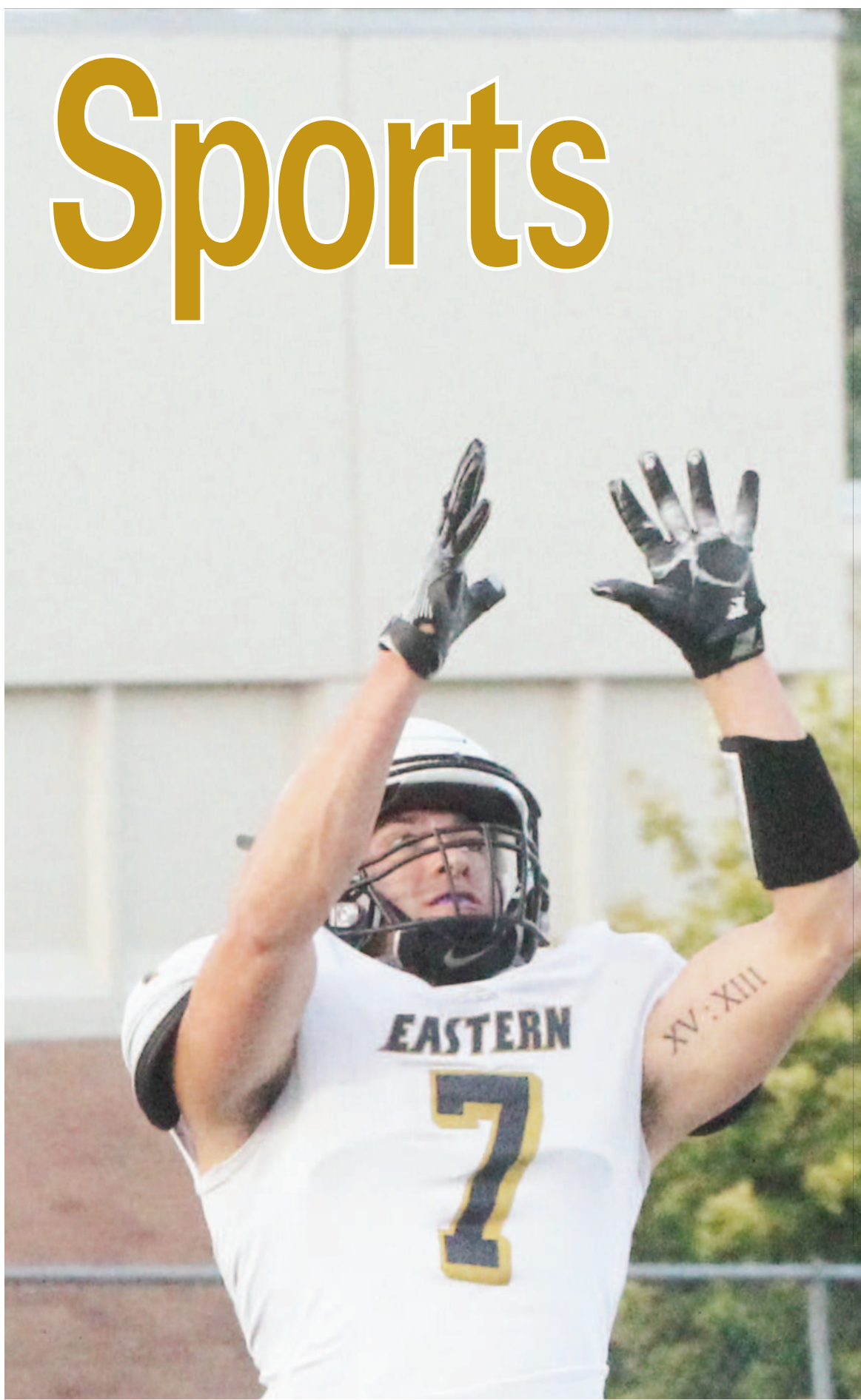


Sports



College of Idaho
at
Eastern Oregon
6 p.m. Sat., Community Stadium

Ronald Bond/The Observer

Eastern Oregon wide receiver Nico Chavez leaps for a catch during the Mountaineers' practice Wednesday night. EOU hosts College of Idaho in the season opener Saturday.

