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## Football Pairings

### 2A State Football Brackets

#### Upper Bracket

11 W.F. West at 6 Highline  
14 Othello at 3 Enumclaw  
10 Washougal at 7 Orting  
15 Rogers at 2 Anacortes

#### Lower Bracket

12 Bremerton at 5 Lynden  
13 Ephrata at 4 North Kitsap  
9 Woodland at 8 Clarkston  
16 Port Angeles at 1 Tumwater

### 1A State Football Brackets

#### Upper Bracket

11 Cascade Chr. at 6 Nooksack  
14 Connell at 3 Lynden Chr.  
10 Freeman at 7 Montesano  
15 Life Chr. at 2 Lakeside

#### Lower Bracket

12 Seton Catholic at 5 King's  
13 Toppenish at 4 Cashmere  
9 Omak at 8 La Center  
16 Eatonville at 1 Royal

### 2B State Football Brackets

#### Upper Bracket

11 TC Prep. at 6 Toledo  
(Winner vs 3 NW Christian)  
10 Brewster at 7 Goldendale  
(Winner vs 2 Okanogan)

#### Lower Bracket

12 Friday Harbor at 5 Kalama  
(Winner vs 4 Onalaska)  
9 Asotin at 8 River View  
(Winner vs 1 Napavine)

#### 4A

11 Em. Ridge at 6 Kamiakin  
14 Mt. Si at 3 Camas  
10 Kennedy at 7 Curtis  
15 Woodland at 2 Lk. Stevens  
12 Skyline at 5 Skyview  
13 Sumner at 4 Eastlake  
9 Chiawana at 8 Gonzaga P.  
16 Richland at 1 Graham-Kap.

#### 3A

11 Monroe at 6 Bellevue  
14 Ridgeline at 3 Arlington  
10 Garfield at 7 Mt. Spokane  
15 Auburn-RS at 2 O'Dea  
12 Mtn. View at 5 Kennewick  
13 Lincoln at 4 ES Catholic  
9 Mt. Tahoma at 8 Ferndale  
16 MV-Pilchuck at 1 Yelm

#### 1B

4 Liberty Christian has bye.

# Overcoming Adversity

## Woodland Has the Best Back Story Among All 2A Teams

Nearly every team, coach or program has a great story about overcoming adversity.

But this year, perhaps the Woodland Beavers have the best narrative of all.

The community of around 6,500 residents is located on I-5, 20 miles north of Vancouver and tucked midway between Ridgefield and Kalama.

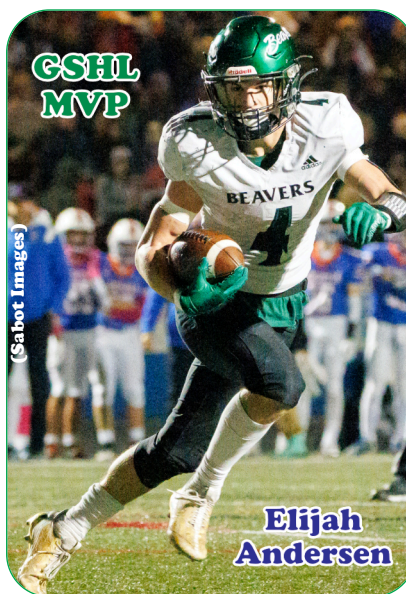
What makes their story unique is they failed a double levy last spring which had a severe impact on their sports program.

They wound up losing their long-time athletic director, Paul Huddleston; their 11 middle school sports programs, the high school C teams and school transportation to games.

The district wound up having to make \$3 million in cuts and the impact went much deeper than just sports as it affected teachers, custodians, para educators and other support programs.

"We anticipate that we will have to make addition cuts next year," stated Woodland Superintendent, Michael Green.

What Woodland is facing is not unique and with the current economic climate, it



could be anyone in the near future. "Statewide there were other levy failures," Green pointed out, "Including Kent who also had a double levy failure."

Although there are plans to run another levy; at this point, the Beavers have to make adjustments and adapt to what they're currently facing.

One of the first major impacts was losing Huddleston, who was a major force in their school district.

"The (levy failure) was a major disappointment and a huge setback, he stated.

Although he didn't lose his

job, his role was reduced to a .6 AD, .4 classroom teacher.

At first, he thought about leaving and explored another job before deciding to stay and weather the storm.

"After sitting down and discussing the situation, I became excited about how to work with the community, coaches and admin on how to overcome the challenges of our failed levy," he stated.

"It was actually really inspiring to watch everyone step up and work towards a solution instead of feeling sorry for ourselves," he added.

However, when a Dean of Students job opened up at nearby Cascadia Tech Academy, he couldn't pass it up. "I planned on finishing out my career at Woodland," he said.

But, as a graduate of Cascadia, he understood what a bigger impact he could make, working in partnership with ten different school districts in SW Washington.

His old role has been filled with three different individuals, working together for the athletic program.

Despite the setbacks, the biggest asset the football program had was their head coach, Sean McDonald, who was entering

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## Woodland Foe Also Faces Travel Issues

Clarkston sits on the Washington-Idaho border and plays in the 2A Greater Spokane League in which there are no close games.

