

Cougars:

Continued from Page A10

They are willing to try something new, and you can teach them the right way.”

That includes the rules of the game.

“The hardest part at first was trying to teach the girls who had never played before all the rules,” Sandoval said. “They learned really quickly and they played great in their first game.”

The Cougars were 0-5-2 last year, and Sandoval is encouraged with the improvement her team has shown since spring.

“Last year to this year, I have seen tremendous growth in the girls,” she said.

The Cougars, who play in the Blue Mountain Conference with Riverside, Umatilla, Four Rivers, Irrigon and Nyssa, are off to an 0-2 start to the season. They host McLoughlin at 4 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 9, in Echo.



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian
Echo's Mayela De La Fuente works the ball upfield during a home game Friday, Sept. 3, 2021, with Trout Lake.

Eggers records career-best performance in season opener

The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Eastern Oregon University Mountaineers may have found their new workhorse running back.

Redshirt-sophomore Jordan Eggers burst onto the scene in Week 1, tallying 148 net rushing yards and two rushing touchdowns in Eastern Oregon University's 26-24 victory over Montana Tech in the season opener on Aug. 28. The Mountaineers relied heavily on the run, totaling more than 250 rushing yards as a team.

“Our emphasis from the start of the game was to control the run game,” Eggers said.

The Mountaineers did just

that, compiling 266 yards on the ground in comparison to 134 for the Orediggers.

Eggers scored the team's first touchdown of the season on a 37-yard rush midway through the first quarter. The back went on to carry the ball 21 times in the victory, adding another touchdown on a six-yard run in the second quarter. Prior to this season, Eggers carried the ball only 27 times for 82 total yards and one touchdown across the 2019 and shortened 2020 seasons. Eggers in his first career start had a career-best performance.

“I just got into a good rhythm and it led to a heavier workload,” Eggers said. “Our offensive line played great.”

Start:

Continued from Page A10

An athlete for all seasons

Pasena-Littlesky has been playing soccer since she was in the first grade. She also plays basketball and was one of the Bucks' top golfers.

At nearly 5-foot-10, she will be an asset to the girls basketball program, and her reach makes her an asset in goal.

“Caitlin Anderholm was our goalie last year, but she wanted to play defense,” Guizar said. “She is a natural defender. When we lost Lanie Gomez, Caitlin ended up our goalie her junior year, but her passion was to play defense. We lost three defenders from last year. To be able to rotate my defense and not worry about who is in goal is nice. It was a win-win for us.”

Pasena-Littlesky was a defender until her freshman year in high school.

“One of the JV goalies got hurt and I played to fill the position,” she said. “I just stayed there.”

Guizar got a good look at Pasena-Littlesky last year when the Bulldogs played the Bucks in a pair of nonleague matches. Hermiston won 7-0 and 2-0.

“When we beat them 2-0, she stopped almost everything we sent her way,” Guizar said. “I was impressed.”

Over the summer, Pasena-Littlesky played on the Hermiston club team. Guizar was able to watch her play, but he had to wait for her transfer to be approved before he could talk to her.

Then came the discussion about IMC soccer versus the Mid-Columbia Conference.

“It was a wakeup call,” Guizar said. “We told her it was the hardest thing she was going to face. She looked at us and said we were really good. She didn't get how serious we really were. We are playing the toughest teams you will face. You have to give everything every game.”

She got her first dose of the MCC on Saturday, Sept. 4, in a 1-0 loss to Hanford.

“In the first half it was 0-0,” Guizar said. “She said it was harder than she thought. I messaged her after the game. She felt she let us down. I let her know she didn't.”

Pasena-Littlesky also has found her way into Emilee Strot's girls weightlifting class at school.

“I've never done weights before,” she said. “I like it. I like the environment. You have to push yourself.”

It's all part of the Hermiston experience.

“In every Hermiston program, we aren't just here to build a good team, but we are building a culture and a family,” Guizar said.



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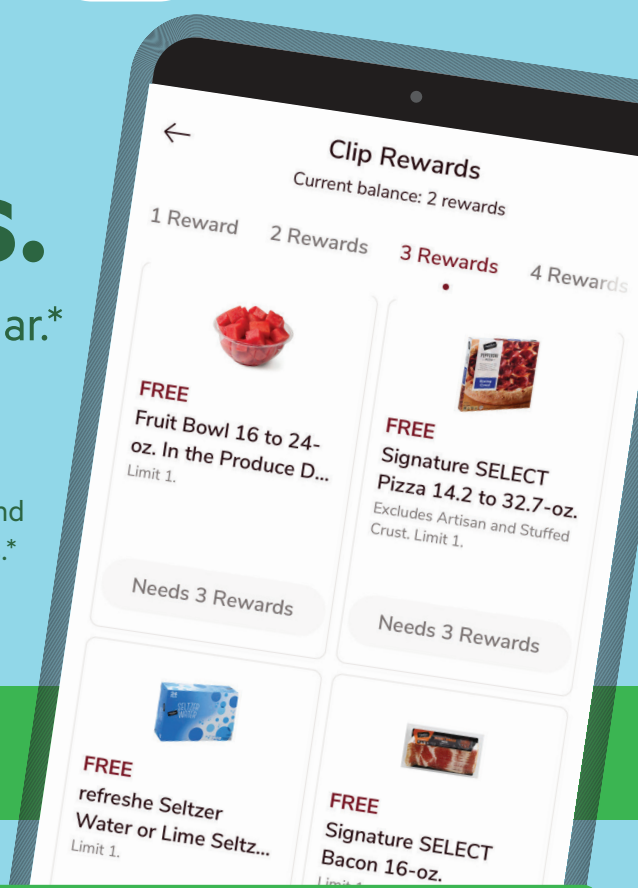
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