



Ronald Bond/The Observer

EOU's Jarek Schetzle slams home a dunk late in the fourth quarter of Saturday's win over NCU.

## Balance leads EOU to two big victories

By Ronald Bond  
The Observer

Jordan May scored 16 points to lead four players in double figures as the Eastern Oregon Mountaineers men's basketball team used a big second-half rally to pull ahead, then held on late for a 75-72 home win over the Corban Warriors on Friday in Cascade Collegiate Conference play.

May hit a tiebreaking 3-pointer midway through the second half to give EOU a

48-45 lead and kick off an 18-6 run. He hit another trey in the rally, Kobi Gardea connected from deep and Said Hersi capped the rally with a trifecta for a 63-51 lead — the largest of the game — with 6:25 to play.

Corban got as close as three points on several occasions late in the contest, but Eastern had an answer each time, and went 6-for-8 from the free-throw line in the final minute to secure the win.

Jarek Schetzle added 14

points and eight rebounds, Peter Hamilton had 12 points and five assists, and Zane Wright scored 10 points.

On Saturday Schetzle led the way with 25 points, Landon Jones had a double-double, and Eastern Oregon completed a key weekend sweep by holding on for an 87-82 home win over the Northwest Christian Beacons.

The win not only moved EOU into a tie for third place with NCU in CCC play, but

gave Eastern the tiebreaker due to the regular-season sweep of the Beacons.

"These two wins were not easy," EOU Head Coach Carlito Labarda said of the weekend sweep. "I couldn't sleep (before the games). But I'm glad we got the wins."

Eastern led the majority of the night Saturday, responding to every Beacon rally with a surge of its own.

NCU took its first lead at See **Eastern** / Page 7A

## Eagles take top-five showdown

By Ronald Bond  
The Observer

A matchup of two of the top four teams in the OSAA standings quickly turned into a one-sided affair thanks to something the Joseph Eagles girls basketball team has used to its advantage all season.

The full-court press. Emma Hite scored a game-high 16 points, and No. 3 Joseph used its pressure to trigger a game-opening 13-0 run on the way to a 44-27 win over the No. 4 Powder Valley Badgers Friday in Old Oregon League play in Joseph.

"Our press sets us up. That's what we do," Joseph Head Coach Lance Homan said. "We're really athletic, but we're not really big, so for us to get moving we've got to get our hands in the passing lanes. We've gotta trap. We've gotta move because that's where we're at our best."

The trapping man-to-man pressure frazzled the Badgers into numerous first-quarter turnovers and led to some easy baskets for Joseph. Hite hit two early 3-pointers during the rally, with her second giving the Eagles a 13-0 lead with a minute to play in the first quarter.

"We read each other really well. That's a huge thing that helps a lot with our press," Hite said.

Her banked-in 3-pointer early in the second quarter made it an 18-2 margin and was an indicator it was primed to be Joseph's night. A late steal and jumper by Haley Miller gave the Eagles a 25-8 lead at the half, and the Badgers pulled no closer than 13 points in the second half.

"We were aware of their press, and I did not think we would panic like we did," Powder Valley Head Coach Allen Bingham said. "We did not handle their press as well as I thought we should. That first quarter was the difference in the game."



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Joseph's Emma Hite (10) had 16 points in the Eagles' win over Powder Valley Friday.

Hite's scoring effort also showed another strength of the Eagles this season, that anyone can step up to score when needed. Sabrina Albee, who has typically been the team's leading scorer, had 10 points Friday. Albee had eight of her points in the second half to help put the game away. Meanwhile Madelyn Nelson scored all seven of her points in the first half and triggered the scoring early.

"They feed off each other, they love each other, and they're a good group," Homan said.

"It doesn't matter (who scores)," Hite added. "We all are high scoring. It's pretty spread out."

Megan Bingham had 11 points — all in the second half — to lead the Badgers, who lost for just the third time this season. Belle Blair added eight points.

The contest was just the latest high-profile game for the Eagles, who have now played the No. 1, No. 2, No. 4, No. 5, No. 8 and No. 11-ranked teams in the OSAA's 1A rankings, and the No. 4 2A team. Homan said

that helped prep the Eagles for Friday.

"They don't go into games scared. They've traveled to the west side to play the best teams," he said. "They want it. Games like this are something they look forward to, and they brought it (Friday)."

And it may be the only regular-season matchup between the teams, but they are currently the top two teams in the OOL, and would be on pace to meet in the district tournament in February.

"We'll probably get another chance at them," Bingham said. **Also Friday**

### TIGERS FALL TO BAKER

The La Grande Tigers girls basketball team saw its seven-game winning streak come to an end with a 52-39 road loss to the Baker Bulldogs Friday in Greater Oregon League play.

The Tigers hung with Baker much of the night, trailing by two after one quarter and 30-25 at the half. But Baker held La Grande to just four points in the third quarter to take a 42-29 lead and held on to take

sole possession of first place in the GOL.

Camryn Collman had 12 points — 10 in the first half — to lead La Grande. Jacie Howton added seven points.

The Tigers (10-4 overall, 2-1 GOL) host Ontario Friday.

### NIXY EDGES HUSKIES

The Elgin Huskies girls basketball team fell just short in a matchup against the Nixyaawii Golden Eagles on the road Friday, falling 37-33 in Old Oregon League action.

Tymra Anderson led the way with 11 points for Elgin, while teammate Jocelyn Palmer had seven points.

### COVE HAMMERS IMBLER

The Cove Leopards girls basketball team shot 53 percent as it rolled to a 57-26 home blowout win over the Imbler Panthers Friday in Old Oregon League play.

