

Sweet revenge for La Grande

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

In one fell swoop, the La Grande Tigers got revenge for the loss that knocked them out of the playoffs a year ago and picked up the program's biggest victory in four decades.

Nathan Reed rushed for 188 yards and two touchdowns and the Tiger defense held Gladstone to just 158 total yards as La Grande shut out the Gladiators in a defensive slugfest, 14-0, Friday night at Community Stadium.

"The boys played phenomenally. I couldn't be prouder of them," head coach Rich McIlmoil said. "We came out, battled the whole game, had a few hiccups, but we managed to overcome the adversity. Super proud of the offensive line. They dominated the game."

The victory sends La Grande (10-0 overall) to the state semifinals for the first time since 1976, when the Tigers beat Lake Oswego in the quarterfinal round, 7-0.

La Grande's other semifinal appearances came in 1944, 1949 and 1974, with the latter the year the Tigers claimed the program's lone state title.

"(It was) a long time ago. And that's why it's such an accomplishment for these boys. We haven't seen it in



Ronald Bond/The Observer

La Grande running back Nathan Reed, right, carries the ball during the third quarter Friday night against Gladstone. Reed had 188 yards and two touchdowns as the Tigers knocked off the Gladiators, 14-0, to avenge a loss from a year ago and reach the state semifinals.

a long time," McIlmoil said. "They've done a great job."

The win also avenged Gladstone's last-second 30-27 win in the quarterfinals a year ago. In that

game, kicker Mateo Burgos connected on a 47-yard field goal as time expired to lift Gladstone to the victory.

La Grande was determined not to let it come

down to a late kick this time.

"We've been working our butts off all year, and finding out (last week) we got another redemption shot at these guys (was) awesome,"

LHS quarterback Parker Robinson said. "We had a little bit of a chip on our shoulders."

After two early interceptions by Robinson, La

Grande relied solely on the ground game, with Reed and Robinson as the main catalysts behind a dominant offensive line, to get on the

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Tomas Carradero photo

The Eastern Oregon women's soccer team celebrates Friday in Springfield as the players are handed the trophy for winning the Cascade Collegiate Conference tournament title. EOU defeated Rocky Mountain, 2-1.

Women's soccer claims CCC

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

Even though the Eastern Oregon University women's soccer team entered Friday's Cascade Collegiate Conference tournament title match likely to earn a bid to the NAIA national tournament regardless of the outcome, Jenna Jensen didn't want to leave any doubt.

Jensen scored what proved to be the winning goal in the 60th minute — just one minute after Rocky Mountain had tied the score — and EOU won the CCC tournament for the second time in three years, holding off the Battlin' Bears, 2-1, Friday in the championship match in Springfield to earn an automatic NAIA bid.

"I was not ready to give up. It's my senior year. I did not want that to be my last game, and I did what I could," Jensen said. "I didn't want to rely on (a possible at-large bid), because there's still a chance we wouldn't have gotten it."

The victory sends Eastern into the national tournament — it will learn where and who it plays during an

NAIA selection show today — with momentum, as EOU (15-2-2 overall) is on a six-match winning streak.

"We had a really good tournament. All three games the ladies battled and played well, responded when they needed to, (and) set the tone when they needed to," head coach Jacob Plocher said.

Junior forward Morgan Farrington noted that a different player scored each of the team's six goals in the tournament, which pointed to the balance the team has on offense.

"It shows how versatile our bench is and how great we are. You can't just mark one player," she said.

The Mountaineers set the tone right away Friday, with Nan Kiebert scoring her 12th goal of the season just 59 seconds into the match for an early lead.

EOU outshot Rocky 17-7 on the afternoon, and 7-1 in the first half, but was unable to extend the margin. The Mountaineers faced a challenge when Lauryn Gamache, the CCC co-offensive player of the year, scored her 17th goal

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Tomas Carradero photo

Eastern Oregon's Jenna Jensen, right, scored the eventual game-winning goal in the CCC title match.

Last-second stop lifts EOU to win



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Eastern Oregon's Kaler Moore scores the first of his two touchdowns Saturday against Carroll College.

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

Running back Victor Dias spent most of his final game in an Eastern Oregon University uniform watching from the sidelines after re-aggravating a knee injury he had suffered last week against Rocky Mountain College.

He got the opportunity, though, to take the kneel down on the final play of the game as EOU sent its seniors out with a win and built momentum for the offseason.

"It's one way to honor him. He was a hard runner for us and a great leader," EOU head coach Tim Camp said.

The biggest honor for Eastern's 15 seniors was that they went out with a victory.

The Mountaineers mounted two lengthy fourth-quarter drives to rally for the lead, then got a stop on a two-point conversion when defensive back Eric Prom broke up a would-be tying pass with eight seconds to play to hold on for a 28-26 victory over No. 22 Carroll College Saturday in their season finale at Community Stadium.

"It feels great," Prom, a senior. "The whole time we kept harping on finishing games playing a whole four

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