

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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— Echo volleyball coach Des Thew

Kathy Aney/East Oregonian  
**Echo High School’s Faith McCarty prepares to serve the ball Tuesday, Sept. 28, 2021, during a win over the Sherman Huskies in Echo.**

## A COMPETITIVE EDGE

Echo’s Faith McCarty knows how to work for what she wants

By ANNIE FOWLER  
East Oregonian

ECHO — The McCarty family is competitive, whether it be board games or basketball.

That has been very apparent at Echo High School, where the four McCarty sisters — Elizabeth, Hannah, Rachel and Faith — have put their stamp on everything from volleyball to basketball to softball and track.

That run is about to end as the youngest, Faith, will graduate in the spring of 2022.

“It’s the end of an era, for sure,” Echo volleyball coach Des Thew said. “Faith is the fourth of the four girls, and the last one. It has been a good run. In all my years coaching, I’m pretty sure I have had a McCarty the whole time. It will be a loss, for sure, but somebody will step up and fill her shoes, just like with the others.”

While basketball is McCarty’s favorite sport, you wouldn’t know it by the way she controls the play on the volleyball court.

The 5-foot-7 senior is a setter, but when she plays the front row, she plays outside. She will even hit middle for one rotation.

“She not tall, but she can jump,” Thew said. “She just knows where to put the ball, and she reads the court really well. She keeps them on their toes. She’ll hit line, they will adjust, and then she will hit cross court, or she will tip. I think if Faith had her way, she’d stay in high school and play forever.”

Thew, who is in her second year as head coach of the Cougars, has been coaching at Echo for 12 years. Her first year at the school, McCarty was in the first grade. Now she’s team captain.

“Time goes by really fast,” Thew said.



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

**Echo High School’s Faith McCarty (13) waves to spectators during introductions before the beginning of a Tuesday, Sept. 28, 2021, match with the Sherman Huskies in Echo. The Cougars went on to defeat the Huskies.**

“She is our leader because she just takes charge. She’s not necessarily loud, but she takes control. We have a lot of support behind her. Her presence on the court will very much be missed.”

This season, McCarty is averaging eight kills, six assists, 10 digs and two aces per match. The Cougars are 4-0 in Big Sky League play and 11-3 overall.

“She is usually our leading attacker, and she shares the setting responsibilities with Nevaeh (Thew),” Thew said. “We run a 6-2, and I love that if something isn’t going well at the net, I can switch things up and somebody produces.”

McCarty is more about the team than the numbers.

“I have been playing with most of those girls since sixth grade,” McCarty said of her teammates. “We all have our own piece that we bring to the team. We are a good team. Once we do some-

thing bad in a game, the coaches will pick something out and that’s what we work for that day.”

McCarty said she knew the Cougars had something special when they played North Clackamas Christian and South Wasco County in a preseason tournament.

“We lost to North Clackamas in three, but we kept up with them,” McCarty said. “They are No. 1 right now. We expect a lot from our team, knowing what we are capable of. Our coaches really work us. We hope to go far.”

The Cougars will get a taste of other top teams in the state on Saturday, Oct. 2, when they play in the Eagle Invitational at Damascus Christian.

“We are looking forward to the Damascus Christian Tournament to see what we are made of,” McCarty said.

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### ON THE SLATE

Saturday, Oct. 2

**College football**  
Eastern Oregon at Southern Oregon, 1 p.m.  
**College volleyball**  
Northwest at Eastern Oregon, 5 p.m.  
**Prep volleyball**  
Southridge at Hermiston, 1 p.m.  
Pilot Rock vs. Enterprise at Grant Union, 3:30 p.m.  
Pilot Rock at Grant Union, 5 p.m.  
McLoughlin at Dayton-Waitsburg, 12:30 p.m.  
Irrigon at Vale, 10 a.m.  
Irrigon at Nyssa, 3 p.m.  
Riverside at Nyssa, noon  
Riverside at Vale, 2 p.m.  
Umatilla at Burns, 1 p.m.  
Griswold at Imbler, 10 a.m.  
**Prep cross-country**  
Hermiston at Oxford Classic in Bend, 2 p.m.  
Pendleton, McLoughlin, Stanfield/Echo, Weston-McEwen at Pasco Big Cross Invite, 10:30 a.m.  
**Prep girls soccer**  
Nyssa at Stanfield/Echo, noon  
Four Rivers at Umatilla, 2 p.m.  
**Prep boys soccer**  
Four Rivers at Umatilla, noon  
**College men’s soccer**  
Blue Mountain at Wenatchee Valley, noon  
**College women’s soccer**  
Blue Mountain at Yakima Valley, noon

