

PREP NOTES

Dynamic offense boosts Powder Valley

By DAVIS CARBAUGH
The Observer

POWDER VALLEY — The Badgers have one of the most electric quarterback-wideout duos in seniors Reece Dixon and Kaden Krieger. The pair connected early and often in a massive 50-40 win over a St. Paul team ranked in the top five of the 1A rankings.

Down 8-0 on the team's first offensive play of the game, Dixon threw a spot-on ball on the right side of the field to Krieger for a 70-yard touchdown strike. The two linked up again in the fourth quarter for another deep-ball touchdown, this time from about 60 yards out.

"In my opinion, and I might be a little biased, Kaden Krieger is the best receiver in the state at our level," Dixon said. "He's very athletic and has an ability to bring in balls that look like they might be way out of reach."

In addition to the passing attack, senior running back Clay Martin gives opposing defensive coordinators headaches in the ground game. He rushed for two rushing touchdowns and caught a touchdown from Dixon in the win over St. Paul.

The Badgers are No. 1 in the 1A rankings and host Cove on Sept. 24.

La Grande's defense front sets the tone in win over Vale

LA GRANDE — The Tigers came away with a statement win, knocking off Vale 37-12 at home on Sept. 17.

Head coach Rich McIlmoil was pleased with his defense's efforts, saying that the game plan was highly centered around slowing down mobile Vale quarterback Tanner Steele. La Grande made it difficult for Vale's offense all game long, holding the Vikings scoreless until well into the third quarter.

"Our defensive front played really well," McIlmoil said. We got great play from our guys up front."

Junior quarterback Logan Williams set the tone for La Grande's offense, building a 30-0 lead at one point in the game. Williams rushed for a touchdown, but McIlmoil credited his leadership and understanding of the offense more than anything.

"He's understanding the offense and the way I like to run things," he said. "He's a really talented kid and a good team motivator."

La Grande faces one of its biggest challenges of the season this Thursday as Estacada comes to town for

See, Prep/Page A7



Davis Carbaugh/The Observer

Powder Valley quarterback Reece Dixon prepares for a handoff during the Badgers' 50-40 victory over St. Paul on Friday, Sept. 17, 2021. Dixon scored five touchdowns to help the Badgers improve to 3-0 on the year.

AT THE CONTROLS

Senior quarterback Reece Dixon pilots top-ranked Powder Valley

By DAVIS CARBAUGH
The Observer

NORTH POWDER — Reece Dixon is living in the end zone this season.

Powder Valley's senior quarterback and linebacker is paving the way for a highly ranked Badgers team. Dixon's dynamic play on both sides of the ball, combined with his work ethic off the field, is a big reason for Powder Valley's 3-0 start to the season.

"We have a good idea of where we could be this season," Dixon said. "Our goal is to make it as far as we can in the state playoffs without over-looking anybody."

The senior has scored six passing touchdowns and four rushing touchdowns through Powder Valley's first three games of the season.

"It's pretty tough to tackle Reece Dixon," Powder Valley head coach Josh Cobb said.

Dixon and the Badgers are staying humble, even after climbing to No. 1 in the 1A rankings after a significant 50-40 win over St. Paul on Friday, Sept. 17. Powder Valley came into the matchup ranked fifth in the state, while St. Paul was ranked sixth.

The senior quarterback was electric in the victory, finding the end zone five times. Dixon threw for three touchdowns, rushed for a score and returned a fumble to the house in the big victory.

Dixon's performance was a big reason the Badgers secured the victory, but he credits his teammates for



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

North Powder's Reece Dixon scores a touchdown against Elgin during the Badgers' 42-14 win on Thursday, Sept. 9, 2021. Powder Valley is ranked No. 1 in the OSAA rankings following a 50-40 win over St. Paul on Friday, Sept. 17, 2021.

Powder Valley's success.

"My offensive line is a great offensive line," he said. "I have a great unit there and I trust every one of them."

The Powder Valley offensive line gave Dixon time to connect early and often with his top wideout, Kaden Krieger. The duo connected on two deep passing touchdowns in the vic-

tory over St. Paul, one of which was a 70-yard touchdown on the first offensive play of the game for the Badgers.

"He's what makes me look good and he's the reason that my passing game is what it is," Dixon said. "We've grown up together and I trust him in one-on-one coverage."

Many of the Badgers players grew up together, but Dixon is still doing everything he can to create strong team chemistry this year.

"Reece is outstanding," Cobb said. "He's more than a leader, he's a true teammate."

Dixon and the upperclassmen on Powder Valley emphasize studying film as a crucial part of game planning every week.

"You can't expect to be a great football team without knowing the other team before you play," Dixon said. "I go home and watch probably two hours of film a night, whether it's our games or teams we're playing next."

Powder Valley has five regular season games remaining, one of which is a matchup at Adrian on Oct. 1. The Antelopes won the OSAA Class 1A state championship in 2019, the last full-length football season. The Badgers have the talent and work ethic to make a deep run this season and compete with top 1A teams, but are not looking too far ahead.

"Every week is a battle," Dixon said. "We're taking it one week at a time and trying to make it as far as we can."

