

EOU volleyball runs winning streak to eight

Observer staff

The 17th-ranked Eastern Oregon Mountaineers volleyball team is finding a groove. Hailee Ackerman had another career-best night with 24 kills, Megan Bunn added 12 and the

Mountaineers picked up a road win against the No. 12 College of Idaho Coyotes Thursday in Cascade Collegiate Conference action, 25-10, 24-26, 30-28, 25-19. Taylor Tibbetts added eight kills for the Mountaineers, who

won a road match against C of I for the first time since 2015 and earned their eighth straight win. Kiley McMurtrey led the defense with 23 digs, Bunn had 18 to complete a double-double, and both Madison Pilon and Sarah

Carpenter added double-doubles. Pilon had 28 assists and 17 digs, and Carpenter and 25 and 10, respectively. Allyson Crisp added six block assists. EOU (13-4 overall, 8-1 CCC) hosts Walla Walla Saturday.

Eastern ekes out a victory

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

Both the Eastern Oregon Mountaineers and the College of Idaho Coyotes women's soccer teams had opportunities to score, especially in an offensive-oriented second half. Instead, the goalkeepers and defenses of both teams made plays throughout, and Jenna Jensen's early goal for EOU was the difference maker in the Mountaineers' 1-0 win over C of I Thursday night in Cascade Collegiate Conference action at Community Stadium. "I was surprised we only scored one goal just because of how powerful we are," Eastern Head Coach Jacob Plocher said. "At the same time though with how they have been in the past I knew one goal could potentially win it. A lot of it was going to come down to how our back line played defensively." Jensen scored in the 16th minute of the contest, taking a pass from Natalie Mitchell, who was on the left side, in front of the net and scoring from about 13 yards out.

The Mountaineers squandered several opportunities to add on throughout both halves. Part of that was due to shots missing just wide or high, and part of that was also a credit to C of I keeper Shea Waters, who made 12 saves. "I don't know if they have a magic genie that they get their stud keepers, but they always have really strong goalkeepers," Plocher said. "(EOU keeper) Cydni (Cottrell) had a really good game as well. She came out and played strong and helped seal that shutout."



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Eastern Oregon's Jenna Jensen, right, shown during the second half, had the only goal in the Mountaineers' 1-0 win over College of Idaho Thursday.

Waters kept the Yotes in the contest by stopping several close shots, especially in the second half when she had eight of her saves. "C of I, in my time here, has been really strong defensively," Plocher said. "It's tough to break them down. I thought we created a lot of opportunities. Thankfully we were able to get one. I think we left a few more (goals) out there as well." On the statsheet, EOU outshot the Yotes 24-9, but C of I had chances, most notably a

shot by Jocelyn Cook-Cox late in the first half that rang off the crossbar. The Yotes held possession often in the early stages of the second half, but the defensive line of EOU kept the Yotes from many serious threats, and nearly every shot taken by the Yotes went wide or high. The defense was so strong, in fact, that of the Yotes' nine shots, none were officially recorded as shots on goal. "The back line did a really good job of clearing the ball out,"

Cottrell said. "We have a really good connection." Cottrell said she expected C of I to battle back, especially with the contest being a rivalry game. "We always want to come out our hardest, but being up 1-0 we expected them to come back in the second half," she said. "We held our own and were able to get the win." The Mountaineers (7-1-1 overall, 3-1-1 CCC), who are now on a three-match winning streak, host Rocky Mountain Sunday.

Mountaineers settle for 'disappointing' tie

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

On paper, the Eastern Oregon Mountaineers men's soccer team is better than the College of Idaho Coyotes, and they believed they were the better team. One needs to look no further than the standings in the Cascade Collegiate Conference: EOU entered with a 3-1 record, while C of I was 0-3. That made the outcome of Thursday night's contest at Community Stadium, a scoreless draw, feel like a loss to the Mountaineers. "We didn't play well," EOU Head Coach Zach Mills said. "Honestly, on a good day, (if) we come out (and) do the job, we'll find a win on that kind of game. They have some talented players, but if we did our part, we (would have) come out on top." Both teams had their opportunities in regulation and in overtime periods. But a blend of good goalkeeping by EOU's Aidan Wright, who had seven saves, and C of I's Parker Billings, who had three saves, coupled with several errant shots that just missed, resulted in the even outcome. "It's disappointing when you're the better team and you don't get the result that you want," Wright said. "A tie here feels like a loss." Wright made a solid save on a Cole Fuller shot in the fifth minute of overtime to keep EOU alive in the contest, and the Mountaineers had two shots as the win sandwich that attempt. A try by EOU's Ethan Ronquillo early in the second overtime was punched away by Billings, and Wright made a save in the closing seconds to keep the score even.



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Eastern Oregon men's goalkeeper Aidan Wright, shown during the second half Thursday, had seven saves in the Mountaineers' draw with College of Idaho.

