawks haven’t lost since Nov. 5, 2016.
- Hockinson is trying to become the second 2A team to three-peat this decade (Lynden, 2011-2013).
- Seven teams have won three consecutive state championships (Bellevue, LaCrosse, DeSales, Lynden, Royal, Raymond, Colton).

FRI., SEPT. 6



Toppenish

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



Archbishop
Murphy

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



at R.A. Long*

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



Columbia
River

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



at Woodland*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



at Mark
Morris*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18

OPEN

FRI., OCT. 25



Washougal*

7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



Ridgefield*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 2A Greater St. Helens League game

PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Mason Priddy	5-8	170	Jr.
RB	Isaac Bibb-O'Neil	5-11	185	Sr.
WR	Keith Blau	5-11	170	Jr.
WR	Jake Ayers	6-0	150	Jr.
WR	Max Sturtevant	5-5	160	Jr.
TE	Adam Huerena	6-0	180	So.
OL	Daniel Patel	6-1	240	Jr.
OL	Brandon Chun	5-10	220	Sr.
OL	Caeden Craig	5-11	240	Jr.
OL	Nick Hutchinson	5-11	210	So.
OL	Cody Hardy	6-0	200	Sr.

DL	Cody Hardy	6-0	200	Sr.
DL	Nick Hutchinson	5-11	210	So.
DL	Brayton Osterweil	6-2	190	Jr.
LB	Adam Huerena	6-0	180	So.
LB	Eddie Hockhalter	5-11	175	Jr.
LB	Dylan Kier	5-8	170	So.
LB	Atticus Kurtz	5-11	160	Sr.
DB	Jake Ayers	6-0	150	Jr.
DB	Aden Flores	5-10	150	So.
DB	Max Sturtevant	5-5	160	Jr.
DB	Shawn Rain	5-9	160	Jr.

Coach: Brett Smedley (first year)



Chieftain Stadium

at Columbia River HS,
800 NW 99th St.,
Vancouver

2018 RECORD: 5-5, 4-2. Third in 2A GSHL; lost to Black Hills 45-7 in state preliminary round.

BEST STATE FINISH: Semifinals in 2002

New head coach, next wave of players eye another postseason berth

Columbia River entered last season with two towering figures battling for a quarterback spot. Both those players are now gone, and there isn't another 6-foot-3, 200-pound body to step in. Enter Mason Priddy. The red-headed junior stands 5-8 and 170 pounds. Before he throws, it's hard to tell he's a football player, let alone the Chieftains starter under center. As he slings the ball around in summer 7-on-7s, it's easy to see why new coach Brett Smedley has tabbed him for the gig.

Priddy will guide Smedley's spread offense this season as the Chieftains eye another playoff run.

"It's a whole new offense and it's all based on spacing and getting the most out of it," said Priddy, who makes clear he has something to prove. "I just go out there and do me, and show them I'm not small and unathletic."

The offense isn't the only thing changing this season. River graduated 26 seniors and welcomes a new face atop the team, as Smedley, the defensive coordinator a year ago, takes over.

"We love our new coach," Priddy said. "He's super honest about everything and knows a lot about football."

Smedley's familiarity with the group has allowed him to quickly pick out the next wave



SAM WILSON/for The Columbian

Columbia River running back Isaac Bibb-O'Neil, center, is one of many players looking to step up after 26 seniors graduated.

of stars at Columbia River.

Isaac Bibb-O'Neil ran for 208 yards and six touchdowns last year and should give the Chieftains a weapon out of the backfield. He'll run behind a bruising offensive line that includes returners Kyle Sheldon and Caeden Craig. AJ Ahyek and Cody Hardy, too, are big bodies in the trenches. At the skill positions, Keith Blau, Max

Sturtevant and Jacob Ayers should give Priddy plenty of weapons.

And while everything has gone seamlessly in practice, Smedley is well aware things change when the lights flicker on.

"We'll know if it's all sunk in when the tough times come around," he said.

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- The Chieftains graduate 26 seniors from last year's final varsity roster.
- Coach Brett Smedley has one year of prior head coaching experience: Coupeville in 2015.
- Columbia River has made the post-season in each of the past eight years

FRI., SEPT. 6



Centralia

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



at Skyview

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



Ridgefield*

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



at Hockinson*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



Mark Morris*

7 p.m.

THU., OCT. 10



at Washougal*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



R.A. Long*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



at Woodland*

7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



at Clarkston

7 p.m.

*-denotes 2A Greater St. Helens League game

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PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Cole Busch	6-0	190	Sr.
RB	Keoni Makaiwi	5-8	175	Sr.
RB	Bryson Webb	6-0	220	Sr.
WR	Jack Shipley	6-4	190	Sr.
WR	Jamison Watson	6-2	160	Jr.
WR	Brayden Chapman	5-8	140	Sr.
OL	Marco Valdivia	6-0	230	Sr.
OL	Michael McNeil	6-3	240	Jr.
OL	Tim Sears	6-0	200	So.
OL	Andrew Hoyt	6-3	275	Sr.
OL	Olin Barnes	6-0	220	Sr.

DL	Marco Valdivia	6-0	230	Sr.
DL	Andrew Hoyt	6-3	275	Sr.
DL	Sonny Harris	6-1	290	Sr.
LB	Tim Sears	6-0	200	So.
LB	Bryson Webb	6-0	220	Sr.
LB	Timur Berishev	5-11	160	Sr.
LB	Keoni Makaiwi	5-8	175	Sr.
DB	Brayden Chapman	5-8	140	Sr.
DB	Jack Shipley	6-4	190	Sr.
DB	Jamison Watson	6-2	160	Jr.
DB	Mitchell Pelton	5-10	150	Sr.

Coach: Shawn Perkins (17th year)



Longview Memorial Stadium

R.A. Long High School
2903 Nichols Blvd.,
Longview

2018 RECORD: 4-5, 2-4. Fifth in 2A GSHL.

BEST STATE FINISH: Second in 1979.

With several key players back, Monarchs see a chance at postseason



Longview Daily News photo

At 6-foot-5, Mark Morris receiver Jack Shipley is an inviting target. He caught 23 passes and five touchdowns last season.

Mark Morris hasn't had a winning season since 2013. The Monarchs, though, see an opening this season in a competitive 2A Greater St. Helens League.

While 17th-year coach Shawn Perkins' squad graduates "warrior" quarterback Dawson Fritz, they boast a stable of intriguing returners ready to take the next step after a 4-5 season in 2018.

"Anytime you have a chance to play an extra game at the end of the year, that's something special," Perkins said. "We do feel there's a little opening. It's been really tough the past three years. There's been some good teams out there."

The program certainly feels on much more stable ground than it did in a win-less 2016. Cole Busch will take over at quarterback. The senior has a cannon of an arm and has gotten time in pass-heavy situations the past couple years. His targets include 6-foot-5 Jack Shipley, who caught 23 passes for 350 yards and five touchdowns last year, and 6-3 junior Jamison Watson. The talented crew could lead Perkins to open up the wing-T offense.

"We might run a little more of a spread wing than the tradition wing-T with our

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Coach Shawn Perkins is 78-85 in 17 years as the Monarchs' head coach.
- The Monarchs last winning season was a 10-win campaign in 2013.
- Mark Morris plays its final four regular-season games at Longview Memorial Stadium.

personnel," Perkins said. "We have pretty good size for our receivers out there. That's a tough matchup for a lot of kids."

In the backfield, Keoni Makaiwi is poised for a big year. He was an all-league linebacker last season. Makaiwi will be running behind big bodies up front in Andrew Hoyt, Michael McNeil and Olin Barnes. Marco Valdivia-Aldana returns after an all-league season at defensive line. The biggest thing will be replacing a strong leadership group that is now graduated.

"That's been the exciting thing to see that some of these kids are starting to figure it out," Perkins said. "They're stepping into those roles and letting their voices be heard in a positive way."

FRI., SEPT. 6



Kelso

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



at Castle Rock

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



at Stevenson

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



at Ridgefield*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



at Columbia River*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



Hockinson*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



Washougal*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



at R.A. Long*

7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



Woodland*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 2A Greater St. Helens League game



PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Julian Sheldon	5-7	160	So.
RB	Jacob Johnson-Valencia	6-0	210	Sr.
WR	Mitchell Bergquist	5-11	170	Sr.
WR	Gage Kotera	6-0	175	Jr.
WR	Jake Anderson	5-9	150	Jr.
WR	Anthony Barnett	5-9	160	Jr.
OL	Anthony Powell	5-11	170	Jr.
OL	Julian Illanes	6-2	260	So.
OL	Kaeden Kersavage	6-1	240	So.
OL	Alberto Balbuena	5-10	210	Sr.
OL	Josiah Smith	6-0	190	Fr.

DL	Ruben Viladez	6-0	190	Sr.
DL	Brayden Highley	5-10	190	So.
DL	Nate Castle	6-0	175	Jr.
DL	Gage Kotera	6-0	175	Jr.
LB	Hamson Eram	5-10	180	Jr.
LB	Chris King	5-10	170	Jr.
LB	Rhys Cronk	5-9	195	Jr.
LB	Jorge Aguilar	5-10	175	So.
DB	Rene Alvarez	5-9	170	Sr.
DB	Ilyas Mehrer	5-8	155	So.
DB	Jamond Harris	5-5	140	So.

