

Dawgs:

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Neidhold also is looking forward to watching the battle in the trenches.

“They have some big guys up front who like to play rough,” he said. “Our offensive line vs. their defensive line will be a matchup that will declare itself early in this game.”

This will be the third

matchup between the teams since Hermiston joined the MCC in 2018. The Bulldogs won in 2018, and the Bombers in 2019. They did not play each other last year.

“I know those guys down there are trying to build something and the coaches are putting in the time,” Neidhold said. “They want to make the MCC proud of them. We need them to be good. It just makes us better. I’m rooting for them.”



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

Hermiston quarterback Chase Elliot scrambles during a game with Kamiakin on Sept. 3, 2021. The Bulldogs are at home Friday, Sept. 24, and take on the Richland Bombers.

Bucks:

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This season, the Bucks have gotten a good performance from their offensive line, and the defense has done well with Kyle Liscom leading the way. Pendleton held Putnam to six points last week.

“We don’t let little things become hurdles,” Davis said. “The little things should not stop you from being a good football team. Each week you face a different offense. Our defensive

staff has done a good job of preparing them. All 11 have to do their job. Our defense has played very well.”

On offense, the Bucks have been working with Jack Lieualen at quarterback, with Collin Primus taking a few snaps, as well. The Bucks are averaging 31 points a game, with Primus a workhorse at wide receiver, and Liscom coming out of the backfield.

“We are trying to get the best 11 on the field and we are going that direction,” Davis said. “That’s a good thing that came out of the Putnam game.”

Eastern looks to win fourth straight game

College of Idaho holds big lead on matchups with the Mountaineers

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Since the College of Idaho reinstated football in 2014, the Yotes have been a tough test for Eastern Oregon.

The two teams have met each of the last 18 seasons the College of Idaho has fielded a football program, with the Caldwell, Idaho, school holding a 33-13-1 all-time series lead, including an 8-5 mark since football returned in 2014. Eastern Oregon won the first two games after the resumption of the series, but has since gone 3-8, including four straight losses.

“In the Frontier Conference, anybody can beat anybody and anybody can lose to anybody,” EOU head coach Tim Camp said. “We just have to be us. They have some very talented players, but at the same time so do we.”

The two teams meet again at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 25, at Community Stadium in La Grande.

Eastern is coming off a low-scoring 10-7 victory at Carroll College that improved the team’s record to 3-0 and helped the Mountaineers climb up to No. 11 in this week’s National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics coaches’ poll. The Yotes enter the matchup 2-1 on the year, receiving 16 votes in the latest poll.



Alex Wittwer/The Observer, File

Eastern Oregon quarterback Kai Quinn runs a zone read alongside running back Jordan Eggers in a win over Montana Western on Sept. 4, 2021. The No. 11-ranked Mountaineers face a difficult challenge Sept. 25 against the College of Idaho.

“We’re super excited about it, but have a lot to improve on,” Camp said.

The Mountaineers have won each of their games by one possession through the undefeated start to the season. After a scoreless first half, quarterback Kai Quinn scored the lone offensive touchdown of the game on a 13-yard strike to Isaiah Thomas in the third quarter.

Eastern’s defense was efficient, holding the Saints to just 216 yards and no offensive touchdowns. The defensive unit will look for similar production facing a College of Idaho team that is averaging 33.7 points and 257.7 rushing yards per game.

“I think they have one of the best backs in football,”

Camp said. “We have to line up and play solid assignment football.”

Eastern’s kicker Zachary Cahill has been a difference maker. He took home special teams player of the week honors in the Frontier Conference following his steady performance in the narrow win at Carroll College. Cahill scored a 30-yard field goal and converted his only extra-point attempt in the victory. This is the second time this season Cahill has earned the honors during a season where he has converted all five of his field goal attempts to date.

Yotes running back Nick Calzaretta has tallied 381 yards and five touchdowns across College of Idaho’s

three games this year. EOU linebacker Solo Taylor, the team’s leader in tackles, will have his hands full aiding the defensive line in stopping the run.

The Mountaineers stifled the pass against Carroll College, sacking quarterback Devan Bridgewater seven times. Senior defensive end Chase Van Wyck will look to carry the momentum of his two-sack performance into Saturday’s action against the Yotes.

The Mountaineers are 3-4 all time at home since 2014 against the Yotes and will aim to improve that number at Community Stadium. Eastern has not started the season 4-0 since the 2011 season, when the team finished the year 8-3.

Rockets:

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“I was pretty confident we could do well in the playoffs, now things are starting to look rough,” Rockets coach Mike Baleztena said. “They have that Rollins kid running the ball. That kid is so powerful, and he’s a hell of a linebacker. He hits hard and is smart. We are going from a game I was confident in winning, to

just a game. It can go either way, I think.”

The Rockets will count on quarterback Jace Otteson and running back Efren Castro to lead the offense, along with their offensive line, which has played a part in getting the Rockets off to a 2-0 season.

“I still have a good line,” Baleztena said. “I’m still confident my line can do really well, but having Wyatt made it that much easier. He was our leading tackler last year, and his blocking was unreal. He hits

so hard. His loss is so big.”

The Cardinals are coming off a 50-28 loss to Lyle, a game in which Ione/Arlington saw a close game slip away in the fourth quarter.

“We had six turnovers,” Ione/Arlington coach Dennis Stefani said. “That’s what we spent Monday doing, going back to the basics. We aren’t a bad football team, we just aren’t executing well and getting things done the way they should be. We’re OK, we just need to clean things up.”

HEPPNER AT KENNEDY —

Two of the top-ranked teams in the state are meeting for the first time since the Mustangs beat the Trojans in the 2019 2A state title game.

It’s a pretty even battle on paper. Heppner has only allowed 12 points in three game games, while top-ranked Kennedy has given up 14. The Trojans are averaging 21 points a game, while the Mustangs are at 16.

This is why they play the game. **WESTON-MCEWEN AT**

STANFIELD — Kenzie Hansell’s TigerScots (2-0) are flying high after opening Blue Mountain Conference play last week with a 36-0 win over Umatilla.

The Tigers (1-2) are licking their wounds after a 14-0 loss to Heppner — a game in which they managed just 87 yards of offense.

ALSO — Irrigon is at Grant Union on Thursday night, while on Friday, Baker is at McLoughlin, Umatilla is at Riverside, and Echo is at Dayville/Monument.

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