



Samantha Flett/Eastern Oregon University Athletics

Eastern Oregon University quarterback Kai Quinn prepares to pass Saturday, March 27, 2021, while playing on the road against Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Montana. Quinn led the team to five touchdowns and an overtime victory.

Mountaineers improve to 2-0 with comeback win over Battlin' Bears

The Observer

BILLINGS, Mont. — Eastern Oregon University football improved to 2-0 on the season with a comeback to defeat Rocky Mountain College in overtime on Saturday, March 27.

EOU Athletics reported the Mountaineers trailed 30-16 late in the fourth quarter before scoring 14 straight points to force the overtime, then sealed the win with a touchdown to win 36-33 over the Battlin' Bears.

As a team, the Mountaineers (2-0, 2-0 Frontier) racked up 452 yards of total offense to edge out the Battlin' Bears (0-3, 0-3 Frontier), which finished with 423. EOU quarterback Kai Quinn guided the offense finishing with 341 total yards and five touchdowns.

Rocky Mountain scored first with a 47-yard field goal in the opening quarter. EOU responded, tying the game at 3-3 when Zachary Cahill hit a 42-yard field goal with 3:40 to play in the first quarter.

The Battlin' Bears retook the lead early in the second quarter with a 37-yard field goal, going up 6-3.

EOU BY THE NUMBERS

- EOU quarterback Kai Quinn had 341 yards of total offense with five touchdowns. He rushed for 85 yards and scored twice. Through the air, he completed 24-35 passes for 356 yards and three touchdowns.
- Wide receiver Tanner Zenke caught all three of Quinn's touchdown passes and finished with six catches for 130 yards with a long catch of 36 yards.
- Linebacker Zak Donato led the way for the defense with 11 total tackles, with five coming on a solo effort.
- EOU Athletics also reported the football team is off to its first 2-0 start since the 2016 season. The Mountaineers have not won each of the last two matchups against the Battlin' Bears. Dating back to last season, EOU has won its last four games.

Quinn scored the first of his five touchdowns with a 31-yard pass to Tanner Zenke to cap a seven-play, 59-yard drive. But the point after was no good, leaving Eastern with a 9-6 lead. He scored his second touchdown with 5:13 remaining in the first half to put EOU ahead 16-6.

Rocky Mountain tacked on a third field goal just before the first half ended to bring the score to 16-9.

But in the second half, the Battlin' Bears scored three straight touchdowns, putting the team up 30-16 with less than 9 minutes left in the fourth quarter.

EOU responded when Quinn connected again with Zenke for a 21-yard touchdown pass with 4:11 to play in the game. The point after was good, edging the

Mountaineers closer, 30-23.

The defense made a pivotal stop and Quinn hit Zenke to cap a third touchdown with 1 second left on the clock. The point after was good, tying the score 30-30 to send the game into overtime.

The Battlin' Bears got the ball first and were able to kick a 27-yard field goal. Quinn delivered for EOU as he rushed in for a 6-yard touchdown to complete the comeback and seal the 36-33 win.

Head Coach Tim Camp has now reached 73 career wins.

Eastern returns home this upcoming weekend for the final home game of the regular season to take on College of Idaho. Kickoff is 1 p.m. Saturday, April 3, at Community Stadium.

two teams just two days before the faceoff.

Auburn bass fishing team suspended for COVID violations

AUBURN, Ala. — Auburn University has suspended the school's bass fishing team over allegations it repeatedly violated COVID-19 policies.

A memo to team members says the suspension is for the rest of this year, AI.com reported.

The team violated the travel and events policy in July 2020, February 2021 and March 2021, the document states. During the suspension, no member of the team will be allowed to compete, recruit or represent the Auburn University Bass Fishing Team.

Auburn's team is one of the country's top-ranked programs. Several former members have gone on to compete in professional bass fishing competitions.

Ngannou takes UFC heavyweight championship

LAS VEGAS — Francis Ngannou claimed the UFC heavyweight championship on Saturday night, March 27, stopping Stipe Miocic with ferocious punches early in the second round at UFC 260.

Ngannou (11-2) avenged his blowout loss to Miocic in 2018 by demonstrating everything he has learned in the ensuing three years

during a dominant victory. The first UFC heavyweight champion from Africa flattened Miocic (21-3) twice early in the second, finishing the fight 52 seconds into the round.

The fight ended quickly after Ngannou won the first round. Miocic recovered from his first knockdown in the second round and even landed a right hand that stung Ngannou, but the challenger replied with a picture-perfect left hook, depositing Miocic on the canvas again for the finish.

Utah hires men's basketball coach

SALT LAKE CITY — The University of Utah has hired Utah State's Craig Smith as its men's basketball coach.

