

ON DECK

Thursday, Sept. 1

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Mountain View, La Grande at Redmond, noon
Joseph at Wallowa, 5 p.m.
Cove at Imbler, 5:30 p.m.
Powder Valley at Pine Eagle, 6 p.m.

Friday, Sept. 2

COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

EOU at Corban, 7 p.m.

PREP FOOTBALL

La Grande at Weiser, Idaho, 6 p.m.
Pilot Rock vs. Imbler, at Eastern Oregon University, 7 p.m.
Joseph at Echo, 7 p.m.
Dufur Classic
Powder Valley vs. Camas Valley, 1 p.m.
Prospect Charter vs. Cove, 4 p.m.

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Powder Valley at Baker Tournament, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 3

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

EOU at Montana Western, noon

COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

EOU at Bushnell, 5 p.m.

PREP FOOTBALL

Enterprise vs. Mohawk, at Dufur, 10 a.m.
lone/Arlington vs. Wallowa, at Dufur, 7:30 p.m.

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Pine Eagle at Imbler, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 6

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Enterprise at Imbler, 5:30 p.m.

PREP BOYS SOCCER

La Grande at McLoughlin, 6 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 7

PREP GIRLS SOCCER

La Grande at Seaside, 3 p.m.

Victory on the road

Tough preseason victories may prepare Mountaineers for successful season

By ISABELLA CROWLEY
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Playing in back-to-back tournament games can be grueling for athletes, but the Eastern Oregon University volleyball team handled the schedule while on the road at the Big Sky Tournament in Montana and the Hampton Inn Volleyball Classic in Missouri.

Across the two tournaments the Mountaineers went 7-1, losing their opening game in Montana on Thursday, Aug. 18, against Viterbo University, but quickly turning the ship around — beating Midland University, University of Jamestown and Carroll College. Across the three games, the Mounties dropped only one set against the Jimmies. Five of the seven wins at the two tournaments were over top-25 teams.

“I am incredibly proud of our team and their ability to battle back after our first loss,” Eastern head coach Kaki McLean Morehead said.

The Mountaineers continued their winning streak Aug. 26-27 at the Hampton Inn Classic with another four victories — beating Ottawa University, Columbia College, Central Methodist and William Woods University.

The matches in the Missouri-based tournament were hard-fought victories. After dropping the first set against Ottawa, the Mountaineers rallied to win the next three sets. Then after losing the first two sets to Columbia, Eastern clinched a come-



Isabella Crowley/The Observer

Eastern Oregon University's volleyball team on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022, prepares for its conference opener. The Mountaineers travel to Salem to face Corban on Sept. 2.

from-behind victory by winning the final three sets, including a 15-12 decision in the deciding fifth set.

“We wanted a preseason that was going to push us really early on and for us to have to have a really steep learning curve, and we definitely achieved that with the opponents that we played. But more than that I think it was great to be able to see the grit that we showed in pressure situations and the ability to come back after being down 0-2,” Morehead said. “I think those kinds of things you can't replicate and you learn from and you use in future experiences.”

Eastern opens conference play against Corban University — which they lost to four times in 2021 — on Friday, Sept. 2, in Salem.

The Mountaineers are well positioned going into conference play after the tough preseason. Led by senior Cambree Scott, juniors Kara Clayton, Preslee Jensen and Sade Williams, and sophomores Hailey Arritola, Alexis McMurtrey and Madison Morgan, the Mountaineers look to reverse their recent fortunes against Corban.

“I'm excited to start conference play. I think our preseason has really prepared us for the conference that we do have,” Morehead said. “We have one of the toughest conferences in the nation and it will only help prepare us more for the national tournament. We open up against two really tough opponents, so it will be a good weekend and hopefully we can use what we've learned so far.”

Mountaineers look to bounce back after season-opening loss to Montana Tech

By ISABELLA CROWLEY
The Observer

LA GRANDE — It certainly wasn't the start to the season the Eastern Oregon football team was hoping for, but head coach Tim Camp remains optimistic.

The Mountaineers surrendered 445 total yards of offense, while turning the ball over four times, in a lopsided 38-3 Frontier Conference loss to Montana Tech on Saturday, Aug. 27, at Community Stadium in La Grande.

