

Molalla fans land school in trouble

Racial taunts at basketball game land Indians on year-long OSAA probation

By NIK STRENG
The Oregonian

PORTLAND — Following an independent investigation into a January boys basketball game where Gladstone boys basketball players claimed they were met with racist taunts from Molalla fans, the Oregon School Activities Association has placed the Molalla High School Indians on probation.

The one-year probation period started on March 31, 2022, when the OSAA first released its findings to the two schools. The probation enacted by the OSAA means that the school needs to take certain actions to ensure that an incident like this doesn't happen in the future, and also the school will incur harsher penalties for any further violations during the probationary period.

The incident in question stems from a boys basketball game on Jan. 28, 2022. During the game, Gladstone students claimed they faced racism and intimidation, including an adult displaying a photo of a Confederate flag in their direction, a Molalla student adorned in blackface and monkey noises chanted from the Molalla student section.

Three of the OSAA's findings were redacted by Molalla River School District, as they include personally identifiable information related to students. The one unredacted finding was that heckling from people seated in the Molalla student section, which included fans from another school, "was poor at times but was not determined to be racially motivated."

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MAKING A RUN

Enterprise standout Zac Knapp to continue running at Division I level

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Zac Knapp has put together a career that rivals the best in the history of the Enterprise cross-country and track and field programs.

Now, he's going to run at a collegiate level that he didn't think was possible a year ago — Division I.

Knapp has signed to run for the University of Idaho starting next season, and his joining the Vandals adds another Northeastern Oregon runner to the program.

"Immediately when they started telling me about their philosophy and how they treat their athletes, I knew I could buy into that and do that four more years," Knapp said. "They had a long track record of a lot of fantastic athletes. I know I can be like them in a year or so."

Knapp had a senior campaign to remember in cross-country, winning every race he took part of — and each in dominant fashion. Nobody stayed within 20 seconds of him. His closest race was a win by 23.9 seconds. Six wins were by more than 30 seconds, including a 36-second victory in the state championship race. Three were by more than a minute, with his widest margin of victory at 83.6 seconds.

He's undefeated in individual races on the track this spring, as well, with a top mark in the 3,000 of 8:37.37, shattering his own personal best set earlier this season — which was a school record.

"That's an exceptional time," EHS head track coach Dan Moody said. "He was in a groove. I really think that he was way over what I was planning for him. He wanted to break 8:50."

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Davis Carbaugh/The Observer, File

Enterprise's Zac Knapp, front, runs during the La Grande Invitational track meet at La Grande High School on Friday, April 8, 2022.

SPORTS SHORT

Mountaineers softball earns Team of the Week honor

The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Eastern Oregon University Mountaineers softball team is the Under Armour Team of the Week for April 11-17, the Cascade Collegiate Conference announced.

The recognition came after the team went 4-0 in weekend play and secured a spot in the 2022 CCC Championship.

Despite a spring snowstorm that delayed EOU's departure from La Grande, the Mountaineers made it to Bellevue,

Washington, and took down the Eagles, 4-0. The sweep brought the team's overall record to 34-11 overall and 19-5 in league play. The Mountaineers' 34 wins are now the third most in a single season and a career best in a season for third-year head coach Nicole Christian.

Eastern also continues to receive votes in the NAIA Softball Coaches' Top-25 poll. With their spot locked in for the CCC Championships, the Mountaineers now have made the conference postseason each of the last two seasons. Eastern sits

third in the league standings behind No. 6 College of Idaho and No. 2 Oregon Tech entering the final two weeks of regular season action.

EOU will return home next weekend to face league leader No. 2 Oregon Tech for Senior Weekend. The series will take place Friday-Saturday, April 22-23, at Peggy Anderson Field. Day One will begin at 2 p.m. for the doubleheader. Day Two action is set for an 11 a.m. start. It will be Senior Day and EOU will honor eight seniors between the two games.



Isabella Evans/Eastern Oregon University, File

Eastern Oregon University's Madison Stalder takes a swing Friday, Feb. 15, 2022, against Northwest University in Bellevue, Washington. In April, the Mountaineers swept the Eagles 4-0 in weekend play, earning a spot in the 2022 Cascade Collegiate Conference.

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