The school announced Saturday, March 27, that Smith will replace Larry Krystkowiak, whom the university fired March 16.

Smith turned Utah State into one of the nation's best mid-major programs in a short span, leading the Aggies to the NCAA Tournament twice in three years. Utah State won the Mountain West Conference Tournament title in 2020, but didn't get a chance to play in the NCAA Tournament because of the pandemic. Utah State won the MWC Tournament this season and won 20 games before losing 65-53 to Texas Tech in the opening round of the NCAA Tournament.

— Associated Press

Sophomore is committed to speed

La Grande's Dima McCarthy takes training to the next level

By **COREY KIRK**
For The Observer

LA GRANDE — Over this past summer, one sophomore from La Grande High School would go through his regular routine. In the middle of his day, with his shoes tied and his headphones plugged in, he would run numerous miles with one goal in mind: to get better.

That was the Tigers own cross-country/track and field runner Dima McCarthy.

Last year, McCarthy entered Alma Crow's cross-country program in the fall. Knowing his career in running was young, just beginning in middle school the year before, Crow saw how difficult the training was for him at the beginning of last year.

"He just didn't have that base that all the other kids had, where they've already been running with me since middle school, or that whole summer. Dima was new to the program completely," Crow said.

After competing in his first full high school cross-country season, and never given the chance to compete in track and field due to COVID-19, McCarthy decided to amp up his training, running every day in summer to prepare for this year.

"Every day I would run and it would make me feel good that I would get better times, and it would make me want to get better times every time I would run,"

Prep Sports Schedule

Tuesday, March 30	Baker City at La Grande, 4 p.m.
GIRLS SOCCER	
La Grande at Ontario, 3 p.m.	
BOYS SOCCER	
Ontario at La Grande, 4 p.m.	
VOLLEYBALL	
Baker at La Grande, 6 p.m.	
Joseph at Imbler, 6:30 p.m.	
Wednesday, March 31	
BOYS SOCCER	
La Grande at Baker City, 4 p.m.	
Thursday, April 1	
GIRLS SOCCER	
	Enterprise at Elgin, 5 p.m.
	Wallowa at Joseph, 5 p.m.
	Ontario at La Grande, 6 p.m.
	Cove at Imbler, 6:30 p.m.
	Friday, April 2
	FOOTBALL
	Joseph at South Wasco County, 3 p.m.
	La Grande at Ontario, 6 p.m.
	— Source: Oregon School Activities Association

McCarthy said. "Also, my dad would say to find out how great you would be, and what your body can do, so for me I know what I actually could do and how great I could succeed in this sport."

So McCarthy began to run about 20 miles a week, running paths and distances he had run in the past, especially one that Crow makes her program run on Island Avenue. Crow even saw McCarthy running early in the morning.

"I thought, 'Gosh who is that kiddo?'" she said. "And it was Dima. So I was very impressed, and I pulled over and started to honk at him, and I was like, 'Good job, Dima,' and he was just in the zone. It is 8:10 in the morning, it is windy, going on Island Avenue, and this kid has been running."

The hardest part of this training for McCarthy was sticking to the training schedule and avoiding

taking time off.

McCarthy's hard work seemingly paid off. He surpassed his personal record (from the Oregon School Activities Association state championship meet last fall with 19:18.10) at the Baker meet March 12 with 19:17.50. After the weekend, at the Tour de Willowcreek in Vale, McCarthy eclipsed his last run by nearly a minute, gaining a personal record time of 18:20.30.

"It's a tremendous leap. That just shows how hard he has been working all season, because with running you have to have that base," Crow said. "If you don't have that base, there's just no way you will have those times."

McCarthy is content with his most recent time running out in Vale.

"If you work hard, you can achieve the things you (want to) achieve and that will make you happy," he said.

THE WEEKEND IN NATIONAL SPORTS

NCAA president gets thumbs up

INDIANAPOLIS — The chairman of the NCAA's Board of Governors gave President Mark Emmert a vote of confidence Saturday, March 27, saying the association's top governing body was satisfied with how he has addressed inequities in the college basketball tournaments and with his leadership through a tumultuous 10 days.

Georgetown University President Jack DeGioia told The Associated Press the board met Friday, March 26, along with the Division I Board of Directors, to hear from Emmert and discuss issues that have in some ways overshadowed the women's games in San Antonio and men's tourney in Indianapolis.

Boston Pride becomes first two-time winner of the Isobel Cup

BOSTON — Lexie Laing and Taylor Wenczkowski scored power play goals and the Boston Pride on Saturday night, March 27, became the first two-time winner of the Isobel Cup with a 4-3 win over the defending champion Minnesota Whitecaps.

It was a NWHL championship the Pride, regular-season champions, had hoped to win a year earlier, before the COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of the championship game between these same

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March 29 - 30

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