

Tigers open GOL play with sweep of Mac-Hi



Ronald Bond/Observer file photo

Claire Hardy, shown last week against Grant Union, had 17 kills in La Grande's sweep of McLoughlin Tuesday.

Observer staff

The La Grande Tigers volleyball team opened Greater Oregon League play in dominant fashion.

Claire Hardy posted 17 kills, leading La Grande to a home sweep of McLoughlin Tuesday, 25-11, 25-12, 25-13.

"Great team effort," Head Coach Melinda Becker-Bisenius said. "All 11 players contributed to our success tonight. (I'm) very proud of how well we played regardless of who was in the game. Claire came up big for us tonight in the hitting department and on offense."

Jayne Seavert tallied team highs with 15 digs and six aces, Felicity Houston chipped in with 12 digs and four aces and Riana Scott added nine digs. Kenzie Williams recorded a team-best 17 assists and Jacie Howton added 14 assists.

The Tigers (5-1 overall, 1-0 GOL) travel to the Baker Tournament Friday.

Also EAGLES GET PAST WALLOWA

The Joseph Eagles improved to 2-0 in Old Oregon League play, picking up a close four-

set road victory over the Wallowa Cougars Tuesday, 26-24, 19-25, 25-17, 29-27.

Sabrina Albee led the Eagles with 17 kills. Emma Hite added 11 kills and seven assists, and Madelyn Nelson had 14 digs.

Shanna Rae Tillery led the Cougars with 10 kills, and Riley Ferre added nine kills.

"I feel the girls keep improving every game," Wallowa Head Coach Janea Hulse said. "Joseph is another tough team and I felt that we battled with them very well."

The Eagles (9-5 overall, 2-0 OOL) host Cove Thursday, while Wallowa (1-7, 0-2) travels to Elgin Friday.

GRISWOLD SWEEPS ELGIN

The Elgin Huskies were handed a straight-set Old Oregon League loss at Griswold Tuesday, falling 25-10, 25-21, 25-13 in Helix.

Kaelin Evans led the Huskies' attack with three kills, Tymra Anderson had five assists, Jayden Palmer recorded two blocks and Shelby Sannar had an ace.

Elgin (1-6 overall, 0-3 OOL) hosts Wallowa Friday.

LHS girls soccer moves to 4-0

Observer staff

Lexee Gomes scored a goal and assisted on two others, leading the La Grande Tigers girls soccer team to a 3-0 road victory against the Riverside Pirates Tuesday in Boardman. It's La Grande's fourth straight victory to open the season.

"We played amazing," Head Coach Kristen Rice said. "One of our better games so far this season. We possessed the ball very well, moved off the ball to get open and found each other's feet. The speed of play was awesome and (the) overall game was a big success for us."

Gomes assisted both first-half goals for La Grande, with Katie Perry giving La Grande a 1-0 lead and Bethany Brock scoring later to make it 2-0 at the half. Gomes scored in the second half off a pass from Perry for the final margin.

Faith Akers recorded eight saves for the Tigers (4-0 overall), who travel to Baker Saturday to begin Greater Oregon League play.

Pair of Beavers leading the Pac-12 in rushing

By Anne M. Peterson
The Associated Press

There's already a somewhat surprising development early in the Pac-12 season. The top two backs aren't named Love and Gaskin, but instead Jefferson and Pierce. And they're from Oregon State.

Yes, they're Beavers.

The Pac-12's 2018 class of running backs is unquestionably led by Stanford's Bryce Love, a Heisman finalist last year who returned for his senior year. Washington's Myles Gaskin came back for another season, too. Utah's Zack Moss is also considered a rusher to watch this fall.

But a pair of Beavers — Jermar Jefferson and Artavis Pierce — lead the Pac-12 in average yards in the early going. That's notable considering Oregon State's opening opponent was Ohio State.

Pierce, who ran for 168 yards and two touchdowns in the loss to the Buckeyes, injured his elbow in the Beavers' 48-25 victory over Southern Utah last Saturday. A junior, Pierce was widely considered the heir apparent to Ryan Nall, who decided to skip his final season at Oregon State and go pro.

Pierce is out for some four weeks, a blow to a team that won just one game last season.

But the Beavers may be OK without him for the time being, thanks to Jefferson.

The freshman from Harbor City, California, near Los Angeles, took the game over after Pierce went down and ran for 238 yards and four touchdowns. The only two Beavers in school history with more yards in a game were Bill Enyart, who holds the record with 299 in a game in 1968, and Steven Jackson, with 239 in a game in 2002.

"It's crazy. It's crazy," Jefferson told reporters afterward. "It's a big experience."

Jefferson is atop the depth chart for the Beavers' game at Nevada on Saturday, but Oregon State coach Jonathan Smith said he'll make sure other backs get in the mix, too.

"I'm not into having one featured



Andy Cripe/The Corvallis Gazette-Times via AP

Oregon State's Jermar Jefferson carries the ball down the sideline against Southern Utah on Saturday in Corvallis.

back, especially this early in the season," Smith told reporters Monday. "Those guys can get worn out. Too many carries early in the year can cost you later in the year."

Jefferson currently leads the Pac-12 with an average of 142.5 yards through two games. Again, it's early, but it's an encouraging sign for the Beavers, who could use any success that comes their way.

A look at what's going on with the ground game elsewhere in the Pac-12:

All you need is Love: After being held to 29 yards rushing in Stanford's opener against San Diego State, Love ran for 136 yards and a touchdown in last weekend's 17-3 victory over USC. Known for his long runs, Love had a 59-yard dash that led to a field goal in the third quarter. He's sitting out ninth-ranked Stanford's game Saturday against UC Davis with an unspecified injury.