■ Mountaineer football team to employ a speed aspect as it begins 2018 season Saturday night on new Community Stadium turf

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

Twelve to 14 seconds. That is the amount of time Eastern Oregon football Head Coach Tim Camp wants to see between snaps when the Mountaineers take the field for their home opener Saturday night against College of Idaho. The move to the up-tempo style of

offense is actually a return to what EOU first did when Camp arrived on campus more than a decade ago. The plays Eastern runs will still be much the same as a year ago — just faster.

"(It's) not so much philosophy has changed, but the emphasis on how we attack somebody has changed," said Camp, who enters his 11th year as head coach.

He said it requires the team to be fit and keep focused mentally, but he believes the team is ready for the change.

"You're going to have some three-and-outs (but) you have to stay composed," he said. "Our guys are in shape. They're conditioned to run this offense."

Running back Victor Dias said the players have adapted well to

the offense, adding "it's been fully embraced by all of our guys."

He noted, though, it will require execution for EOU to start the 2018 season on the right track. That was something often lacking during the Mountaineers' 4-6 campaign a year ago.

"We need to be able to limit our mistakes," he said. "We were inconsistent last year. If we play consis-

tent, we'll be effective on offense."

Dias is just one of the players back for EOU as it looks to end a two-game skid against the Coyotes, who last year went 6-5.

Dias was the Mountaineers' No. 2 leading rusher last fall with 539 yards, trailing only quarterback Kai Quinn, who paced the ground game with 570 rushing yards to go with
See Game Day / Page 3C

EOU men's soccer opens under the lights

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

Eastern Oregon's new men's head soccer coach, Zach Mills is big on possession, and wants to implement that playing style this fall.

He'll get his first real opportunity to see how the Mountaineers adapt to the format when they open the season tonight against Whitworth in the first official contest on the new turf field at Community Stadium.

"I don't know for sure if (EOU has) been a big possession team before," Mills said. "I think maybe they tried to. But I'm all about (possession). Luckily with (our) personnel, we're going to keep the ball. We're going to knock it around. And we're going to play fast, but we're going to play smart."

Mills said being a possession team can sometimes mean a lengthy build-up to a shot attempt, but that will be far from the case for the Mountaineers this fall.

"I want to coach exciting soccer," he said. "A lot of teams who play possession like to work for that quality and are building up to where they can't miss. They have this perfect on-the-platter shot. We're going to be running early, quick and fast. As soon as we see those opportunities (to score), we're (taking them)."

He said, ideally, that could mean his team gets

off between 25-30 shots per contest.

And he believes the players are in place to do it, even though they have had to quickly adapt to his style — he's been the head coach for less than a month.

"I'm thankful that the guys Ken (Huber, former EOU head coach) did pick up are very talented players, because they are not my style at all — or haven't been — (but) because they're young players, they're already adjusting, and they're playing like I want them to," he said. "They're coachable. They don't care how it gets done."

The new coach is also addressing an area that he felt was lacking a year ago — discipline. EOU will be feeling the effect of Mill's stance with three players unable to take the pitch for tonight's opener due to either yellow or red cards acquired late last season.

"I'm going to make sure this team knows its roles and places. Those yellow and red cards (are) gone," he said.

Steven Beaudry, one of EOU's senior returners from last fall's team that went 8-8-1, said the players are already adapting to the style of Mills.

"The coaches don't put up with anything. If we're slacking, we're on the line running, which is how it should be," he said. "We've been working hard in the weight (room), which is something



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Members of the Eastern Oregon men's soccer team goes through drills during practice Thursday night at Community Stadium. The Mountaineers open the 2018 campaign tonight against Whitworth.

we haven't done before. We're stronger than ever, for sure."

Beaudry said getting used to a third head coach in as many seasons, especially in such a short time frame, was "weird" at first, "but the transition was smooth. It took (just) one or two days to realize we're going to have to take him seriously. He said in the classroom the first day, 'I'm here to win,' and he hasn't stopped saying that."

Abraham Garcia, a senior transfer from Fisher College, said Mills' approach is for things to be carefree off the field, but added "in practice it's totally different — you

have to pay attention."

"I have confidence (in Mills)," he added. "I believe (in) what he's trying to do for us."

Beaudry is one of seven players returning who started at least 12 matches last fall. Mills pointed to the senior as one of the key pieces this fall and said his impact was evident in one of EOU's preseason scrimmages. Beaudry was ineligible for one scrimmage.

"When he stepped on the field for the (next) scrimmage when he was eligible, you could see the game change," Mills said.

See Soccer / Page 4C



Ronald Bond/The Observer

EOU goalkeeper Aidan Wright made 43 saves last fall.

