

Simpson, Huskies top Powder Valley

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

The Elgin Huskies started strong and finished strong offensively to win an early matchup of unbeaten teams — a victory that sets up another showdown next week.

Tristan Simpson rushed for 191 yards, passed for 140 more and accounted for four touchdowns, and Elgin scored the game’s first 22 points on the way to a 62-32 win over the Powder Valley Badgers Friday in a Special District 3-East contest in North Powder.

“I feel like the team played well,” Simpson said. “We had a few mistakes

PREP FOOTBALL

throughout the game that we need to fix this week, but overall we did really well.”

The win means the Huskies will face Adrian/Jordan Valley at home Friday night with both teams 4-0 overall and 3-0 in SD3-E. First place in the district will be on the line.

Elgin struck often and took it to Powder Valley early. In the game’s first 7:26, Simpson scored on a 68-yard run and hit Jordon Palmer for a 25-yard score. In between, Wyatt Hallgarth found paydirt from 3 yards out, and Elgin had

a 22-0 advantage.

“They’re a very good football team. There is no doubt about it,” Powder Valley head coach Josh Cobb said. “We had an off night against a good team.”

The lead reached 34-6 midway through the second after touchdown runs of 19 and 4 yards by Simpson. It could have been worse going into the half, but an interception grabbed by Powder Valley’s Ethan Stephens stopped Elgin in the red zone. The Badgers followed with a 14-play, 84-yard drive that used up the rest of the

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Ronald Bond/The Observer

Elgin’s Tristan Simpson had a combined 331 yards in the Huskies’ win over Powder Valley Friday.

One is enough for LHS

By Ronald Bond
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Enough offense and a great play on defense.

That was all the La Grande Tigers needed to stay undefeated in the Greater Oregon League.

Callum Ebel scored the game’s only goal in the 47th minute, Owen Rinker made four saves — including a crucial stop in the closing seconds — in his first start as goalkeeper, and La Grande fended off the McLoughlin Pioneers, 1-0, Saturday in GOL action at Community Stadium.

“I tried to step in and do some work. I tried to do my best and keep them out. Everyone believed in me,” Rinker, a freshman, said.



Ronald Bond/The Observer

La Grande’s T.J. Clay, right, and Mac-Hi’s Carlos Martinez battle for possession Saturday.

PREP BOYS SOCCER

The Pioneers were the aggressors much of the first half but were unable to generate many good looks against La Grande’s defense. Mac-Hi did take six shots, but the two that were on goal were long shots off of free kicks that Rinker easily scooped up.

“We had our chances and we did not take advantage of it,” Mac-Hi head coach Jose Garcia said. “That’s killing us. We cannot finish. We cannot score.”

The coach said it has been “little” mistakes that have kept Mac-Hi from coming away with goals. It cost them in a match Saturday he felt was neck-and-neck.

“We played (La Grande) evenly. We could have beaten

them,” he said.

La Grande was outplayed and flat much of the first half. The Tigers were missing two starters, including regular goalkeeper Jacob Huntsman, and Rangel said that impacted his team early.

“That threw us off. Players had to step up and play in positions (they) are not used to,” he said. “That’s part of soccer. You have to be able to adapt, and that’s what we did in the second half.”

La Grande adapted indeed, dominating possession in the second half. But the Tigers’ lone goal was somewhat advantageous, as it came partly as a result of a misplay by the Mac-Hi defense.

“That was a mistake from our defender,” Garcia said of what proved to be the

difference maker.

Ebel made Mac-Hi pay with the goal. He agreed that the team started flat but got better as the match progressed.

“We gotta keep on improving. We played well, but there are things we need to improve on,” he said.

Every other attempt in the second half was turned away by Christian Castillo, who had all seven of his saves after halftime after not facing a shot on goal in the first half. La Grande, in fact, took 11 second-half shots after only taking two in the first half.

La Grande (7-1 overall, 2-0 GOL) hosts Ontario Wednesday in its regular season home finale. The winner will take over sole possession of first place in the league.

