

# Tigers earn all-state honors

Devin Bell named state's top player, Parker McKinley earns coach of the year

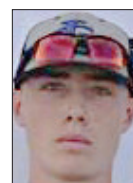
By RONALD BOND  
For The Observer

**L**A GRANDE — Devin Bell wrapped up his high school baseball career last week with a state championship.

The La Grande standout added another feather to his cap just days later.

Following the Tigers' 10-1 victory over Hidden Valley to earn the program's third title, Bell was named 4A state player of the year.

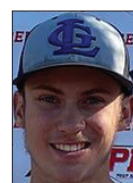
Bell was a standout both at the plate and on the mound for the Tigers, who cruised to a 28-1 record. The shortstop, who also was named a first-team infielder, hit .539 on the season with 10 home runs and 69 RBIs. He also boasted a 6-0 record with a scant 0.39 ERA. He struck out 64 batters and walked just 13 in 36 innings pitched, and posted a WHIP of .667. His efforts on the season included a no-hitter in the Tigers' 8-0 semifinal win over Philomath.



Bell



McKinley



Schow



Jorgensen

The Tigers landed two other players on the first team, including pitcher Jace Schow. The junior finished with a perfect 10-0 record, a 1.45 ERA, 57 strikeouts and just 16 walks in 53 innings pitched.

The third first-team all-state member from the Tigers was Cole Jorgensen, who made it at catcher. The senior batted .479 with four home runs and 33 RBIs, and posted an impressive on-base percentage of .635, aided by being walked 29 times and striking out just seven. Behind the plate, he threw out 59% of baserunners who attempted to steal on him.

Making the third team as a pitcher was Sam Tsiatsos, who posted a record of 6-0 with an ERA of 0.42, striking out 50 batters and issuing just eight walks in 33 innings of work.

Logan Williams also landed on the third team as an infielder. He finished with an average of .267, a home run, 18 RBIs and 35 runs scored and 10 stolen bases.

And earning honorable mention at first base was Nick Bornstedt and as a utility player was Noah McIlmoil. Bornstedt, who went 3-for-4 in the



Isabella Crowley/The Observer, File

Pitcher Devin Bell and catcher Cole Jorgensen speak to coach Parker McKinley during La Grande's 8-0 victory over Philomath at Pioneer Park on Tuesday, May 31, 2022. Bell was named the Class 4A state player of the year, while McKinley earned 4A coach of the year honors. Jorgensen was named to the 4A first team.

championship game, finished .262 with 26 RBIs and a .479 on-base percentage. McIlmoil hit .447 with a home run, 16 RBIs and 11 runs scored.

Parker McKinley was named 4A coach of the year, directing the Tigers to a season-ending 24-game winning streak, a 28-1 record overall, a team average

of .363 and a team ERA of 0.85. Under his tutelage, the Tigers had seven players with more than 50 plate appearances hit above .300, 10 with 10 more RBIs on the season and 12 who accounted for at least 10 of La Grande's 326 runs. The Tigers outscored their opponents 326-38 and pitched 15 shutouts.

## Breakaway roping a growing sport on professional rodeo circuit

Texas women doing their part at Eastern Oregon Livestock Show to build breakaway roping

By RONALD BOND  
For The Observer

UNION — Martha Angelone and Amanda Hodges remember just a few years ago competing at breakaway roping in amateur rodeos in Texas.

They never imagined at the time they'd be competing halfway across the country in the budding rodeo sport, as they were Saturday, June 11, during the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show in Union.

"It's been tremendous how many rodeos have added it for us, and that

it's in the pro rodeos," Angelone, who lives in Stephenville, Texas, said. "Me and Amanda, a couple years ago, we were going to the amateur rodeos together down in Texas where we'd get to go to three or four a week, and now we're getting to go all over the world doing it. I would never be in Oregon if there wasn't pro rodeo up here."

The two were among dozens of women competing for the first time in Union with the EOLS electing to add breakaway roping to the fray during its 115th edition.

The growth of the sport, Hodges said, has opened up more opportunities for the competitors, including



Angelone



Hodges

the chance to earn more on the circuit.

