



TONY OVERMAN toverman@theolympian.com

Kennewick quarterback Dayton Davis delivers a pass during Saturday afternoon's 3A football state championship game against the Bellevue Wolverines at Sparks Stadium in Puyallup. Bellevue won the title, 17-13.

Kamiakin and Kennewick dominate All-Conference team

BY JEFF MORROW
Special to the Herald

Let's empty the notebook now that the state football championships are over:

It should come as no surprise that Kamiakin and Kennewick — the two top football teams in the Mid-Columbia Conference this season with a combined record of 24-3 — dominated the All-Conference Football Team, as voted on by the league's coaches.

Kamiakin — which made it to the state 4A semifinals before being eliminated by eventual champ Graham-Kapowsin — earned three of the top five major awards, as senior quarterback Henry Mercado was named the MCC Offensive Player of the Year, senior all-anything Payton Graham was named MCC All-Purpose Player of the Year, and Scott Biglin was named MCC Coach of the Year.

Kennewick — which fell 17-13 in the 3A state championship to Bellevue last weekend — boasted the MCC Defensive Player of the Year in senior Bronson Childs, and the MCC Lineman of the year in senior Ayden Knapik.

It was the second straight season that Knapik was named MCC Line-man of the Year — al-though he shared the honor last spring with Kamiakin's Aaron Tano.

There were also seven seniors who were named



JENNIFER KING jking@tricityherald.com

Kamiakin senior Luis Salgado dodges North Creek defense during the first round 4A state tournament game at Lampson Stadium in Kennewick. The Braves beat the Jaguars 56-21.

first-team MCC on both sides of the ball: Kamiakin's Graham at defensive back and wide receiver (he was also second team at punter); Kennewick's Knapik at offensive and defensive lineman; Kennewick's Myles Mayovsky at both running back and linebacker; Richland's Elijah Rodriguez at running back and defensive lineman; Kamiakin's Luis Salgado at running back and linebacker; Kennewick's Austin Stoddard at wide receiver and defensive back; and Kamiakin's Tano at offensive and defensive lineman.

But wait, there's more. Kamiakin's Mercado was named first-team quarterback, and he was joined on the first team by teammates Aidan Canada, a senior wide receiver; Andon Castilla, a senior offensive lineman; Jaxin McCallum, a senior offen-

sive lineman; and Gabe Tahir, a junior defensive back.

Other Kennewick first-teamers include Childs at linebacker, and junior Ashton Tripp on the offensive line.

Besides Rodriguez's two-way first-team honors, other Richland Bombers named to the first team are junior linebacker Isaya Galvez and senior defensive back Luke Ritchie.

Chiawana had two first-team selections in senior kicker Michael Kot, and junior wide receiver Kade Smith.

Southridge also had two first-team selections: junior wide receiver Lucien Cone, and senior punter Lance Spaniel.

Pasco senior Jamie Townsend II rounded out the first team as the kick returner.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

The University of Hawaii women's basketball team defeated Portland State 71-68 on Nov. 21.

Kennewick High grad MeiLani McBee sank two clutch 3-point field goal attempts in the final 1 minute and 25 seconds to give the Rainbow Wahine the victory.

Her last trey came with 16 seconds remaining, and it gave Hawaii the lead for good at 69-68.

McBee finished with 8 points.

Sailor Liefke, a Sunny-side Christian graduate who played two seasons at Walla Walla Community College, led the Eastern Oregon University women's basketball team to a 90-84 victory over Oregon Institute of Technology last Saturday.

Liefke scored a game-high 38 points on 13-for-22 shooting from the floor, 9-for-10 shooting from the free throw line, and she added 6 steals.

Teammate Maddy Juul (Hermiston) added 12 points for the 5-6 Mountaineers.

COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

Eastern Oregon University's volleyball team went 0-2 in pool play in the NAIA National Tournament in Sioux City, Iowa, last week.

The Mountaineers qualified for the main event after they beat Columbia International of South Carolina 3-0 in the first round of the tournament on Nov. 20.

EOU senior Breanna Shaffer, a Kennewick High grad, finished her final season with 319 kills (second most on the team) and 322 digs (fourth on the team).

Her numbers were good enough that she was named first-team Northwest Region by the American Volleyball Coaches Association for the second straight year.

Eastern finished the season with a 26-9 record.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Kamiakin graduate Parker Lee made a return for a second season with FC Malaga City Femenino, a women's professional soccer team in Spain.

Lee was named a team captain this season. Chiawana grad and goalie Cydni Cottrell made the decision to leave FC Malaga City after last season. She returned to La Grande, where she's been an assistant coach for Eastern Oregon University.

AREA SIGNINGS

- Mikailyn O'Dell, a senior at Walla Walla High School, has signed a letter of intent to play women's soccer at Walla Walla Community College.
- Othello senior Maya Valdez recently signed to play softball for Big Bend Community College in Moses Lake.
- Emmy Williams, who plays at Walla Walla Community College, has signed a letter of intent to play both women's soccer and track and field for Eastern Oregon University.
- Southridge senior Adria Parker will play volleyball next fall for Columbia Basin College after she signed a letter of intent.
- Richland High senior Joey Pearson will be playing baseball for Lower Columbia Community College in Longview beginning in the spring of 2023.
- Kamiakin senior Grayson Wilcott, one of the top runners in the state, recently signed a letter of intent to compete in both men's cross country and track and field for Washington State University.
- Wilcott placed third last month at the state 4A cross country championships in Pasco — with only teammate Isaac Teeples and Olympia's Ethan Coleman finishing ahead of him.
- Kamiakin's Peyton Rickard, a senior, has signed a letter of intent to play baseball for Yakima Valley Community College.