A Heisman Trophy finalist who ran for 2,118 yards last season, Love eschewed going pro this season to get his Stanford degree.

Stanford coach David Shaw has done his best to mitigate the pressure on his star rusher.

"There's no pressure to have a certain number of yards, or impress a certain number of voters. We can't worry about that stuff. Because at the end of the year, hopefully we win as many games as we can win and if they want to hand some of our guys awards, that's great, if they don't, who cares? That's not up to us," Shaw said.

It keeps you runnin': A lot was expected from Moss after he rushed for 1,173 yards and 10 touchdowns for Utah last season. Moss ran for 150 yards and a touchdown in the Utes' season-opening win over Weber State, but the running game faltered a bit last week in the 17-6 victory at Northern Illinois.

Utah gained just 68 yards on the ground. Moss had 66 of those yards on 16 carries, with a touchdown. Coach Kyle Whittingham said it's important to get the junior more involved.

"The bottom line is we think he's one of our most potent weapons, and one of our most productive and valuable offensive players. We've got to make sure we utilize him," the coach said. "Last week he had 16 carries; that probably was not enough."

The Utes host No. 10 Washington on Saturday night for a Pac-12 After Dark game.

I can see for Myles: Gaskin had 75 yards rushing in the Huskies' opening loss to Auburn, putting him ahead of Napoleon Kaufman for the school's career rushing record. But he was limited to 53 yards on 15 carries in last weekend's win over North Dakota.

Coach Chris Petersen said it just makes sense that a team's rush takes longer to develop.

"You practice the pass game all the time. You can throw all the time. But to practice really the running game and put pads on and have those five guys getting real reps, it takes a while to get into that rhythm," he said.

All together now: No. 20 Oregon had to figure out who was going to replace Royce Freeman, the team's prolific back who is now with the Denver Broncos. Turns out the answer was, well, a bunch of guys. The Ducks are getting yards from lots of players but a couple of newcomers stand out: C.J. Verdell and Travis Dye. Verdell leads the team with 157 total yards through two games.

M's fall to Padres, now 8-1/2 back

The Associated Press

The Mariners' offensive woes have been the chief culprit for their fall from AL playoff contention. Those struggles showed up again Tuesday night, only furthering Seattle's fade from the wild-card race.

Wil Myers lined an RBI double off major league saves leader Edwin Diaz with one out in the ninth inning, lifting the San Diego Padres to a 2-1 win and dropping the Mariners 8-1/2 games back in the race for the second AL wild card.

The Mariners only have 18

games left after losing to the Padres for the third time in the past month. It was the 11th time since July 1 the Mariners scored one run or fewer. Not surprisingly, they dropped to 1-10 in those games.

"Story of tonight, just our lack of offensive production. We haven't done much at all swinging the bats against San Diego this year," Seattle manager Scott Servais.

While Seattle's hitters failed to come through with scoring chances, Myers got the better of the best closer in baseball this season. Myers lined an RBI double off Diaz

to snap the 1-1 tie.

Diaz (0-4) struggled without having a chance at his 55th save and left pitches up. He gave up singles to Hunter Renfroe and Eric Hosmer leading off the inning. After a strikeout of Franmil Reyes, Myers jumped on the first pitch and pulled it into the left field corner, letting pinch-runner Travis Jankowski score easily from second.

It was just the second inning all night the Padres put multiple runners on base, but they were able to capitalize on their opportunity unlike the Mariners.

EOU women's soccer remains at No. 19

Observer staff

The Eastern Oregon women's soccer team held steady in the NAIA coaches poll, coming in at 19th for the second week in a row Tuesday.

The Mountaineers had 216 points in the poll, and are again the highest-rated team in the Cascade Collegiate Conference. Rocky Mountain is the only other CCC team receiving votes in the poll, and is outside the top 25 with 12 points.

EOU had been ranked

20th in the previous poll, but were readjusted into a tie for 19th with Embury-Riddle, Arizona — which EOU beat — after an error was found in the poll.

Embury-Riddle moved out of the tie, jumping to 17th in the latest poll.

Defending national champion Spring Arbor, Michigan, continues to hold the top spot in the poll.

The Mountaineers open CCC play Friday at Providence in Great Falls, Montana.

LOCAL SCHEDULE

Thursday PREP VOLLEYBALL

- Stanfield at Union, 5 p.m.
- Cove at Joseph, 5 p.m.
- Powder Valley at Imbler, 5:30 p.m.

Friday MEN'S COLLEGE SOCCER

- Eastern Oregon at Providence, Great Falls, Montana, noon
- WOMEN'S COLLEGE SOCCER

- Eastern Oregon at Providence, Great Falls, Montana, 2:30 p.m.

COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

- Evergreen at Eastern Oregon, Quinn Coliseum, 7 p.m.

PREP FOOTBALL

- Cove at Adrian/Jordan Valley, noon
- Enterprise at Imbler, 2 p.m.
- La Grande at Ontario, 6 p.m.
- Dayville/Monument at Joseph, 6 p.m.
- Union at Dufur, 7 p.m.
- Wallowa at Elgin, 7 p.m.
- Pine Eagle at Powder Valley, 7 p.m.

PREP VOLLEYBALL

- La Grande at Baker Invitational, 11 a.m.
- Wallowa at Elgin, 4 p.m.
- Enterprise at Joseph, 4 p.m.
- Pine Eagle at Powder Valley, 5 p.m.
- Cove at Adrian, 5:30 p.m.

PREP CROSS COUNTRY

- La Grande, Enterprise, Elgin, Union at Catherine Creek Scamper, Union, 3 p.m.

— Subject to change