Coach: Dave McDaniel (second year)



Longview Memorial Stadium

R.A. Long High School
2903 Nichols Blvd.,
Longview

2018 RECORD: 0-9, 0-6. 7th in 2A GSHL.

BEST STATE FINISH: First round in 2010.

With a new young team, second-year coach tries to build stability

With every one of its starters gone from a winless 2018, the R.A. Long Lumberjacks enter this season with plenty of questions. Coaching isn't one of them.

For the first time in five seasons, the Lumberjacks don't have a first-year head coach as Dave McDaniel returns for his second year.

"The kids do well with it," McDaniel said. "They get used to me and the staff more every year."

McDaniel, too, is adjusting to the high school game. Last year was his first as a high school coach.

"It has slowed down for me," he said. "I've been to clinics this year and it's opened my eyes how much it takes to develop a successful program. Rick Steele at Hockinson, the Auburn coach (Aaron Chantler), the Sumner coach (Keith Ross), those guys put a lot of energy into it. That was an eye-opener."

The Lumberjacks will start up to 13 sophomores this season, and McDaniel conveyed to them the speed of the game will eventually slow down. Early on, there may be some struggles.

"They're really excited to play varsity as sophomores," McDaniel said. "I'm sure they're a little concerned also. It's going to be an experience this year playing against some



Longview Daily News photo

R.A. Long players fight for the ball in a game against Centralia. The Lumberjacks return no starters from last year's team and might start up to 13 sophomores.

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- The Lumberjacks return no starters from a winless 2018.
- R.A. Long has seven wins in the past four years.
- The Lumberjacks play just three home games this season.

real athletes from teams like Hockinson."

The Jacks will turn to more

run-pass options, a switch from the power-I formation they worked out of last year.

Sophomore Julian Sheldon will slot in as quarterback, along with junior Gage Kotera. Jacob Johnson-Valencia is one of the few varsity returners and be the primary running back.

Defensively, Rene Alvarez could shine at cornerback and Rhys Cronk is a big line-backer.

FRI., SEPT. 6



at Fort Vancouver
7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



at Kelso
7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



Hockinson*
7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



Woodland*
7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



at Elma
7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



at Ridgefield*
7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



at Columbia River*
7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



Mark Morris*
7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



at Washougal*
7 p.m.

*-denotes 2A Greater St. Helens League game



PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Luke Price	6-1	185	Jr.
RB	Hunter Abrams	5-9	210	Sr.
WR	Ryan Jenkins	5-10	170	So.
WR	Aidan Hundt	6-0	170	Jr.
WR	Spenser Harmon	5-11	160	Sr.
WR	Trey Knight	6-2	220	Sr.
OL	Matthew Kinswa	6-1	205	Jr.
OL	Carson Bondegard	6-0	225	Sr.
OL	Ethan Mollett	5-11	220	Sr.
OL	Wyatt Bartroff	6-1	195	Fr.
OL	Jonathan Ketels	6-2	190	Sr.

DL	Dylan Parton	6-1	200	Jr.
DL	Trey Knight	6-2	220	Sr.
DL	Matthew Kinswa	6-1	205	Jr.
DL	Cedric Dameron	6-0	200	Jr.
LB	Tanner Roberts	5-9	160	Jr.
LB	Hunter Abrams	5-9	210	Sr.
LB	Clay Madsen	5-8	160	Sr.
DB	Matt Vance	5-7	160	Jr.
DB	Luke Price	6-1	185	Jr.
DB	Spenser Harmon	5-11	160	Sr.
DB	Matt Torres	5-10	160	Jr.

Coach: Scott Rice (first year)



Ridgefield Stadium

at Ridgefield HS,
2630 S. Hillhurst Rd.,
Ridgefield

2018 RECORD: 3-5, 1-5. Sixth in 2A GSHL.

BEST STATE FINISH: Champions in 1995

New spread offense should bring excitement, firepower to Spudders

New scheme, new concepts, new terminology. New-found success? Ridgefield certainly hopes so.

Scott Rice comes from Skyview to take over a Spudders team with just eight wins the past three years. He will install a spread offense, as the team gets away from the wing-T it has run in recent years.

The switch excites bruising running back Hunter Abrams, who is hoping for a playoff berth for the first time in his prep football career.

"I haven't seen it and that's what I need," Abrams said of the postseason. The senior ran for 1,000 yards and 10 touchdowns last season. "I feel like we're excited with the place we're at and I think we can surprise some teams."

Rice believes the more aerial-based attack will only help Abrams, who is known for his punishing bowling-ball like runs. The key, Rice said, will be getting the offensive line all on the same page.

"The offensive line is the hardest part in learning new concepts," Rice said. "We've got some dudes out there and I think we'll be OK once we get an identity."

Quarterback Tanner Roberts also returns, but will make the move to slot wide receiver. Perhaps stepping into the quarterback role will be Seton Catholic transfer



NATHAN HOWARD/The Columbian

Ridgefield's Hunter Abrams throws on a halfback pass last season against Woodland. The bruising back rushed for 1,000 yards and 10 touchdowns as a junior.

Luke Price, who applied for a medical hardship waiver. Bryce Harrison will get first-team reps until the Spudders confirm Price will be able to suit up this season.

On defense, Clay Madsen and Matt Torres will be key pieces as the Spudders try to replace league defensive player of the year Brock Harrison.

"You can't replace a guy like Brock but I feel like we've got some guys where as a

team we're going to be solid," Abrams said.

Also new to the team this year is track and field stand-out Trey Knight, who will be playing for the first time in his high school career.

"He did some stuff at summer camp that I've never seen a kid do live or on tape," said Rice, who believes Knight would generate football interest from colleges if he ever wanted to pursue that.

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Senior Trey Knight is a four-time individual state champion in track and field.
- Coach Scott Rice was an offensive line coach for the past five years at Skyview.
- Ridgefield returns six starters on each side of the ball.

FRI., SEPT. 6



at La Center

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



King's Way
Christian

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



at Columbia
River*

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



Mark Morris*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



at
Washougal*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



R.A. Long*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



Woodland*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



Prairie

7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



at Hockinson*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 2A Greater St. Helens League game



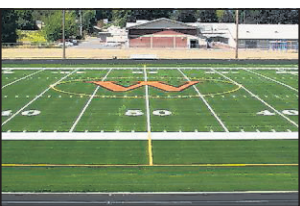
PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Dalton Payne	6-3	180	Sr.
RB	Peter Boylan	6-0	215	Jr.
WR	Judson Mansfield	6-3	180	Sr.
WR	Aiden Kestner	5-9	160	Sr.
WR	Brevan Bea	6-0	205	Sr.
WR	Jakob Davis	6-3	225	Sr.
OL	Tommy Liston	6-1	225	Sr.
OL	Korben Modoc	5-10	215	Sr.
OL	Wyatt Leifsen	6-2	180	Sr.
OL	Wyatt Grindy	6-2	240	Jr.
OL	Andrew Darr	6-2	220	Jr.

DL	Gabe Kent	6-4	225	Jr.
DL	Gus Shelly	6-0	175	Sr.
DL	TJ Tauialo	6-0	270	Sr.
DL	Andrew Darr	6-2	220	Jr.
LB	Brevan Bea	6-0	225	Sr.
LB	Peter Boylan	6-0	215	Jr.
DB	Tanner Coons	5-9	170	Sr.
DB	Preston Bentley	5-10	175	Sr.
DB	Judson Mansfield	6-3	180	Sr.
DB	Dalton Payne	6-3	180	Sr.
DB	Erik Christman	5-8	155	Sr.

Coach: Dave Hajek (sixth year)



Fishback Stadium

at Washougal HS, 1201 39th St., Washougal

2018 RECORD: 5-4, 3-3. 4th in 2A GSHL.

BEST STATE FINISH: Semifinals in 1974

With a strong defense, Washougal isn't counting out a title run

Washougal feels the gap is closing atop the 2A Greater St. Helens League. A league title in grasp? With two-time state champion Hockinson still strong, some may scoff. The Panthers, loaded with experience, are hungry to prove it.

A year after missing the postseason in an injury-riddled 2018, Washougal returns the bulk of its starting lineup.

"We've been able to pick up right where we left off," senior linebacker Brevan Bea said.

Everything starts with Bea, who led the team in tackles last year and was praised by coach Dave Hajek as one of the top two players in the league. "If not the best," Hajek says.

Bea is a disciplined, hard-working middle linebacker who is so quick to the ball, coaches challenged his teammates to make the tackle before Bea did.

"His attitude, his work ethic. He's just a football player in his mind," Hajek said of his senior captain.

The Panthers allowed 23 points per game last year, ranking second in the league, and has improved this off-season after returning eight starters.

"I think our defense is going to be really good this year," Bea said. "We're going to be exciting to watch."

Offensively, the Panthers



ALISHA JUCEVIC/The Columbian

Washougal's Peter Boylan (18) breaks through the Woodland defense. The Panthers are talented on both offense and defense, having allowed 23 points per game last season.

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Washougal returns eight starters on each side of the ball.
- Three of the Panthers' four losses last season were by one score.
- Gus Shelley had a team-high eight sacks last year.

return all-league quarterback Dalton Payne, who threw for 1,800 yards and 15 touchdowns

combined for 1,000 yards receiving despite battling injury

last season. He'll be throwing to fully healthy targets Julian Jones and Jakob Davis, who

last year.

