



Ronald Bond/The Observer

La Grande's Alaina Carson, left, tries to put a tag on McLoughlin's Rikki Mark during the first game of Thursday's doubleheader. The Tigers won both games, 11-0 and 12-6.

## A proper christening

By Ronald Bond  
The Observer

The La Grande Tigers softball team couldn't have asked for a much better way to christen a newly revamped Sam Marcum Field Thursday — a dominant doubleheader sweep that strengthened its grip on first place in the Greater Oregon League.

A one-hitter by Allie Brock and a two-home run effort by Jayce Seavert lifted the Tigers to an 11-0 win over the McLoughlin Pioneers in Game 1, and a balanced offensive attack sent La Grande to a 12-6 win in the second game and to a 6-0 start in GOL play.

"The new field helped," Seavert said. "We were like, 'We've got a new facility. We want to play well for the first game on the new home field.' We were looking at (the doubleheader) as we've got to come in strong and want it more than (the Pioneers) do."

Outfielder Kara Gooderham, one of LHS's seniors, said the upgraded facility, which includes a new backstop, new dugouts for both home and visiting teams and a permanent outfield fence, helps to validate the program and its growth into one of the state's strongest after taking the title a year ago.

"It shows we're not just some rag-tag team from nowhere. We won state and we look like it," she said. "When people show up, they think we're a good team."

The Tigers have definitely looked the part of the state contenders they are, as the sweep Thursday continued what has been a runaway start to GOL action. In their first six league games, the Tigers have outscored the opposition 108-7, reaching double digits in runs in all six games and securing mercy-rule wins in five.

"The bats are working all the way around, for sure,"

Head Coach Woody Wright said. "As long as we can continue to support (Brock) with runs I feel pretty good about where we're sitting with the league right now."

La Grande scored the first run of the opener without a hit, as Alaina Carson was hit by a pitch and later scored when Seavert reached on an error for 1-0 first-inning lead. The first hit at the upgraded facility came an inning later on a single by Jaiden Hafer, and the first RBIs were in the third when Seavert and Hafer both hit RBI doubles for a 3-0 lead.

The offense exploded in the fourth, with Kara Gooderham and Seavert leading the charge. Gooderham hit a blooming RBI double into right field and Seavert followed with a two-run home run for the new park's first dinger. Hafer later reached on error that plated two more runs and gave La Grande an

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## Dodd leads after first day



Ronald Bond/The Observer

EOU's Paige Dodd reached a national automatic qualifying mark of 5-feet-5-3/4 in winning the high jump, and led the women's heptathlon through Thursday.

By Ronald Bond  
The Observer

Paige Dodd already has one women's heptathlon title under her belt this spring, and the Eastern Oregon redshirt junior is eyeing another. Dodd held the lead in the heptathlon through one day of the Cascade Collegiate Conference Multi-Event Championships, which began Thursday and concluded today at the EOU track.

"I feel like today went really well," Dodd said Thursday. "The warm weather was a nice change and it seemed to help everyone.... There are definitely some things I know that I need to work on, but today all around felt really good."

Dodd, one of three EOU athletes competing in the heptathlon this weekend, had 2,994 points through four of the seven disciplines and was 75 points ahead of Loghan Sprauer of Southern Oregon. Mountaineer teammates Olivia Lane (2,688) and Cheyanne Collins (2,260) are in fourth and eighth, respectively.

All three Mountaineer women, in fact, hit personal bests in three events: both Dodd and Lane in the 100 hurdles, outdoors high jump and shot put, and Collins in the hurdles, shot put and 800.

Dodd's time of 14.99 seconds in the hurdles put her in fourth with 843 points. She moved into the lead with a national qualifying mark of 5-feet-5-3/4 for 818 points, and maintained the lead with a 35-foot-7 effort in the shot put and a time of 26.57 in the 200, which were good for second and seventh.

Lane was fifth in the 100 hurdles (15.74) and moved into fourth with a fourth-place finish in the high jump at 5-feet-2-1/4. She followed by taking fourth in the shot put (34-foot-0-1/4) and 11th in 200 (27.44).

"The first three events were great and helped me to get a day one PR of 158 points," Lane said. "It has given me a lot of confidence going into day two."

Both Dodd and Lane, in fact, were more than 150 points ahead of their scores

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## LHS tennis has mixed results

Observer staff

The La Grande Tigers boys tennis team bounced back from a loss to Baker earlier in the week to top Ontario in all five home matches Wednesday and split a home set against McLoughlin Thursday.

On Wednesday, the Tigers dropped just one set as Colm Cahill went the distance to earn a 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 win against Andrew Barba.

The other four matches were sweeps. Cayson Forsberg rolled over George Leyva (6-2, 6-0) and Adam Remily dumped Jose Banuelos (6-0, 6-0), while in doubles James Thurman and Scott Remily took down Trevor Gammage and Jonathan Snow (6-3, 6-3) and Nick DuVernay and Kaleb Myer topped Landon Curtis and Jonathan Alman 6-0, 6-1.

Thursday the team went 2-2 in both singles and doubles against the Pioneers. Cahill again went three sets to earn a win, edging Jamie Gomez 6-2, 6-7 (5-7), 7-5, and Caden Johnson took an 8-2 win over Andrew Starr. Forsberg, though, dropped an 8-5 match to Rafael Pereyda, and Adam Remily fell 8-2 to Ian Miller.

In doubles, DuVernay and Myer topped Rolando Castilla and Chris Gracia (8-5), and Mason Mellinger and Gabe Blackman topped Eddie Rodriguez and Caven Pratton (8-3), while Thurman and Scott Remily fell in three sets to Dylan Quist and



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Colm Cahill went three sets both Wednesday and Thursday to win his matches for La Grande.

Alexis Perez (3-6, 6-2, 6-3), and Devin Ingram and Ashton Morwood lost to John Wells and Jamie Gomez, 8-6.

The LHS girls, though, had two rough afternoons, dropping all six matches to Ontario Wednesday and seven to Mac-Hi Thursday.

In singles against Ontario, Rebecca Conklin dropped a 6-2, 6-0 match to Keyona Navarrete, Brenna Bushman lost to Megan Oester 6-1, 6-1, and Emily Wilson fell to Izzy Mills, 6-3, 6-0. On Thursday against Mac-Hi, Daisy Alvarez beat Conklin (6-2, 6-2) Leslie Diaz topped Bushman (8-1) and Nicole Flores defeated Wilson (8-0).

In doubles Wednesday, Maylen Tommy and Mattie Hendrickson dropped a 6-4,

6-1 match to Ana Bertolini and Tayler Gammage, Katelyn Banes and Lindsay Shaul fell to Emma Navarrete and Karina Tovanche, 6-0, 6-1, and Isabelle Hadley and Celeste Villagomez lost 5-0, 5-2 to a split squad from Ontario.

Thursday against Mac-Hi, Janelle Martinez and Evelyn Garcia defeated Tommy and Bushman (6-2, 6-0), Jessica and Kasey Lesko topped Banes and Shaul (8-1), Jadie Jackson and Sarah Odman beat Hadley and Villagomez (8-0) and Dani Angel and Aby Hernandez topped Banes and Shaul (8-0).

The Tigers host Weston-McEwen in their final regular season home match Tuesday. ■

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