

Tigers topple Mac-Hi for second time in four days in 3-0 win

Observer staff

Adam Endress scored two goals, Logan Sandoval also scored, and the La Grande Tigers boys soccer team defeated McLoughlin for the second time in four days with a 3-0 win over the Pioneers Tuesday at home in a nonleague matchup.

"Mac-Hi is always dangerous," La Grande Head Coach Wade Wright said. "We controlled the first half pretty well even though we lacked intensity at times. At halftime we talked about working to put our

players in more dangerous positions and imposing our game on Mac-Hi."

The Tigers held a 1-0 lead at the half on Endress' first goal in the 26th minute, then jumped on the Pioneers right away in the second half with goals in the 42nd and 45th minutes. Callum Ebel had two assists, Luke Bloodgood added an assist and Christian Waugaman had two saves.

The Tigers (5-2 overall) travel to Ontario for a Greater Oregon League contest Saturday.



Ashley Martinez photo

La Grande's Adam Endress, left, shown during Saturday's win against McLoughlin, had two goals in Tuesday's rematch, a 3-0 Tigers win.

Cougars hold off Imbler in five

The Wallowa Cougars volleyball team rallied from a set down to earn an Old Oregon League road win at Imbler Tuesday, topping the Panthers in five sets 25-17, 21-25, 22-25, 25-21, 15-9.

"This was a win that wasn't possible without the total team effort. Everyone played a huge role in this success," Wallowa Head Coach Janae Hulse said.

Shanna Rae Tilley had a big night for the Cougars with 16 kills, four blocks and 34 digs. Ashlyn Young had 31 assists and 24 digs, and Rylee Goller had 27 digs and six kills.

Erin Coston led Imbler with 10 kills. Caysie McGinness added nine assists. Chloe Birkmaier led the back line with 33 digs, while both Coston and McGinness had 26 digs. Karrington Troyer added 25 assists and 18 digs.

"Wallowa played strong defense, and it was a battle (from start to finish)," Imbler Head Coach Jennifer Teeter said.

The Cougars (6-11 overall, 4-3 OOL) are off until Tuesday when they host Elgin, while Imbler (8-7, 4-2) is at Nixyaawii today.

TIGERS SWEEP IRRIGON

Claire Hardy led the way with 11 kills as the La Grande Tigers volleyball team swept the Irrigon Knights on the road Tuesday, 25-11, 25-18, 25-22.

"Great overall team effort," La Grande Head Coach Melinda Becker-Bisenius said. "We made awesome hustle plays on defense (and) ball placement on offense was good."

Jayce Seavert added eight kills and 18 digs, and Kenzie Williams tallied 17 assists, 13 digs and six kills. Jacie Howton posted 14 assists and 13 kills, and Felicity Houston had 19 digs.

The Tigers (10-2 overall) travel to Ontario Thursday.

BADGERS MOVETO 20-0

The Powder Valley Badgers volleyball team earned its 20th win of the season with a straight-set road win over the Cove Leopards in Old Oregon League play Tuesday, 25-18, 25-5, 25-22.

Stats were not available.

The Badgers (20-0 overall, 6-0 OOL) host Crane Friday, while Cove (6-9, 2-4) hosts Nixyaawii Thursday.

GRANT UNION SWEEPS BOBCATS

The Union Bobcats fell in three sets to Grant Union on the road in Blue Mountain Conference play Tuesday, 25-16, 25-15, 25-15.

"In general the girls played well with far fewer unforced errors than the previous two matches last Saturday," Union Head Coach Lasa Baxter said.

Stats were not available.

The Bobcats (7-7 overall, 1-4 BMC) host Pilot Rock Thursday.

BRIEFLY

Registration is open for La Grande's Pee Wee Basketball league, which this year will be its own league separate from youth basketball. Early bird registration runs until Oct. 17 and costs \$20. Visit www.lagrandeparks.org/sites/cityoflagrande/program/17372/Pee-Wee-Basketball-League-Fall-2018 for details.

'Pac-12 After Dark' here to stay

By Anne M. Peterson

The Associated Press

Pac-12 After Dark brings drama, even in the daylight.

Those late West Coast games are here to stay, however, despite criticism that they are a challenge for the league, its teams and the fans.

"We've got eight of what we call special date games, Thursday or Friday night games, every year. Those have been very successful for ESPN or Fox just from a purely ratings perspective. And also you don't have the clutter, or the fragmentation of a lot of multiple games going on," Pac-12 Commissioner Larry Scott said. "So they work well."

Some have long argued the late starts in the Pac-12 mean that East Coast viewers don't necessarily see key games, putting the league's teams and star players at a disadvantage when it comes to poll voting or postseason award consideration.

Coaches have voiced concern about the late starts because they can wreak havoc with travel schedules and take a toll on athletes. For example, road teams that have a 7 p.m. Saturday kickoff might not be back home until early Sunday morning. If the team has to turn around to play another road game the next week, it is at a disadvantage.

The reality is the league has a 12-year, \$3 billion contract with ESPN and Fox. Good West Coast teams are going to get those late national time slots because there is no other competition for them.

Scott, who spoke to reporters from this weekend's evening game between Stanford and Oregon (5 p.m. start Pacific), said the league limits teams to playing just one of those games per season. Usually it is no more than two in every three years, he said.