The Panthers are also more experienced and "much improved" in the trenches, Hajek says. All-leaguer Tommy Liston anchors the line.

It all amounts to a promising chance to return to the postseason for the third time in four years.

"We're optimistic," Hajek said.

FRI., SEPT. 6



Hudson's Bay

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



at Prairie

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



at Woodland*

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



at W.F. West

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



Ridgefield*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



Columbia River*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



at Mark Morris*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



at Hockinson*

7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



R.A. Long*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 2A Greater St. Helens League game

PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Isaiah Flanagan	6-3	195	Sr.
RB	Ian Short	6-0	190	Jr.
FB	Brooks Massey	6-1	175	Sr.
WR	Hunter Smith	5-10	175	Jr.
WR	Isaac Hall	6-3	190	Sr.
WR	JJ Fuerst	5-7	165	Jr.
OL	Colton Graham	6-1	205	Sr.
OL	Dan Trice	6-0	200	So.
OL	Jason Bowman	6-3	225	Jr.
OL	Michael Karchesky	6-2	255	Jr.
OL	John Arocan	5-11	235	Jr.

DL	Jason Bowman	6-3	225	Jr.
DL	Michael Karchesky	6-2	255	Jr.
DL	Ian Short	6-0	190	Jr.
DL	John Arocan	5-11	235	Jr.
DL	Colton Graham	6-1	205	Sr.
LB	Brooks Massey	6-1	175	Sr.
LB	Hunter Smith	5-10	175	Jr.
LB	Daeton Logren	5-10	175	Fr.
LB	JJ Fuerst	5-7	165	Jr.
DB	Isaac Hall	6-3	190	Sr.
DB	Isaiah Flanagan	6-3	195	Sr.

Coach: Garrett Lutgen (first year)



Beaver Stadium

at Woodland HS,
1500 Dike Access
Rd. Woodland

2018 RECORD: 8-2, 5-1. Second in 2A GSHL; lost to Tumwater 58-38 in state preliminary round.

BEST STATE FINISH: Second in 1982

What Woodland lacks in experience, it will make up for with work

Woodland enters 2019 as one of the least experienced teams in the 2A Greater St. Helens League after graduating most of its starters from last season. But new coach Garrett Lutgen is going to make sure the Beavers are the most conditioned team in the region.

Priding themselves on the physical nature of football, the Beavers enjoyed a productive summer on the gridiron. Despite the demands of the first-year varsity head coach, the young players have bought into the philosophy.

"Most of us had Lutgen as a middle-school coach," senior Isaac Hall said. "He worked us really hard and we saw the results. It'd be a lot different if he was brand new, but we have that experience that this actually works."

It's still a stiff climb to repeat last year's second-place league finish and postseason appearance. Gone is do-it-all athlete Tyler Flanagan, who put up record numbers as the team's quarterback last season. He's replaced by his cousin, Isaiah, under center. Thus far, Lutgen hasn't seen Isaiah Flanagan feel any pressure following two illustrious quarterbacks in Tyler Flanagan and Wyatt Harsh. Lutgen doesn't foresee any pressure coming Isaiah Flanagan's way, either. The lead-by-example senior is as



NATHAN HOWARD/The Columbian

Woodland is coming off a second-place finish in the 2A GSHL behind a senior-heavy roster. Now, this year's younger team is looking to make its own identity.

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- The Beavers' JV program went 7-2 last season under Garrett Lutgen.
- Woodland graduated 21 players from last year's varsity roster.
- Several Beavers take dance lessons with instructor Andria Terry to improve their flexibility.

humble as they come, and has a supporting cast to lean on.

That begins up front with junior lineman Jason Bowman, who stands 6-foot-4, 220 pounds at left tackle. In the backfield, Ian Short is expected to take on a larger role at run-

ning back and Brooks Massey makes the move to fullback.

Hunter Smith, too, will factor into the new "Ohio State spread" offense.

"Obviously Tyler and Wyatt did great, but it's just a different skillset," Bowman said of

his new QB. "As long as he's protected, I think he can do whatever he wants."

Defensively, Massey and Isaac Hall should help anchor the squad. The Beavers feel overlooked, and aren't counting out another playoff run just yet.

"Nobody expects much from Woodland," Hall said. "A lot of people know the senior class we had was really talented. So it makes sense to me why we'd be overlooked."

"But we believe we're working harder than everybody else in the league."

FRI., SEPT. 6



at Kalama

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



La Center

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



Washougal*

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



at R.A. Long*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



Hockinson*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



Montesano

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



at Ridgefield*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



Columbia River*

7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



at Mark Morris*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 2A Greater St. Helens League game

1A TRICO LEAGUE

PROJECTED FINISH

Picks by Columbian sports staff

- 1  **LA CENTER:** John Lambert will have the Wildcats' engine roaring again.
- 2  **CASTLE ROCK:** The new wave of talented Rocket athletes has arrived.
- 3  **COLUMBIA - WHITE SALMON:** Size up front always a recipe for success.
- 4  **KING'S WAY CHRISTIAN:** Consistency will be good for the Knights.
- 5  **STEVENSON:** Replacing Isaac Hoidal and Lincoln Krog is no easy feat.
- 6  **SETON CATHOLIC:** A surprise record turnout has Cougars hopes high.



FILES/The Columbian

For just the second time in the past nine years, La Center didn't win the 1A Trico League. Now coach John Lambert and the Wildcats have their sights on reclaiming the title.

BIGGEST GAMES

- Oct. 11**  vs. 
7 p.m., La Center High School
- Oct. 18**  vs. 
7 p.m., Columbia High School
- Nov. 1**  vs. 
7 p.m., Castle Rock High School

La Center seeks to reclaim its usual spot atop the Trico

It's not often La Center isn't atop the 1A Trico League. For just the second time in the past nine seasons, the Wildcats were dethroned, as Stevenson ran the table last season to take the league crown. The Wildcats are eager to make that a one-year hiatus, and with the bulk of their starting roster returning, enter the 2019 season as Trico favorites.

"Stevenson deserved to win last year based on how they did, but we felt like the much better team," La Center coach John Lambert

said. "Our guys can see the progress we made throughout the year and are ready to really say, 'Hey, this is the expectation.'"

The Wildcats being knocked off their perch and Stevenson graduating its biggest stars has given hope to the rest of the league.

King's Way Christian finished 0-5 in league play last season, but have title aspirations now with quarterback Kemper Shrock (1,700 yards, 20 touchdowns) and his top targets — Bryce Dodge (500 yards, seven touchdowns) and Bryson

Metz (750 yards, eight touchdowns) — returning.

"The guys are tired of football being a third-tier sport at King's Way," second-year coach Brian Rodriguez said.

Castle Rock is in a similar boat with several of its young skill players back, a year older and a year stronger. Wyatt Partridge ran for 1,000 yards and 14 touchdowns last season and Landon Gardner returns as a terror on the defensive line.

Columbia-White Salmon returns three all-league

linemen and its size up front should keep the Bruins in a race for a playoff spot. Stevenson, too, will be eyeing a postseason spot despite graduating league MVP Lincoln Krog and offensive player of the year Isaac Hoidal. Seton Catholic, now under the guidance of Dan Chase, has a surprising 28 players out, its highest total since the team began in 2011. Luke Pitzer makes the transition to quarterback for the Cougars, who already forfeited their Week 7 matchup with La Center.



PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Chance Naugle	5-8	150	So.
WR	Wyatt Partridge	5-9	175	Jr.
RB	Coleman Guerrero	5-11	220	Sr.
WR	Parker Watts	6-4	190	Sr.
WR	Jayden Behrendsen	5-8	160	Sr.
TE	Landon Gardner	6-2	180	So.
OL	Jonah McGary	6-4	260	Jr.
OL	Jett Johnson	6-1	240	Sr.
OL	Eric Daniels	6-2	260	Sr.
OL	Jacob Byerly	6-1	220	Sr.
OL	Reed Ness	6-1	210	Sr.

DL	Jett Johnson	6-1	240	Sr.
DL	Eric Daniels	6-2	260	Sr.
DL	Parker Watts	6-4	190	Sr.
DL	Landon Gardner	6-2	180	So.
LB	Adam Partridge	6-2	170	So.
LB	Jaden Outwater	5-10	190	Sr.
LB	Coleman Guerrero	5-11	220	Sr.
LB	Austin McQuilliams	5-10	170	Jr.
DB	Wyatt Partridge	5-9	175	Jr.
DB	Hayden Curtiss	5-7	140	So.
DB	Jayden Behrendsen	5-8	160	Sr.

Coach: Aaron Gehring (second year)



Rocket Stadium

at Castle Rock HS,
5180 Westside
Hwy. Castle Rock

2018 RECORD: 3-6, 2-3. Fourth in Trico.

BEST STATE FINISH: Champions in 1988.

Rockets have sights on postseason with solid line, key returners

There's budding excitement from the Rocket faithful for this year's Castle Rock squad. For good reason, too.

The Rockets bring back exciting junior running back Wyatt Partridge, who ran for 1,000 yards and 14 touchdowns last season, and sophomore defensive end Landon Gardner, who had 40 tackles and six sacks. Coleman Guerrero was a two-way all-league player and makes a move to fullback for his senior season.

