



Ronald Bond/Observer file photo

Eastern Oregon catcher Brandi Bowling was a second-team all-Cascade Collegiate Conference catcher.

Trio of Eastern Oregon softball players scoop up CCC awards

Observer staff

Three members of the Eastern Oregon softball team earned all-conference recognition from the Cascade Collegiate Conference, the CCC announced Thursday.

Senior Brandi Bowling led the award winners from EOU as a second-team all-CCC catcher, and senior Shevan DeFreitas (first base) and freshman Haley Ebner (designated player) were both honorable mention.

Bowling, who missed half the season due to injury, still had an impact for Eastern in CCC play. The senior played in 17 conference games, and hit a team-

best .370 in CCC action with seven RBIs and seven runs scored. For the season, Bowling had a .377 average with one home run, 13 RBIs and 11 runs scored. She also threw out seven would-be base stealers.

DeFreitas hit .353 — second on the team — with three home runs, 13 RBIs and seven runs scored. Those numbers included a .328 average with four RBIs in CCC action.

Ebner hit .309 with four home runs and a team-best 26 RBIs, and her 19 runs tied her for second on the team. In CCC games, she hit an even .300 with a home run, 14 RBIs and 12 runs. ■

Blazers even series with Denver

The Associated Press

DENVER — After giving up 39 points to Damian Lillard in the opener, the Denver Nuggets were determined to make sure Portland's role players would have to bear the burden of evening up the series.

His teammates were up to the task on a night that Lillard, who came in averaging 34.8 points in the playoffs, was held to 14 points on 5-of-17 shooting.

CJ McCollum led six Trail Blazers in double figures with 20 points in a 97-90 victory at the Pepsi Center on Wednesday night that evened their series 1-1.

"It's very important," said Enes Kanter, who chipped in 15 points for Portland. "Teams can't guard him with one man. They were sending double-teams, triple-teams. That's when I said, 'He's making himself better, but at the same time he's making everybody else better around him.' He was passing the ball, really active on defense. He's been unbelievable, man."

The series shifts to Portland for Game 3 Friday night, and Lillard's hoping a return to the Moda Center will help him find his long-range rhythm after he misfired on 14 of 19 3-pointers in Denver.

The Nuggets trimmed a 17-point, third-quarter deficit to 95-90 in the final minute thanks to an astonishing 14 offensive rebounds in the fourth quarter and a 19-9 run before Rodney Hood's two free throws with 17 seconds left iced it.

"The good news is they had all of those offensive rebounds but they didn't convert a lot," Portland coach Terry Stotts said. "They were 8 for 24 on second-chance points. We were fortunate we came away not hurt as badly as we could have been on the offensive boards."

Nikola Jokic had 16 points and 14 boards but got off to a slow start and wasn't nearly the take-con-



David Zalubowski/The Associated Press

Portland Trail Blazers guard Damian Lillard, right, drives as Denver Nuggets guard Jamal Murray defends during the second half Wednesday night in Denver. Portland won 97-90.

rol force he was in Game 1, when he scored 37 points.

"The last quarter we missed a lot of put-backs, but 23 offensive rebounds is a big number," Jokic said. "The first half we had open shots but we didn't make any of those."

With Jokic taking — and missing — just one shot in the first quarter and scoring six points in the first half, the Nuggets trailed 50-35 at halftime after the franchise's worst quarter ever at home in the playoffs, one in which they made just 5 of 23 shots and missed all 10 of their 3-pointers.

Nuggets coach Michael Malone said he admonished his team at halftime, "if you're not making shots, maybe attack the basket, maybe get to the foul line, maybe get to the rim."

They started doing that after halftime, but the Blazers answered time after time, getting 15 points from

Hood, 11 from Al-Farouq Aminu and 10 from Zach Collins.

BANGED UP

Denver spark plug forward Torrey Craig's nose was bloodied after he was knocked down and slammed into teammate Monte Morris' foot early in the second quarter. Moments after Craig hobbled off, leaving a trail of blood, Maurice Harkless rolled his right ankle and also left the game.

Harkless didn't return but Craig came back in the second half.

Jamal Murray spent part of the fourth quarter on the stationary bike trying to loosen up his tight right thigh. He missed 12 of 18 shots.

Craig, whose insertion into the starting lineup turned around the Nuggets' first-round series against San Antonio, returned with a face mask with 3 minutes left in the third quarter. He immediately grabbed a

rebound and his 3-pointer with a minute left in the quarter was Denver's first since 1:11 of the first quarter.

"I think Torrey Craig is the unsung hero of the game," Malone said. "He's got some (guts). He's got some toughness."

SCUFFLE

Jokic pushed Kanter, who slammed into Craig with 43.5 seconds left on a made free throw. Murray took exception to Kanter staring down the fallen Craig and a scuffle ensued at midcourt. The two were assessed a double technical.

BOWTIES

Stotts and his assistants rocked bow ties Wednesday night in honor of Jon Yim, the team's video coordinator and player development coach who was seriously injured in an auto accident last week that left him hospitalized with a broken leg and collapsed lung. ■

Tigers tennis teams win six matches in Ontario

Observer staff

The La Grande Tigers boys tennis team earned four wins in five matches Wednesday in Ontario, while the girls team picked up two wins.

La Grande went 2-1 in boys singles, with wins by Colm Cahill (6-4, 6-3) and Ashton Morwood (6-1, 6-0) and a loss by Cayson Forsberg. The doubles

teams of Nick DuVernay and Kaleb Myer (6-0, 6-0), and James Thurman and Scott Remily (6-0, 6-0), also won. All four victories were in straight sets.

The LHS girls also went 2-1 in singles, getting victories from both Brenna Bushman (6-3, 6-0) and from Emily Wilson (6-0, 6-0). Rebecca Conklin lost her match in three sets.

La Grande's doubles teams, Mattie Hendrickson and Maylen Tommy, Lindsay Shaul and Katelyn Banes, Isabelle Hadley and Celeste Villagomez, and Martiza Villagomez and Maria Ortiz, all took setbacks.

The Tigers play again today and Saturday in the Special District 4 Sub-District Tournament in Nyssa. ■



Ronald Bond/Observer file photo

La Grande's James Thurman, above, and teammate Scott Remily won their doubles match in straight sets Wednesday in Ontario.

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