Their closest rival, Pullman, is 42 minutes away while the rest of the schools are in Spokane, nearly a two-hour drive.

It is a situation the Bantams always face when heading into the playoffs.

Fortunately, Clarkston, (5-1, 7-2), won the top seed and are hosting the opening round. But, in the past they have traveled to Washougal, a five-hour drive and if they win Saturday, will probably go to Tumwater, a six-and-a-half hour trip.

Coached by Brycen Bye, they are riding a five-game winning streak and are led by Sage Lone Bear (6-4, 280), a first-team all-league selection on the offensive line and a two-time first-team defensive line selection.

"I am extremely proud of our team," state Bye. "We battled through losing two of our key seniors/returning starters, had to regroup and find our identity for the year."

"When we did, we really started playing football in the second half of the season," he added.

After losing to West Valley of Spokane in week four, they have not lost and have outscored opponents 40.2-13.6.

"We're ready for a battle," stated Woodland coach, Sean McDonald about Clarkston

"They're big, physical, and look impressive on film," he added.

No matter who wins the game, you can bet this will be an old-fashioned battle down to the last second.

(Woodland from Page 1)

his second year as the head coach.

McDonald, who became the third head coach in four years when he was hired, was a familiar name.

The Humboldt State graduate, was just nine miles away at nearby Kalama, where he saw unparalleled success.

The Chinooks won three state championships during his rein in seven years.

"I enjoyed every minute of competing against him," stated K.C. Johnson, now the Superintendent at Raymond, but was the former Adna football and baseball coach.

"When he took the Woodland job, I knew he would take a solid program and make it even better," continued Johnson. "His teams were always a class act and played with pride, win or lose. Kids love to play for him."

This year, the GSHL was a dogfight and the champion wasn't decided until the final weekend.

Entering the last week, a win by the Beavers would clinch the top seed, but their task wasn't easy. Their opponent was nearby Ridgefield, who was also tied for first.

After Woodland was leading 28-6 at the half, the Spudders came back in the second half, before the Beavers etched out the 28-21 victory. (It was their first league title since 2007.)

"I'm proud of this team," said McDonald, the league's Coach of the Year, who added, "It was exciting to see the crowd storm the field," after the dramatic win.

But first, they had to play a cross-over game with the Evergreen Conference #4



Sean McDonald

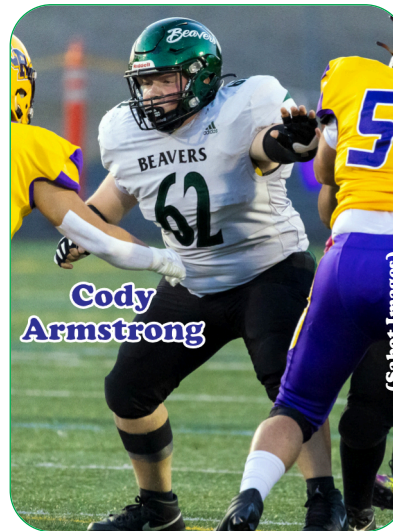
seed, Rochester, to qualify for state.

The result was a 33-8 victory.

7-1 in league and 8-2 overall, riding a six-game winning streak, they were favored to earn a top eight seed, which meant they would be able to host the opening round of the playoffs.

However, as fate has done all year, they got a gut punch when the brackets were released last Sunday.

They not only had to travel in the opening round, but it would be to Clarkston, the longest trip anyone in the 2A ranks would make (360 miles) in the first round.



Cody Armstrong

(Sabot Images)

Perhaps the seeding wasn't as shocking as the reality that Woodland didn't have any transportation provided by the school.

Their levy failure meant parents had to ferry athletes to games.

"I was nervous," McDonald admitted about relying on someone to get players to the game. "But, the parents did a great job," while adding that he felt the experience of having no bus travel during the Covid season gave them a blue

print to follow.

After the disappointment of learning their fate on Sunday night, the community came together.

Within two days, enough money was raised to not only allow the team their first experience of traveling on a bus this year, but enough for overnight accommodations and other expenses like food, etc.

"We're excited," said McDonald. "I now feel like we are set up in a good position."

"People have rallied around our kids," added Huddleston, the former AD. "To make sure they still have opportunities whether it's club ball for middle school and younger kids or like what we've seen this week with the fundraiser."

Keys for Woodland include multi-purpose junior Elijah Andersen, the GSHL MVP, and a force on both sides of the ball. He is a running back, and Wildcat quarterback, who has scored 30 TD's.

The defense is led by sophomore Karsen Northcut, a linebacker who also plays running back.

All-League selections include: TE Chase Hall, Jr., OL Cody Armstrong, Sr., DL Logan Busig, Jr., DB Brett Martynowicz, Sr.

Second teamers included Northcut as a RB, OL Seth Popp, Jr., And DL Charles Elkinton, Jr.

The team will leave Friday at 10 AM for Clarkston, stop halfway in Hermiston, Oregon to practice before traveling North to their destination.

Their game will be played Sat., Nov. 11 at 12 noon in Clarkston with the winner advancing to probably play at top-rated Tumwater. ♦



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