"They've been putting in a good summer and we're definitely excited for the season to start," second-year coach Aaron Gehring said. "There's big pieces coming back on both sides of the ball."

Up front, the Rockets return nearly their entire offensive line in addition to Toutle Lake transfer Jett Johnson. The size up front will be key in protecting sophomore quarterback Chance Naugle, who was the frontrunner for the job as of mid-August.

All of those players are multi-sport athletes, a point of emphasis for the Rocket athletic programs. The athleticism gives Gehring a solid foundation to build on as the team becomes more familiar with the schemes.

"They know what to expect now," Gehring said. "The terminology we have is easy to remember and recognize and the



Longview Daily News photo

Castle Rock's Wyatt Partridge rushed for 14 touchdowns and more than 1,000 yards last season. The Rockets return a team with ample athleticism and postseason hopes.

guys are getting better. They're adapting to the league."

With three playoff spots coming out the 1A Trico League, the Rockets are hoping to jump into the postseason after falling short in their final game of the year in last year's 3-6 campaign.

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Coach Aaron Gehring played college football at Washington State.
- Chance Naugle's older sisters, Zoe and Trinity, are collegiate softball players at Lower Columbia.
- The Rockets' last state playoff experience was in 2008.

FRI., SEPT. 6



at Hoquiam

6 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



Mark Morris

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



at Tenino

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



Elma

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



at Columbia-
W. Salmon*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



King's Way
Christian*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



at Stevenson*

7 p.m.

SAT., OCT. 26



at Seton
Catholic*

1 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



La Center*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 1A Trico League game



PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Kemper Schrock	6-5	195	Sr.
RB	Connor Delamarter	5-10	180	So.
WR	Ty Snider	6-1	165	So.
WR	Bryson Metz	5-8	145	So.
WR	Mason Packer	6-3	190	Jr.
TE	Bryce Dodge	6-3	190	Jr.
OL	Andrew Peru	6-0	215	Fr.
OL	Bailey Meek	6-4	235	Jr.
OL	Taylor Shega	5-10	200	Sr.
OL	Cole Roalsen	6-0	205	Jr.
OL	Rylee Suckling	6-3	205	Sr.

DL	Cole Roalsen	6-0	205	Jr.
DL	Bryce Dodge	6-3	190	Jr.
DL	Bailey Meek	6-4	235	Jr.
LB	Ty Snider	6-1	165	So.
LB	Kobi Cason	6-0	180	Sr.
LB	Connor Delamarter	6-3	190	So.
LB	Mason Packer	6-3	190	Jr.
LB	Taylor Shega	5-10	200	Sr.
DB	Bryson Metz	5-8	145	So.
DB	Trevyn Long	5-6	135	Fr.
DB	Kindrick Aragon Silvery	6-2	160	So.

Coach: Brian Rodriguez (second year)



King's Way Christian High

3300 N.E. 78th St.
Vancouver

2018 RECORD: 0-5, 2-7. Sixth in Trico

BEST STATE FINISH: 8-man quarterfinals in 2011.

Returning coach, quarterback give Knights much-needed stability

King's Way Christian coach Brian Rodriguez makes it clear he's with the Knights for the long haul.

"This is not a stepping stone to where I want to be," he says.

Stability might just be what the Knights' football program needs. Rodriguez will be the first coach in the past five years to stay with the team at least two years. It's given new life to the Knights, who had 25 players at spring ball, the most the program has ever had, Rodriguez claims.

The guys who turned out all summer, including to weight-room sessions adjacent to Rodriguez's office, are a talented bunch, too. It starts with quarterback Kemper Schrock, who threw for 1,700 yards and 20 touchdowns last season. The 6-foot-5 senior has garnered interest from Western Oregon and Pacific Lutheran this summer, as he continues to develop his ability to read coverage. The Knights also hope to use his legs more this season to open up the offense.

"This has been my first year having the same offense two years in a row in my whole life," Schrock said. "You don't have to think about the old stuff as much because you already know."

He'll be primarily throwing to sophomore Bryson Metz and junior tight end Bryce Dodge. The two combined for more than



JOSHUA HART/The Columbian

King's Way Christian running back Connor Delamarter gets instruction from coach Brian Rodriguez.

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- There's a new covered grandstand that seats 900 at King's Way Christian's field.
- Coach Brian Rodriguez was an assistant on the state runner-up boys' basketball team last season.
- The Knights return eight starters on each side of the ball.

1,000 yards and 15 touchdowns last year.

"I feel like we're taking practice more seriously," Metz said.

"We didn't have the season we wanted to, so we're just really hungry."

The Knights finished 2-7 and

last in the 1A Trico League in 2018. That's not something team leaders like Bailey Meek take lightly. Meek, who impressed at a Western Oregon football camp, is a 6-foot-3, 215-pound two-way lineman with college aspirations. He's applauded by coaches for his leadership on and off the field, and he doesn't mince words when talking about the team's goals:

"I'll say it: I think we can win league."

FRI., SEPT. 6



at Elma

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



at Ridgefield

7 p.m.

SAT., SEPT. 21



at Bellevue Christian

2 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



Riverside (Ore.)

6 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



La Center*

6 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



at Castle Rock*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18



at Columbia-W. Salmon*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 25



Stevenson*

6 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



Seton Catholic*

6 p.m.

*-denotes 1A Trico League game



PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Tom Lambert	6-0	195	Jr.
RB	Nic Budke	5-9	165	Sr.
HB	Jeremy Humphrey	5-10	170	Jr.
TE	Micah Adams	6-2	205	Jr.
WR	Andrew Scott	6-3	170	Sr.
WR	Andrew Kysar	5-10	150	So.
OL	Max Muffett	5-11	185	Sr.
OL	Sam Wilmot	6-1	245	Sr.
OL	Sam Kitchel	5-11	185	Sr.
OL	Clay Roberts	5-7	195	Sr.
OL	Jace Story	5-8	260	So.

DL	Sam Kitchel	5-11	185	Sr.
DL	Sam Wilmot	6-1	245	Sr.
DL	Micah Adams	6-2	205	Jr.
LB	Tom Lambert	6-0	195	Jr.
LB	Jeremy Humphrey	5-10	170	Jr.
LB	Max Muffett	5-11	185	Sr.
LB	McKai Rivers	5-8	140	Sr.
DB	Andrew Scott	6-3	170	Sr.
DB	Andrew Kyser	5-10	150	So.
DB	Sean Fox	5-4	125	Sr.
DB	Nic Budke	5-9	165	Sr.

Coach: John Lambert (21st year)



La Center High

725 N.E.
Highland Rd.
La Center

2018 RECORD: 4-6, 4-1. Second in Trico; lost to Elma 33-21 in state preliminary round

BEST STATE FINISH: Semifinals in 2003, 2016, 2017

Wildcats enter season with effective passing game, chip on shoulder

At a late July 7-on-7 in Ridgefield, La Center's Andrew Scott stuck out like a sore thumb.

The 6-foot-3 wide receiver's bounding gait is calculated as he times his leaps. Ball after ball, he hauls in. It's no wonder why the Wildcats are throwing more these days.

"Everybody always says 'Oh La Center, they can't pass,'" Scott explains. "The last couple years, we've really changed that mentality."

Scott caught 27 passes for 450 yards last season and was a two-way all-league pick. He'll also enjoy the benefits of a more experienced La Center squad, which has won seven of the past nine 1A Trico League titles. Tom Lambert returns as quarterback after combining for 1,700 yards rushing and passing his sophomore season. Jeremy Humphrey and Scott are big targets.

Of course, La Center is first and foremost a power run-based offense, and Nic Budke and Bryten Schmitz will take leading roles in an perennially successful backfield.

Up front, the Wildcats return three all-league linemen in Sam Wilmot, Max Muffett and Sam Kitchel.

"I always think they're the most important guys on the field, the linemen," coach John Lambert said.

Defensively, the Wildcats



JOSHUA HART/The Columbian

La Center receiver Andrew Scott tries to put a block on Sean Fox during a late-August practice.

return eight starters. Sean Fox, Micah Adams and Clay Roberts will be key contributors on that side of the ball, in addition to several of those mentioned on offense.

Perhaps most importantly, La Center is hungry to return to its Trico perch. After starting 0-4, the Wildcats saw amazing

progress by Week 10. A continuation of that improvement is undoubtedly the expectation.

"There's a different mentality this year," Scott said. "Last year we were a fresh team with a lot to learn. I think we're going to be a lot better."

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Tom Lambert is coach John Lambert's son.
- La Center went 4-2 last season after starting 0-4.
- The Wildcats have won 49 of their last 51 league games.

FRI., SEPT. 6



Ridgefield

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



at Woodland

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



Hoquiam

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27



Kalama

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 4



at King's Way
Christian*

6 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 11



Stevenson*

7 p.m.

FRI., OCT. 18

OPEN

FRI., OCT. 25



Columbia-
W. Salmon*

7 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



at Castle
Rock*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 1A Trico League game

PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Luke Pitzer	5-9	170	Sr.
RB	Elijah Volk	5-5	160	Jr.
RB	Caer Brion	5-7	150	Jr.
WR	Isaac Washington	5-8	160	Jr.
WR	Lance Stuck	6-0	160	So.
TE	Griffin Young	6-3	220	Sr.
OL	John Harter	5-11	190	Sr.
OL	Kyle Baker	5-9	180	Sr.
OL	Kevin Munoz	5-10	190	Sr.
OL	Jaime Gutierrez	5-8	180	Jr.
OL	Riley Limberg	5-8	175	Jr.

