

Tigers return to title game

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

La Grande head softball coach Woody Wright said getting back to the state championship game was not a goal for the Tigers — it was an expectation.

That expectation was met with authority Tuesday, as La Grande pounded out four home runs — three from Jayce Seavert — in a 9-2 victory over the Junction City Tigers at Sam Marcum Field in La Grande.

“We look at game day as celebration day for all the hard work they put in, (and) today is even more special because of all the hard work they’ve put in all year leading up to this game,” Wright said. “It’s a big celebration for them.”

Seavert, who had been relatively quiet at the plate during the first two playoff games — going 1-for-5 — wasted no time in leaving an indelible mark on the semifinal game with a two-run shot to center field just three batters in for a 2-0 La Grande lead.

“We wanted to go back, we wanted to do it for our seniors, and we came in with (the thought that) we’re going to do this as one team,” she said. “It’s not one person. All of us contributed today, and I feel that going back to the state championship (game) is the boost La Grande needs as a community and a school.”

Seavert added two more two-run blasts to left field — one in the fourth and one in the sixth — and scored on the fourth home run, which was a three-run home run by Allie Brock to center in the third.

“The kid was due,” Wright said of Seavert. “We have a team saying, ‘Show up, show off,’ and (Seavert) definitely did that today.”

The big day from the junior was also the latest display of a different player or group of players stepping up for La Grande, which has been a theme all season for the Tigers. Seavert attributed that to the team’s “incredible” bond, noting that the team picked her up during the first two rounds of the playoffs.

“They had my back,” she said of the first two games. “We just wanted to win (and) we wanted to pick each other up.”

Wright added that facet is what’s “beautiful” about the team.

“(If) somebody is having an off day and not hitting their norm, someone else steps up and gets it done. That’s what this team is about,” he said.

Seavert’s first home run also rattled Junction City — and especially starting



Ronald Bond/The Observer

The La Grande softball team celebrates at home plate as they wait for Allie Brock to arrive after hitting a home run during the third inning of Tuesday’s 9-2 win over Junction City.

pitcher Jenna Kister — and dealt a blow the visiting Tigers were ultimately never able to recover from. Wright said his scouting report on Junction City noted a key was to get into the pitcher’s head early.

“If you can get in the other team’s head from the get-go, it’s advantage you,” he said. “The girls did a good job. We wanted to establish our offensive game early, execute our game plan, and the girls went out and did that.”

La Grande also crafted a way to navigate the top of Junction City’s lineup without allowing too much damage. Junction City actually outhit La Grande, 9-8, but was held to mostly singles, and La Grande was able to limit the big innings.

“First three batters we knew could put the ball in play. (They’re) really aggressive at the plate,” Wright said. The (plan) was to keep them off balance and then attack (the rest of the lineup). First three batters from Junction City had some of the best swings we’ve seen all year.”

The top four in the batting order for Junction City, in fact, went 7-for-14 and had both RBIs — an RBI double by Mariah Ohman in the third that briefly pulled Junction City within 2-1 and an RBI groundout by Lindsey Stripling in the seventh.

But the rest of the lineup went 2-for-16 against Brock. The junior struck out eight, walked one and hit a batter in seven innings, and did so while admitting she wasn’t at her best. The defense, though, picked her up with several sound plays both in the infield and the outfield.

“I had an off day today pitching. My spins were off



Ronald Bond/The Observer

La Grande’s Jayce Seavert connects on the first of her three home runs during the Tigers’ 9-2 win over Junction City. The win sent La Grande back to the state championship game and a rematch with Henley, which it defeated a year ago for the title.



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Kara Gooderham, front, and Jayce Seavert react as they round the bases following Allie Brock’s home run in the third inning of Tuesday’s game.

and I wasn’t throwing as hard as I usually do, but I was relying on the defense behind me, and it was nice having

them (there),” Brock said. Shortstop Alaina Carson said infield coach Lin Casciato helped the team

prep for what it would see against Junction City.

“We were really ready. Lin See **Tigers** / Page 7A

Bruins top Blues in Game 1

By Jimmy Golen
The Associated Press

BOSTON — Torey Krug flew down the ice with his helmet off, like his big, bad predecessors on the Boston defense from the days of Eddie Shore and Bobby Orr.

He lined up St. Louis center Robert Thomas and knocked him off his skates, delighting the crowd and sending an unmistakable message to rest of the Blues: The Bruins had woken up from their 11-day layoff, and they were ready to fight for the Stanley Cup.

“I think it gave our team energy, and that’s all you’re trying to do out there,” Krug said after Boston rallied from a two-goal deficit to beat St. Louis 4-2 in Game 1 on Monday night. “Hopefully it gave the guys a boost on the bench.”

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Warriors set for new foe in finals

By Janie McCauley
The Associated Press

OAKLAND, California — After four straight years of facing LeBron James and Cleveland in the NBA Finals, this feels refreshing for the two-time defending champion Warriors.

“For sure,” Shaun Livingston said with a smile of taking on the upstart Raptors, “for sure, we’ll leave it right there.”

Off to Toronto, finally a fresh team that’s tops from the East. Golden State is

See **NBA** / Page 7A

SPORTS BRIEFS

EOU hosting volleyball tournament

LA GRANDE — The Eastern Oregon volleyball team will be hosting a women’s 6-on-6 volleyball tournament June 8. The event will have food, a beer garden and prizes. EOU alumni are encouraged to either join a team or come to watch the tournament. Cost for a team is \$50. For more information contact Makayla Lindburg at mlindburg@eou.edu or at 541-514-4290.



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