



Union’s Ahnica Shoemaker, left, Callie Glenn, center, and Taylor Daggett celebrate after a point during the Bobcats’ match against Weston-McEwen Thursday. The Bobcats topped the TigerScots in four sets.

Union tops TigerScots

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

UNION — An early showdown between teams that entered the night in the top five of the OSAA rankings lived up to its billing. But more consistent play by the Union Bobcats led to them taking the win Thursday and moving into first place in the Blue Mountain Conference.

Autumn Daggett had 16 kills, Kylie Marriott had a strong all-around match with 13 kills, 16 digs and three aces, and Union picked up an important early BMC win, topping the Weston-McEwen TigerScots in four sets, 25-17, 25-16, 25-27, 25-16.

“Definitely the best match we’ve played all year and that’s what we practiced for,” Union head coach Karly Knapp said. “They put it all together on the right night.”

The match featured solid, gritty defense on both sides of the net, and especially early on it was tough for either team to get a kill. Long rallies and impressive digging defined much of the match.

“A lot of what we were doing was going for everything at that point,” Knapp said. “The ball is moving fast, long rallies, you might as well go for everything and not let the ball hit the ground.”

Union, which showed perhaps the most balance on offense it has all season, jumped out to an early advantage. The Bobcats scored the final seven points of the opening set, then ended the second set on a similar run — this one of six straight points — to seemingly take control of the match.

“On the offensive side we’ve been really trying to have balance because it’s hard to have one hitter only. If you have that, then the other team knows who they are going to put their defense on,” said Union’s Ahnica Shoemaker, who added six kills and five blocks.

The TigerScots, though, showed toughness to get back in the match. Weston-McEwen twice jumped ahead to five-point leads in the third set, once at 12-7 on a kill by Ellie Scheibner and later at 19-14 on a Carrie Hazen ace.

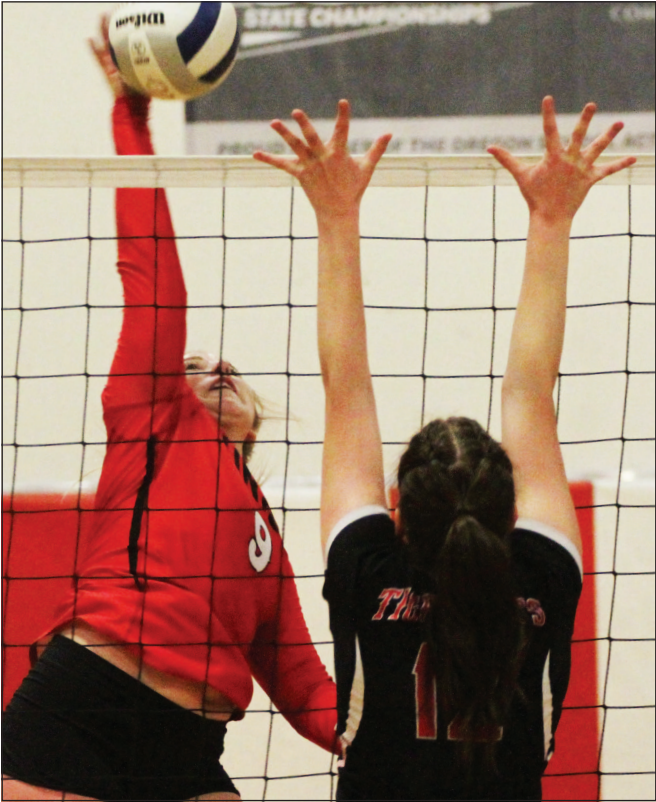
Union scored the next six points, taking a 20-19 lead on an ace by Marriott and going ahead 24-22 on a Sydney Antoine kill.

The TigerScots managed to make an impressive save on a kill attempt on match point, which Union eventually put out of bounds, then later took a 26-25 lead on a block by Cloe Davis and Scheibner. They scored the next point on a Union error to force a fourth set.

“For whatever reason with this team, we’ve won almost every two-point set we’ve been in all year,” TigerScots’ head coach Shawn White said. “And we’ve been in a lot of them.”

Weston-McEwen rode that momentum to an 11-6 lead in the fourth before Union took it back, a result, White said, of his team’s struggles with consistency Thursday.

“We had momentum and (the lack of) execution just stepped up and bit us,” he said. “If we’re going to beat a good team like that, we gotta be more consistent.”



Union’s Kylie Marriott, left, had 13 kills and 16 digs in the Bobcats’ win Thursday.

Union used a 7-1 run — one that saw Shoemaker tally three kills — to tie the set, then took the lead for good on back-to-back kills by Daggett and Callie Glenn, which started a match-ending 11-2 run. Marriott had three kills to help close the match, including dropping one on the sideline for the winner.

“I definitely knew that we had to come out on top of (our game), be super confident and play every play to the fullest,” Marriott said.

Glenn had 33 assists and added 11 digs for Union. Brianna Kohr added 28 digs and four aces.

“Callie, our setter, was just able to move the ball around a little more to-

night,” Knapp said.

Jesse Manning, who had 18 digs, seven kills and two aces for the TigerScots, said the team played well in spite of the outcome.

“We pushed really hard and did everything we could,” she said. “I feel like we just weren’t focusing, and we really needed to get our focus back.”

