

# La Grande football sweeps all-league honors

Tigers earn 13 first-team nominations

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Coming off a 6-1 regular season and Greater Oregon League title, the La Grande High School football team racked up all-league awards.

The Tigers finished the season 7-2 after a run to the 4A quarterfinals that ultimately ended in a 44-22 loss at Estacada on Friday, Nov. 12. La Grande took home 13 first-team mentions, highlighted by senior Brody MacMillan being named league offensive player of the year and senior Cole Jorgensen being selected as defensive player of the year. MacMillan was also first-team defense at the linebacker position and Jorgensen was named first-team offense at offensive line.

Offensive first-team honorees that joined MacMillan and Jorgensen for La



Alex Wittwer/The Observer, File

**Brody MacMillan leads La Grande onto the field against Ontario at Community Stadium on Thursday, Oct. 21, 2021. MacMillan was chosen as Greater Oregon League offensive player of the year after a stellar season at the running back position.**

Grande were senior center Nick Bornstedt, junior lineman Jarrett Armstrong, junior wide receiver Jace Schow and junior tight end Noah McIlmoil.

On the defensive side of the ball, the Tigers' first-team selections included Armstrong at defensive line, senior defensive back Coby Hibbert, junior defensive back Kaden Nelson and

senior linebacker Braden Carson.

Junior John Remily earned first-team at both kicker and punter positions this fall.

La Grande saw quite a few second-team nominations, totaling four on offense, six on defense and one on special teams.

On offense, the team's second-team honorees were



Chris Keizur/Pamplin Media Group

**La Grande's Cole Jorgensen (51) and Kenai Huff (54) line up Friday, Nov. 12, 2021, during the Tigers' 44-22 loss to the Estacada Rangers in the quarterfinal round of the OSAA Class 4A state football tournament at Sandy High School.**

junior quarterback Logan Williams, junior offensive lineman Ryan VanderZanden, junior lineman Myer Whitmore and Carson at the running back position.

On defense, La Grande's second-team players were McIlmoil at defensive line, Bornstedt at defensive line, Whitmore at defensive line, Schow at defensive back, Williams at line-

backer and Bryen Penalazo at linebacker. Schow was also named second-team returner on special teams.

Coming off the loss in the quarterfinals, La Grande saw five seniors named to the all-league team. A promising sign for next year's team is 10 juniors being selected to the all-league team, a strong foundation to build upon.

**ON THE SLATE**

**Saturday, Nov. 27  
PREP FOOTBALL**

Powder Valley vs. Adrian, 1A state championship, Baker Bulldog Memorial Stadium, 1 p.m.

**COLLEGE MEN'S  
BASKETBALL**

Eastern Oregon at Menlo College, 1 p.m.

**COLLEGE WOMEN'S  
BASKETBALL**

Eastern Oregon vs. Rocky Mountain, Best Western Inn and Suites Classic, Caldwell, Idaho, 2 p.m.

**Sunday, Nov. 28  
COLLEGE MEN'S  
BASKETBALL**

Eastern Oregon at Cal Maritime, 2 p.m.

**Wednesday, Dec. 1  
PREP BOYS  
BASKETBALL**

Union at Imbler, 7 p.m.

**PREP GIRLS  
BASKETBALL**

Nysa at La Grande, 5:30 p.m.  
Union at Imbler, 5:30 p.m.

**BOYS**

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said. "He's that kind of rare quality where he's more in tune to playing tough defense as opposed to worrying about offensive numbers."

The Bobcats will also utilize Tee Ledbetter's versatility to play in the post as well as help with ball handling.

Miller expects opposing teams to guard him with their post players, which he thinks can create mismatches.

Trae Frank will be another key piece after being a part of last year's playoff team as a sophomore. Now entering the season as an upper-classman, Frank will look to make a big step. Evan Cloutier contrib-

uted to last year's efforts as a freshman and will add range and length at the guard position in his sophomore year.

The Bobcats will also lean on a sizable group of freshmen and underclassmen to step up to the plate this year.

"We've got a lot of underclassmen, which is exciting because they're all talented," Miller said.

Union is crafting this year's group around defensive intensity, which Miller says is the formula for success with any group of basketball players.

"It's going to be the focal point. It's something we work on every single day," he said. "We have to be tough to compete in the Blue Mountain Conference. The only way I know how to be tough

is to buy in defensively. Those are the teams that have the most success."

Miller stated that the Bobcats are motivated by last year's success and eager to write their own story with a largely new group of players this season. With new names comes a new era at Union, one that Bobcats fans will hope ends in continued success at the league and state level. Union kicks off its season at Imbler at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 1.

"They're hungry to have success," Miller said. "They have a little bit of a chip on their shoulders knowing that they're talented but they're unproven. They're anxious to prove themselves, which I think makes us a dangerous team."

**GIRLS**

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granted this season. While the team has high ambitions for a deep tournament run, players and coaches alike realize that every game is essential.

"They hate to lose more than they love to win," Klebaum-Johnston said. "They're motivated and know what could come if they work hard."

The Bobcats get things started at Imbler on Dec. 1, before hosting the Union Lion's Tournament at Union High School on Dec. 3 and Dec. 4. After a slew of non-league matchups and tournaments, Union gets Blue Mountain Conference competition underway on Dec. 30 against Weston-McEwen. Leaning on its core group or returners, the



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

**Union senior Audrey Wells faces the basket during a fast break at a practice on Monday, Nov. 22, 2021. Wells is one of five seniors on this year's Bobcats girls basketball roster heading into the 2021-22 season.**

Bobcats will look to claim another district title and make a run toward a state championship.

"I truly believe that if

everyone plays to their potential and we stay healthy, this is a top-five team in the state," Klebaum-Johnston said.

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