

ON THE SLATE

Saturday, Feb. 5

COLLEGE MEN'S BASKETBALL

Eastern Oregon at Lewis-Clark State, 5 p.m.

COLLEGE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Eastern Oregon at Lewis-Clark State, 3 p.m.

COLLEGE MEN'S WRESTLING

Eastern Oregon at Southern Oregon, 7 p.m.

COLLEGE WOMEN'S WRESTLING

Eastern Oregon at Southern Oregon, 6 p.m.

COLLEGE BASEBALL

Eastern Oregon at Linfield, 1 p.m.

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL

Joseph at Nixyaawii, 4:45 p.m.
Heppner at Union, 5:30 p.m.
Elgin at Pine Eagle, 5:30 p.m.
Powder Valley at Baker, 5:30 p.m.
Imbler at Cove, 5:30 p.m.
Griswold at Wallowa, 5:30 p.m.
Grant Union at Enterprise, 5:30 p.m.

PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL

Joseph at Nixyaawii, 1:30 p.m.
Elgin at Pine Eagle, 3:30 p.m.
Heppner at Union, 4 p.m.
Powder Valley at Baker JV, 4 p.m.
Imbler at Cove, 4 p.m.
Griswold at Wallowa, 4 p.m.
Grant Union at Enterprise, 4 p.m.

PREP GIRLS WRESTLING

La Grande, Union/Cove, Elgin, Imbler at Special District 4, West Albany High School, TBA

PREP SWIMMING

La Grande at Riverdale/Lewis and Clark, Portland, TBA

PREP BOYS WRESTLING

Union, Imbler and Elgin at Bank of Eastern Oregon Invitational, Heppner, TBA

Sunday, Feb. 6

COLLEGE BASEBALL

Eastern Oregon at Linfield, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 8

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL

Elgin at Cove, 5 p.m.
La Grande at Baker, 7:30 p.m.
Weston-McEwen at Union, 7:30 p.m.

PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL

La Grande at Baker, 6 p.m.
Weston-McEwen at Union, 6 p.m.
Elgin at Cove 6:30 p.m.



Eastern Oregon University Athletics/Contributed Photo, file

Kiara Fontanilla readies to clear the ball in front of the Eastern Oregon University goal during a match in the 2021 spring season. Fontanilla helped the Philippines earn a spot in the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, marking the first time the country has ever qualified for the tournament.

MAKING HISTORY

EOU goalkeeper plays part in historic World Cup run by Philippines women's soccer team

By DAVIS CARBAUGH
The Observer

PUNE, India — A local college soccer player recently helped the Philippines women's national soccer team make history.

Kiara Fontanilla, a goalkeeper for Eastern Oregon University, played a part in the team's magical run at the AFC Women's Asian Cup. A dramatic victory in penalty kicks over Chinese Taipei on Sunday Jan. 30, sealed the Philippines' spot in the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, marking the first time the country has ever qualified for the tournament.

The Philippines' run started

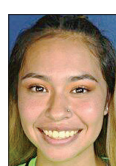
in the group stage, with the team looking to earn enough

points to make the knockout stages. The team started with a narrow 1-0 victory over Thailand on Jan. 21 to secure three points — forward Chandler

McDaniel scored the game-winning goal in the 81st minute.

In the team's second matchup, Fontanilla earned her first career start at the international level against one of the toughest teams in the tournament. Fontanilla started in net against Australia, ranked No. 11 in the FIFA women's soccer rankings.

Up against one of the strongest teams in the tournament, Fontanilla and the Philippines held Australia scoreless in the first half. Australia picked up the pace in the second half and won 4-0 after controlling possession for 75% of the match.



Fontanilla

A 6-0 win over Indonesia in the Philippines' third match of the AFC group stage ensured the team's spot in the knockout rounds.

Matched up against Chinese Taipei, the Philippines had their hands full in a low-scoring match. Both teams went back and forth with chances, but played out a scoreless first half. Quinley Quezada scored the opening goal in the 49th minute off a volley, giving Philippines a 1-0 lead. However, Chinese Taipei's Zhuo Li-ping scored an equalizer off an incredible long shot from outside the box in the 82nd minute.

After 30 minutes of scoreless extra time, the Philippines' fate would come down to a series of penalty kicks.

Both teams converted three out of their first five attempts, leaving the game up for grabs. Ping shot the sixth penalty for Chinese Taipei, but her shot was saved

by goalkeeper Olivia Davies McDaniel. With the game on the line, the Philippines' Sarina Bolden drilled a shot into the left side of the net to send the team through to the semifinals and clinch the country's first World Cup appearance. Players and coaches alike embraced on the field as history was made.

The Philippines went on to lose 2-0 to No. 19 South Korea in the semifinals, ending the team's hopes of winning the AFC Women's Asian Cup. Nonetheless, the team achieved its ultimate goal of earning a spot in the FIFA Women's World Cup.

The Philippines are one of six teams currently eligible for the World Cup, with other continents still in the qualifying stages. The 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup is set to take place across Australia and New Zealand, with group stages scheduled to begin in late July of 2023.