ON CAMPUS

Mountaineers rely on defense in 10-7 victory over Carroll

By DAVIS CARBAUGH
The Observer

BUTTE, Mont. — It was a low-scoring affair, but No. 13 Eastern Oregon held on for a 10-7 win on the road against Carroll College. The hard-fought win propels the Mountaineers to 3-0 on the season.

In what felt like a soccer or baseball score for most of the early game, Eastern's defensive resiliency paved the way. Senior Chase Van Wyck recorded two sacks, bringing his career total to 35.5, which is tied for second best in program history. Former La Grande star Gabriel Shukle recorded two and

a half sacks in a career game.

Linebacker Solo Taylor continues to set the tone on and off the field, leading the defense vocally and by his play on the field. Taylor tallied 12 tackles and a half sack in a game where every point mattered.

Quarterback Kai Quinn had a mediocre performance by his standards, throwing for 150 yards, one touchdown and two interceptions.

The Mountaineers have now won seven straight matchups against the Saints and remain undefeated heading into a home game against College of Idaho on Sept. 25.

Men's soccer wins first of the year

PORTLAND — It's been a difficult start to the year for the Mountaineers, but the team found the win column in a 1-0 win over Multnomah on Sept. 18.

Senior midfielder Kellen Burke got the job done against the Lions, scoring the lone goal of the game in the 37th minute. Burke led the way for a strong offensive attack that outshot Multnomah 10 shots to five.

Eastern is now 1-4-0 on the year, following four straight losses to start the regular season. Eastern

returns to La Grande to face Bushnell on Sept. 24.

Volleyball stretches win streak to five

PORTLAND — The Mountaineers got off to a slow start to the season facing a number of ranked opponents, but the team is rolling as conference play gets underway.

Eastern Oregon made easy work of a weekend trip to Portland, besting Multnomah (25-10, 25-8, 25-6) and Warner Pacific (25-19, 25-18, 25-2) in straight sets on back-to-back days. The Mountaineers are balanced at the front and back of the court,

with Cambree Scott, Madison Morgan and Breanna Shaffer regularly leading the team in kills. Against Warner Pacific, Scott recorded eight kills and eight blocks. Shaffer tallied nine kills and six blocks in the same game as Eastern cruised to a steady victory.

Freshman Alexis McMurtrey has been stepping up big this year. She recorded 30 assists in each game and led the Mountaineers with 21 digs in the win over Multnomah.

Eastern has won five straight games and ascended to second place in the Cascade Collegiate Conference with a 6-1 conference record.

ON THE SLATE

All Times PDT

Tuesday, Sept. 21 PREP VOLLEYBALL

Enterprise at Imbler, 5 p.m.
Union at Grant Union, 5:30 p.m.
La Grande at Baker, 6:30 p.m.

PREP GIRLS SOCCER

La Grande at Baker/Powder Valley, 5 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 22 PREP BOYS SOCCER

Baker/Powder Valley at La Grande, 5 p.m.

PREP

CROSS-COUNTRY

La Grande/Union/Cove at Payette, Idaho, Open, TBA

Thursday, Sept. 23 PREP FOOTBALL

Estacada at La Grande, 6 p.m.

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Weston-McEwen at Union, 5 p.m.
Imbler at Joseph, 5 p.m.
La Grande at Irrigon, 5 p.m.
Nixyaawii at Cove, 6 p.m.
Stanfield at Enterprise, 5 p.m.

Friday, Sept. 24 COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

Eastern Oregon at Oregon Tech, 7 p.m.

COLLEGE MEN'S SOCCER

Bushnell at Eastern Oregon, 4 p.m.

COLLEGE WOMEN'S SOCCER

Bushnell at Eastern Oregon, 6:30 p.m.

PREP FOOTBALL

Crane vs. Elgin at Eastern Oregon University, noon
Imbler at Adrian, 6 p.m.
Union at Wallowa, 7 p.m.
Cove at Powder Valley, 7 p.m.

Joseph at Prairie City/Burnt River, 7 p.m.

Dufur at Enterprise, 6 p.m.

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Imbler at Pine Eagle, 4 p.m.

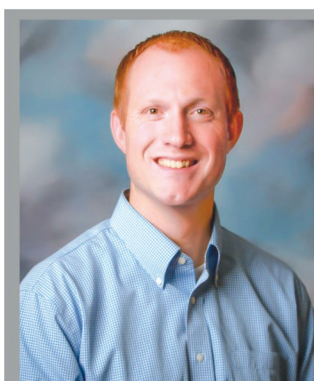
Cove at Powder Valley, 5 p.m.

Nixyaawii at Elgin, 5:30 p.m.

Joseph at Prairie City/Burnt River, 4 p.m.

PREP CROSS-COUNTRY

Imbler, Baker/Powder Valley at Bob Firman Invitational, Boise, Idaho, TBA



Turning 65?
We're here to help!

Joel Myer
jmyer@valleyinsurance.com



1603 Washington Ave, La Grande
(541) 963-3121

Let us take the
mystery out of
Medicare for you!

Kathy Rienti
krienti@valleyinsurance.com