Davis led Weston-McEwen with eight kills and added 10 blocks. Trinity Hearn and Kendra Zink had six kills each. Emma Olson led the back row with 21 digs, Charli King had 13 assists, and Scheibner had 12 assists.

The TigerScots (11-5 overall, 1-1 BMC) face Grant Union and Stanfield Saturday in Stanfield.

Outlaws sweep Stubblebuster races



Henry Coughlan, right, won the boys race to lead Wallowa Valley to a victory at the Helix Stubblebuster Thursday.

EO Media Group staff

Henry Coughlan of Wallowa Valley finished first in the boys race at the Helix Stubblebuster Thursday, leading the Outlaws to the team title with 23 points. Coughlan finished in a time of 16:02.2.

The relatively flat course made three loops through town, with about one-quarter of a mile on each loop cutting through the stubble of a wheat field.

Teammate Zac Knapp (16:43.4) finished second behind Coughlan.

Stanfield’s Sisay Hurty (16:51.8), Bayden Menton of

the Outlaws (17:10.4) and Heppner’s Trevor Nichols (17:39.5) rounded out the top five.

In the girls race, the Outlaws ran away with the team title with 35 points. Heppner was right behind with 42.

Ellyse Tinglestad of Wallowa Valley won the race in a time of 20:15.9, with Heppner’s Hailey Heideman (20:18.8) right on her heels. Madelyn Nichols of Heppner (20:30.5) was third, followed by Condon’s Kally Wilkins (20:31.2) and Kaylee Cope of Griswold (20:42.8).

The Outlaws return to the course Oct. 3 at the Crosby Invitational in Ontario.

Tigers survive scare from Irrigon



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Jacie Howton and the La GrandeTigers overcame Irrigon in five setsThursday night.

Observer staff

The La Grande Tigers survived a major scare and eked out a victory over the Irrigon Knights Thursday that unexpectedly went five sets, 25-21, 20-25, 24-26, 25-17, 15-7.

“In those middle two sets we just struggled. We were making everything look hard,” La Grande head coach Melinda Becker-Bisenius said. “We’re a much better team than that. Credit to Irrigon. They played tough. Their libero was all over the floor.”

Becker-Bisenius said the team found a rhythm in the latter stages of the match and came alive.

“We played some good defense, (started) getting some kills and playing smarter,” she said.

Jayne Seavert led the Tigers with 15 kills, 23 digs and five aces. Jacie Howton had 11 assists and 13 digs, Kenzie Williams added 19 assists and nine digs, and Presley Justice had nine kills and 17 digs. Felicity Houston added 21 digs.

La Grande (15-1 overall) hosts Ontario Tuesday.

OUTLAWS FALL TO STANFIELD

The Enterprise Outlaws were unable to hold on to a two-set lead and ultimately dropped a heartbreaker in five sets to the Stanfield Tigers at home Thursday, 20-25, 23-25, 26-24, 25-13, 15-8, in their Blue Mountain Conference opener.

“We played solid volleyball for the first three sets and I can see great improvement, but tonight was frustrating for us,” head coach Lisa Farwell said. “We completely let down after the close loss in the third set. We beat ourselves in the fourth set with mistakes and mental errors and then couldn’t rally in set five.”

Ashlyn Gray led Enterprise with 13 kills. Carsyn Miller had 13 assists and Zari Bathke had 13 digs. Gray and Claire Farwell combined to go a perfect 31-for-31 from the service line.

The Outlaws (7-6 overall, 0-1 BMC) travel to Heppner Saturday to face both Heppner and Union.

COUGARSTAKE DOWN LEOPARDS

The Wallowa Cougars shook off a first-set loss to overcome the Cove Leopards in four sets in Old Oregon League play Thursday, 20-25, 25-10, 25-23, 25-22.

“Second (set), the girls were back to normal and came out on fire,” head coach Janea Hulse said. “I saw a lot of fight in the girls. We had a few let downs in the third and fourth but they persevered.”

Ella Moeller led the defense with 25 digs. Libby Fisher had 23 digs and Lyvie Thorne added 14. Bailey Hafer chipped in with seven kills, and Ashlyn Young had five aces.

Kierra Moore led Cove in the loss with 12 kills and a .290 kill percentage. Elli Hines-Dunlap and Austin Kendall each had four kills, and Mykiah Overton added four aces.

“We have things to work on and areas where we can improve, so that will make our game better as we move forward,” Cove head coach Brett Moore said.

Wallowa (10-5 overall, 3-1 OOL) faces Adrian and Jordan Valley on the road today and hosts Nixyaawii and Griswold Saturday, while Cove (9-4, 2-2) hosts Griswold today.

PANTHERS SWEEP SPARTANS

The Imbler Panthers picked up their fourth win in Old Oregon League play Thursday, sweeping the Pine Eagle Spartans on the road, 25-15, 25-22, 25-22.

Aspen Smith had 15 kills to lead the Panthers, who also got a strong all-around effort from Erin Coston, who had seven kills and teams highs of 15 digs and four aces. Kenna Whitmore added 12 digs and five kills, and Rylee Deal had 23 assists.

Imbler (7-11 overall, 4-1 OOL) travels to Wallowa Tuesday.



Ellen Morris Bishop/EO Media Group

Cove’s Austin Kendall, left, and Raegan Duby both try to make a play on the ball during the Leopards’ loss to Wallowa Thursday.