

## La Grande roars past Molalla

By Ronald Bond  
The Observer

A hat trick from their lead-scoring, a stellar second half from their goalkeeper and strong defensive play in general helped send the La Grande High School girls soccer team back to the state quarterfinals.

The Tigers didn't even have to go to a shootout as they did in the past two years.

Audrey Garlitz scored three goals, Alexyss Chamberlain had five of her eight saves in the second half, and the Tigers topped the Molalla Indians, 3-1, Tuesday night in a first-round

playoff match at Community Stadium.

"Super strong, super hard, super aggressive," La Grande head coach Sam Brown said of his team's play. "It was a dogfight for 80 minutes. It wasn't pretty, but we'll take it."

Garlitz's first-half goals — the sophomore scored after taking a crossing pass, dribbling in and connecting from 11 yards in the ninth minute, and off a rebound in the 32nd minute — gave La Grande all it needed on offense. Chamberlain and the rest of the La Grande defense made sure of that.

"Overall our center backs were solid. Our defense was solid," Brown said. "Lexy came through and made some critical saves at critical moments."

Most of Chamberlain's second-half saves came with La Grande clinging precariously to a 2-1 lead. The senior turned away shots from Molalla's Holly Rae, Madeline Lisac and Ashlee Albright in a four-minute span early in the second half and corralled a handful of other dangerous passes in the goalbox. She also stopped Albright from scoring midway through the

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Ronald Bond/The Observer

La Grande soccer players, from right, Audrey Garlitz, Katie Perry and Cecelia Aguilera celebrate after Garlitz's goal in the ninth minute of the Tigers' 3-1 win over Molalla Tuesday.



Ben Lonergan/EO Media Group

La Grande running back Nathan Reed (25) takes a handoff from quarterback Parker Robinson (1) during the La Grande Tigers' 34-0 win over the Baker Bulldogs on Oct. 26.

## A primary catalyst

By Ronald Bond  
The Observer

To this point, Nathan Reed's senior season has been everything a player could want.

The running back and line-backer has been a major catalyst in helping the La Grande Tigers to an undefeated regular season. The Tigers enter the Class 4A playoffs as one of the favorites for a state title — which would be the program's first since 1974.

"We couldn't ask for a better season so far," Reed said. "It's been such a fun year."

And while the team has moved past it, last year's state quarterfinal loss to Gladstone on a last-second field goal still serves as motivation for the Tigers and for Reed.

It's possible, too, the teams could meet this postseason. If Gladstone and La Grande each win their first-round games, they would have a quarterfinal rematch at Community Stadium.

"We can't let it come down to that field goal," Reed said when asked about the Tigers and Gladiators potentially meeting again. "We can't give them that chance. We can't let it come down to being that close. We gotta put everything in our own hands."

Reed will have a major say in what happens in the playoffs, just as he has throughout the season. Reed has rushed for 1,108 yards, averaging 138.5 yards per game for the 8-0 Tigers. The number is impressive enough, but more so when considering Reed has often been an observer during the second half of games with them often well in hand by halftime. Only one of La Grande's games this season has been decided by less than 21 points, and the Tigers are winning by a margin

of 38 points per game on average.

La Grande head coach Rich McIlmoil said Reed came in determined to meet or surpass in yardage the 1,261 he rushed for a year ago.

"He's coming off a season where he finished with (more than) 1,200 yards. We haven't had a running back for a long time rush for over 1,000 yards in a season," McIlmoil said. "The expectation was to match or exceed that."

The numbers are impressive, too, since Reed is coming off an injury that cost him the majority of his wrestling and track seasons as a junior, and one that had him entering the fall with some doubts of the level of play he could bring to the field.

Reed was injured 15 seconds into his first match at the Rollie Lane Invitational in early January, suffering a broken left leg. He knew right away, too.

"I caught it wrong on the mat and I felt it break. I knew it was broken," he said.

Reed at first hoped he would be able to be back by the Tigers' district wrestling tournament, but the injury proved to be too severe. He later learned he also had torn ligaments in his left ankle. It meant the junior wouldn't have an opportunity to build upon his second-place individual finish at state in wrestling, and would be limited in his chance to get back in condition for track, where he had taken second in state in the 110-meter hurdles and 300 hurdles as a sophomore.

"That was heartbreaking," he said.

But Reed was determined to do what he could to get back into competition quickly.

"I thought I could make it back



Darcy Blackman photo

La Grande running back Nathan Reed breaks loose during the Tigers' game against Baker Oct. 26.

by the end of the track season, and I wanted to be back as soon as I could," he said.

Reed returned for the final two regular-season meets before the district track meet and went on to win the district title in the 300 hurdles on May 11. A week later, he took third in the state in the event.

"He worked really hard coming off that injury in wrestling," McIlmoil said. "That was huge for him to come back. It's a testament to his hard work and dedication not to just sports, but his integrity. He wants to work hard.

He wants to finish and be the best he can be. It's not just about him, it's about the team."

The injury did limit what he could do on the track. He didn't compete in the 110 hurdles because his still-recovering left leg is his landing leg on the hurdles.

"That's a big reason I didn't do the 110 hurdles last year," Reed said. "That's a lot more pounding than the 300s."

The injury also gave him some concern entering the football season, even though he had fully recovered.

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## Beavers open with win over Northridge

By Gary Horowitz  
The Associated Press

CORVALLIS — It was just a typical game of filling the stat sheet for Oregon State's Tres Tinkle.

Tinkle scored 25 points, grabbed 10 rebounds and had seven assists, leading the Beavers to an 87-67 victory over Cal State Northridge on Tuesday night in the season opener for both teams.

The 6-foot-7 forward was an all-Pac-12 selection last season and contemplated an early entry into the NBA Draft, but opted to return for his senior year. That decision could translate into the Beavers' first NCAA Tournament appearance since the 2015-16 season.

For now, there's much work ahead. "I think everyone's excited to finally play someone different and it finally counts," said Tinkle, who was 10 of 17 from the field. "But obviously I think there was some nerves in there, even from me."

CSUN coach Mark Gottfried called Tinkle a difficult matchup "because not a lot of teams will have a guy that big that can defend him on the perimeter."

"He's got a chance to play at the next

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## Ducks get by Fresno State, 71-57

The Associated Press

EUGENE — Oregon's roster is almost completely made over from last season's Sweet 16 team.

As the No. 15 Ducks' most experienced player, Payton Pritchard stepped up Tuesday night. He had 24 points with seven rebounds and seven assists in a 71-57 victory over Fresno State in the season opener for both teams. It was his 110th consecutive start.

"He's one of the best point guards in the country, obviously," said Anthony Mathis, a senior transfer for the Ducks who played with Pritchard in high school. "We have no worries with Payton."

Chris Duarte, a junior college transfer and one of nine additions to the roster, added 16 points in his first game with Oregon, and Francis Okoro added 12 points and 10 rebounds for his first career double-double as the Ducks out-rebounded the Bulldogs 45-31. Okoro is one of three returning players from last year's team.

"I thought Francis set a good tone for us (on rebounds)," Oregon coach Dana Altman said. "He did a very good job."

Nate Grimes led the Bulldogs with 13 points.

Oregon took control with a 21-6 run to end the first half at a 38-27 advantage. Duarte had eight points as the Ducks broke away.

After Fresno State scored the

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