DL	Griffin Young	6-3	220	Sr.
DL	John Harter	5-11	190	Sr.
DL	Jaime Gutierrez	5-8	180	Jr.
DL	Ivan Polyakov	5-10	180	Sr.
LB	Isaac Washington	5-8	160	Jr.
LB	Nolan Hannam	5-10	170	Sr.
LB	Alex Arredondo	5-11	170	So.
LB	Ken Koceja	6-1	180	Jr.
DB	Elijah Volk	5-5	160	Jr.
DB	Luke Pitzer	5-9	170	Sr.
DB	Lance Stuck	6-0	160	So.

Coach: Dan Chase (fifth year, first since 2014)



Seton Catholic

9000 N.E.
64th Ave.,
Vancouver

High turnout has Cougars heading in the right direction

The word all summer around the 1A Trico League was that Seton Catholic was struggling with turnout. By the time the first practice rolled around, it was quite the opposite. A record 28 players lined up on Seton Catholic's turf field for the start of fall practice. They wore practice kits that highlighted the new co-op with Firm Foundation for the 2019 season.

"The players and students made football a priority," coach Dan Chase said of the surprising numbers. Chase founded the Cougars' football program in 2011 and coached four years before stepping away from the team. The school's vice principal returns this season to replace Will Ephraim, who headed the team the past four years.

"This is the first class that not one player knows me as a football coach, only as the vice principal and a teacher," Chase said. "Building that coach-player relationship has been a lot of fun."

Notable pieces from last year are missing from the Cougars. Quarterbacks Tyvauntae Deloney (Evergreen) and Luke Price (Ridgefield) transferred, as did wide receiver Mikey Silveira (IMG Academy). All-league defensive back CJ Hamblin, a state wrestling champion, will miss the season with an injury.

So Seton Catholic is a bit green in a lot of areas. Experience is most apparent in the trenches with Ken Koceja and John Harter returning on the offensive line. Jaime Gutierrez is expected to be a strong contributor as well.

Luke Pitzer will slide into the quarterback role and has shown promise this summer. He'll have lengthy receiver Lance Stuck and strong tight end Griffin Young to target in the Cougars' spread offense. In the backfield, Elijah Volk should see plenty



JOSHUA HART/The Columbian

Seton Catholic quarterback Luke Pitzer reads the option as he fakes a handoff to running back Elijah Volk.

of work and Isaac Washington will be a key piece at linebacker.

"We don't know yet," Chase said of where the Cougars might expect to finish in league play. "But I think we'll surprise some people."

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Coach Dan Chase returns to the program after a four-year hiatus.
- Two of the record 28 players are from Firm Foundation.
- The Cougars allowed just 15.9 points per game last season.

2018 RECORD: 4-5, 1-4. Fifth in Trico.

BEST STATE FINISH: Haven't qualified

SAT., SEPT. 7



Chimacum

1 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 13



at Northwest Chr. (Lacey)

7 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 20



at Fort Vancouver

8 p.m.

FRI., SEPT. 27

OPEN

FRI., OCT. 4



at Stevenson*

7 p.m.

SAT., OCT. 12



Columbia-W. Salmon*

1 p.m.

SAT., OCT. 19



Morton-White Pass

1 p.m.

SAT., OCT. 26



Castle Rock*

1 p.m.

FRI., NOV. 1



at King's Way Christian*

6 p.m.

*-denotes 1A Trico League game



PROJECTED STARTERS

QB	Garret Mathany	Sr.
RB	Ty Hildenbrand	Sr.
RB	Carter Bennett	Jr.
WR	Andrew Garcia	Jr.
WR	Nick Nissen	So.
TE	Austin Jones	Sr.
OL	Garret Bernt	Jr.
OL	Hayden Baxter	Jr.
OL	Ethan Haight	Sr.
OL	Jaden Swope	Sr.
OL	Kurt Lepoidevin	Jr.

DL	Jaden Swope	Sr.
DL	Ethan Haight	Sr.
DL	Austin Jones	Sr.
DL	Manny Smith	Sr.
DL	Garret Bernt	Jr.
LB	Ty Hildenbrand	Sr.
LB	Carter Bennett	Jr.
LB	Landon Pearson	So.
DB	Nick Nissen	So.
DB	Garret Mathany	Sr.
DB	Andrew Garcia	Jr.

Coach: David Waymire (ninth year)



Stevenson High

390 NW Gropper Rd., Stevenson

2018 RECORD: 7-2, 5-0. First in Trico; lost to Hoquiam 49-0 in state preliminary round.

BEST STATE FINISH: First round in 2010, '18

Stevenson still riding high after undefeated Trico League season

The famed Gorge Bowl trophy that proudly sits in Stevenson High School's lobby represents the Bulldogs' historic 2018 football season.

The 20-14 home victory over Columbia-White Salmon gave the Bulldogs the 1A Trico League title, and a state playoff berth.

It's a new season, but the buzz surrounding Stevenson's football program hasn't worn off, head coach David Waymire said.

"That's a big deal," he said. "They want to try to fight for that, and hopefully, they can do it again. That excitement already is there from last year's buzz of being successful.

"It's nice to have that already."

Stevenson made program history in 2018. It won its first league title since 1994, and ultimately, reaching the state playoffs for the first time since 2010. That year also was the school's only other state appearance in football.

Waymire, in his ninth season at Stevenson, doesn't shy away from calling this fall a rebuilding year. The Bulldogs departed a senior-heavy class behind league MVP Lincoln Krog and league offensive MVP Isaac Hoidal and quarterback Brandon Connell off a team that went 7-2 and loss to Hoquiam in the 1A state



FILES/The Columbian

Stevenson players hoist the Gorge Bowl trophy, covered in plastic wrap to protect it from rain, after beating Columbia-White Salmon.

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Stevenson is a reigning league champ for first time since 1994.
- Bulldogs graduated league MVP Lincoln Krog, league offensive MVP Isaac Hoidal.
- Program has two state playoff appearances (2018, 2010).

playoffs.

But defense is expected

to be a strength, and there's plenty of excitement sur-

rounding the underclassmen, Waymire noted.

"The younger classes are pretty solid athletes," Waymire said. "We'll get them in and get them experience. It's going to help us in the next couple years and being really solid again.

"Hopefully, they can come in and fill some of those big shoes left behind."

FRI., SEPT. 6

FRI., SEPT. 13

FRI., SEPT. 20

FRI., SEPT. 27

FRI., OCT. 4

FRI., OCT. 11

FRI., OCT. 18

FRI., OCT. 25

FRI., NOV. 1



Blanchet Catholic, Ore.

7 p.m.



Corbett, Ore.

7 p.m.



Mark Morris

7 p.m.



Irrigon, Ore.

7 p.m.



Seton Catholic*

7 p.m.



at La Center*

7 p.m.



Castle Rock*

7 p.m.



at King's Way Christian*

6 p.m.



Columbia-White Salmon*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 1A Trico League game



PROJECTED STARTERS

Returning all-league selections in **bold**

QB	Austin Charters	5-10	180	Jr.
RB	Bowen Durkee	6-0	190	Sr.
FB	Cody Colloton	6-1	220	Sr.
WR	Elijah Nielsen	6-2	175	Jr.
WR	Isaac Wang	6-3	185	Jr.
TE	Alarick Blankenship	5-11	200	Sr.
OL	Stanley Hylton	6-2	190	Sr.
OL	Kegan Brasuell	6-1	220	Jr.
OL	Cody Wharton	5-9	225	Sr.
OL	Juan Acosta	6-2	280	Jr.
OL	Tristan Williams	6-0	240	Jr.

DL	Juan Acosta	6-2	280	Jr.
DL	Dylan Muehlbauer	6-2	200	Jr.
DL	Cody Colloton	6-1	220	Sr.
DL	Kegan Brasuell	6-1	220	Jr.
LB	Bowen Durkee	6-0	190	Sr.
LB	Alarick Blankenship	5-11	200	Sr.
LB	Stanley Hylton	6-2	190	Sr.
DB	Austin Charters	5-10	180	Jr.
DB	Zavier Smith	6-0	165	Sr.
DB	Angel Sanchez	5-6	140	Jr.
DB	Elijah Nielsen	6-2	175	Jr.

Coach: Dan Smith (second year)

Bruin Stadium

Columbia HS,
1455 NW
Bruin Country Rd.
White Salmon



2018 RECORD: 5-5, 3-2. Third in Trico; lost to Montesano 32-7 in state preliminary round.

BEST STATE FINISH: Quarterfinals in 1996, 1998.

With experience and depth, big Bruins on the line anchor Columbia

Dan Smith has been around Columbia-White Salmon's football program for 11 years — first as a nine-year assistant coach and now second year as head coach.

There's been few offensives and defensive lines as experienced — and big up front — as the Bruins are projected to be in 2019.

"Those are going to be our two best units as a whole," said Smith, entering his second season.

And it's easy to see why.

