

Eastern Oregon's Taylor Tibbetts, left, and Jet Taylor both reach for a block during Saturday's match against Northwest Christian.

Twenty wins once again

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

A perfect weekend secured yet another 20-win season for the Eastern Oregon volleyball team and all but assured the Mountaineers at least a top-two finish in the Cascade Collegiate Conference.

The No. 13 Mountaineers outlasted the Corban Warriors in five sets for the second time this season, winning Friday night at Quinn Coliseum, 25-18, 25-22, 20-25, 23-25, 15-11, and following with a sweep of the Northwest Christian Beacons Saturday, 25-21, 25-14, 25-18.

"(Friday) was definitely a battle. Corban came to play and did a great job of exploiting some of our weaknesses," Head Coach Kaki McLean-Morehead said. "The fifth game was definitely a battle. I'm really proud of how resilient, focused and competitive (we) were in that fifth set."

The teams were tied five times in the final set, the last at 10-10, before EOU finished the match on a 5-1 run. Hailee Ackerman and Jet Taylor had back-to-back kills for the lead for Eastern. Megan Bunn and Taylor Tibbetts followed with kills for match point, and Kiley McMurtrey ended the match with an ace.

McMurtrey said the team's ability to grind out a win showed Friday, especially given EOU lost a two-set lead.

"That's where your grit comes in," she said. "That's your guts. Everyone's tired, (so) that's where your heart is. You have to go point-by-

point and play-by-play and make sure you're zoned in."

Bunn paced the EOU offense on the night with 22 kills. She also had 19 digs. Tibbetts recorded 14 kills, Ackerman had 11 and Holli Mullins had eight kills and five block assists. McMurtrey anchored the defense with 28 digs, and Aspen Christiansen added 18. Madison Pilon added 30 assists, and Sarah Carpenter had 25.

"This was a big weekend for us," Tibbetts said. "It was exciting to come out, all play together and have a lot of fun."

The victory was Eastern's 20th of the season, lifting the Mountaineers to that plateau for the seventh straight season.

"It says a lot about our program," said McLean-Morehead, who has coached EOU to 20 wins eight times. "I think it says a lot about our girls that they've achieved 20-win seasons multiple times. I think it says Eastern Oregon is a force to be reckoned with and is a national tournament team consistently, which says a lot about our program. I'm proud of that, and I hope they're proud of that too."

EOU added to that win total with a sweep of the Beacons Saturday.

If there was any fear of a letdown after the match against Corban, it only showed in the early stages of each set. NCU actually jumped ahead in each set, only to see the Mountaineers impose their will and dominate after settling. That was most evident in the second

set, which Eastern ended on a 20-5 run after trailing 9-5.

"One of the things we continue to work on is consistency, and maintaining that consistency, not only throughout the season but throughout the match — (to) not be a rollercoaster," McLean-Morehead said. "That's something we're getting better at."

McLean-Morehead said Tibbetts, who led Eastern with 10 kills against the Beacons, is becoming a more important piece of the EOU attack.

"She's been much more consistent, and she is definitely a force at the net defensively as well as offensively," the coach said.

Tibbetts attributed the rise to developing as a player and adjusting to her new position. "This is my first real season as a right side," she said. "(I'm) just connecting with my setters and going around those blocks."

Bunn and Taylor both added eight kills. Pilon engineered the offense with 25 assists, and McMurtrey tallied 17 digs.

"You have to have the mindset that nothing is going to hit the floor," McMurtrey said of being in the back row. "We've played together enough, and we like to play for each other."

EOU (21-5 overall, 16-2 CCC) travels to face winless Walla Walla Thursday before closing out the regular season Friday at home against College of Idaho. A victory in one of those two matches guarantees a top-two finish for Eastern.

EOU's win streak stopped

Observer staff

A blowout loss ruined a record-setting day by Eastern Oregon football player Brenden Kelly and put a major damper on the Mountaineers' playoff hopes.

