Friday's football game rescheduled for 1 p.m.

This Friday, varsity football players will play under the sunshine rather than the lights at Bulldog Memorial Stadium.

Kickoff against Homedale will be at 1 p.m. The original game was scheduled for 7 p.m.

There are two reasons for the change. First, there weren't enough officials to cover an evening game. When athletic director Tim Smith found out the Northeast Oregon association didn't have coverage, he contacted the association in Ontario.

“We had the game covered,” Smith said.

Then came bad news: the Malheur association was short to cover their own games, so couldn't officiate Baker's evening game.

Smith said moving the game to Thursday or Saturday wasn't an option. Thursday wouldn't allow a full week of recovery from Baker's game last Friday. On Saturday, the football players – along with other high school teams – are committed to helping at Cycle Oregon as a fundraiser for the program.

“Our athletic teams stand to make $9,000,” Smith said.

Although Baker School District normally does not have school on Fridays, this week is an exception because there was no school on Monday.

“It's not ideal at all,” Smith said. “It's unfortunate we don't have enough officials to cover games.”

School on Friday runs regular hours, with dismissal at 3:30 p.m.

“The student section will definitely be limited,” Smith said.
He's hoping to take a scheduled pep assembly outside to the football game.

“For real life pep,” he said.

Smith said the rest of the football season schedule should remain unchanged. As for other sports, he said volleyball has enough officials to cover games, but soccer is being affected by the shortage.

New sports officials receive training – including on the job – and are paired with a veteran official. Pay per game varies from $40 to $60, depending on the level. To become an official or for more information, go to www.osaa.org and click on “Become an official.” Candidates must be older than 18, register with OSAA, and pass a background check. Another resource for information is www.osaa.org/new-officials/index.html.

The commissioners for each sport are listed online at www.osaa.org/officials along with their contact information. Contacts for the Northeast Oregon area are:
Pete Caldwell: 541-910-7020
Dave Comfort: 541-910-3754
Heidi Justus: neovba@gmail.com

About Baker School District 5J
Nationally recognized Baker School District 5J (BSD) in Baker City, OR, is the largest of three rural school districts in Baker County, serving 1,700 students and employing over 235 educators and staff. District elementary schools include Brooklyn Primary School, Haines Elementary, Keating Elementary School, and South Baker Intermediate. Baker Middle School and two high schools, Baker High School and Eagle Cap Innovative High School, are also part of BSD. Additionally, BSD sponsors two charter schools, Baker Web Academy and Baker Early College, each offering teacher-supported online education. BSD provides next generation education for the future of Eastern Oregonians and launched Baker Technical Institute (BTI), a career and technical program that partners with regional employers and industry experts to provide an innovative education in hands-on fields. BSD believes strong schools are the foundation of strong and vibrant communities and is committed to prepare students to become successful life-long learner.

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The Baker 5J schools exist to be the center of community vitality eliminating the barriers for gratifying individual educational experiences in order to have capable contributing citizens with character.