

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2021

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B1

ON THE SLATE

Saturday, Sept. 11

Prep football
Warrenton at Heppner, 5 p.m.
Prep volleyball
Ione/Arlington at Condon Tournament, 9 a.m.
Hermiston at Kennewick, 1 p.m.
Prep boys soccer
Umatilla at Dayton, 2 p.m.
Prep cross-country
McLoughlin at Chiawana Invite, Pasco, 10:30 a.m.
College volleyball
Blue Mountain vs. Snow College at Starr Invite, 1 p.m.
Blue Mountain vs. College of Southern Idaho at Starr Invite, 3 p.m.
EOU vs. Lewis-Clark State College at EOU, 5 p.m.
College men's soccer
Blue Mountain at North Idaho, 2:15 p.m.
College women's soccer
Blue Mountain at North Idaho, noon.

Monday, Sept. 13

Prep volleyball
Pendleton at Herdmond, 6:30 p.m.
Prep girls soccer
La Grande at Pendleton, 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 14

Prep volleyball
Chiawana at Hermiston, 7 p.m.
Pilot Rock at Stanfield, 4 p.m.
Pilot Rock vs. Umatilla at Stanfield, 5 p.m.
Umatilla at Stanfield, 7 p.m.
McLoughlin at La Grande, 6:30 p.m.
Sherman at Ione/Arlington, 5 p.m.
Prep girls soccer
Southridge at Hermiston, 7 p.m.
Riverside at Portland Christian, 3 p.m.
Irrigon at McLoughlin, 4 p.m.
Prep boys soccer
Pendleton at La Grande, 5 p.m.
McLoughlin at Catlin Gabel, 4:30 p.m.
Irrigon at Prescott, 4 p.m.
Portland Christian at Riverside, 5 p.m.
Prep slowpitch softball
Wenatchee at Hermiston (2), 4 p.m.
College volleyball
EOU vs. College of Idaho at Caldwell, 6 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 15

Prep volleyball
McLoughlin at College Place, 6:30 p.m.
Prep girls soccer
McLoughlin at College Place, 6 p.m.
Prep boys soccer
Putnam at Pendleton, 4:30 p.m.
College volleyball
Columbia Basin at Blue Mountain, 6 p.m.
College men's soccer
WWCC at Blue Mountain, 4:15 p.m.
College women's soccer
WWCC at Blue Mountain, 2 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 16

Prep football
Putnam at Pendleton (at PHS), 5 p.m.
Umatilla at Weston-McEwen, 7 p.m.
Prep volleyball
Grant Union at Heppner, 5 p.m.
Pilot Rock at Weston-McEwen, 6 p.m.
Union at Stanfield, 5 p.m.
Riverside at Irrigon, 5 p.m.
Umatilla at La Grande, 5:30 p.m.
Echo at Ione/Arlington, 5 p.m.
Prep girls soccer
Hermiston at Kamiakin, 7 p.m.
Stanfield/Echo at Riverside, 4 p.m.
Umatilla at Irrigon, 4 p.m.
Prep boys soccer
Prescott at McLoughlin, 4 p.m.
Umatilla at Irrigon, 6 p.m.
Prep slowpitch softball
Hermiston at West Valley (2), 4 p.m.

Friday, Sept. 17

Prep football
Hermiston at Chiawana, 7 p.m.
Stanfield at Heppner, 7 p.m.
McLoughlin at Burns, 7 p.m.
Lyle/Wishram/Klickitat at Ione/Arlington, 7 p.m.
Riverside at Irrigon, 7 p.m.
Huntington at Echo, 7 p.m.
Prep cross-country
Pendleton, Heppner, McLoughlin, Nixy-aawii, Riverside, Umatilla, Stanfield/Echo at Wallowa County Invitational, 3 p.m.
College volleyball
Yakima Valley at Blue Mountain, 6 p.m.



Colton Akers of Irrigon, a racing fan and seventh grade football player, visits Ken Thompson in the pits on Sept. 5, 2021, at Hermiston Raceway.

Debbie Akers/Contributed Photo

Living the *fast* life

Thompson finds peace, and fun, on the race track

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

IRRIGON — Some people go fishing, others go camping, and some like a long weekend at the beach to relax.

Not Irrigon football coach Ken Thompson. He rolls along the lines of extreme sports with mountain biking and race car driving.

A week prior to his team's season opener, Thompson drove his blue 1984 Fox Body Mustang at Hermiston Raceway on Sept. 5 in the Mini-Stock Class during the Labor Day Spectacular.

"As far as family entertainment, there isn't any more bang for your buck," Thompson said of the action at Hermiston Raceway. "I had a lot of people who knew I was racing. They came out and watched, sat in the car and took pictures. I am a big believer in living life and trying new things. During COVID last year, I had a mountain bike thing going on and I was at Mt. Bachelor every weekend."

The Labor Day Spectacular also had Legends, Street Stock and Super Late-Mod-

els, but Thompson was comfortable in his race, which featured seven cars and 25 laps worth of adrenaline. Thompson's top speed was close to 70 mph, which was fine with him.

