



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Lauren Spencer, shown late in Game 3 Saturday, tossed a shutout in the series finale for Eastern Oregon.



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Second baseman Madison Barr sets to field a grounder during Saturday's doubleheader against Northwest.

Brock tosses two shutouts for Tigers

Observer staff

Allie Brock pitched a one-hit shutout with 13 strikeouts and helped her own cause with a pair of RBIs as the La Grande Tigers softball team routed the Banks Braves on the road Friday, 10-0 in five innings.

Brock allowed just a single and a walk, and had three strikeouts three of the five innings.

Meanwhile, the La Grande offense put the game out of reach right away. An RBI double by Jayce Seavert, an RBI groundout by Brock and a two-run single by Sophie Bell made it 4-0 Tigers in the first inning.

An error and a fielder's choice allowed Kinzy Bowen and Alaina Carson to score, and RBI singles by Brock and Howton gave La Grande an 8-0 lead in the second inning. Brock later scored on a wild pitch.

Grace Neer rounded out

the scoring with an RBI single in the fourth.

Bell and Seavert both joined Brock by collecting a pair of RBIs.

LA GRANDE 11, PHILOMATH/ALSEA 0

Brock followed up her dominant performance Friday with an equally strong effort Saturday, striking out 12 batters and allowing just two singles in La Grande's 11-0 road win over the Philomath/Alsea Warriors Saturday.

The game was a rematch of last year's state semifinal game, which La Grande won, 5-0.

Carson drove in four runs to power the offense, and both Neer and Seavert added a pair of RBIs. The trio helped the Tigers break the game open in the second, with Neer's RBI single and two-run singles by both Carson and Seavert putting La Grande ahead, 5-0.

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EOU hopes win can be a spark

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

The season hasn't gotten off to the start the Eastern Oregon softball team was hoping for.

But Head Coach Erin Dickhausen believes there is still time for the Mountaineers to turn things around, and Saturday's finale of their four-game series against Northwest (Wash.) is the kind of game that could be a spark.

Lauren Spencer turned in EOU's best pitching performance of the season with a five-hit shutout and three Mountaineers hit home runs during the fifth inning of a 5-0 win Saturday during EOU's home-opening series.

"Lauren was hitting her spots," Dickhausen said. "Lauren's changeup was on point in that game and you could just see the confidence she had in herself and in her defense. That allowed her to be comfortable and throw the ball the way she can. It's nice to see us be able to put up that zero on the board."

Northwest had won the previous three games — all Cascade Collegiate Conference matchups — 9-7, 9-5 and 8-5. But Eastern put together a complete effort in the series' nonconference game.

"One thing we have been struggling at is getting our defense behind (our offense) and limiting the runs so we can win these games," Dickhausen said. "We're coming away with four, five, six-plus runs almost every single game. We just have to figure out a way to get it shored up in the circle and shored up on defense."

Spencer did just that Saturday, locating her pitches and navigating the Eagles' lineup to toss EOU's first shutout of the season. She walked five batters and struck out four, and said a key in the win for the squad was energy.

"As a team we feed off each other, so it's easier when everyone else is having fun and we're in it together," she said. "You can feel each other's energy, feed off of it and it gets you

hyped."

The Mountaineers gave Spencer all the offense she needed in the fifth with three big swings: A two-run home run by Rayne Spencer broke a scoreless tie. Shevan DeFreitas followed two batters later with a solo home run and Brandi Bowling capped the barrage with a two-run shot.

"Hits are contagious," Bowling said. "It only takes one. As soon as that one person hits or gets on (base), that allows us to have a rally and just keep going from there."

Bowling, who caught Lauren Spencer's shutout, agreed with Dickhausen that the pitcher was beaming with confidence.

"She had no doubt in the world that she could throw (any) pitch," Bowling said. "That's something you want to have from your pitchers."

The Mountaineers struggled, though, to keep the Eagles off the scoreboard in the first three contests, each of which turned into high-scoring affairs.

NORTHWEST 9, EOU 7

In Friday's opener, the Eagles scored the game's first six runs, highlighted by a solo home run from Nicola Fish in the third inning.

Madison Barr's RBI groundout in the bottom of the third got Eastern on the board, and Jordan Hentley's solo blast was part of a two-run fourth to bring the Mountaineers within 7-3.

The score reached 9-3 before EOU made a final push. Jordan Shaw's RBI single capped a three-run fifth to make it 9-6, and Haley Ebner hit an RBI single in the sixth to make it a two-run game.

Rayne Spencer, DeFreitas and Ebner all had two hits for the Mountaineers. Jessica Lambert pitched only 2/3 of an inning, allowing four runs to take the loss.

NORTHWEST 9, EOU 5

Friday's second game, which was completed Saturday morning after being suspended due to darkness, saw the Mountaineers build an early lead

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Eagles earn sweep

Observer staff

The Wallowa Valley Eagles boys baseball team opened the season with a pair of come-from-behind victories, defeating the Baker/Powder Valley Bulldogs JV twice on the road Friday, 9-7 and 12-10.

WALLOWA VALLEY 9, BAKER/POWDER VALLEY 7

The Eagles scored four late runs to rally and win their season-opener, scoring twice in the sixth to pull even and twice more in the seventh for the win.

Chris Nobles hit an RBI single in the sixth to pull Wallowa Valley within 7-6, and scored later on

a passed ball to tie the score.

In the seventh, Malachi Roberts gave the Eagles the lead for good with a two-run single.