"He made some game-saving blocks," Mills said of Wright. "We're super happy he handled his business in goal. That's all he could do. The best he could do is not concede any." EOU's pressure mounted late, especially when C of I's Ben Bechor was forced to leave due to a red card with three minutes left, giving EOU a man advantage. But the Mountaineers couldn't capitalize. The Mountaineers were on a short turnaround, having just played both last Friday and Sunday, while C of I was playing just its second match in 12 days, and its first since Saturday.

"You could tell a couple guys were a bit tired, but we're a fit team," Wright said. "The weird schedule this week I'm sure didn't help us, but we're not going to use that as an excuse." Mills said he hopes the outcome and the punch-in-the gut feeling will stick with the team as it continues through CCC play. "Out of all the games to tie, it's almost good we did it against a team like College of Idaho," he said. "Hopefully we can see this isn't a good feeling." The Mountaineers (5-2-2 overall, 3-1-1 CCC) host Rocky Mountain Sunday.

Tigers move to 3-0 in GOL with sweep

Observer staff

Claire Hardy led the way with 14 kills and added seven digs, and the La Grande Tigers volleyball team rolled to a Greater Oregon League road sweep of the Ontario Tigers Thursday, 25-8, 25-15, 25-10. Jayce Seavert added seven kills and had a team-best of 19 digs. Felicity Houston added 18 digs and Riana Scott had 12 digs to help anchor the defense. Jacie Howton posted 14 assists and Kenzie Williams had 13. The Tigers (11-2 overall, 3-0 GOL) host Pendleton Tuesday.

OUTLAWS FALL INTHREE The Enterprise Outlaws volleyball team dropped a straight-set match at home to the Weston-McEwen TigerScots in Blue Mountain Conference play Thursday, 25-15, 25-14, 25-23. "Weston-McEwen hit the ball well and we spent a lot of time playing defense," Enterprise Head Coach Lisa Farwell said. "We didn't really get our offense rolling." Shelby Moncrief led the defense with 11 digs, and Lexie Gasset was a perfect 14-for-14 from the service line. The Outlaws (5-7 overall, 1-3 BMC) face both Pilot Rock and Grant Union Saturday at Pilot Rock.

UNION ENDS LOSING STREAK Kalin Nowak had 13 kills and 10 digs, Autumn Daggett added 10 kills, and the Union Bobcats ended a five-match losing streak with a home sweep of the Pilot Rock Rockets in Blue Mountain Conference play Thursday, 25-20, 25-18, 25-14. Callie Glenn added 25 assists, Kylie Marriott had four aces and Brianna Kohr had 12 digs. "We experienced a lot of growth tonight and began to overcome making so many of our own mistakes," Union Head Coach Lasa Baxter said.

The Bobcats (8-7 overall, 2-4 BMC) travel to Stanfield Thursday. **HUSKIESTOP GRISWOLD** The Elgin Huskies volleyball team picked up their second Old Oregon League win Thursday, defeating the Griswold Grizzlies at home, 25-23, 25-21, 25-18. "It felt so good to see them win tonight," Elgin Head Coach Tiana Murphey said. Jayden Palmer and Shelby Sanner both led the Elgin defense with four digs. Sarah Baker and Tymra Anderson had two blocks each, and Anderson also had two kills. The Huskies (4-11 overall, 2-5 OOL) travel to Wallowa Tuesday.

COVE PICKS UP SWEEP The Cove Leopards volleyball team earned an three-set home win over the Nixyaawii Golden Eagles in Old Oregon League play Thursday. Set scores and stats were not available at press time. The Leopards (7-9 overall, 3-4 OOL) host Pine Eagle in league play today. **JOSEPH ROLLS ON THE ROAD** The Joseph Eagles volleyball team earned an three-set road win over the Pine Eagle Spartans in Old Oregon League play Thursday. Set scores and stats were not available at press time.

The Eagles (14-7 overall, 4-1 OOL) host Imbler Tuesday. **Wednesday** **IMBLER SERVES WAY TO WIN** Sydney Treat and Karrington Troyer both served up 12 of Imbler's 31 aces as the Panthers volleyball team coasted to a three-set road win against the Nixyaawii Golden Eagles in Old Oregon League action Wednesday, 25-8, 25-8, 25-14. Troyer also had 20 assists in the win. Aspen Smith led the offense with eight kills, Caysie McGinness had six kills and nine digs, and Treat added five kills.

The Panthers (9-7 overall, 5-2 OOL) face Crane today at North Powder in a nonleague matchup. **Prep cross country** **ELGIN RUNS AT HERMISTON** Jocelyn Palmer took 10th place with a time of 23:45.40 to lead the Elgin Huskies girls cross country team at the Bulldog Fest Thursday in Heppner. The other two runners for Elgin, Anika Jacobson (25:35.20) and Kaylee Smith (31.43.10) took 17th and 36th, respectively. For the Elgin boys, Jordan Palmer posted the top time at 19:58.30, good for 24th. Kaden McClure (20:08.10) was 27th and Brandon Caldwell (23:53.60) was 76th. The Huskies return to action Oct. 12 at the Tiger Invite at Lane Farms east of La Grande.