"Those amateur rodeos that me and Martha used to go to would pay nowhere near the same as these," Hodges, from Brazoria, Texas, said. "We'd go drive a couple hours across Texas to win \$1,000, and now we're driving for \$10,000 (pots)."

Breakaway roping, a women's event, is essentially half of tie-down roping. The riders follow a calf out of a chute just as in tie-down roping, and try to rope the calf around the neck. Once the calf is roped, however, the time stops. There is no need to dismount and tie the animal.

That fact was met with gratitude June 11 by at least

one of the 10 women who competed, with one rider saying to another, "I'm glad we don't have to get off" as they awaited their turn in the rainy, muddy conditions at the EOLS arena.

The speed of the event — most competitors have their calf roped in 2-3 seconds — makes thinking on your feet vital.

"A lot of this sport is just reaction. You can't think," Hodges said. "You kind of just gotta hope that things go your way, and a lot of times things do have to fall your way for you to win."

The fact that it is a quick event makes it one Angelone said is extremely hard.

"You don't really have a lot of time to set up your shot because you gotta be so fast, so you gotta think about trying to make everything happen in a split second," she said. "You

have to be focused on what you're about to have to do to make your run work. The tie-down ropers can always take an extra swing and set everything up. We don't even have time to think about that."

Angelone was quick on her feet Saturday, twirling an orange rope to catch her calf quickly and post a time of 2.6 seconds.

It was a mark that briefly moved her to the lead, until being surpassed by Sawyer Gilbert later in the round. Gilbert had a time of 2.4 seconds, which ended up being the top time of the day.

"This is the first time I've ever rode this horse in the mud," Angelone said following her run. "I honestly didn't know how he was going to handle it. It's a little bit different for the start and the cattle than if it

was dry, but not terrible."

Hodges had a strong run negated by breaking the barrier, which added 10 seconds to her time and put her out of the running for a good payday. Still, she was pleased with her effort.

"It was fun for me. I got a little early start on mine, broke the barrier, but I feel like my horse worked good," she said. "I did my job good enough for me to be happy with."

Both were pleased to be a part of the first run of breakaway roping at the EOLS, and said they would be back.

"If it wasn't raining I'd probably give it a 10 out of 10," Angelone said of the Union-based rodeo. "Since it's raining, probably an eight out of 10. I think it's cool. I think it's awesome that they're letting the breakaway ropers in."

### SPORTS SHORT

## Mounties finish No. 14 in final softball poll EOU moves up one spot in final coaches' poll of the season

The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Eastern Oregon University softball team moved up one spot in the final NAIA Softball Coaches' Top 25 poll, which was released last week.

The Mountaineers finish the 2022 season with a No. 14 ranking, up from No. 15 in the prior poll.

Oklahoma City, which earned its 11th NAIA Softball World Series crown, was the top team in the poll, earning all 18 first-place votes, followed by national championship runner-up Mobile (Ala.). Science & Arts (Okla.) landed in the No. 3 spot while

Southeastern (Fla.) vaulted all the way up from 11 to No. 4. Freed-Hardeman (Tenn.) rounded out the top five.

The poll was voted upon by a panel of head coaches representing each of the conferences and the Continental Athletic Conference (Independents).

EOU finished the year at 43-17 overall and as the runner-up of the Oklahoma City Bracket in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics opening round after earning an at-large bid. The team's tally of 43 wins now stands alone atop Eastern's record books for the

most victories in a single season. Entering the 2022 campaign, EOU was picked to finish fifth in the Cascade Collegiate Conference but easily exceeded expectations, according to an announcement from EOU Athletics. The team finished third in the regular season standings and at the CCC Tournament, registering a 24-6 mark in conference action.

Eastern Oregon was one of four Cascade Collegiate Conference teams in the top 25. Oregon Tech was the highest placing CCC team, finishing No. 7, while Southern Oregon finished No. 12 and College of Idaho was No. 22.



The Observer, File

Eastern Oregon University's Karsyn Zaragoza (7) rounds third base on her way to home plate against Providence University at the Peggy Anderson Softball Field, La Grande, on Friday, March 25, 2022.