For starters, Smith estimates his junior- and senior-laden lines average 6-foot-1 and 240 pounds. Juan Acosta, who started at center as a freshmen, anchors the line. He is one of the Bruins' three returning all-league linemen in addition to Stanley Hylton and Cody Colloton.

That experience on the line is key for a program that features plenty of returning faces from a 5-5 season and reaching the 1A state preliminary round for the second time in three seasons. One of those is quarterback Austin Chambers, also an all-league defensive back, as one of four returning all-leaguers.

Last season's annual Gorge Bowl game at Stevenson determined the league championship. The 20-14 loss sent the Bruins to third place, one of three losses by less than a touchdown.

That experience of down-to-the-wire finishes only benefits this year's team in hopes of competing for a league championship.



Columbia-White Salmon's Austin Charters (5) returns as quarterback for the Bruins.

Photo courtesy of ELMER KINDER

Not only for players, but coaches, too, such as Smith and his staff when it comes to game management.

"It's going to be huge," he said. "Now, we can compete at that level and not get a little bit rattled when it starts getting close at the end."

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Bruins reached the postseason for the second time in three seasons in 2018.
- Offensive, defensive lines expected to average 6-1, 240 pounds.
- Coach Dan Smith is in his second season as head coach, 11th overall in the program.

FRI., SEPT. 6

FRI., SEPT. 13

FRI., SEPT. 20

FRI., SEPT. 27

FRI., OCT. 4

SAT., OCT. 12

FRI., OCT. 18

FRI., OCT. 25

FRI., NOV. 1



at Goldendale

7 p.m.



Ilwaco

7 p.m.



Montesano

7 p.m.



at Hoquiam

7 p.m.



Castle Rock*

7 p.m.



at Seton
Catholic*

1 p.m.



King's Way
Christian*

7 p.m.



at La Center*

5 p.m.



Stevenson*

7 p.m.

*-denotes 1A Trico League game

BOYS GOLF

GOLFERS TO WATCH

GRAHAM MOODY, MOUNTAIN VIEW: The junior is a two-time All-Region golfer of the year. He tied for third at the 3A state tournament last spring after winning the state title in 2018.

CADE BRINGHURST, RIDGEFIELD: The junior returns to lead the defending 2A state champion Spudgers this season. Bringhurst was the 2A Greater St. Helens League golfer of the year and placed third at district and 13th at state.

OWEN HUNTINGTON, CAMAS: Another standout golfer from the Class of 2021, Huntington was the 4A Greater St. Helens League player of the year, 4A district runner-up in a playoff and placed 10th at the state tournament.

ELI HUNTINGTON, CAMAS: Freshman don't normally get preseason attention. But Owen's younger brother has established himself by becoming the youngest player to participate in the Royal Oaks Invitational in June. He also placed second to Moody in the boys 14-15 division of the Oregon Junior Amateur in June.

OTHER GOLFERS OF NOTE: Nick Radosevich, jr., Ridgefield; Jarrett Christiansen, jr., Hockinson; John Dorotik, jr., Hockinson; Noah Gilchrist, jr., R.A. Long; Eli Saenz, sr., Ridgefield; Ryan Snyder, so., Columbia River; Caden Whitsitt, jr., Ridgefield; Isaac Kinsman, sr., Prairie; Tyler Klepec, jr., Mountain View; Josh Kuzmovich, sr., Prairie; Hugh Foster, sr., Prairie; Chase Williams, sr., Union; Caleb Shira, jr., Camas

BIG EVENTS

■ **Titan Cup, Sept. 16** — Union hosts Camas, Mountain View and Ridgefield in a four-team Ryder Cup-format event at Camas Meadows.

■ **Prairie Invitational, Sept. 25** — Annual event at The Cedars on Salmon Creek brings together most of the golf teams in Southwest Washington.

■ **4A, 3A district tournaments, Oct. 7-8** — At Tri-Mountain.



NATHAN HOWARD/The Columbian

Mountain View's Willy Yeh hits from the fairway during the 3A District Boys Golf Tournament Tri-Mountain Golf Course.

For Willy Yeh, taking on challenges is par for the course

Willy Yeh enjoys a good challenge. After all, he's enrolled in a class called "multivariate calculus."

With an attitude like that, there's never a bad day for Yeh to play golf.

"When I'm playing golf, I literally don't care about the weather," the Mountain View junior said. "It's simply a matter of I have to time to play. I've played with it's snowing outside. I remember one time it snowed like a couple of inches, and I was outside hitting 'bunker shots.' So I don't care about the weather. When it's bad, it's actually fun. It's a challenge."

On most high school golf teams, Yeh would be the No. 1 golfer. But since he arrived at Mountain View High School two years ago, Yeh has played second fiddle to one of the top

golfers in the state — two-time All-Region golfer of the year Graham Moody.

But as you might expect, that's not a problem for Yeh.

"I really appreciated having a really high competitor as a teammate because what he's done is push me to be better," Yeh said of Moody. "When you have a standard that's really high — and that's what his golf game is — you learn from it. It's really easy to learn from how he goes around the course, how he presents himself. I feel like I try to emulate certain parts of his game. The way he plays makes me better."

Yeh won the 3A district title as a freshman and finished second to Moody last season.

At state is where Moody has distinguished himself. He won the 3A state title as a freshman, when Yeh finished 34th.

Last spring at state, Moody tied for third while Yeh finished 27th.

Even with Moody casting a long shadow, Yeh doesn't even think he's the most overlooked player on the Mountain View team. That title goes to fellow junior Tyler Klepec.

"I feel like a lot of the stuff that (Klepec) has done is underappreciated," Yeh said. "But he's definitely a great teammate, and we're glad to have him. With him as our third seed, it's going to help us go from a great team to the best team around."

Klepec won the Royal Oaks junior championship this summer.

"Tyler's actually on the course right now," Yeh said on a recent Saturday afternoon at Royal Oaks.

Moody and Yeh also get to

play at Royal Oaks after they both were selected to be part of the country club's scholarship program last fall.

"Ever since, I've got to play such a great facility, and that has helped me improve my game so much," he said. "The greens here are incredible, and the course is in terrific shape all throughout the year. Like I could play here in the winter and it feels like I'm playing in the summer."

Well, except for the weather. But that doesn't bother Yeh.

"I played at Bandon Dunes one time, and the wind was blowing so hard the carts would be moving by themselves," Yeh said. "You'd have to put the brakes on them on a flat slope. That was fun for sure. The score wasn't great, but the experience was fun for sure."

VOLLEYBALL

SEASON STORYLINES

SPIKE IN TALENT AT CAMAS: Behind reigning 4A GSHL MVP Emma Villaluz, the Papermakers are gunning for a second straight trip to state. Camas graduated just three players from a team that ended reached state for the first time since 2014.

SKYVIEW SET TO DEFEND: Last year's 4A GSHL champion will be tough to beat. Skyview returns two first-team all-leaguers in junior outside/middle hitter Lia Hawken and sophomore outside hitter Tyra Schaub.

CONSISTENT PRAIRIE: The Falcons are coming off two consecutive sixth-place finishes at the 3A state tournament. The Falcons graduated five seniors, including 3A GSHL MVP Katie Vroman. But first-team all-league middle blocker Sophia Carter, a senior, will have Prairie looking to reclaim an outright place atop the league after sharing last year's title with Mountain View.

LA CENTER RELOADS: Defending Trico League champ La Center has reached state five of the past six years. But the Wildcats must replace two-time Trico MVP Laynie Erickson, who graduated. Behind junior Tiffany Chandler, a first-team all-leaguer, the Wildcats hope to stay ahead of the pack.

KEY DATES

SEPT. 10 **EARLY TEST:** 4A GSHL champ Skyview takes on 2A state champ Ridgefield in a good early test. Camas also faces River that night.

OCT. 31 **DECISIVE CLASHES:** The 2A GSHL regular season ends with a potentially title-deciding match between Ridgefield and Columbia River. Also, Camas and Skyview vie in a potentially title-clinching match at 4A.

NOV. 15-16 **1A-2A STATE TOURNAMENTS:** The 2A state tournament will be held in Lacey while 1A teams will compete in Yakima.

NOV. 22-23 **3A-4A STATE:** The 3A and 4A state tournaments take place in Yakima.

Ridgefield reigns after 2A state title, but River is on its heels

As the Ridgefield volleyball team gathered for this season's first practice, there was a different feeling in the gym.

For the first time since 1991, the Spudders were coming together as reigning state champions.

But this year's Ridgefield team isn't looking toward this year as a victory parade.

"Today the hard work starts," senior Delany Nicoll said. "We've got to put in more effort than we did last year and be better than last year."

Nicoll, the Columbian's All-Region player of the year, cherishes last year's triumph. She also remembers how close Ridgefield's championship dreams came to being derailed.

Ridgefield was four points away from being swept in the state semifinals by Columbia River. But the Spudders rallied, eventually winning in five sets against the only team to have beaten them last year.

"It crosses my mind all the time, maybe too much, just how close that game was and how intense it was," Nicoll said.

Nicoll won't need to tell that story to too many of her teammates. Ridgefield graduated just one senior from last year's team.

Columbia River also won't need to convince many players on this year's team that they can hang with the state's best. The Chieftains return all but three players from last year's team, which placed fourth in state. That includes first-team all-leaguer Maddie Sheron.

