

Joseph withstands self-inflicted issues to win

Eagles defense forces 7 turnovers to defeat Echo

By RONALD BOND
For the Wallowa County Chieftain

ECHO — Joseph did just about everything right in the first half, then seemingly little right in the second half.

But when they needed to in crunch time, the Eagles' defense stepped up to the task at hand, stopping Echo near the goal line late in the fourth quarter to preserve a 24-21 road win Friday, Sept. 2, in a game where Joseph forced seven turnovers.

"I think the score was a lot closer than the game was. We jumped out 24-0, then in the second half, especially in the fourth quarter, we shot ourselves in the foot," new head coach Damian Huff said.

The win was the first for Huff, one he said was stressful, though it hardly seemed it would be a high-stress show-down early.

Jaxon Grover, who had 150 yards receiving, had two touchdowns and a big catch that set up a short touchdown run by Gavin Russell all in the opening half. The Eagles



Yasser Marte/East Oregonian

Joseph's Jaxon Grover (4) outruns Echo's Sam Wyse (4) to score the Eagles' second touchdown Friday, Sept. 2, 2022, in Joseph's 24-21 season-opening win.

WALLOWA STRUGGLES IN LOSS TO IONE/ARLINGTON

DUFUR — A young Wallowa football team struggled Saturday, Sept. 3, in the final game of the Dufur Classic, dropping its opener to Ione/Arlington, a playoff squad a year ago, 48-0.

The Cougars return to the road Sept. 9 to face Sherman/Condon.

— Ronald Bond, For the Wallowa County Chieftain

were primed to run away, opening up a 24-point lead in the second. The defense was stout, and senior defensive back James Burney was a key contributor to that success, grabbing three interceptions in the first half.

Echo clawed to within 24-6 by the half, and inched

closer in the second half, especially during a fourth quarter that saw Joseph commit three of its own four turnovers.

Echo pulled within 24-19, and was driving for the lead, but the Eagles stood tall when it mattered. Joseph stopped the Cougars near the goal line in the closing minutes, and

GUTSY CALL SETS TONE FOR ENTERPRISE VICTORY

DUFUR — One might consider going for it on fourth down, deep in your own territory, on the first series of the game, a gutsy call.

But Enterprise head coach Josh Harman said he trusts his team — both his offense to score points, and his defense to get stops.

That trust was rewarded, as the Outlaws went for it early in their season opener Saturday, Sept. 3, at the Dufur Classic, and the play set the tone.

Chase Duncan caught a pass from Tyler Knapp and went 65 yards to the 2-yard line. Caden Fent followed with a touchdown run for the first score, and Enterprise rolled to a 48-14 win over Mohawk.

"Having Chase catch that energized our team and set the tone for the entire game," Harman, who won his debut as EHS head coach, said. "And then for our defense to come back on the next series and give us that ball back (by forcing a turnover), that is the way to start a game."

The offense didn't let up, generating 442 yards on the day behind 275 yards passing and four touchdowns from Knapp. The defense, meanwhile, was solid, especially

after halftime when it blanked the Mustangs.

"I saw so many great things on Saturday that I was pleased with," Harman said.

Knapp, Duncan and Fent may have been key on the opening drive, but Harman also noted the contributions of several other athletes — including Trey Stewart, Pearce Schnetzky and Tanner Kesecker. He noted both Schnetzky and Kesecker were starting on the offensive line for the first time, and excelled in their roles.

"We did a great job controlling the line of scrimmage," he said.

Stewart, meanwhile, rushed for 131 yards and two touchdowns. Duncan had 104 yards receiving and a TD.

Enterprise, which has a road-heavy slate to start the season, visits Imbler Sept. 9. The Panthers, like the Outlaws, are coming off a dominant opener, as they defeated Pilot Rock 44-8.

"They always have a great program. They're consistent," Harman said. "I expect Imbler to give us a tough game this week."

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although a safety followed, the Eagles prevented the Cougars from scoring again.

"I would just say the six starters I have on defense, there is no quit in them. They were gassed. They were on

the field most of the fourth quarter," Huff said, though he noted the confidence they exuded under fire. "They were not going to let us lose that game."

Joseph aims for a second

win to open 2022 when it hosts Harper on Sept. 9.

"If our defense can take away the ball seven times, I'm pretty comfortable with how the season is going to go," Huff said.

Enterprise, Wallowa volleyball make strides at Dufur Classic

By RONALD BOND
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DUFUR — Enterprise recovered from a challenging first weekend and saw ample improvement in taking second at the Dufur Classic on Sept. 2-3.

And the Outlaws did so with a senior missing a chunk of the action.

"Maci Marr, our captain and senior starter, sprained her ankle in about set three of the day," head coach Lisa Farwell said. "That was not an easy feat. The

rest of the girls stepped up. We played some pretty darn good volleyball, all things considered."

The Outlaws won their pool to reach a matchup of pool winners, where they dropped two sets in the de facto championship to South Wasco County.

"We played some pretty good volleyball in those two (sets)," Farwell said.

And on the weekend, Enterprise improved in the two areas Farwell wanted it to.

"Our top goal was (improving) serve-receive,

which we did that, and our second goal was maximizing our advantage on free balls," she said. "We did that."

Farwell highlighted Joana Tavares — a foreign exchange student from Portugal — Josi Coggins and Bri Rouse among the players who elevated their play over the weekend.

"I was pleased with their mental toughness," she said of her team. "They kind of pushed through. That is a big thing in volleyball, so it was good to see early in the season they have some of that."

Wallowa also saw a marked level of improvement at the Dufur Classic, tying for first in its pool after losses to Joseph and Myrtle Point in the previous two days.

"We had a really strong pool on our side. All the games were very very close," head coach Janea Hulse said.

The Cougars went 4-2 in six sets — over three pool matches — to tie for first. South Wasco County won the tiebreaker to reach the final.

Hulse said the key for her

team was coming together and deepening trust.

"You could see they were relying on each other, trusting each other, working as a unit rather than individually," she said. "We just hadn't put it all together yet (in the first week). We saw a lot of that this week, what works for them and what doesn't work for them."

Hulse noted the play of Zoe Hermens, Sophie Moeller and Libby Fisher, and of a fourth, equally important player who she said doesn't get some of the notice.

"Someone that I've seen

that is a total workhorse, and you can guarantee is going to give 110%, is Cecilia April," Hulse said. "She gets lost in the wayside because she doesn't get the kills, but she is so scrappy and defensive. She works really hard."

Joseph won its lone match of the week, easing past Wallowa on Sept. 1 in straight sets. The Eagles have a matchup against South Wasco County Sept. 9. Wallowa visits Imbler and Sherman Sept. 8 and 9, and Enterprise visits Imbler and Elgin Sept. 6 and 8.

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