"They've been big showcases. Our broadcast partners like them because they get good ratings. We've got plenty of challenges in this conference with time zone, and being willing to be a little bit flexible and willing to play those has been good for our league," the commis-



Chris Pietsch/The Associated Press

Stanford's Bryce Love, center, runs up the middle against Oregon during the first quarter of an NCAA college football game Saturday

sioner said.

Saturday's game in Eugene, which was the "Saturday Night Football" game on ABC, was the most watched ESPN/ABC Pac-12 Conference game in nearly four years, with a total live audience of 4.26 million viewers, according to ESPN. The audience peaked at nearly 6 million viewers for Stanford's 38-31 overtime victory.

Some ticketholders are not fans of late start times, especially when travel to stadiums is involved. Take Eugene: It's about a two-hour drive from Portland and possibly more on game day, then there are TV timeouts that stretch the actual game before the lengthy late-night drive home.

Alumni on the opposite coast sometimes have to stay up until the wee hours to watch their teams.

Colorado Coach Mike MacIntyre noted that his team is coming off a bye before hosting UCLA this Friday night. He said the league continues to address coaches' scheduling concerns over late starts.

"We also understand that we are going to have to play some night

games at prime time, which honestly, if you're winning games and playing at night, you're kind of pumped about it," he said. "Would you rather play at 2 o'clock in the afternoon? Of course."

Last season, 24 games started at 7 p.m. local time or later. This year's number has not been determined because TV slots are often determined only a couple of weeks before games, not at the start of the season.

Utah faced Washington two weeks ago with an 8 p.m. Pacific start time, so Utes Coach Kyle Whittingham was grateful for the hour of this week's game at Washington State.

"The 3 p.m. kick will be nice," he said. "Getting to play a game in daylight is going to be awesome."

TARGETING TARGETING

Scott also addressed a controversial no-call for targeting late in USC's 39-36 victory over Washington State on Friday night.

The Trojans' Porter Gustin made helmet-to-helmet contact with Cougars quarterback Gardner Minshew at a critical juncture of the game.

Scott said he had consulted the

officialing team about that call. He said every play is reviewed.

"So you can certainly assume that play got a lot of looks, not just from the replay booth at the stadium, but we've got our command center back in San Francisco with our head of officiating and a bunch of experienced replay guys, who absolutely would have looked at that play," Scott said.

He said it also was looked at afterward and was not determined to be targeting.

"As you know, in any given game there are a lot of close calls, and this was a very, very close one. No doubt about it," Scott said.

At his media availability Monday, Washington State Coach Mike Leach held his tongue.

"I'd be happy to comment on it if I were allowed to, but I'm not allowed to. But if I were allowed to I'd be happy to," he said, suggesting questions be directed to the Pac-12 offices.

"Anything we do in this conference," Leach said, "player safety should be the forefront of our concerns."

Mariners end A's string of late-game success

By Tim Booth

The Associated Press

The Oakland Athletics knew they'd been fortunate to get this deep in the season without seeing their bullpen blow a late lead.

It finally happened on Tuesday night, and in the process wrapped up the AL West title for the Houston Astros and sent the A's into a wild-card matchup with the New York Yankees.

Pinch-hitter Chris Herrmann's two-run homer in the 11th inning capped Seattle's late rally and gave the Mariners a 10-8 win over Oakland. Seattle overcame an 8-5 eighth-inning deficit and dropped the A's 2-1/2

games behind the Yankees for home-field advantage in the Oct. 3 winner-take-all matchup.

Oakland had been 68-0 when leading after seven innings.

"We have a lot of confidence we're going to finish games, our bullpen is such a strength for us," Oakland manager Bob Melvin said. "To go perfect through the course of a season is probably tough to do."

Seattle's rally started with Denard Span's two-run double off Fernando Rodney in the eighth. Blake Treinen was on strike from closing out his 38th save in the ninth, but Nelson Cruz

punched a two-out single, Ryon Healy reached when third baseman Matt Chapman bobbled his grounder for an error and Kyle Seager hit an RBI single. Treinen had allowed just one hit in his previous 13 appearances.

"We know they're loaded in the bullpen and you got to grind it out, have good at-bats and you got to get a little break once in a while," Seattle Manager Scott Servais said.

Ben Gamel walked with one out in the 11th against Emilio Pagan (3-1), and Herrmann batted for Andrew Romine. He sent an 0-1 fastball out to deep right-center field for his second home run of the season. It was the fourth

game-ending hit of his career; two of those homers.

"I hate extra-inning games, I'm sure a lot of people do," Herrmann said. "Just try to make the best of my opportunity tonight and I was just telling myself to make contract here. Knew that guy has a pretty good fastball, Pagan, and just really wanted to make solid contract. That was my goal and just kind of got it up in the air for a home run so it worked out in our favor."

Alex Colome (7-5) pitched the 11th for the victory.

A day after clinching no worse than a wild-card berth, Oakland took a 6-3 lead in the first two innings off Mike

Leake. Nick Martini had a two-run triple and Matt Joyce a two-run single off Leake, and Marcus Semien added his 14th home run leading off the fifth inning. But the A's went scoreless after Matt Olson's RBI double in the sixth inning.

Oakland starter Brett Anderson lasted just 2-1/3 innings, giving up seven hits and five runs.

"Anytime you're handed a three-run lead and cough it up, and cough up another three-run lead it's frustrating," Anderson said. "If I did any semblance of my job we should have won this game. But unfortunately that wasn't the case."