



Photo by Samantha Flett/EOU Athletics

Eastern Oregon University's Natalee Hall tossed 3-1/3 shutout innings in relief to earn the win Saturday against University of British Columbia.

Mounties finish off sweep of UBC

Observer staff

LA GRANDE — A huge sixth-inning rally Saturday lifted the Eastern Oregon University softball team to a sweep of University of British Columbia as the Mountaineers scored six times in the sixth to come back for a 9-8 win in Cascade Collegiate Conference play. The final game of the series, which was scheduled to be a nonconference tilt, was canceled.

The Thunderbirds seemed primed to salvage a win in the series as they scored five runs in the first, led by as many as six and were up 8-3 entering the sixth.

But EOU chipped away, loading the bases with nobody out and trimming the margin to four on Payton Pocklington's sacrifice fly. Katie Silvestri scored on a bases-loaded walk to Brittney Bertrand,

and Jordan Henley made it 8-7 with a two-run single.

A pitching change by UBC did nothing to stop the bleeding, as Haley Ebner greeted pitcher Damaris Begin with a single to drive in Bertrand and tie the score, and Amanda Smith followed with a single to drive in pinch-runner Tina Furado for the lead.

Natalee Hall closed the door in the seventh for EOU as she pitched 3-1/3 innings of shutout relief for the win as Eastern moved to 3-0 at Peggy Anderson Field.

UBC dominated early. A sacrifice fly by Olivia Malesku, a Nicole Salas two-run single and run-scoring singles by Emily Chorpita and Jordan Britten-Yung gave the Thunderbirds a five-run first-inning lead, and the margin reached six in the second when Cassa

Courtney hit a sacrifice fly.

A bases-loaded walk to Mandy Fetters in the second got EOU on the board. UBC pushed the lead back to six twice, but EOU responded both times. Henley scored on an error in the third after Britten-Yung had hit an RBI single earlier in the frame, and after Hanna Hansen homered in the top of the fourth, Alaina Carson knocked an RBI single in the bottom half of the inning to make it 8-3.

Eastern won despite being out-hit 13-7, taking advantage of eight walks issued by UBC pitchers. Henley and Ebner both had two hits, and Henley finished with two RBIs.

Eastern (6-15 overall, 5-4 CCC) is on the road for the next 10 games, beginning Friday with a series at Northwest Christian.

Eastern Oregon wrestlers denied hardware at nationals

Observer staff

PARK CITY, Kan. — It was a tough day Friday for the Eastern Oregon University men's wrestling team, which saw all six of its competitors at the NAIA national tournament leave short of earning an all-American nod, though two finished one win shy, losing in the "blood round."

Both Noel Orozco (285 pounds) and Marco Retano (184) reached the fourth round of the consolation bracket, and one win from a top-eight finish and an all-American bid. There, though, both suffered heartbreaking losses.

Orozco and Graceland (Iowa) senior Shawn Beeson, the third seed at 285, were tied 1-1 after seven minutes of wrestling and forced to go into overtime. There, Beeson scored an escape in the second

overtime round to go ahead 2-1, and in the third scored a four-point near-fall to earn a 6-1 victory.

The loss brought an end to Orozco's national run at 2-2. He had dropped his opening round match to second-ranked and eventual runner-up Tanner Farmer of Concordia (Nebraska) by a 6-0 decision, but then earned two wins in a row — a win by fall in overtime against Missouri Valley's Joshua Isaac and a 7-4 decision over Gage Johnson of Oklahoma City, a match in which he grabbed an early 4-1 lead and never trailed.

Retano suffered a third-round loss by fall to Kendrick Jones of Grand View (Iowa) in his opening match, then received a double-bye into a consolation round-match against Jeremiah Smith of Life Pacific (California), which he won

in overtime with a takedown for a 6-4 sudden victory.

His all-American hopes, though, were dashed by Antonio Stewart of Reinhardt (Georgia) who used first-round and third-round takedowns on his way to a 6-0 decision.

Keegan Mulhill (174) and Ryan Redford (197) were the only two Mountaineers to win their first matches. Mulhill, seeded seventh, scored an early takedown and near-fall for a 4-0 lead on the way to a 7-0 decision over Logan Bowen of Saint Mary (Kansas), then lost by fall to Mahlic Sallah of Campbellsville (Kentucky). The two were tied at 3-3 in the final seconds of the match before Sallah scored a takedown and registered the pin with three seconds to go.

In the consolation round, Mulhill opened with a 6-3 decision over

Blake Castillo of Concordia, scoring a takedown in the first and third rounds to push him to the win, but was knocked out by a 7-4 loss to Sam Osho of Marian (Indiana).

Redford, meanwhile, notched two third-round takedowns to secure a 7-2 decision over Jacob Henderson of Reinhardt, but lost by fall to Ramsey Bloy of Cumberland (Kentucky) in a match that saw Bloy score four takedowns. Redford recovered to defeat James Caniglia of Thomas More (Kentucky) by fall in the third round of a high-scoring bout. Redford had four takedowns and two four-point near-falls on his way to building a 19-9 lead before finishing with the pin. He was bounced, though, by Southeastern (Florida) wrestler Blake Rypel by fall.