Sunday, Oct. 3

**College men’s soccer**  
Eastern Oregon at College of Idaho, 3 p.m.  
**College women’s soccer**  
Eastern Oregon at College of Idaho, 5:30 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 4

**Prep volleyball**  
Heppner vs. Enterprise (at Stanfield), 4 p.m.  
Enterprise at Stanfield, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 5

**Prep volleyball**  
Pendleton at La Grande, 6:30 p.m.  
Hanford at Hermiston, 7 p.m.  
Nixyaawii at Pilot Rock, 6 p.m.  
McLoughlin at Umatilla, 5:30 p.m.  
Irrigon at Riverside, 5 p.m.  
Ione/Arlington at Echo, 5 p.m.  
**Prep girls soccer**  
Hermiston at Hanford, 7 p.m.  
Pendleton at Hood River Valley, 4:30 p.m.  
Baker at McLoughlin, 5 p.m.  
Stanfield/Echo at Irrigon, 4 p.m.  
Umatilla at Riverside, 4 p.m.  
**Prep boys soccer**  
Hood River Valley at Pendleton, 4:30 p.m.  
Ukiah/Long Creek at Irrigon, 6 p.m.  
Umatilla at Riverside, 6 p.m.  
**Prep slowpitch softball**  
Moses Lake at Hermiston (2), 4 p.m.

## Area schools mixed on OSAA classification proposals

By ANNIE FOWLER  
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Travel time and expense, time lost in the classroom by student-athletes, and league size are some of the biggest concerns by local athletic directors when it comes to the Oregon School Activities Association’s classification and districting proposals.

At present, the OSAA has six classifications, ranging from 6A, which incorporates the largest schools in the state, to 1A, which has the smaller schools. The OSAA has started using enrollment numbers for grades 9-11, instead of 9-12.

Everyone else falls in between, and that’s where some of the issues lie.

The six-classification proposal would keep schools from Bend and the Salem area together in the 6A Mountain Valley Conference.

**Pendleton would like to see a change, whereas La Grande would not**

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### SPORTS SHORT



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

**Eastern Oregon University quarterback Kai Quinn hands off to Jordan Eggers during a game Sept. 25, 2021, against the College of Idaho. The Mountaineers lost the game 24-7, dropping the team seven spots in the NAIA Coaches’ Poll ahead of a matchup with Southern Oregon on Saturday, Oct. 2.**

## Mountaineers look to bounce back against Southern Oregon

By DAVIS CARBAUGH  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — A week after suffering its first loss of the season, the Eastern Oregon University football team faces another big test — this time, on the road.

Eastern dropped a 24-7 decision on Sept. 25 at home against the College of Idaho, ending an undefeated start to the season. The loss dropped Eastern from No. 11 to No. 18 in this week’s National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Coaches’ Poll. Now at 3-1 on the year, the Mountaineers will be looking to turn things around against the Southern Oregon Raiders.

“I think that the ability to go back out and go to work is the answer,” head coach Tim Camp said. “It was a tough one to swallow, but at the same time there’s still a lot of football to be played.”

Each team enters this week’s matchup coming off a very different outcome in Week 4. Southern Oregon trailed Carroll College 33-14 with just more than 11 minutes left in regulation, but scored 20 unanswered points to stun the Saints and earn the team’s second win of the season. The Raiders are currently just one game behind the Mountaineers in the Frontier Conference standings.

Against the College of Idaho, East-

ern struggled to move the ball offensively throughout the losing effort. The Mountaineers totaled 259 yards, compared to 419 from the Yotes, and rushed for just 70 yards as a team. The loss comes on the heels of a narrow 10-7 victory at Carroll College in which Eastern tallied just 179 yards of total offense. Moving into this week’s matchup, Camp emphasized the importance of getting the offense rolling.

“We have to make plays offensively,” he said. “They’re out there to be made and we’re not making the ones that we’re used to making in the past. It’s not going to change until we change it, so that’s one of the main focus points.”