



Tomas Carradero photo

Eastern Oregon's Oscar Alegria looks upfield during the Mountaineers' title match against Corban Friday in Springfield. EOU dropped the contest, 2-1.

EOU men miss first title, 2-1

Observer staff

The Eastern Oregon University men's soccer team's impressive unbeaten run ended one step short of the program's first Cascade Collegiate Conference title, but the Mountaineers will still have a surge of momentum as they head to the NAIA national tournament.

EOU fell in the CCC tournament title match against regular-season champion and unbeaten Corban Friday, 2-1, in Springfield, seeing their seven-match unbeaten streak — one in which they moved from near the bottom of the conference to an unlikely CCC tournament berth to an improbable NAIA berth — come to an end.

"Today was tough. We played very well (but) we just couldn't find the back of

the net more than that one time," head coach Zach Mills said. "I guess we are just saving some goals for our trip next week."

Two goals by Charles Cleyton — one in the 20th minute and one in the 62nd — gave Corban a 2-0 lead before the Mountaineers responded. Felipe Madero scored just 2-1/2 minutes after Cleyton's second goal to pull the Mountaineers to within one. Eastern had four more shots in the final 25 minutes as it aimed for the tie, but one went wide and three others were turned away by Justin Keegan, who finished with five saves for the Warriors.

The match was a contrast to the first meeting between the teams, when Corban handed EOU its worst loss of

the season, 6-1. The setback was part of a 2-6 start to CCC play by the Mountaineers, one that could have derailed the team's season.

Instead, the Mountaineers rattled off victories in their final five regular-season matches — with a win in the fourth over Warner Pacific locking up a berth to the CCC tourney.

Eastern followed with two unlikely outcomes, topping Oregon Tech and Southern Oregon in shootouts to reach the final against Corban and an automatic national bid.

"We have said it from the start (that) our goal was nationals, and I'm glad we reached it," Mills said.

Eastern (9-9-3 overall) will learn who it faces in the first round of the NAIA national tournament today.

SOU topples EOU in CCC final

Observer staff

The Eastern Oregon University volleyball team will head into the NAIA national tournament with a bitter taste in its mouth.

The No. 4 Mountaineers coasted to a sweep of No. 13 Corban in the Cascade Collegiate Conference tournament semifinals Friday, 25-22, 25-16, 25-20, but then were swept by No. 7 Southern Oregon in the championship match Saturday, 25-12, 25-22, 25-18. The CCC tourney took place in Ashland.

"SOU played really well. While we did some great things we just didn't put a complete game together, and against a team like that, you can't afford it and it cost us," head coach Kaki McLean-Morehead said.

The title match against the Raiders was a stark contrast from the first two regular-season matchups, which saw the teams battle for five sets and the road team come away with the win both times.

SOU used two big first-set runs — one of 5-0 and one later of 7-0 — to help build a 21-9 lead in a set the Raiders never trailed. The SOU defense came up big during the second run, as the combination of Taylor Ristvedt and Makayla Hoyt had four blocks, including three in a row for the 12-point lead.

Eastern built a 10-5 lead in the second set on a Jessie White ace, withstood a Raider rally to go ahead 15-13 on a Jet Taylor kill, and battled to a 19-19 tie on a kill by Taylor Tibbetts. Southern scored the next five points to take a 24-19 lead on a Sara Fanger ace. EOU pulled within two after a pair of Cambree Scott kills and an SOU error, but Southern's Maddie Pernich ended the set with a kill.

An 8-1 run put SOU in control in the third set, as another block, this one from Ristvedt and Elliott Cook, put the Raiders in front 16-8. Eastern pulled as close at five on several occasions late, the last at 22-17 on another kill

by Scott, but Southern ended the match with three kills by Ristvedt, who had 10 on the night to go with nine block assists.

Scott led the Mountaineers with nine kills, and Taylor had six, but EOU, which entered as one of the top blocking teams in the country, had just three on the night. Madison Pilon had 25 assists, and Kiley McMurtrey and Aspen Christiansen had 16 and 11 digs, respectively, to lead the back row.

On Friday, Eastern ran away from Corban for a sweep behind a defense that had 11 blocks and held the Warriors to a minus-.041 attack percentage.

"We played really well on Friday, controlled the things we needed to and played our game," McLean-Morehead said.

Four straight points gave Eastern the lead for good in the opening set at 10-7, and the lead reached six at 24-18 after a Taylor kill and a Corban attack error. A block by Tibbetts and Taylor later ended the set.

EOU took control of the second set with a 10-1 run. Eastern's lead reached nine on several occasions before a block by Tibbetts gave the Mountaineers their largest lead of the set at 24-14. Breanna Shaffer ended the set with a kill.

A 7-1 run in the third gave EOU a 16-9 lead on a kill by Megan Bunn. Corban got within 23-20 on an Kealani Ontai ace, but back-to-back kills by Taylor ended the match.

Bunn finished with a match-best 11 kills, while Scott had eight and Taylor had seven. Scott also had six block assists. Both Bunn and Tibbetts had five blocks, with Tibbetts posting two solos. Pilon had 36 assists, and McMurtrey and Christiansen again were strong in the back row with 20 and 10 digs respectively.

The Mountaineers (29-3 overall) wait to see what their seed to the NAIA national tournament will be when its announced today.

