

# Badgers, Huskies reach state

By Ronald Bond  
The Observer

The Powder Valley Badgers scored the game's first 34 points and coasted to a 60-28 victory over the Enterprise Outlaws in the opening game of the Special District 3 playoffs Friday at Eastern Oregon University.

The win didn't guarantee a playoff berth for the Badgers, who moved to 6-3, but helped solidify Powder Valley's OSAA rankings as it later grabbed one of four at-large berths to state. It's the Badgers' first playoff berth since 2016, when they reached the state quarter-finals.

"It's a huge step for us," head coach Josh Cobb said. "We're young. We're sophomore heavy, so getting these guys some playoff experience is going to be huge for the long run."

Reece Dixon threw for 463 yards and six touchdown passes for the Badgers, including a 72-yard scoring strike to Kaden Krieger and a 6-yard pass to Dominick Grende to help Powder Valley's lead reach 28-0 after one quarter.

Another long touchdown pass — this one of 74 yards from Dixon to Ethan Stephens, made it 34-0 before the Outlaws finally got on the board. Gideon Gray scored from 2 yards out, and a safety just before the half brought Enterprise within 34-8.

But four second half scores — the last of which was a 54-yard touchdown catch by Roper Bingham to make it 60-8 with 3:03 to play in the third quarter.

Grende and Bingham finished with 188 and 116 yards receiving, respectively.

The Outlaws added three fourth-quarter scores on a 9-yard run by Jericho Peters, a 25-yard rush by Trace Evans and a 40-yard TD reception by Evans for the final margin.

The Badgers, who have won their last three games, ended up as the No. 12 seed and will travel to face Lowell in the first round of the state playoffs Friday night.

Enterprise, which dropped its final two games, finishes the season with an overall record of 2-5.

## HUSKIES DROP SHOOT-OUT TO DUFUR

A wild, high-scoring, back-and-forth affair went to the defending state champion, as the Dufur Rangers, powered by seven touchdowns from Cooper Bales, held on for a 62-50 victory over

the Elgin Huskies and an automatic state playoff berth Friday evening.

The teams traded leads three times in the first half and went to the break tied at 28-28, but the Rangers, led by Bales, distanced themselves in the second half. His rushes of 86 and 41 yards helped Dufur take a 40-28 lead midway through the third quarter.

Elgin twice got back within a touchdown, as Wyatt Hallgarth scored on a 64-yard touchdown run to make 40-34 with 3:39 to play in the third. Another Hallgarth TD from a yard out answered a Dufur score by Jacob Peters and made it 46-42 Rangers with 9:55 to play.

Elgin then recovered an onside kick, but turnovers on the Huskies' next two possessions led to touchdowns, with Bales' final score from 3 yards pushing the lead to 62-42 with 3:17 to play.

Tristan Simpson threw a late touchdown pass of 39 yards to Jordan Palmer for the final margin.

Simpson threw five touchdown passes for the Huskies — three to Palmer and two to Cody Harvey. A 14-yard pass to Harvey with 8:44 to play in the first half gave Elgin its first lead at 20-16, and the duo connected again for a 29-yard score for a 28-22 lead with 1:32 to play in the half.

Bales, though, rushed in from 7 yards just before the half ended to tie the score with his fourth touchdown of the game to that point.

Elgin (5-3 overall) did clinch an at-large berth to the 1A state playoffs, earning consecutive playoff appearances for the first time since going three straight years between 2006-08. The Huskies will travel to face top seed St. Paul Friday night.

## UNION'S SEASON ENDS IN LOSS TO CRANE

The rematch was closer, but the Union Bobcats allowed Crane to end on a 38-6 run as the Mustangs clinched an automatic state playoff berth with a 46-14 win on Friday.

A 3-yard run by Cameron Dillman, who rushed for 144 yards for the Bobcats, pulled Union even at 8-8 midway through the first quarter.

It was all Crane after that, as the Mustangs scored three second-quarter touchdowns and took a 32-8 late in the first half when Seth Doman hauled in a 46-yard touchdown pass — his second of the game.

Dillman's second touch-

down run of the game, this one of 21 yards, made it a 32-14 game at the half. The Bobcats, though, were held off the scoreboard in the second half.

Doman caught three touchdown passes and 131 yards receiving for Crane. Jerret Doman added 121 yards rushing and two touchdowns as the Mustangs gained 394 yards.

Dillman added 47 yards receiving for Union. Jace Phillips passed for 101 yards and had 41 yards rushing. As a team, the Bobcats totaled 294 yards.

The teams played in the season opener, a 56-0 win by Crane.

The Bobcats finish the season with an overall record of 4-4.

# MEN

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Oct. 18 loss to Rocky Mountain College, and was well out of the playoff picture.

"Change of attitude," Zuluaga said Saturday of the reason behind the turnaround. "Everyone knows the goal now. It took a while, but I'm happy to say we're all on the same page now."

What followed was a win over CCC afterthought Walla Walla, then a pair of one-goal victories in must-win games over Northwest and Evergreen on back-to-back nights a week ago.

"They brought some positive energy over the last two weeks," Mills said. "The hard work is starting to pay off."

The Mountaineers got some help from other teams in the conference when Evergreen and Carroll College — two of

the teams EOU was trailing — each lost in its finale to fall to 6-7 in the CCC. Eastern's win over Warner Pacific, which moved it to 6-6, assured it that even had it lost to Multnomah, it would make the conference tournament as it owned the tiebreaker over those two schools.

The winning streak also puts EOU back above .500 at 9-8-1, the first time it has had a winning record since the first match of the season.

EOU (7-6 CCC), which earned the No. 6 seed to the conference tournament, will meet Southern Oregon in the quarterfinals Nov. 12 in Springfield. Eastern dropped the only contest against SOU this season, 2-0, but played the majority of that contest a man down due to a red card.

"We did well against them with 10 men. Obviously SOU is a great team, but it's one of

## LOCAL SCHEDULE

### Tuesday

**PREP GIRLS SOCCER**  
Molalla at La Grande, Class 4A state playoffs, first round, Community Stadium, 4 p.m.

### WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Eastern Oregon at Whitman College, 7 p.m.

### Wednesday

**PREP BOYS SOCCER**  
La Grande at North Marion, Class 4A state playoffs, first round, Canby High School, 7 p.m.

— Subject to change

those things where we know we can go in with the right attitude, get the job done and get the win," Mills said.

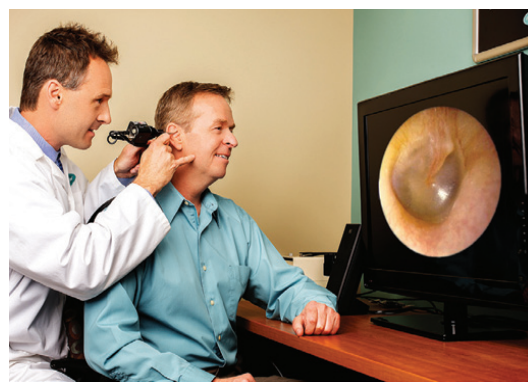
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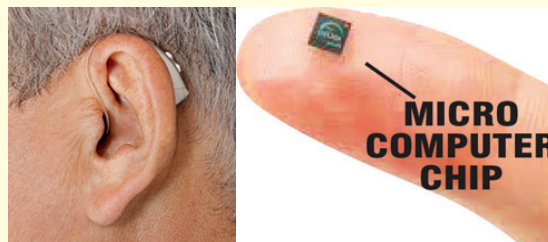
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