



DAVIS CARBAUGH  
CARBAUGH'S CORNER

## LHS girls team built for title run

A cross-country powerhouse could be in the works in La Grande.

The La Grande girls cross-country team came away with an admirable finish at the OSAA Class 4A State Championships on Saturday, Nov. 6, taking fourth overall with 111 points. The Tigers were just 26 points back of first-place Siuslaw in a gridlocked top four.

Leading the way for La Grande, as she did all season, was sophomore Emily Tubbs in the pole position at 19 minutes, 4.6 seconds. Tubbs beat the second-place runner by 14 seconds to take home an individual state title. The individual championship concludes a season where Tubbs won every race she competed in.

La Grande's top four has been consistent all season, earning strong finishes from freshman Cecilia Villagomez (20:25.3) in ninth, sophomore Kiah Carlson (20:38) in 14th and sophomore Faith Calhoun (20:56.3) in 22nd. Junior Anne Sweet rounded out the Tigers' efforts at 77th.

All five of La Grande's runners will be back next season, while its young core will look to build on the successes of this season.

If the Tigers can garner some more depth, the team could enter next season as the odds-on favorite to take the 4A title. After a stellar sophomore campaign, Tubbs will certainly be the runner to watch in pursuit of another individual title.

Depth was the achilles heel for La Grande this season, as seen in the Baker Invite on Oct. 1. Carlson was injured during the race and unable to finish, which put the Tigers below the threshold to qualify for a team score. Moving forward into next season, head coach Alma Crow is just a runner or two away from having a deeper group capable of competing with the best teams in the state.

The Tigers have plenty to be proud of from this season, with four underclassmen all placing in the top 25 at the state meet. With a little more added depth to its core group, La Grande could be the team to beat at the 4A level the next two years.

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Alex Wittwer/The Observer, File

Cambree Scott (12) and Breanna Shaffer (14) attempt to block a spike from Grace Buchanan (20). The Eastern Oregon University volleyball team had five all-conference selections, the Cascade Collegiate Conference announced Thursday, Nov. 11, 2021.

# Postseason glory

Five Mountaineers earn all-conference honors in volleyball

By DAVIS CARBAUGH  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Eastern Oregon University volleyball team made its mark on the Cascade Collegiate Conference once again this year, earning five all-conference nominations on Thursday, Nov. 11.

Eastern's all-conference selections were highlighted by three players earning first-team honors, one player being named to the second team and one player earning honorable mention.

Junior middle hitter Cambree Scott, senior outside hitter Breanna Shaffer and sophomore outside hitter Sade Williams all made it to the first team for their strong showings all season. Senior middle hitter Jet Taylor was named to the second team and freshman libero Hailey Arritola earned honorable mention.

The five all-conference players helped the Mountaineers finish the season as the No. 2 seed in the CCC with a conference record of 19-3. Eastern went 24-6 overall on the year. The Mountaineers finished just one game back of first place Corban and concluded the regular season ranked No. 12 in the NAIA Coaches' Poll.

Scott, the conference player of the year in the spring, was phenomenal at the net once again this season. Through the conclusion of the regular season, Scott led the team with 360 points, 282 kills and 134 total blocks. Her block total led the conference, and her .293 hitting percentage was good for fifth. This is Scott's third-straight



Alex Wittwer/The Observer, File

Mountaineer Breanna Shaffer (14) defends against a serve from Evergreen University at Eastern Oregon University on Friday, Oct. 1, 2021.

first-team nomination. Williams was right next to Scott at the net this year, adding yet another strong piece to Eastern's lineup. Williams was second on the team with 303 points, third in kills with 248 and fourth in digs per set with 2.79. This is the first time that Williams has earned all-conference honors.

Shaffer was another weapon for the Mountaineers, creating a dominant front line next to Scott and Williams. The senior is second on Eastern with 264 kills, third with 301.5 points and third with 296 digs.

Taylor made the all-conference team for the third time in her career, bringing home second-team honors this year. The senior finished the regular season fourth on the team in points with 223, fourth in kills with 169 and second in blocks with 102.

Taylor is currently second all-time in program history with 385 blocks, only trailing Scott's mark of 503. The duo has helped the Mountaineers play stout on

defense this year, holding opponents to a league-best .104 hitting percentage in the regular season. Eastern also leads the conference as a team with 2.45 blocks per set.

Arritola, a true freshman, has been a welcome addition to a strong Eastern group this season. She played a key role in the Mountaineers climbing to the top of the conference with 17.43 digs per set. Arritola's 495 digs and 4.67 digs per set were tops in the CCC.