Mounties knock off No. 5 Southern

Observer staff

COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

After appearing as if they would dominate the No. 5 team in the nation, the eighth-ranked Eastern Oregon University Mountaineers had to fight to survive a five-set thriller against Southern Oregon. EOU came away with the victory in an important Cascade Collegiate Conference and national showdown, winning 25-18, 25-17, 21-25, 17-25, 15-11 Saturday night in Ashland. The victory wrapped up an undefeated weekend as Eastern also claimed a four-set win at Oregon Tech Friday.

“Really proud of our girls for their perseverance in one of the toughest road trips,” head coach Kaki McLean-Morehead said. “Neither gym is an easy place to play, and I was impressed with our consistency in pressure situations and our composure when

times got tough.”

EOU played clean volleyball in the first two sets Saturday, with just four attack errors and kill percentages of .324 and .333. A 5-0 run gave EOU the lead for good in the first, and a 4-0 run later, capped by a Jessie White ace, gave Eastern a 17-10 lead.

Sade Williams had an ace to cap a 7-1 run in the second for a 12-7 lead, and a 6-2 run later pushed the lead to 10 before Madison Pilon and Cambree Scott teamed for a block to take the set.

But Southern Oregon rallied, ending the third set on a 7-2 run and finishing it on a Makayla Hoyt kill to get back in the match, then rolling in the fourth set. An 8-1 run put the Raiders ahead for good, and they finished the set with a 5-1 run to

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Ronald Bond/Observer file photo

Taylor Tibbetts, right, and the Eastern Oregon volleyball team moved to 17-1 with two more wins.

Tigers solve Mac-Hi defense in 5-0 win

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

PREP GIRLS SOCCER

The La Grande Tigers saw something new in Saturday’s Greater Oregon League matchup against the McLoughlin Pioneers.

Mac-Hi, knowing La Grande has a powerful offense, loaded the defensive end of the field in an effort to clog passing lanes and slow down the Tigers.

“I know La Grande has an awesome passing game, so we went with a more defensive strategy,” Mac-Hi head coach Martin Martinez said. “We held them the first 20 minutes, hoping they would get frustrated and then we could get loose on their defense and we could get a long ball, and one of our fast girls could get it and score. But Sam (Brown) is a good coach. He adjusted to it right away.”

Eventually, La Grande

broke through, and two goals by Audrey Garlitz midway through the first half got the Tigers’ offense rolling as they went on to a 5-0 win at Community Stadium.

“They played with five in the back, which is way more difficult to find passing angles and through balls,” La Grande’s Lauran Rinker said. “But once we figured that out, we got in the groove of passing around them.”

The Tigers, who are averaging 6.4 goals per game, were stymied early by Mac-Hi’s formation. Head coach Sam Brown, though, said the key was to just wait and let the offense come.

“Patience,” he said. “Patience and not feeling like you have to score 1,000 goals. They’ll get it. It’ll come. It did, and once it did, we were able

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Ronald Bond/The Observer

La Grande’s Taryn Miller, right, tries to maneuver away from Mac-Hi’s Giselle Ruiz Saturday.

Bulldogs send EOU to fourth loss

Observer staff

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Jon Jund threw four touchdown passes and ran for another, and No. 19 Montana Western scored the game’s final 28 points on the way to a 49-13 win over Eastern Oregon University Saturday in Frontier Conference play in Dillon, Montana.

The blowout loss halted what has been a trend of close matchups in the series. Entering Saturday, six of the previous seven games had been decided by fewer than 10 points. UMW’s 36-point victory, however, was the most lopsided since EOU earned a 54-13 victory in Dillon during the 2011 season.

EOU, which never led, did get within a touchdown early in the third quarter: Kai Quinn found Phoenix Millhollen for a 27-yard

score to make it 21-13 just 89 seconds into the second half and cap a quick five-play, 75-yard drive.

It was all Bulldogs after that. Jund, who threw TD passes to four different players, connected with Nate Simkins, Jamison Hermanson and Chayce Morgan on passes of 11, 45 and 5 yards, respectively, to put Western ahead 42-13, and Joe Caicedo capped the scoring with an 86-yard interception return for a score with 11:20 to play in the game.

Western gashed the EOU defense to the tune of 575 yards, 407 of which came through the air. Jund was 22-for-30 for 378 yards. He also rushed for 31 yards as the Bulldogs totaled 168 on

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