Josh Pine (165) and Blake Mc-

Nall (141) both were eliminated in two matches. Pine dropped a close 4-0 decision to eventual national champion Brennan Swafford of Graceland in his first match, then nearly staged a miraculous comeback in his match against Jerrod Mullins of Rochester (Michigan) before losing 15-12. Pine was down 12-0 after two rounds, and 14-0 early in the third. But he scored a reversal to get on the board then earned two four-point near-falls and a two-point near-fall to get as close as 14-12.

McNall opened with a 6-3 loss to Reinhardt's Trent Leon then fell to Jaime Mullins of Dickinson State (North Dakota) by a 10-4 decision. McNall led 4-3 after two rounds, but Mullins scored seven points in the third to earn the win.

EOU as a team placed 28th.

EASTERN

Continued from Page 6A in competition and to know that all the hard work was paying off. Not to mention it broke the record that I've had my eye on since the beginning of this indoor season."

Kate Grint of Doane was the national champion with a mark of 48-feet-7.

"That was monstrous," Welch said of Ledbetter's effort. "She had a good mark going in, and to throw three foot farther then she has ever thrown (prior to Saturday) is astonishing."

Eastern's 4x400 relay team followed with a seventh-place finish, with Elizabeth Herbes, Jasmine Neve, Michelle Herbes and Bolton finishing in a time of 3:54.28, and Michelle Herbes clocked in a time of 3:04.54 in the 1,000 to place eighth.

Payton Jolley added a

mark of 37-feet-0-1/2 to take 15th in the triple jump.

Welch pointed to the team mentality going to the national meet as to why it was able to place in the top 10.

"They didn't care that they weren't ranked in the top 10 or 12. They went in there to get that done, and they did," he said. "Very impressive. That was the attitude they went in with."

The men's team finished in 17th, getting all-American efforts Saturday from Corey Sledge in the pole vault and Alex Navarro in the 1,000 as five of the seven members of the men's team came away with hardware.

Sledge cleared a mark of 16-feet-8-3/4, doing so on his second attempt, on his way to the third-place finish, though he was hoping to reach a higher mark.

"I know I can do better and I hold myself to a higher standard than that," he said,



Photo by Connor Bracken/EOU Athletics

Maggie Ledbetter, shown earlier this season in the weight throw, took third at nationals in the shot put.

later adding, "I was very happy with how I was vaulting, but in the end there was a mistake made that could/should have been avoided that cost me the win."

Sledge said he should have moved to a bigger pole later in the event, but he also gave credit to John Hunter James of Columbia International, who won at 17-feet-0-3/4.



Photo by Connor Bracken/EOU Athletics

Corey Sledge, shown earlier this season, earned third at nationals in the pole vault.

Navarro turned in a time of 2:31.18 to take sixth in the 1,000.

Alex Kosel finished 18th in the triple jump at 45-feet-8-1/2, and Noah Chaney

failed to hit a mark in the pole vault.

Eastern opens the outdoor season Saturday when it hosts the EOU Team Challenge.



Photo courtesy of NNU Athletics

Northwest Nazarene senior Avery Albrecht, a former La Grande standout, was named GNAC play of the year.

ALBRECHT

Continued from Page 6A sophomore and stepped out her junior year, started in 31 games. That season, she averaged 13.9 points, 3.4 rebounds and 1.4 assists per game while shooting 49% from the floor, 48% from 3-point range and 91%

from the free-throw line on her way to a spot on the all-GNAC first team.

The Nighthawks earned their third-consecutive berth to the NCAA Division II tournament Sunday, and will begin play Friday against UC San Diego in a first-round game in Honolulu.

UNION

Continued from Page 6A spanned seven minutes for a 42-22 lead with 1:14 remaining in the quarter.

Union senior Taylar Daggett sunk two of her four attempted 3-pointers in the latter three minutes of the quarter, but the effort beyond the arc would not be enough to recover the game.

Daggett went on to lead Union with 12 points on the night. She also shot 4-for-6 at the line.

"We've got girls that can get hot at every game, and Taylar is definitely one of them," Rickman-Johansen said. "It was nice to see her knock down some 3s today. We have a unified front and we have girls that have bought in. They really celebrate when everyone has a great game. Everyone has a role."

Arana scored five points at the line in the final eight minutes — a quarter where foul trouble dug Union's hole even deeper.

"Bandon has a lot of all-around players," Daggett



Photo by Kathy Aney/EO Media Group

Union's Kaylee Lantis defends Bandon's Sterling Williams during Saturday's OSAA 2A state basketball girls third-place game at the Pendleton Convention Center.

said. "Arana is really quick. Keeping up with her and staying out of foul trouble was really hard. That was a big one for us. You have to be quick on your feet. If they set a screen, you have to talk

with your teammates, or else you're just going to get caught in it."

With a fifth place trophy in tow, the Bobcats finished their season at 25-5 overall. Junior Kylie Marriott

followed Daggett in scoring with nine points, and hauled down a team-high seven rebounds. Sophomore Callie Glenn chipped in five points to Union's season-ending game.