Men's hoops wins shootout

Observer staff

Two huge offensive performances helped the Eastern Oregon University men's basketball team to a win in the second-highest scoring effort in program history.

Max McCullough scored a game-high 35 points, Jarek Schetzle poured in 31 points and grabbed 18 rebounds, and the Mountaineers outlasted Pacific in a wild overtime affair, 132-125, Friday night in Forest Grove.

The duo was among five players who reached double figures in scoring for Eastern, which rallied from a 14-point halftime deficit to force the extra session, then dropped 25 points in

overtime for the win. Josh Brown recorded 18 points, Kobi Gardea added 14 points and Brock Johnson scored 11 points.

Schetzle's scoring effort came on a night that saw him shoot 15-for-16 from the field. The center, who added six blocks, scored six points in the overtime period, including a short jumper and a dunk on back-to-back possessions to give EOU the lead in overtime, 114-110. Brown gave EOU a 119-117 lead with a layup with 2:11 to go and Johnson, who also had six points in overtime, hit a crucial 3-pointer to make it a five-point game with 1:45 to play. Eastern

iced the win with 10 free throws, including six from Gardea, in the final 75 seconds.

Schetzle added six of the Mountaineers' 11 blocks, while McCullough toyed with a triple-double as he finished with seven rebounds and seven assists.

The Mountaineers, whose point total trailed just the 146 scored in game against Multnomah in 2010, shot 64.5% from the floor, including 74% as they scored 61 second-half points to come back.

Pacific led at halftime, 60-46.

EOU (3-2 overall) hosts Northwest Indian on Friday.

Five make all-CCC squad

Observer staff

Four members of the Eastern Oregon University volleyball team were named to the all-Cascade Collegiate Conference first team and five in all were recognized, led by junior Kiley McMurtrey who was named the CCC libero of the year.

"I'm so incredibly proud of their accomplishments on the floor, but proud that other coaches see the work they put in as well," EOU head coach Kaki McLean-Morehead said.

McMurtrey, junior setter Madison Pilon, senior outside hitter Megan Bunn and sophomore middle blocker Cambree Scott were each first-team selections for the No. 4 Mountaineers, while sophomore middle blocker Jet Taylor was tabbed honorable mention.

McMurtrey was the co-libero of the year a season ago, but this time claimed the award outright. The junior collected 536 digs during the regular season at a clip of 4.9 per set to help anchor the back row of the EOU defense.

"Kiley being named libero of the year is a great accomplishment," McLean-Morehead said. "Our defense is a huge part of our success."

In conference play, McMurtrey tallied 340 digs. She was also among the toughest servers in the conference with 42 aces, including 31 in CCC action, both of which were second in CCC play.

"I'm definitely really honored to have received it and gotten that recognition, but at the end of the day the awards aren't what the season is about," McMurtrey said. "I just try to do everything I can to make our team better and reach our goals."

Pilon has turned in one of the best seasons in program history as a setter, as her 910 assists is fourth-most in program history. Only one player at EOU, Rachele Chamberlain, has had more assists in a season than Pilon. The junior was second in the conference in assists, both overall and in CCC play, where she had 638. The versatile Pilon also had 299 digs, 42 blocks and 32 assists on the season.

Bunn, who has cemented herself as one of the top attackers in program history, has registered 352 kills this season and led the CCC in conference play with 265. She is just the fourth player in EOU history with multiple seasons of at least 350 kills. She also tallied 317 digs during the season.

Scott and Taylor formed the best blocking duo in the CCC with 135 and 117 blocks, respectively, to go 1-2 on the season among CCC players. In conference play, they were ranked second and fourth in total blocks (87 and 78, respectively) and each put up 1.2 blocks per set to tie for second. The sophomores were also both formidable on the EOU attack with Scott recording 218 kills on the season and Taylor close behind at 202. Their totals on block assists (127 for Scott and 115 for Taylor) are currently second and fourth in single season program history.

SOCCER

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But Jensen, who felt she should have been awarded a penalty kick on a no-call in the goal box moments earlier, took out her frustration by scoring the go-ahead goal, the first of the season for the senior midfielder.

"I was kind of upset about



Ronald Bond/Observer file photo

Kiley McMurtrey was named a first-team all-CCC performer and the conference libero of the year.



Ronald Bond/Observer file photo

Megan Bunn, who had 352 kills during the regular season, was named first-team all-CCC.



Ronald Bond/Observer file photo

Cambree Scott, who had 135 blocks, was a first-team all-CCC performer.



Ronald Bond/Observer file photo

Madison Pilon was named first-team all-CCC after tallying 910 assists, fourth-most in program history.

it, and right after that was when they scored, so I had a lot of built-up anger," she said. "We still had a lot of time left in the game. We scored and we held on for the last 30 minutes."

The goal by Gamache ended a streak of five straight shutouts by the EOU defense, but Eastern heads into nationals having blanked 12 of their 19 opponents on the season.

The title marks the third year in a row Eastern has claimed either the CCC's regular-season title or tournament title. EOU also won the tournament in 2017 and was the regular-season champion in 2017 and co-champion in 2018.

"This whole group wants it. We all wanted to go to nationals (and) want to go to (the final site in) Bama," Farrington said.