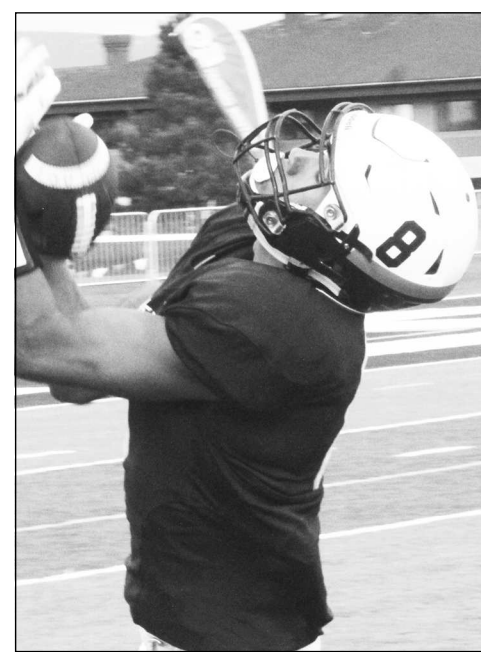
College of Idaho quarterback Darius Peterson threw for 360 yards and four touchdowns, and the Yotes put up a huge offensive day and took advantage of four EOU turnovers to roll past the No. 18 Mountaineers, 48-24, Saturday in Frontier Conference play in Caldwell, Idaho.

The win was the fourth in a row for the Coyotes, and also ended EOU's four-game winning streak.

C of I's offensive explosion — the Yotes gained 612 yards — offset a record day for Kelly, who for the second time this season set the program mark for receiving yards in a game. Saturday, he had 281 yards and two touchdowns to lead the Mountaineers' receiving corps. The big day also moved his season total to 1,118 yards, the single-season record for an EOU receiver, and increased his EOU record for career receiving yards to 2,945.

Kai Quinn threw for 451 yards and two touchdowns for Eastern but was also intercepted three times. Additionally, EOU was never able to get its ground game going, rushing for just 31 yards in the loss. Victor Dias did have 50 yards rushing and a score for Eastern.

The Yotes scored the last 17 points of the second quarter — and 10 points in the final 41 seconds — to take the lead for good, 27-14, going into the half. Keegan Crafton caught one of his two touchdown passes, a 36-yarder, to make it a 34-17 lead midway



Eastern Oregon receiver Brenden Kelly, shown earlier this season, had a program-record 281 yards against College of Idaho Saturday.

through the third.

Peterson added 85 yards rushing to help C of I generate a total of 612 yards. Nick Calzaretta rushed for 99 yards and a score as the Yotes totaled 252 yards through the air.

EOU pulled within 34-24 on a 53-yard TD catch by Kelly early in the fourth, but C of I tacked on two additional scores late.

The Mountaineers briefly took a 14-10 lead in the second quarter on an 82-yard touchdown reception by Kelly.

Eastern (5-3 overall, 5-3 Frontier) hosts Rocky Mountain in its home finale Saturday.

Eastern soccer routs Wolves

Observer staff

EOU ROUNDUP

The Eastern Oregon men's soccer team completed Cascade Collegiate Conference play with a dominant 10-1 win over Walla Walla Sunday at Community Stadium.

Eastern put the game away almost instantly, scoring 36 seconds into the match and taking a 3-0 lead by the nine-minute mark of contest. Christian Miramontes and Anthony Leavens both scored twice in the first half. Oscar Munoz, who scored the opener, and Micah Hill, also scored in the first half for a 6-0 lead at the break.

Alex Gutierrez scored twice in 10 seconds early in the second half to push the lead to 8-0. Jacob Thielke added a goal in the 57th minute and Munoz rounded out the Mountaineers' offense with his second goal in the 78th minute.

Eastern had a sizeable 31-9 shot advantage, and Antonio Gracia had a save in goal for EOU.

The Mountaineers (10-3-4 overall, 8-2-3 CCC) who reached 10 wins for the second time and concluded their best CCC schedule in history, open play in the CCC tournament Nov. 7 as the fourth seed. EOU faces Providence in the quarterfinals at 8 p.m. in Springfield.

EOU MEN'S HOOPS DROPS THREE IN CALIFORNIA

The Eastern Oregon men's basketball team endured a tough weekend, going 0-2 with losses to UC Merced and California Maritime at the Frank Dye Classic in Vallejo, California, Friday and Saturday, and losing on the road to Pacific Union in Angwin, California, Sunday.

Eastern started the weekend with a close two-point

loss to UC Merced Friday, 76-74.

Zane Wright led EOU off the bench with 16 points. Joel Anderson added 15 points and six rebounds.

EOU struggled from 3-point range in the loss, going just 8-for-24. EOU was behind just 38-36 at halftime, but the back-and-forth second half went the Bobcats' way.