River coach Breanne Smedley used part of a recent practice to watch the state semifinal loss to Ridgefield with her team.

The purpose was two-fold — One, to put that loss in the past and, two, to use it as a reminder that the Chieftains can play with any team, even a state champion.

"We want to face it head on and deal with any unprocessed feelings that might still be around," Smedley said. "At the same time, we want to celebrate our motto of 'River Will Rise.' We're going to rise above that."



ALISHA JUCEVIC/The Columbian

Ridgefield's Delaney Nicoll (3) is the reigning Columbian All-Region player of the year. She and her Spudder teammates are aiming for a second 2A state title.

With two of the top four teams in the state returning most of their talent, the 2A Greater St. Helens League is arguably one of the state's best. Many of Ridgefield's and River's players also play with and against each other on area club teams.

"There's a lot of good volleyball in our league," Smedley said. "We're thankful for that."

Ridgefield shares that sentiment. "They're going to be fun to play," said Ridgefield junior setter Kohana Fukuchi said of Columbia River. "I know many of the girls on the team. It's going to be great competition."

Looking ahead to that competition helped Fukuchi recover from tearing her ACL in February. After rehabbing five days a week, she was cleared to play volleyball in mid-August.

"This season was the thing that kept me above water," Fukuchi said of the grueling rehabilitation process.

Now that the season is finally here, Ridgefield is trying not to look back or too far ahead. The focus, Nicoll said, is on the next practice or next match.

"We all have physical talent on this team," she said. "But we really need to focus on the mental side in order to be good in both aspects."

GIRLS SOCCER

SEASON STORYLINES

NEW ERA FOR CAMAS: Roland Minder retired after 15 years at the head of the Papermaker girls team. It included two state titles and 12 league championships, including the last nine. Now Keri Tomasetti, a longtime assistant, is tasked with keeping that run alive with a reloaded squad that needs replacements for eight graduated starters.

HAWKS' TIME: After capturing the 2A GSHL title, Hockinson stumbled in the playoffs. There's high hopes this season after returning everybody from their varsity roster, including defensive standout Brooke Grosz.

3A BATTLE: Prairie made last year's state semifinals, but graduates co-player of the year Savannah Harshbarger and first-team all-league pick Malaika Quigley. Mountain View returns Oregon commit Olivia Fothergill and a strong core ready to knock the Falcons off.

WHO STEALS THE TRICO? King's Way rolled through the league last season behind MacKenzie Ellertson, now at Washington State. With so many key pieces gone, La Center and Columbia-White Salmon, the latter of which only graduated one, are primed to take the top spot.

KEY DATES

SEPT. 24 FINAL TUNE-UP: Prairie's preseason slate is loaded with Columbia River, Hockinson, Union. It ends with a stiff test against Camas in its preseason finale.

OCT. 10 TITLE STAKES: In a bout that could decide the 2A Greater St. Helens League title, Hockinson and Columbia River meet for the second time in a midseason clash.

NOV. 12-13 STATE BEGINS: Last year five local teams made the final 16, with four making the semifinals.

NOV. 22-23 FINAL FOUR: The state semifinals and finals take place in Puyallup (3A, 4A) and Shoreline (1A, 2A).



RANDY L. RASMUSSEN/For The Columbian

Columbia River' midfielder Yaneisy Rodriguez (8), now a senior, helped the Chieftains place third in state last year.



FILES/The Columbian

Camas defender Josephine Rein, now a junior, battles in last year's 4A state championship game against Skyline.

By investing in culture, Columbia River and Camas stay ahead

The numbers speak for themselves: 18 playoff appearances, 12 final fours, four state titles. The past decade of high school girls soccer has been illustrious for Camas and Columbia River.

Both are once again coming off semifinal bids — Camas finished second, River third in state last season. It's a familiar place to be for a pair of programs that have managed to stay among the state's elite even with the ever-evolving rosters in high school sports.

Columbia River won state titles in 2016, 2012 and 2009. They've missed the playoffs just once in the past decade and have six final four appearances. Camas nearly mirrors that with nine playoff berths in 10 years, six final fours and a 2016 title.

So how have they done

it? How have the programs maintained such consistency?

"Invest in culture," said eighth-year Chieftain coach Filly Afenegus. "A strong foundation is imperative."

The Papermakers, too, have their own culture. It's one of high expectations.

"I don't think all programs have that ability to hold their student-athletes to that high of a standard," said Keri Tomasetti, who steps in as head coach this season after serving as an assistant under Roland Minder for 13 years. "We do and can because of our student-athletes and our parents, who are tremendous."

Culture is an attractive lure to the elite soccer players, many of which opt for club teams rather than high school ball. That's not an issue at River and Camas,

who routinely have top-end players donning school colors.

"For our sport, we are very fortunate to live in a community that really values our high school sports," Tomasetti said. "We have such an outpouring of community that come to games, who may not even directly be a part of the soccer world."

As much as coaches can preach culture from the top, change — or in Camas and River's case, consistency — comes from the players. That means as team leaders graduate, new ones must fill their spots. The Chieftains make a conscious effort to make that transition seamless.

"We don't leave anything to chance," said Afenegus, who says the Chieftains focus more on culture-building than skill-building.

"We're very intentional with our players and with our leaders."

For Afenegus, that means defining success as more than wins and losses. Early in his coaching career, wins and losses defined the program in the coach's mind.

"Now, I take greater joy in getting a text message from a former player that they're using something in everyday life," he said. "Those things stick out more and mean more nowadays."

As for other programs trying to emulate what the Papermakers and Chieftains have done, it's not going to be easy.

"It will take many years," Tomasetti said. "It takes consistency in your own coaching values as well as the values you want to impose onto the student athletes."

BOYS TENNIS

WHAT TO WATCH

4A GSHL: Skyview senior Jonathan Hutley, The Columbian's 2019 boys tennis player of the year, will look to improve on his fifth-place finish at state as well as defend his district singles title.

3A GSHL: Prairie sophomore Elijah Nelson returns to defend his district singles title. Three-time league champion Mountain View will be stacked again led by sophomore James Bertheau and junior Vincent Hsu, who placed fourth in doubles at state.

2A GSHL: Three-time league champ Columbia River returns first-team all-league doubles players in seniors Max Firstenburg and Alex Miller, as well as first team all-league singles Wilson Keller, a senior who placed sixth at state in doubles. Ridgefield junior Derek Kropp, a state qualifier, returns to a loaded Spudders' lineup.

KEY DATES

- END OF OCTOBER** District tournaments.
- EARLY NOVEMBER** Bi-district state qualifiers.
- MAY 29-30** 2020 state tournaments at Richland (4A), Kennewick (3A), Seattle (2A).



Photos by ZACH WILKINSON/The Columbian

Sophomore Jake Flentke, left, and senior Kyle Mosier practice at Union High School.

Nearly reaching state title match fuels Union doubles team

Getting oh so close to playing for a state title last season is providing fuel for two Union High tennis players.

"It was right there the whole time," senior Kyle Mosier said looking back on a 6-3, 6-4 loss in the 4A state doubles semifinal. "It was literally in our hands."

Mosier, who was making his second trip to state, was partnered with freshman Jake Flentke and they were on a roll at Richland. They had a 3-0 lead in the second set.

"We even had two points to go up 4-0," Flentke said.

It was on Mosier's serve that the team from Newport broke back and went on to win.

"They hit some of the best shots in the match to break

my serve and it just pushed us down," Mosier said. "I had the better serve, and Jake had way better volleys. It was right there."

Despite being a bit down, the duo was able to recover and place third at state.

Lucky bounces never hurt either.

"We were down set point and I hit a chip that hit the frame (of the racket) and bounced over, and the wind pushed it back," Flentke said. "So we got lucky there."

Now they have that added experience to take into the 4A Greater St. Helens League season.

For Mosier, he said he's never been more excited for the season. He was a first-team all-league singles player last fall after being a

first-team doubles player as a sophomore and freshman.

"I really want that state title. For our coach, and the school," Mosier said.

Flentke was part of the 4A GSHL doubles team of the year with Naman Thawani, who qualified for state in singles.

Both Flentke and Mosier have put in a lot of time on the tennis courts to improve their game. They play the whole year round either in USTA tournaments or just hitting on their own. Mosier said they frequently get to the Union High courts at 6 a.m. before school to hit some balls.

"All the good players do it," Mosier said. "You've got to put the work in."

Flentke said reaching state as a freshman last

year gave his game new meaning.

"I play USTA tournaments, but this was a different environment because it's the whole team," he said. "It was a different kind of nerves because it's for your school instead of for yourself."

Flentke and Mosier believe Union, which was 13-1 in dual matches last fall and tied with Camas at 7-1 atop the 4A GSHL, could make a run at a state team title as well. The Titans were third at state last year.

"We have the players to do it, now we just have to execute it," Flentke said.

Mosier is just as focused, being this is his final year of high school tennis.

"I just have the end goal," he said. "Eyes on the prize."



Sophomore Jake Flentke, left, and senior Kyle Mosier.

CROSS COUNTRY

KEY RUNNERS

DAVID CARRION: The Seton Catholic senior placed eighth in the 1A state meet last year after winning the District 4 title.

SAM GEIGER: The Camas junior placed 11th in the 4A state meet last season, the highest among any local athlete in that race.

