The Observer

Casey resigns after 24 years, three titles with Beavers

By Anne M. Peterson The Associated Press

Oregon State baseball coach Pat Casey, who led the Beavers to three national championships, has announced his retirement after

Casev's most recent College World Series title came this summer, follow-

24 seasons with the team.

ing back-to-back titles in 2006 and 2007. Since 2005, the Beavers have made the NCAA tournament field 12 times and they've advanced to Omaha six times. The team also won five conference championships under

"My problem is, what I expect from my players on the field I expect out of myself," Casey said during an emotional news conference in Corvallis on Thursday. "Right now I'm not positive that I can give that same effort that I expect of them, I'm not sure I can. But I will never put the uniform on unless I do it with that same passion I expect of

Casey was hired by the Beavers in 1995 after a stint at Division III George Fox. He compiled a 900-458-6 (.662) record at Oregon State.

"I've been doing this for 31 years. I wish I was one of those guys who could tell you I wouldn't change a thing, because I'm not one of those guys," Casey said. "I wish I

was as good a coach day one as I was the last day, I wish I would have made every player better, I wish I would have been a guy that didn't make any mistakes. That doesn't happen in coaching."

The Beavers went 55-12-1 this season. The team swept through the regional and super regional rounds before losing their CWS opener. They won four straight elimination games to reach a best-of-three finals against Arkansas.

Rumors had swirled this summer after the championship run that the 59-yearold native of Oregon might retire.

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Eastern back on the course

By Ronald Bond

It's not easy to replace an all-American runner.

And yet that's what the No. 7 Eastern Oregon men's cross country team will have to do this fall if it hopes to remain in the top 10 in the nation with the graduation of Nic Maszk, who placed 11th at nationals a year ago.

EOU Head Coach Ben Welch said the Mountaineers will have to do that with depth, adding the 2018 edition of the Mountaineers may be in a position to do that based on some of their preseason workouts.

"Depth is going to be the key," Welch said. "Our time trial was faster through (the top) seven than we were last year."

EOU does return a handful of athletes who helped the program to a seventh place finish at nationals last November, including their next four top finishers behind Maszk in Alex Navarro (66th place at nationals), Dustin Zimmerly (78th), Thomas Morrell III (86th) and Lane Inwards (119th).

"We're excited," Inwards, a senior, said. "It's fun to have a big returning group. You know what you're working with. We lost Nic which is going to hurt, (but) we're ready to take that position (as team leaders) and take on the new class we got."

Welch said there is a chance Navarro may be redshirted this fall, but added the senior is having an impressive preseason, so that decision could change by the time EOU takes the course in its home opening meet Sept. 21.

Brandon Hartill is the fifth returner of the seven athletes who competed at nationals a year

ago, where he placed 233rd. Welch said he's confident in the runners who are back.

"They're all more fit than they were by and large last year," he

Transfer Hunter Kratz and returning sophomore Hunter Schiess will be in the mix, as will freshmen Travis Running and Braxton Wilson, both from Hood

"They have talent and a willingness to work hard," Welch said. And while it could be expected,



Eastern Oregon men's runners Lane Inwards, left, Dustin Zimmerly, center, and Thomas Morrell III are among the returners for the No. 7 Mountaineers.

the coach added there isn't pressure on the team to build on the expectations that come with a No. 7 finish from last year with so many pieces back.

"It's more incentive. I don't think this group views that as pressure," he said.

Inwards agreed.

"For teams there it could be, but I don't think our team feels that. It's something we expected to see," he said.

The Eastern Oregon women's team is also largely intact from a year ago with the biggest loss being Rachel Roelle, who just missed out on being an all-American at nationals a year ago.

The Mountaineers take to the course with several returners and a large freshman class, many of whom could be in the mix right away for Welch.

"Very excited about them," he said. "They came in prepared. It's the biggest freshman group we've had in decades. I think the last See EOU / Page 9A



Sophomore Megan Boals is one of the top returners for the EOU women's team.

WOMEN'S COLLEGE SOCCER

EOU women keep spotless record intact, now 4-0

An error in the NAIA rankings moved the Eastern Oregon women's soccer team up another spot in the coaches poll Wednesday.

That same day, the Mountaineers picked up their first of two wins in California to improve to 4-0.

No. 19 EOU defeated Sierra Nevada Wednesday, 2-1, the followed with a 4-3 win over Hope International Thursday in a pair of matches played in Tahoe Vista, California.

The updated poll put Eastern in a tie for 19th with Embry-Riddle, Arizona, a team EOU beat earlier in the season.

The Mountaineers kept their winning ways up, even though they surrendered goals for the first time this season.

Kaitlyn McLeod scored in the final minute of the first half for a 1-0 lead at the half against Sierra Nevada.