"I was seventh out of seven," said Thompson, whose car features a 4-cylinder motor. "One car wrecked, so I might have been sixth. Everyone knew I was slow, but I had a great time. That's what matters, having a release from our day-to-day lives. I just do it for fun."

The racing bug

Thompson always has enjoyed going to Hermiston Raceway to watch the action. It was his friend Jay Tracy who got him on the track.

"We were sitting at the race track one day and I said it would be fun to do," Thompson said. "The next week, he brought me out to Irrigon, before I lived there. We bought a hornet car for \$500. He is my pit mate. I have had my car parked at his place the past two months. I am not a mechanic. He supervises and gives me a hard time when I try to do things."

Thompson has been racing for about 10 years.

"I started out in the hornet class, which is the beginner class," he said. "Then I moved up to minis."

While the racing is fun, the camaraderie is priceless.

"We've made some friends," Thompson said. "Everyone is great. They know I'm slow. They give me some pointers, but only enough. I don't get in their way. I let the cars racing race. That's racing in a nutshell. Guys have a lot of money in their cars, and they have skilled drivers. Then there are guys like me who do it on a dollar budget. It's as close to the NASCAR experience I will get."

Thompson enjoys the small-track racing and the communities that come out to support the racers. He appreciates the atmosphere at Hermiston Raceway.

"When Greg Walden took over the track a few years ago, he made some big improvements," Thompson said. "Their track workers do a good job. It's a fun thing to be a part of. No matter what you do, do it 100 percent and try to have a good time."

T-Wolves going with the flow

After a COVID-19-filled season, the BMCC volleyball team is ready for anything

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Blue Mountain Community College volleyball coach Ceanna Larson is taking this season day by day.

The COVID-19 pandemic played havoc with the Timberwolves' schedule in 2020, and it continues to haunt the team after it's Northwest Athletic Conference East opener at Walla Walla Community College was canceled Sept. 8, because of COVID-19 issues within the Warriors team.

"We were talking about all the different things we had to go through," Larson said. "It seemed like more than a year. We have to get really creative in our drills when you aren't competing against anyone. I worried more about how they would adapt than they did."

The Timberwolves played in the Northwest Challenge in Bellevue, Washington, two weeks ago, and will play in the STARR Invitational this weekend at College of Idaho in Twin Falls.

"A couple of our first games of the day were against some really good fast-paced teams," Larson said of the Northwest Challenge. "We will be playing high-caliber teams this weekend, and it will be fast paced. We need to take what we learned and apply it."

Larson, who is entering her third year at BMCC, returns nine players from last year's team.

Among those on the list are hitters Savannah Koga, Jaycee Jerome and Audrey Synon, and setter Kenzie Williams from La Grande High School.

"Kenzie helps run our offense, and Audrey has become an offensive threat for us," Larson said. "It's really fun to see these girls grow."

Everyone on the roster is listed as a freshman because players were granted an extra year of eligibility because of COVID-19. Larson knows she will lose some of her players after this year.

"The hard part is that I am a big academic person," Larson said. "I push them to stay ahead. Some are ready to graduate this year. Some are ready to go on. They will be able to get three years at the university level. It's up to them whether they stay another year with us."

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Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian, File
Blue Mountain Community College's Taylor Suko (3) passes the ball against Walla Walla Community College on May 21, 2021. The Timberwolves are getting their season underway after the COVID-19 pandemic made the last season one to remember.

SPORTS SHORT



Eastern Oregon University Athletics/Contributed Photo

Eastern Oregon University quarterback Kai Quinn was named the Frontier Conference Offensive Player of the Week.

EOU's Quinn, Machuca earn FC honors

East Oregonian

LA GRANDE — Eastern Oregon University quarterback Kai Quinn and kicker/punter Jaiden Machuca earned Frontier Conference Player of the Week honors.

Quinn was the Offensive Player of the Week, while Machuca was the Special Teams Player of the Week. Both played key roles in EOU's 35-28 win against Montana Western on Sept. 4.

Quinn, a Pendleton High School graduate, led an EOU offense that

rolled up more than 350 yards of total offense. Through the air, Quinn was crisp, completing 23 of 34 passes for 283 yards and four touchdowns. He shared the wealth as each of his four touchdown passes were to different receivers.

Quinn also led the way in the ground attack for the Mountaineers with 44 yards rushing on 10 carries. He finished with 327 yards of total offense.

Machuca was key in the kicking game for the Mountaineers as he totaled 559 yards between punting and kickoff.

In the punt game, Machuca booted the ball four times for a total of 179 yards. He averaged 44.8 yards per punt and had two land inside the 20-yard line to pin the Bulldogs deep in their own end. His longest punt was 58 yards.

On kickoff, Machuca put up six kicks in the win for a total of 380 yards. He averaged 63.3 yards per kick and had only two of his six attempts for touchdowns.

The Mountaineers return to action Sept. 18 when they travel to Montana to take on Carroll College.