On Saturday, Eastern fell behind at halftime against Cal Maritime and was unable to make up ground in an 80-71 loss to the Keelhaulers.

Anderson led the Mountaineers with 16 points, but was hampered with seven of Eastern's 14 turnovers. Said Hersi added 13 points off the bench and Jarek Schetzle scored 12 points. EOU had its struggles from the floor, shooting just 28-for-74, or 38 percent.

Eastern was down 47-40 at halftime, but saw its deficit swell to double digits much of the second half.

The Mountaineers finished with their best shooting performance of the weekend, but came up just short against Pacific Union, 84-78.

Five Mountaineers were in double figures, led by Hersi, who started and scored 14 points. Brock Johnson scored 13 points off the bench and Peter Hamilton had 12 to lead EOU.

The Mountaineers shot 27-for-51 for 53 percent, and were 10-for-17 from 3-point range. But Eastern turned the ball over 19 times and surrendered 12 offensive rebounds to the Pioneers.

Eastern, which is still missing several regular starters, used a different starting lineup all three

games of the weekend.

The Mountaineers (2-4 overall) are off until Nov. 16 when they travel to Mesa, Arizona to face Benedictine Mesa.

EOU WRESTLING OPENS SEASON IN MONTANA

The Eastern Oregon men's wrestling team opened the season with a pair of dual losses to top-five opponents in Montana. The Mountaineers fell to No. 3 MSU-Northern Friday, 32-9, and were handed a setback against No. 4 Providence Saturday, 32-10.

Eastern picked up three wins against the Lights Friday, including a 14-7 decision by Mhar Caballa over Nick Kunz at 125 pounds to open the match.

Northern won five straight bouts to take a 20-3 lead before Drake Randall edged Chase Short for a 3-2 decision at 174. Marco Retano had EOU's final win at 184, a 5-4 decision over Steeler French.

Saturday, EOU had a similar start with Caballa defeating Michael Lefuel by decision, 9-5, at 125. The Argos won four straight matches before Keegan Mulhill earned a 12-4 major decision against Josh Beckler at 165, to make the score 18-7. Retano also won for the second night in a row, topping Alex Quick by a 7-4 decision at 184.

The EOU women took to the mat for the first time Saturday against the Argos in four exhibition matches. Cassidy Freeman had Eastern's lone victory at 109 pounds over Providence's Angie Sletten by technical fall, 13-1.

Both the men and women return to action Saturday against Big Bend Community College.

Red Sox back atop baseball

The Associated Press

The Boston Red Sox really are that great. David Price proved his postseason mettle, Steve Pearce homered twice and Boston beat the Los Angeles Dodgers 5-1 on Sunday to finish off a one-sided World Series in five games.

A tormented franchise during decades of frustration and despair before ending an 86-year championship drought in 2004, the Red Sox have become baseball's team of the century with four titles in 15 seasons.

"It's very special. Seeing all these grown men over there, just acting like kids, that's what it's all about," Price said.

Alex Cora's team romped to a 17-2 start and a club-record 108 wins, then went 11-3 in the postseason, dispatching the 100-win New York Yankees and the 103-victory and defending champion Houston Astros in the playoffs. Cora became the first manager from Puerto

Rico to win a title and just the fifth rookie manager overall.

Pearce, the World Series MVP, hit a two-run homer on Clayton Kershaw's sixth pitch. Solo homers by Mookie Betts in the sixth inning and J.D. Martinez in the seventh quieted the Dodger Stadium crowd, and Pearce added a solo drive off Pedro Baez in the eighth.

"We are a bunch of grinders," Pearce said, "and this is exactly where we knew we were going to be."

Pearce, a June acquisition from Toronto, had three homers and seven RBIs in the final two games of the Series.

After losing to Houston in Game 7 last year by the same 5-1 score, the Dodgers became the first team ousted on its home field in consecutive World Series since the New York Giants by the New York Yankees at the Polo Grounds in 1936 and '37.

CHECK OUT THE Local Sports Report...

THE OBSERVER

Tune into the Johnny Ballgame Show for the Local Sports Report with Observer Sports Editor Ronald Bond at 5:30 p.m. each Wednesday.



ON THE Johnny Ballgame Show

Listen to the Johnny Ballgame Show from 3-6 p.m. Monday through Friday on SuperTalk 1450 AM.

