

## WESTON-MCEWEN FOOTBALL

# HANSELL RETURNS



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

Kenzie Hansell will rejoin Weston-McEwen as head football coach after stepping down six years ago.

Local farmer previously coached the TigerScots from 2008-13

By ANNIE FOWLER  
*East Oregonian*

ATHENA — Six years ago, Kenzie Hansell stepped down as head coach of the Weston-McEwen football team to spend more time with his young family. Now, his family is encouraging

him to return to the sidelines. “I’m back,” Hansell said with enthusiasm. “When the job came open, my wife (Emily) told me I needed to go for it. She said I enjoyed it and I needed to do it. I talked to our three kids about it, and my brothers (Luke and TJ, they farm together). We are going to make this work.”

Hansell, 38, replaces Travis Glover, who posted an 8-15 mark over the past three seasons.

“I am thrilled to be back,” Hansell said. “It’s an honor to

be the head football coach at Weston-McEwen. Being a coach in Athena is special on Friday nights — that’s what you do, you go watch the TigerScots. We are fortunate to be able to give back to our community.”

Hansell had coached the TigerScots for six seasons before stepping down after the 2013 season when he and his wife were expecting their third daughter, Cora.

With his family, school and foot-

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## Mac-Hi coach Nicole Christian returns to EOU softball

Christian led the Pioneers to two state titles

By BRETT KANE  
*East Oregonian*



Christian

LA GRANDE — Nicole Christian may be leaving Mac-Hi’s softball team, but she’s returning to familiar territory.

For the past 10 years, Christian has coached some of the best Mac-Hi softball teams in recent memory, but next spring, she’ll don Mountaineer gear once again to helm Eastern Oregon University’s softball program.

Christian, a Class of 2000 EOU graduate, was a shortstop for all four years of her collegiate softball career. She was a part of two teams that qualified for the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics finals in 1999 and 2000. Her 1999 team placed fourth in the nation to cap off a season of 41 wins — a program record.

Christian was also named an All-American player both years, and still holds all-time records for career hits (200), RBIs (137), and walks (83). Her legacy at EOU is so rich, in fact, that she was inducted into the school’s Athletic Hall of Fame in 2013. Her team was inducted two years prior.

She graduated EOU with degrees in physical education and health.

“I’m so excited. I think I’m still taking it all in,” Christian said. “I’ll be moving back to a place I’ve always called my second home. (La Grande) reminds me of Milton-Freewater when it comes to community support. I love being back there. I forgot how beautiful and it exciting it is. It’s been an easy transition so far.”

Christian will take the reins from Erin Dickhausen, who coached the Mountaineers for two seasons. Under Dickhausen, EOU went 26-24 and reached the NAIA National Championships last year. However, they finished this season at 13-32 — its lowest win record since 2012.

Christian led Mac-Hi to two championships in 2014 and 2015 — the program’s only title game appearances thus far. The Pioneers finished 2019 with a 17-9 record and 8-4 in the Greater Oregon League. They claimed the No. 2 spot in the conference standings, just below the La Grande Tigers, and made another run at the 4A state title, falling to Banks in the quarterfinals, 6-5.

“It was amazing,” Christian said of her time at Mac-Hi. “I met a lot of amazing young women. Most of them still have a huge impact on my life. I’m very grateful for having those 10 years.”

After graduation, Christian stayed in La Grande and coached the Tigers’ softball team for three seasons. The team went to state three times under her guidance.

However, when her grandfather suffered an injury, Christian returned to Milton-Freewater.

“I never knew that I was going to come back home,” she said, “but I’ve been there ever since. When I moved back, I wasn’t sure if I would be able to coach again. Things just fell into place. We had a ton of community support, and I’ve had a great administration

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## Another big hit from Edman lifts Cardinals past Mariners 5-4

By TIM BOOTH  
*Associated Press*

SEATTLE — Tommy Edman barely missed a go-ahead home run for the second straight game. A two-run single to score what proved to be the winning run was good enough this time.

Matt Wieters and Dexter Fowler homered, Edman came through with another key hit, and the St. Louis Cardinals rallied for a 5-4 win over the Seattle Mariners on Thursday.

Edman put the Cardinals in front for the second straight day with a two-run single in the seventh. Edman connected for a pinch-hit three-run homer during St. Louis’ five-run ninth in a 5-2 win Wednesday night. He nearly went deep again, watching his drive down the right field line for

a potential grand slam on Thursday hook foul at the last moment. Rather than be bothered by the long strike, Edman worked a nine-pitch at-bat and capitalized with a single to put the Cardinals in front.

“He sees the ball well, which is awesome. You know he’s going to give you a professional at-bat,” Fowler said about Edman.

Wieters hit a solo shot in the third inning and Fowler added a two-run drive in the fourth. Daniel Ponce de Leon got his first major league win, and Carlos Martinez worked the ninth for his third save. The Cardinals took two of three in the rare interleague series.

St. Louis starter Michael Wacha was charged with four runs and six hits in 3½ innings, but the Cardinals bullpen was solid for the second straight game. Ponce de Leon (1-0) allowed one baserun-

ner in 2½ innings. Andrew Miller worked out of a jam in the eighth before Martinez finished.

Ponce de Leon said he didn’t have a good feel for his breaking pitches in the bullpen, but his fastball was sharp.

“The main thing is to get the fastball going. If I can get the fastball going I can survive out there,” he said.

J.P. Crawford and Tim Beckham homered for the Mariners, who have dropped six of seven. All-Star Daniel Vogelbach added a run-scoring single.

Seattle wasted a chance to tie the game in the eighth. The inning started with Mallex Smith hitting a liner that deflected off John Gant’s leg for a base hit. Miller then replaced Gant, and a single by



AP Photo/Elaine Thompson

Seattle Mariners’ Omar Narvaez strands a pair of runners as he strikes out swinging next to St. Louis Cardinals catcher Matt Wieters, ending the eighth inning of a baseball game Thursday in Seattle.

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