JACKSON KEYSER: Placing 34th, the senior is the top returning runner from the Washougal team that placed second at the 2A state meet.

SPENCER TWYMAN: The Camas senior clocked 15:58 last season and was never slower than 16:21. Placed fourth at districts.

LUC UTHEZA: With a personal best of 15:41, the Camas senior is a big reason the Papermakers are ranked No. 2 in state. Placed fifth at districts.

BOYS: Luke Lund has Prairie looking up ... and laughing too

When the miles get long, Luke Lund makes sure his teammates' faces aren't long too.

Whether it's a joke or other form of goofiness, the Prairie senior adds a dash of silliness to the slog.

"I'll embarrass myself to get them laughing," Lund said. "I don't care."

While Prairie's runners might have some fun, they also have serious goals this season.

Last season, the Falcons missed out on a team berth to the 3A state meet by two points, placing sixth at the Westside Classic bi-district meet. After coming so close and with five of its top seven runners back, Prairie is aiming for a first state berth as a team since 1997.

The Falcons are led by Lund, who hopes to break 16 minutes in a 5,000-meter race after clocking a personal-best of 16:19 last season.

"Breaking 16 minutes would be very special for me," Lund said. "But it would be much more rewarding to take the team to state. We felt like we had a shot last year. It was disappointing to a lot of the guys, but I was happy with everyone's effort. There's no blame."

Lund has been a consistent contributor for Prairie since his freshman year, when he placed fifth at the 3A Greater St. Helens League district meet. He won the district title as a sophomore and placed eighth at the bi-district

meet.

Last season, he finished seventh in the bi-district meet after placing third at districts.

As Lund has matured as a runner, so has his team.

"When I was a sophomore, we had a giant group of freshmen who took us to the next level," Lund said. "Each year, I've tried to grow more as a leader."

Prairie has won the district title the past two years. This year, Lund and the Falcons are setting their sights higher.

"It's a much more important goal of getting the whole team to state," he said. "It starts in practice. You can't do anything 90 percent. It's gotta be 100 percent all the time."

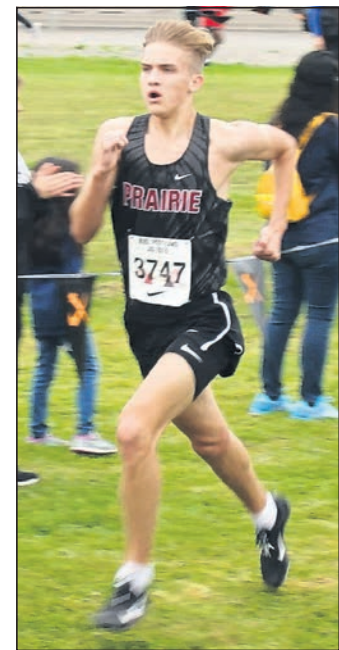


Photo courtesy of ERIC LUND
Prairie's Luke Lund.

KEY RUNNERS

ASPEN ASHCRAFT: The Camas senior placed sixth at state and third at the bi-district Westside Classic.

LARA CARRION: Placed 10th in state last year as a Seton Catholic freshman. Was the district runner-up.

MERI DUNFORD: The 2017 3A district champ and 2018 runner-up, the Prairie senior has two top-20 finishes at state.

SYDNEE DYER: The Seton Catholic junior won the district title and placed seventh at the 1A state meet.

HALLE JENKINS: The defending 4A district champ placed 11th at state and sixth at the Westside Classic.

ALLYSON PETERSON: The Hockinson junior placed eighth in state and was 2A district runner up to eventual state champ Amelia Pullen.

GIRLS: Camas brings everyone back in chase for state title

With four state titles and three second-place finishes since 2011, the Camas girls cross country team has rarely fallen off the pace.

Even a so-called rebuilding year last season turned out pretty well. A Camas team with no seniors placed third at the 4A state meet, winning the bi-district and district titles along the way.

"They were constantly surprising us last year," Camas coach Laurie Porter said.

With everyone back, Camas enters this season a popular pick to win its first 4A state title since 2015. The Papermakers return district champion Halle Jenkins and fellow senior in Aspen Ashcraft, who finished sixth



NATHAN HOWARD/The Columbian
Camas runners, center, race during the 4A district meet.

in last year's state meet.

Also back are a trio of talented juniors. Ashley McKinstry, Camryn Mock and Lenna Lukowiak all broke 20 minutes at the state meet, finishing within six seconds of each other to place 31st to 36th.

"They know what they

have to do to be successful at the state meet," Porter said. "They younger ones, they got a taste of it."

Experience is definitely important when it comes to chasing titles. Yet Porter hopes her team enters this season with the same hungry mentality that powered

last year's success.

"It you think you have it in the bag, that can be your biggest mistake," said Porter, who is entering her seventh season as a Camas head coach. "It's better to come from a humble position."

In Jenkins and Ashcraft, Camas has two runners who are equally talented, but bring different strengths.

Jenkins thrives on fast courses, running the best time of any Camas runner last season (18:14).

Ashcraft fared better on hilly courses, including the state meet where she surged from 14th to sixth place over the final mile.

The seniors plan to work together toward a common goal — returning Camas to the top of the podium.

GIRLS SWIMMING

SWIMMERS TO WATCH

HAILEY GROTT: The La Center senior and two-time All-Region Swimmer of the Year finished second in state in the 50 freestyle and 100 freestyle.

BRYANNA UNGS: The La Center junior was the 2A state runner-up in the 100 breaststroke and placed third in the 200 individual medley.

PAETON LESSER: The Camas junior was the 4A GSHL swimmer of the year and placed eighth at state in the 100 free and 16th in the 200 individual medley.

CARLY KAHLER: The Union junior earned first-team all-league honors in the 200 freestyle and 500 freestyle in the 4A GSHL last season.

ABBY CROWSON: The Union senior finished 23rd at 4A state in the 100 butterfly and 21st in the 100 backstroke last season. She was also part of the 200 medley relay at state.

SHU-TING JONES: The Mountain View senior earned first-team all-league honors in the 50 freestyle and 100 butterfly in the 3A GSHL, qualifying for state in the latter.

EMILY IPE: The Mountain View senior earned first-team all-league honors in the 200 freestyle and 500 freestyle in the 3A GSHL, qualifying for state in both.

KEY DATES

SEPT. 18 LOCAL MEET-UP: Washougal, Evergreen, Heritage, Mountain View and Union meet with Camas at Cascade Athletic Club.

OCT. 12 KELSO INVITE: Nearly every local team heads to Gaither Pool in Kelso for one of the biggest invites of the season.

OCT. 26 SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON INVITE: All local teams meet at in Longview for one of the last chances to put up a qualifying mark.

NOV. 15-16 STATE: WIAA state meet at King County Aquatic Center in Federal Way.



JOSHUA HART/The Columbian

Camas senior Irellyne McGee, right, and junior Shealyne McGee stand by the pool at Cascade Athletic Club in Vancouver. The sisters make up two-thirds of the Camas dive team, which also includes junior Lili Ford.

McGee sisters help Camas grow its fledgling dive program

Until 2017, the Camas dive team hadn't qualified a diver to state in at least two decades. The Papermakers went more than a decade without any divers in the program.

Then the McGee sisters — Irellyne and Shealyne — came along, and with Jax Purwins, used their gymnastics background to start up the Camas dive team again. Now the Papermakers are a staple on the boards at the state championships each fall in Federal Way. All three girls on the team qualified for state in 2017. With Purwins graduated, the McGee sisters continued to leave their imprint by both earning spots again at the King County Aquatic Center last year. Irellyne McGee finished sixth in the 4A competition.

Together with Lili Ford, the three are again eyeing big things as some of the only divers in the area.

"It's exciting," Irellyne McGee said. "It's cool to be part of the team in that way and be able to help contribute."

Diving in Southwest Washington can be a chore. There are few places to practice, and the commute to do so — at Tualatin Hills in Beaverton or at Kelso — is an hour each way. Camas coach Mike Bemis calls the culprit "a lack of water."

"This takes a lot commitment," Bemis said. "The girls have to wake up early, go to school with wet hair while grabbing a snack on the way. And on top of it, the divers have to drive an hour."

The McGees don't know

it any other way. When they lived in Colorado, diving was difficult to practice, too.

"Diving has never really been easy for me," Irellyne McGee said. "It's kind of a pain in the butt and it's hard to get there often enough to train as well as the girls up in Seattle do."

It also puts stress on other areas of life, such as schoolwork. The divers often don't get home until 7:30 p.m. after a long day of school and training.

"It's hard if you're doing it every day," Irellyne McGee said.

But the McGees keep coming back. For Shealyne McGee, a star gymnast on the last year's state champion team, it provides something new and different to hone her skills in. She'll

be the one tasked with keeping the Papermakers dive program alive when Irellyne McGee graduates this year. She can borrow her pitch to prospective divers from her sister.

"One of my first coaches told me that diving isn't really about throwing your body off something, it's about getting over your fears," Irellyne McGee said. "That's probably the best part."

As for the future of diving in the area, Bemis is hopeful. There's potential to have a diving area at an incoming Camas aquatic center. It could help keep the Papermakers' team complete.

"The points are nice, but it's just nice to have a full team," Bemis said. "It's a swim and dive program."

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