Trace Collier, the third of fourth Wallowa Valley pitchers, pitched the sixth and started the seventh for the win, and Gus Ramsden finished the seventh to pick up the save.

WALLOWA VALLEY 12, BAKER/POWDER VALLEY 10

The Eagles came back from down 7-2 and 9-3 with a late surge to start the season 2-0.

Wallowa Valley put up five runs in the sixth, See **Eagles** / Page 7A

Eastern dominates in javelin at NNU Open

Observer staff

Dominance in men's javelin was one of the highlights for the Eastern Oregon track and field team Friday and Saturday at the NNU Open in Nampa, Idaho.

The Mountaineers claimed the top three spots in men's javelin, with the 1-2-3 effort coming from Jakob Sandhagen (195-feet-1), Moses McAninch (187-feet-11) and Dawson Kennon (184-feet-3). The marks by Sandhagen and McAninch automatically qualified them for the NAIA national championship meet, and Sandhagen's distance was fourth best in EOU history.

The men's team added a victory from Jeff Patterson in the 400-meter hurdles in 57.79 seconds. Patterson was also on the winning men's 4x400 relay team with Cooper Shaw, Brennen LeBel and Braxton Wilson, who won in a time of 3:31.31.

A fourth win came from Alex Kosel, who took top honors in the triple jump at 43-feet-11-3/4. Kosel was also third in the long jump at 20-feet-11-1/4.

EOU claimed second- and third-place finishes in the pole vault from

Sam Roddewig (13-feet-7-1/4) and Jonah Coats (13-feet-1-1/2). Also in third were Hunter Schiess in the steeplechase (9:59.39) and Devin Lewis-Allen in the 400 (49.49) and placing fourth were Branden Phamaha in the 100 (11.50) and Shaw in the 200 (23.21).

The EOU women were just as strong, if not more so, claiming 14 first- or second-place efforts, highlighted by a trio of victories. The 4x400 relay team of Megan Bolton, Olivia Lake, Michelle Herbes, Elizabeth Herbes won handily in a time of 4:00.95. Morgan Reddington earned the top spot in the long jump at first at 17-feet-3-1/4, and Payton Jolley led a 1-2-4 effort by EOU in the pole vault with a winning mark of 10-feet-11-3/4. Teammates Kennedy Lake (10-feet-6) and JoAnna Campbell (9-feet-0-1/4) followed in second and fourth, respectively.

Paige Dodd posted a second-place finish in the 100 hurdles in 15.03, a time that was the second best in program history. Maggie Ledbetter, Elizabeth Herbes and Danielle Church also had second-place finishes that were top-10 efforts in the program:

Ledbetter placed second in the discus (135-feet-2) for the sixth-best mark at EOU; Herbes was second in the 200 (25.76) and ninth best at the school; and Church's second-place finish in the shot put (39-feet-6-1/2) was 10th all time at Eastern. Church was also second in the hammer throw (143-feet-1) and Herbes was second in the 100 (12.79). Also claiming runner-up efforts were Karianne Zollman in the javelin (128-feet-6), Megan Boals in the 800 (2:20.75), Haley White in the 400 hurdles (1:08.67) and Victoria Branch in the triple jump (35-feet-7-1/4).

Eastern picked up third-place showings from Ledbetter in the shot put (38-feet-11-1/2), Lane in the high jump (5-feet-1) and Emily Palmer in the 400 hurdles (1:09.98), and in fourth were White in the 100 hurdles (15.89), Kinnah Rhodes in the 100 (13.10), Faith Homer in the 800 (2:21.72), Dodd in the 200 (26.52) and Kaitlyn Burgess, Katie Emerson, Homer and Palmer in the 4x400 relay (4:22.25).

EOU is back in action today and Tuesday at the Boxer Combined Event in Forest Grove. ■

LHS boys golf takes fourth at The Dalles

Observer staff

Braden Bell finished in a tie for second place to lead the La Grande Tigers boys golf team to a fourth-place finish in its season-opener at The Dalles Invitational Friday.

Bell was the lone Tiger to finish under 100 as he shot a round of 81, but dropped a tiebreaker on a scorecard playoff to take third.

"It's early in the season, (and) we haven't been outside but for a few days," Head Coach Ron Evans said. "Overall all of them did really well. Braden did great, which I'm excited for him to do this (well) this early."

Cruz Gallegos followed Bell's effort with a 101. Jack Seydel shot a 106, Tristen Shepherd carded a 112 and Anton Evans rounded out the scoring with a 124.

As a team, the Tigers shot a score of 400. Seaside was the top team with a score of 335.

La Grande is back in action at the Wildhorse Invitational April 1.

HARROD LEADS OUTLAWS

Boone Harrod turned in a score of 99 to tie for fifth and lead the Enterprise Outlaws boys golf team at the Icebreaker Invitational Friday at Echo Hills Golf Course.

Harrod was followed by teammate Zion Mark, who shot a 108. Jacob Amaro turned in a round of 117 and Landon Greenshields finished with a 146.

For the Wallowa/Joseph boys, Michael Diggins recorded a score of 105. Frank Westerman shot a 135 and Willie Gibbs had a score of 147.

Imbler's Will Coston posted a score of 106. Aidan Patton followed close behind with a 107 and Chance Goodman recorded a 139.

Greta Carlsen, the lone local golfer on the girls side, shot a score of 170 for Enterprise.

Enterprise is back in action April 1 at Pumpkin Ridge near Portland, and Wallowa/Joseph and Imbler play April 5 at Pendleton. ■



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