Samantha Flett/Eastern Oregon University Athletics, File

Samantha Buckley (5) of Eastern Oregon University maneuvers between a pair of Corban University players during a lacrosse match Saturday, March 20, 2021. The Mountaineers completed the program's inaugural season with a 1-4 record. The program's lone win came against Whitworth, posting a 22-16 victory March 5.

EOU women's lacrosse schedule set for 2022

Mounties will host five games at Community Stadium

By DAVIS CARBAUGH
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Eastern Oregon University women's lacrosse team is back in action for its second season as a program.

The university announced the team's 2022 schedule on Tuesday, Feb. 1, a slate of 12 games. The Mountaineers are set to host five games at Community Stadium in La Grande this year and travel for the remainder of competitions.

Eastern is coming off its inaugural season in 2021, one year later than the pro-

gram was expected to hit the field. The COVID-19 pandemic canceled the 2020 season, setting the stage for 2021 as Eastern's first year of competition.

In a season still heavily impacted by the pandemic, the Mountaineers compiled a 1-4 record and competed in five seven-on-seven scrimmages. Eastern picked up its first win in program history on March 5 against Whitworth.

This season, the Mountaineers will open up competition against Whitworth in Spokane, Washington, on Feb. 12. Eastern will host two straight home games on the weekend of Feb. 19, welcoming in Willamette and Linfield.

The Mountaineers will travel for a handful of mid-season tournament matchups, facing Whitman

and Whitworth on the weekend of Feb. 26 at the Whitman Classic in Walla Walla, Washington. After a road tilt against Corban, Eastern is set to travel to Boise, Idaho, to compete at the Boise State Tournament on March 12 and March 13.

Eastern hosts Multnomah on March 19 and Whitman on March 20 on a back-to-back homestand at Community Stadium. The Mountaineers head to Tacoma, Washington to face Puget Sound on March 26 and conclude regular-season road competition at Corban on April 2.

The Mountaineers conclude the regular season at home against Multnomah at Community Stadium on April 16.

In Eastern's first season under head coach Monica

Plut, the Mountaineers faced Corban three times and lost each matchup. Eastern will have two chances at revenge against the Warriors this year, as well as welcoming first-year program Multnomah to the lacrosse scene.

Eastern has a young team, with 11 underclassmen listed on the roster. The Mountaineers return numerous key players from last year's roster, including junior Kiana Watchman and senior Lauren Kombol. Eastern announced last October the hiring of assistant coach Ryan McMillen, another new addition looking to build up the university's women's lacrosse program.

Eastern's opening game at Whitworth on Feb. 12 is set to start at noon.

Oregon baseball gets new turf at PK Park

By JAMES CREPEA
The Oregonian

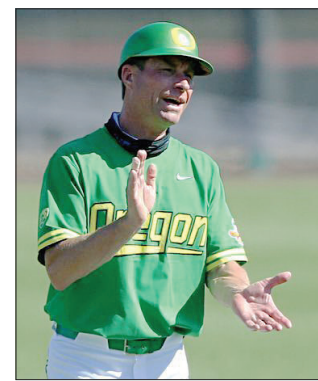
EUGENE — Oregon baseball is going to look different on the field in more ways than one this season.

The Ducks will have an entirely new pitching rotation and several new starters in the field as well. They'll also be playing at a renovated PK Park, which had its FieldTurf replaced, the fences brought in slightly in the power alleys, a new videoboard installed in left field and the fence height made uniform throughout the park this offseason.

"It's coming along nicely," Oregon coach Mark Wasikowski said. "There's brand new turf out there. There's graphics all over the place. They just are beginning the videoboard and scoreboard. All of the changes and the updates and all of that stuff should be complete by the beginning of the season, first home game. Everything is on pace. It looks amazing."

The walls in left- and right-center have been moved in between 10 and 15 feet and the fence is now 6-1/2 feet tall across the entire outfield, compared to the previously shorter wall in front of the Oregon bullpen in right field.

The hope is those changes will create more offense in the pitcher-friendly ballpark, specifically allowing more opportunities for triples since there will be fewer ground-rule doubles.



Sean Meagher/The Oregonian, File

Oregon head coach Mark Wasikowski during a game against the Portland Pilots last season.

"It's going to allow outfielders to make more athletic plays, maybe rob some home runs," Wasikowski said. "It'll also allow for the ball that goes over an outfielder's head, instead of bouncing over the fence that we saw a lot of times, especially in right field with our short porch, I think what we're going to see now and what we've seen so far in the early going is that ball bounces and hits the fence."

"More triples in the ballpark or scoring a guy from first base on a ball that goes to the wall. That's a pretty exciting piece of the baseball game, the three-base play is the most exciting play in the game. To limit that is something we tried to get rid of, we tried to maximize that and I think we'll be able to do that."

The players like the renovations and naturally hitters and pitchers have different perspectives on the changing dimensions in the outfield.