Eastern's postseason campaign got underway in Salem on Nov. 12 with a semifinal matchup against Oregon Tech. The Mountaineers topped the Owls on the road in four sets on Sept. 24, but lost in four sets at home on Oct. 30.

Oregon Tech comes into the game ranked No. 25 in the NAIA Coaches' Poll.

The winner of the Eastern-Oregon Tech matchup will face either Corban or Bushnell in the Cascade Collegiate Conference Championship on Nov. 13 at 3 p.m.

## EOU soccer claims seven all-conference selections

By DAVIS CARBAUGH  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — It was a solid showing from Eastern Oregon University soccer programs during the Cascade Collegiate Conference all-conference selection process.

The Mountaineers women's team earned two first-team nominations, one second-team honor and one honorable mention. For the men's squad, one player was named to the second team and two Mountaineers earned honorable mention.

Leading the way for Eastern's women's team was senior forward Morgan Farrington and senior midfielder Sarah Mitchell. Farrington leads the Mountaineers with 16 points and seven goals, while Mitchell has been an anchor on defense. Both starters earned first-team honors and have helped the team head into the postseason with a 11-5-0 record.

Farrington has now earned all-conference honors for the third time in her career, while Mitchell has earned all-conference for four straight seasons.

Junior midfielder Erika Skindlov earned second-team honors for her versatile playing style. She helped Eastern tally nine shutouts on the year and also added one goal and one assist this season. Senior defender Yahaira Chavarria-Mondragon received an honorable mention nomination, appearing in all 15 games for the Mountaineers this season. Chavarria-Mondragon has been an anchor in defense for Eastern throughout her career in La Grande.

On the men's side, three all-conference awards are an admirable close to the season.

Senior goalkeeper Dalton Mauzey highlighted the selections for Eastern, earning second-team honors. Mauzey tallied 53 saves on the season for a save percentage of .841. The senior's nomination is the first all-conference selection of his career.

Senior defender Erick Diaz and sophomore midfielder Carlos Murillo both earned honorable mention all-conference for Eastern. Diaz appeared in all 15 contests this season and helped Eastern's defense total four shutouts on the year.

Murillo earned the all-conference nod after leading the Mountaineers with three goals, two assists and eight points. The sophomore played in all 15 games this season and tallied 21 total shots.

The Eastern men's team finished the year 6-10-0, placing ninth in the conference standings at the conclusion of the regular season.

### SPORTS SHORT

## Gladstone accuses Tigers of racism during playoff game

By DAVIS CARBAUGH  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The La Grande High School football team is under fire for alleged racism during a state playoff matchup.

An article from The Oregonian was published on Thursday, Nov. 11, describing allegations that members of the La Grande football team hurled racial slurs at Gladstone High School players throughout the first-round matchup at Eastern Oregon University on Nov. 5, a game La Grande won 34-12.

The ending of the game was atypical in a number of ways. Gladstone was penalized after an argument between the team's head coach Cam Sommer and officials on the field with about a minute left in regulation. The game was paused for roughly five minutes as coaches and par-

ents on the Gladstone side of the field argued with officials. Upon time expiring, the Gladstone sideline walked off without shaking hands or confronting the La Grande sideline.

This came as a result of what Gladstone players in The Oregonian article claim was a constant use of racial slurs by La Grande players during the competition.

Ricky White, a Gladstone senior, told The Oregonian that the racial slurs were a problem from the start of the game.

"Every Black person on our team heard (the slur) all game besides the one who was injured in the first quarter," White told The Oregonian.

The La Grande School District released a statement on Nov. 12, which stated that the investigation is ongoing at this point. The school district is working with the Gladstone School District and

the Oregon School Activities Association to get to the bottom of the issue and find facts on what transpired during the game.

"It is extremely concerning that our athletes have been accused of using racist language during the playoff game and our school district will continue to look into this situation," La Grande Superintendent George Mendoza said in the press release. "The impact of racially charged language creates a great deal of strain in relationships and impacts a person's sense of safety and belonging. Our goal and intention is to ensure every student-athlete feels safe, valued, understood and protected."

The statement noted that both school districts and OSAA will continue working together on the matter. The entities involved are looking at game video and questioning players, officials and the chain crew to get more information.



Andrew Cutler/The Observer, File

La Grande quarterback Logan Williams runs past defenders along the sideline during a first-round state playoff matchup against Gladstone on Friday, Nov. 5, 2021.