Sierra Nevada scored in the 61st minute on a goal by Annie Clements — the first allowed by Eastern in 241 minutes of action, not counting the weather-canceled season opener — but Taylor Boyer gave EOU the lead for good 6-1/2 minutes later when she scored off a Sierra Nevada turnover.

EOU outshot Sierra Nevada 18-8 and 10-4 in shots on goal. Cydni Cottrell had three saves for EOU.

Thursday EOU raced out to a 2-0 halftime lead against Hope International on goals by Mackinley Gregus in the 21st minute and Morgan Farrington in the 31st minute.

Boyer made the score 3-0 with a goal early in the second half, but HIU rallied with two goals in a two-minute span from Madison Rutledge and Leigha Williams to cut the margin to one.

A goal by Camie Edgington bumped the lead back to 4-2. HIU's Natalie Valdez scored another goal late, but the Royals couldn't find the equalizer. EOU was opportunistic on offense, given it was outshot 24-12, and 12-8 in shots on goal.

Cottrell recorded seven saves for Eastern.

The Mountaineers begin their run at a second straight Cascade Collegiate Conference title Sept. 14 at Providence in Great Falls, Montana.

PREP SPORTS ROUNDUP

Elgin, Enterprise both pick up Special District 3 victories Thursday

Observer staff

A week after beginning the season with a close loss a week ago, the Elgin football team opened Special District 3 play with a close victory, edging Cove on the road Thursday night, 28-26.

"This was a big win for us after last week's loss to Imbler. Last year we lost to Cove at home, and we've had this game circled for a long time, so we were happy to get out of Cove with the win," Huskies' Head Coach Jeff Rysdam said.

Elgin's Tristan Simpson blocked a Cove punt with about five minutes to play, then punched in the game-tying touchdown from a yard out with 3:42 to play. Gage McKay followed with the eventual winning two-point conversion.

Simpson rushed for 68 yards

and was also 8-for-21 for 92 yards and two total touchdowns. McKay rushed for 45 yards.

Wacey Fite led Cove with 110 yards receiving, 77 yards rushing and four total touchdowns. Cameron Dillman added 35 yards rushing.

"It was a hard fought game by both sides, but we were unable to overcome all of our penalties and turnovers," Cove Head Coach Shawn Parker said

Elgin (1-1 overall, 1-0 SD3) plays at home for the first time next Friday when it hosts Wallowa. Cove (1-1, 0-1) travels to Adrian/Jordan Valley next Friday.

OUTLAWS PICK UP VICTORY

Enterprise picked up its first victory of 2018, topping Ione, 24-14, in Special District 3 play Thursday

Stats were not available.

The Outlaws (1-1 overall, 1-1 SD3) travel to Imbler next Friday.

Prep volleyball **TIGERS EDGE BUCKAROOS**

Claire Hardy recorded 20 kills, and La Grande posted a comefrom-behind five-set road win over Pendleton Thursday, 26-24, 22-25, 22-25, 25-15, 25-8.

Hardy was one of three Tigers in double-figures with kills, joined by Jayce Seavert with 13 and Kenzie Williams with 10. Williams also had 27 assists, one behind Jacie Howton's team high of 28. Riana Scott had 11 digs, while both Seavert and Felicity Houston had 10.

The Tigers (4-1 overall) host McLoughlin Tuesday to begin Greater Oregon League play. **ENTERPRISETOPS COVE**

Enterprise got back in the win column Thursday by taking a tight four-set match from Cove, 25-21, 23-25, 25-21, 25-20.

Lexie Gassett led the Outlaws with six kills. Shelby Moncrief recorded 14 digs and Rilyn was a perfect 16-for-16 serving.

"We were working on implementing a new defense and I was really pleased with the team's patience with it," Enterprise Head Coach Lisa Farwell said. "Our serve receive was not what it usually is. Cove had some strong servers that rattled my passers."

Stats were not available for Cove. Enterprise (3-2 overall) travels to Elgin Saturday, while Cove (2-3) hosts Elgin today.

PANTHERS ROUT PINE EAGLE

Imbler moved to 2-0 in the Old Or-

egon League by blasting Pine Eagle in three sets, 25-9, 25-16, 25-7.

The Panthers rolled in large part due to their service game. Imbler had 24 aces, led by nine from Sydney Treat and six by Gracey Smith.

Caysie McGinness led the offense with 10 kills and added nine digs on defense, while Smith recorded four kills. Karrington Troyer dished out 22 assists, and Aspen Smith had 11 digs.

Imbler (5-3 overall, 2-0 OOL) is at the Griswold Tournament Saturday. **BOBCATSTAKE DOWN WALLOWA**

Union picked up its second win of the season with a sweep of Wallowa at home Wednesday, 25-20, 25-6, 26-24.

Stats were not available. Union (2-2 overall) is at the Summit Springs Tournament Saturday, while Wallowa (1-5) hosts Powder Valley to-

day in an Old Oregon League match.