

CAMPUS

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ference. She is also third on the team in digs and second in service aces this year.

McMurtrey has been a major positive for the Mountaineers, as the team has compiled an 18-5 record overall and a 13-2 record in conference play. With the conclusion of the regular season quickly approaching, Eastern will host five straight home games. The Mountaineers



Alex Wittwer/The Observer, File

Eastern Oregon University setter Alexis McMurtrey (9) readies up during a match against Evergreen State at Eastern Oregon University on Friday, Oct. 1, 2021.

will play the College of Idaho on Oct. 19.

Running hitting his stride late in the season

LEWISTON, Idaho — The Eastern Oregon University men’s cross-country team concluded its regular season with a strong showing at the Inland Empire Championships hosted by Lewis-Clark State College on Oct. 15.

For the No. 21 Mountaineers, senior Travis Running has been living up to

high expectations thus far. Running clocked a season-best time in the 8K this weekend, running a 24:52. The standout runner placed 10th individually to lead the Mountaineers to a fourth place finish.

Running has placed in the top 10 of every race this season, including races that entailed various distances and several Division I opponents. With three weeks off before postseason competition begins for the Mountaineers, the team will continue to lean on

Running as the team’s top competitor.

While it appeared that Running would be on a bit of a solo mission at the top of the pack this year, Eastern has gotten a surprising contribution from freshman Cristian Mendoza.

The former La Grande High School standout, along with junior Hunter Nichols, round out a top unit that has impressed this season. The Mountaineers will compete at the Cascade Collegiate Conference in Klamath Falls on Nov. 5.

PREP

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Freshman running back steps up for Badgers

WALLOWA — The Powder Valley football team has established itself as one of the most dynamic offenses at the 1A level. The Badgers have leaned on its foursome of seniors — Reece Dixon, Kaden Kreiger, Case Olson and Clay Martin — throughout a 6-1 start to the year that has the team ranked No. 2 in the 1A rankings.

In a 62-24 victory over Wallowa on Oct. 15, it was an unusual suspect stepping up for Powder Valley. Freshman Tucker Martin burst onto the scene, scoring three touchdowns on the night.

“Really impressed with the play from the younger guys,” Powder Valley head coach Josh Cobb said.

“Freshman Tucker Martin finally got healthy from an early-season injury and played a great game on both sides of the ball.”

Martin took advantage of his name being called in the first quarter, scoring on early reps. He scored two rushing touchdowns in the first quarter from 25 and 17 yards, giving the Badgers a dominant 34-0 lead at the end of the first frame.

Later in the second quarter, the freshman contributed on special teams with a 75-yard punt return for a touchdown. Cobb noted that his play on defense was stellar as well, adding another versatile threat to the lineup.

Powder Valley’s offense was already explosive, and Tucker Martin adds another option to attack opposing defenses. His



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

David Creech (34) breaks free for a touchdown to score against Crane at Cove High School on Friday, Oct. 15, 2021.

contributions will be crucial to the team as the Badgers are set to square off with No. 5 Crane in the conclusion to the regular season. The matchup will have major implications on playoff seeding.

“The team is feeling great,” Cobb said. “We got most bumps and bruises all patched up the last few weeks.”

Joseph stays hot

JOSEPH — The Joseph volleyball team has shown itself to be one of the top teams in the area, rattling off 16 straight wins. The Eagles cruised by their weekend opponents, sweeping Elgin, Griswold and Nixyaawii.

Joseph has won 15 consecutive sets and given up only two sets in the last 35. The success has the Eagles at No. 4 in the OSAA 1A rankings with a 20-3 overall record and an 11-0 record in Old Oregon League action.

The successful regular season has earned Joseph a top seeding in diistrict play, as the Eagles will play this Saturday at Baker

High School against winners from earlier rounds in the bracket.

Union snaps 10-game losing streak

LYLE, Wash. — It was a glorious night for the Union High School football team on Oct. 15, knocking off Lyle/Wishram/Klickitat 34-26 to avoid a winless season, improving to 1-6 on the year. The win marks both the highest point total of

the year for Union and the least points allowed to an opponent in a single game this year.

While it is just one win, it is a step in the right direction for a program looking to build upward under head coach Mike Wisdom.

The time to celebrate will not last long, as the Bobcats will host top-ranked Adrian on Oct. 22.



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