“The one thing I know going into football season is that half the teams are going to win and half are going to lose. This game doesn't have to define who we are,” Camp said.

Everyone put in the work this week to improve, including the head coach himself. Following the opening night loss, Camp said he stayed up until 2 a.m. as he reflected on his own coaching and what he needed to do better for the team.

He set out to make a list of five things he could improve on, but by the time he was done it was 21 items long. Camp believes that self-reflection is as critical for coaches as it is for players.

“I don't like to react to things,” he said. “I want to respond.”

Which led to his main question to the team in the face of this loss: “How are you going to respond?”

Drills looked different

at practice this week for the Mounties. Coaching staff worked to put the team in more live football situations. Tackling and coverage were another two major areas of focus during the week. Those were areas Camp identified as needing improvement during the game against the Orediggers.

According to Camp, execution is key on offense and defense. When a play is called, the team needs to be able to execute it. He saw opportunities against Montana Tech, but the plays weren't made.

“It really comes down to execution and the ability to trust one another,” he said.

This is why execution, consistency and building trust were also focused on

in practice this week. These things will also come with more game time together, Camp said.

As head coach, Camp doesn't just look at what went wrong, though — he also searches for what went right.

“In every football play, somebody is doing something great,” he said.

Camp said he was proud of the way special teams played and thought there were some bright spots in the game against Montana Tech.

“The standard is the standard. We are going to play Eastern Oregon-style football,” he said.

The Mountaineers look to bounce back when they take on Montana Western, which lost 16-10 to Car-



Andrew Cutler/The Observer

Eastern Oregon running back Anthony Peterson (28) hurdles Montana Tech defensive back Naoki Harmer (9) during the first quarter of the Orediggers' 38-3 win on Saturday, Aug. 27, 2022, at Community Stadium, La Grande.

roll College last week, for a in Dillon, Montana, on Frontier Conference game Saturday, Sept. 3.

SPORTS SHORT

Oregon native excited for chance to play golf back in her home state



The Observer

Epson Tour/Contributed Photo
Oregon native Gigi Stoll, left, celebrates a putt during the first day of the Four Winds Invitational in South Bend, Indiana, on Friday, Aug. 12, 2022.

PENDLETON — Thanks to the Wildhorse Ladies Golf Classic making its debut on the Epson Tour schedule, some proget to return to familiar territories. A few return to the state in which they played collegiate golf, while others are at home.

Gigi Stoll is one of those players who calls Oregon home. Although she's from three hours away in Beaverton, Stoll was thrilled to see Pendleton on the 2022 schedule.

“I'm really excited,” she said. “I've been hoping that Epson would be able to put a stop in

Oregon, and I'm happy that they were able to do it. Coming back to Oregon is exciting.”

For most, being near home naturally brings positive energy to the week. For those who live on the West Coast, playing near home means familiar faces walking the course and receiving support in person rather than via social media. After spending most of the season playing on the East Coast, Stoll is ready for some in-person cheering.

“It means a lot,” she said. “You're out here for most of the year by yourself, so it's fun to have some support out here in

person.”

In a game of ups and downs — and one that changes day-by-day — Stoll reminds herself to be positive and patient. While some rounds or tournaments may not end the way she wants them to, she remains “neutral” and kind to herself.

“Playing a game that tugs at your emotions, it's really important to try and stay neutral,” she said. “I continue to tell myself that I'm doing all the right things on and off the golf course and it will pay off. Being in Oregon this week brings back a lot of good memories for me and it reminds me of where I

came from and why I continue to pursue golf.”

Stoll started her season strong, with five top-30 finishes before June. She missed four consecutive cuts in July and August but most recently finished T50 at the Circling Raven Championship. Getting back into Sunday golf was good momentum for Stoll heading into this week's Wildhorse Ladies Golf Classic.

“The level of competition on the Epson Tour might be the best it has ever been right now,” she said. “I believe the top 50 on this tour could compete on the LPGA. That really pushes me to give it 110% day in and day out.”

THE OBSERVER

Find up-to-date scores and game coverage for Eastern Oregon University and your local high schools, available 24/7 brought to you by **EasternOregonSports.com** and **lagrandeobserver.com**