Maggie Frisch scored 17 points in the win for Cove, which earned its first OOL win of the season. Kierra Moore added 10 points.

The Leopards built a 12-point See **Girls** / Page 7A

## Tigers go 6-1 for third at Classic

Observer staff

The La Grande Tigers wrestling team went 6-1 to place third at the Oregon Classic Friday and Saturday in Redmond.

The Tigers went a perfect 4-0 in their duals Friday, dismantling North Marion 64-15, Philomath 71-6, Marshfield 69-6 and Banks 63-18. La Grande only dropped nine of the 43 contested matches on the day, and eight Tigers went 4-0 — Ezra McIntosh (120 pounds), Braden Carson (126), Alex Kehr (132), Parker Robinson (160), Grayson Livingston (170), Spencer Gerst (182), Christopher Woodworth (195) and Gabe Shukle (285).

Carson won all his matches by fall.

On Saturday, the Tigers defeated Greater Oregon League rival Baker in the quarterfinals, 45-24, dominating in the middle and upper weights. After falling behind 18-0, wins by decision from Carson, Casey McCall (132) and Brody MacMillian (145), and a pin by Keith Oswald (152) pulled La Grande within 21-15. Two Baker forfeits and a pin by Livingston made it 33-24, and Lincoln Clark (220) and Shukle (285) finished the win with pins for LHS.

La Grande suffered its only loss in the semifinals, a 42-27 setback against Sweet Home.

The Huskies won every match from 106 to 152 pounds to rack up a 39-0 lead. La Grande earned wins by fall from Robinson, Clark and Shukle, and a decision by Livingston to get on the board.

The Tigers wrapped up with a 45-30 win over Cascade in the third

place-match. Pinfall victories by McIntosh, Carson and Cole Isaacson (132) helped give La Grande an 18-9 lead. After Cascade retook the lead with three straight wins at 27-18, Robinson, Livingston and Gerst responded with wins by fall for a 36-27 margin. Woodworth added a late decision and Shukle had a win by fall.

La Grande is back in action Tuesday when it travels to Baker. **Union/Cove finishes third in Bonanza**

The Union/Cove Bobcats wrestling team scored 94 points to take third at the Bonanza Invitational on Saturday.

Jaxon Blackburn (132 pounds) and Carter Blackburn (138) both won their weight classes to lead Union/Cove. Jaxon went 4-0 and won all his matches by fall, including over Bonanza's Tanner Mestas in the final. Carter went 2-0, and pinned Rogue River's Carsen Smith in the title match.

The Bobcats added third-place finishes from James Dempsey (152) who went 3-1 on the day, Levi Hammond (145) who went 2-1, and Damon Nipper (195) who finished 1-1.

Union/Cove is back in action Friday at John Day. **Outlaws take 16th in Parma**

The Enterprise Outlaws wrestling team scored 29 points to place 16th at the Padilla Invitational Friday and Saturday in Parma, Idaho.

Nobody placed for the Outlaws, but Kennison Knifong (132 pounds) and Clint Norton (285) had the top performances as both went 3-2.

Enterprise is back in action at the Caldwell JV Tournament Saturday.

## Frenetic Eagles find a way, top Powder

By Ronald Bond  
The Observer

The Joseph Eagles boys basketball team can go from ice cold to red hot and back to icy again over the course of a basketball game.

They showed that in their 49-44 Old Oregon League win over the Powder Valley Badgers Friday in Joseph.

The Eagles missed their first eight shots, had five points in the first quarter and just 18 at halftime. They then flipped the switch and scored 21 points in a third quarter that saw them drill five 3-pointers to take a 15-point lead. Then they almost let that margin evaporate in the final quarter before holding on for the win.

"I'm not kidding when I tell you that it's the most perplex-

ing team that I've seen and coached," Eagles' Head Coach Olan Fulfer said. "We can look really good one game and then completely terrible the next game."

Seemingly every shot Joseph took for much of the first half Friday missed. The Eagles trailed 6-5 after one quarter and were down 12-10 late in the second before Chase Murray, who led the way with 23 points, hit two late corner 3-pointers as part of a 10-0 run to end the period for an 18-12 lead.

That spark carried over, and suddenly Joseph couldn't miss in the third. Murray hit three more 3-pointers while Tyler Homan and T.J. Grote also connected from deep to extend the

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Ronald Bond/The Observer

Joseph's Chase Murray had 23 points and hit seven 3-pointers as the Eagles edged the Badgers on Friday.

## EOU women take fourth at Oregon Classic

Observer staff

The Eastern Oregon women's wrestling team nabbed four top-five finishes to take fourth overall at the Oregon Classic Saturday in Redmond.

Amber Pair (116 pounds) went 3-1 in competed matches to take third and lead the Mountaineers. Pair reached the semifinals and eventually defeated Alberta's Taylor McPherson by a 12-7 decision in the third-place match.

Lisa Megargee (101) took fourth, winning a consolation semifinal match over Menlo's

Esmeralda Arroyo by fall before dropping the third-place match by fall to Ira Navarro of Southwest Oregon Community College.

Both Macy Higa (130) and Dempsey Talkington (143) took fifth for EOU. Higa went 3-2, reached the semifinals, then dropped two matches in a row before pinning Colorado Mesa's Sierra Brown Ton in the fifth-place match.

Talkington went 2-2, including a win by fall over Veronica Coppolino of Southern Oregon to See **Wrestling** / Page 8A