

# Mountaineer men roll in final home meet of the season

Observer staff

What a difference a couple weeks and improved health can make.

Just 15 days after suffering a 40-9 road loss to North Idaho College, the Eastern Oregon men's wrestling team returned the favor as the No. 20 Mountaineers scored a 38-12 victory in a home dual Friday at Quinn Coliseum.

EOU took control of the match from the get-go, scoring six straight victories for an insurmountable

26-0 lead. Mhar Caballa (125 pounds) opened with a 6-3 decision over Jacob Garrison. Eastern then earned wins at two weights it forfeited in the previous dual with the Cardinals, as Blake McNall (133) scored a 7-3 decision over Nicholas Hara and Tyler Miller (141) rolled over Bryce Miller for an 18-3 technical fall. Keegan Mulhill (157) later eked out a 12-10 decision over Cooper McCullough, whom he lost to 14-6 in the last meeting. Drake

Randall (165) won by injury, and Ryan Redford (184) collected a win by fall over James Scott.

Jared Brant (149) and Harley DiLulo (197) recorded wins by forfeit. NIC scored its only points on two pins, with Jake Malchuski (174) pinning EOU's Marco Retano and Connor Sullivan (285) notching a fall over Justin Wilson.

The Mountaineers travel to Southern Oregon Friday for their final dual of the regular season.

**WOMEN TAKE THIRD IN ASHLAND**

The Eastern Oregon women's wrestling team took four wrestlers to the Oregon Women's State Championships in Ashland Sunday and came away with two individual winners and a third-place finish as a team.

Both Lisa Megargee (101 pounds) and Cassidy Freeman (109) went 2-0 to secure first-place finishes. Megargee twice defeated Southern Oregon's Dominique Jeanson, once by a 6-4 decision and once by fall. Freeman,

meanwhile, recorded two first-round pins of Esthela Trevino of Umpqua Community College.

Renay Monohan (155) went 2-2 to take third place, scoring wins over Kailee Doak of Warner Pacific by a 6-2 decision and over Pacific's Emalee Beavers by fall. Rosa Ramirez (123) dropped four matches to take fifth.

The EOU women next travel to Atlanta, Georgia, for the Women's College Wrestling Association National tournament Feb. 8 and 9.

## SWIMMING

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(5:42.41). Kennedy Kruse's second win was part of a 1-2-3 finish with second-place Riley Weigand (5:57.64) and third-place Tulea Setser (5:59.37). Setser was also second in the 200 freestyle (2:15.47), and Reagan Kruse came in second in the 50 freestyle (26.27). LHS rounded out the day with Laramie Ricker, Weigand, Setser and Kennedy Kruse taking second in the 400 freestyle (4:05.76).

"We are doing a really good job racing, finding a way to pace events (and) pace races for good outcomes," the head coach said of where the team has grown in recent weeks.

"In my mind it's that ability to understand where they are in the race and use that to their advantage to optimize their performance."

Romayne Ricker said what stood out to her was the strength and the closeness of the longer girls freestyle races on Saturday — not only in how dominant the Tigers were but how they supported one another. La Grande not only won all three races, but took eight of the combined 12 top-four spots.

"They build each other up before each race, and you can totally see that throughout the race. That group — the 500, 200 and 100 — is pretty close," Ricker said.

Romayne Ricker had maybe the closest race of the day on the girls side, edging Baker's Brianna Stadler by 0.08 seconds in the 200 IM after trailing by roughly .25 seconds headed into the final 25 yards. It was the latest in what has been a back-and-forth this season between the two standouts in the event.

"Brianna and I talked, (and) whenever we talk we come up with fun stuff to do. Our goal this time was to flat-on tie," Ricker said. "I really enjoy racing her. It's been fun."

The boys races provided a good regular-season sendoff for Garren Dutto, as the senior chased down a school record he's been after while turning in three wins for La Grande on the day. The effort helped the Tigers score 382 points for second place.

He claimed the meet — and program — record in the boys 200 IM with a time of 2:00.75.

"I've been chasing (the record) for a couple years now. I finally got it today," he said. "I was there when it was set my freshman year, and I've been trying go get it every since."

Darren Dutto said Garren needed to have a good split in the backstroke to have a shot of breaking the IM record, and he did just that.

"Sometimes he'll lay off in the backstroke and save energy for the breaststroke, and I told him he couldn't lay off in the backstroke today if he wanted to break the record," the coach said of his conversation with his son.

"That made the difference."

Garren Dutto also won the 100 freestyle (48.67) and anchored the winning 200 freestyle relay team, joining Caden Ricker, T.J. Clay and Grayson Jensen for the top spot in 1:37.62.

Jensen also took first in the 100 breaststroke (1:10.85) and, with Dutto, was part of a 1-2-3 finish in the 100 freestyle. Jensen was second in 55.13, and Ricker took third in 55.24.

The quartet of Clay, Jensen,

Dutto and Ricker was also second in the 200 medley relay (1:50.29), and the 400 freestyle relay team of Aaron Corsini, Adam Endress, Logan Flynn

and Adam Remily also took second (4:22.54), showing some strength in an area of concern earlier this season.

"Our relays have gotten

faster," Garren Dutto said. "At the beginning of the season it didn't look like we were going to have much depth, but we have quite a few good swim-

mers now."

La Grande added individual runner-up efforts by Clay in the 50 freestyle (25.00) and Adam Remily in the 500

freestyle (6:26.06).

The Tigers return to action Feb. 8 and 9 when they host the 4A/3A/2A/1A Special District 2 meet.



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