

Sports

BAKER VOLLEYBALL

La Grande rallies to top Baker

By Ronald Bond

The (La Grande) Observer

LA GRANDE — Tuesday's Baker-La Grande volleyball match didn't have the typical feel of a contest between the Greater Oregon League rivals. Whether it was because the teams had just played one another Saturday in the Sisters Tournament or because of illness among the Tigers, energy was lacking at La Grande High School.

"We came out pretty flat. We knew Baker was going to give us a good game tonight," La Grande head coach Melinda Becker-Bisenius said. "They gave us a game (last) weekend (in Sisters). You don't want to make excuses. We gotta come out stronger in the first game regardless of anything."

The Tigers, though, found a reserve of energy in the latter portion of the match and finished strong after a rough first set for a 17-25, 25-18, 25-19, 25-15 win over Baker to take sole possession of first place in the GOL.

"It was really flat, but after that first set we got in the huddle and decided we needed to play strong. Even though we were all sick, we couldn't let that get to us," La Grande senior Kenzie Williams said.

What energy was in the building in the first set came from Baker, as the Bulldogs' offense peppered La Grande early and often to take the lead. Lacy Churchfield, who led Baker with 12 kills, had six in the opening set, but it was the combination of Averil Elms and Hailey Zikmund



Ronald Bond / The (La Grande) Observer

Baker's Kaylee Dalke reaches out to try to return a serve during the Bulldogs' match against La Grande Tuesday night. Baker dropped the Greater Oregon League contest in four sets.

that was strong late in the set for Baker. Zikmund had a kill and teamed with Elms on a block, and Elms added a solo block and a kill during a set-ending 9-2 run.

That early burst didn't carry over, though, continuing a theme Baker head coach Chelsea Hurliman said has plagued the Bulldogs this fall. "That's the hardest thing we struggle with as a team," Hurliman said. "We come out really strong and excited and ready to go, and we make a few errors and we just can't seem to get our feet back under us again."

Hurliman also said Baker struggled offensively when the Tigers prevented Churchfield from being as big a piece of the offense later in the match.

"That tends to be what happens," Hurliman said. "She's very strong in one area, and as soon as (the other team) figures out how to stop that, or double block it or triple block it, they shut it down and then we gotta go to Plan B."

The Tigers started to find some energy in the second set and picked up a big boost from Josie Reagan. She had four kills during the set, two during what proved to be an important 5-0 run to give La Grande the lead for good at 14-9. Jayce Seavert added a late block and Reagan had another kill late to help stop a Baker rally.

"I thought Josie gave us a huge offensive boost tonight," Becker-Bisenius said.

A 10-3 run in the third

set put La Grande in the driver's seat as it gathered momentum. Seavert, who led La Grande with 11 kills, had five in the set, including three down the stretch to help give the Tigers a 2-1 lead.

Another 10-3 run by La Grande, which started after an ace by Elms, put the match away. Presley Justice had a kill and an ace to start it, and Reagan and Anna Green teamed on a block later to push the Tigers' margin to 20-13. Justice added two more kills to help finish the match.

"They just decided they were going to do it," Becker-Bisenius said. "We obviously didn't want to lose tonight, and we at times had good runs."

Lauren Benson contributed seven kills for Baker and, along with Anna Carter, had a team-best 19 digs. Kaylee Dalke added 15 digs, and Elms had a strong all-around match with 21 assists, 13 digs, five kills and four aces.

Baker plays Weiser on Monday at 6:30 p.m. in the Baker gym.

Man jailed after Friday crime spree

■ Michael Tatro of Washington accused of threatening a Haines man with a gun and a knife

By Chris Collins

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A Washington man remains in custody today accused of an early Friday crime spree in the Haines area in which he reportedly threatened one of his victims with a gun and a knife.

Michael David Tatro, 36, of West Richland, Washington, is being held on 20 charges. Bail has been set at \$283,500.

District Attorney Matt Shirtcliff said Tuesday that the case will be considered by the grand jury this week.

"They will review these charges and potentially add more charges," he said. Tatro is being held on these charges:

- Three counts of first-degree burglary, Class A felonies.
- One count of second-degree burglary, a Class C felony.
- One count of unauthorized use of a vehicle, a Class C felony.
- Two counts of unlawful use of a weapon, Class C felonies.
- Two counts of coercion, Class C felonies.
- Two counts of criminal trespass in possession of a firearm, Class A misdemeanors.
- Two other counts of second-degree criminal trespassing, Class C misdemeanors.
- Two counts of menacing, Class A misdemeanors.
- One count of pointing a firearm at another, an unclassified misdemeanor.
- Two counts of second-degree criminal mischief, Class A misdemeanors.
- Two counts of third-degree theft, Class C misdemeanors.

The investigation began when the Baker County Sheriff's Office responded to a call to the dispatch center at 4:45 a.m. Friday, a Sheriff's Office press release stated.

Steve Widner, of 46523 Highway 30, reported that a man was trespassing on his property near Haines and had left driving a Jeep Cherokee toward Haines. Tatro also is accused of breaking windows on Widner's property and theft of a blanket belonging to Widner.

The Jeep was found at 612 Front St. in Haines, but the alleged trespasser was not around, according to court records.

The dispatch center next received a second call from Chris Olmstead of 645 Fifth St. at Haines. According to court records, Tatro damaged the door jamb to Olmstead's house, which Tatro entered without permission, and then threatened Olmstead with a revolver and a knife while demanding the keys to Olmstead's vehicle.

At one point, Olmstead told investigators that Tatro held the revolver to Olmstead's head and pulled the trigger, according to court documents. (The gun did not discharge.)

Deputies later found Tatro at the Haines rodeo grounds, the press release stated. He was driving a 1994 Ford Tempo belonging to Clyde Bigley, according to court records.



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BILLS

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Rates for actual power usage will not increase.

"By staying away from a rate increase that impacts actual usage, residential members are not negatively affected for using more energy when they need it, particularly for heating their homes during the colder months of the year," the press

release states.

Wholesale power costs account for more than half of OTEC's business costs, which is why the BPA increases are passed through to members, according to the press release.

According to OTEC's annual report for 2018, the cooperative paid \$27.7 million for power that year.

A 3.97% increase from BPA equates to about \$1.1

million more in OTEC's annual power costs.

The \$4 increase in the monthly delivery charge for the 22,000 residential customers will boost revenue by about \$1,056,000.

"Because we know a rate increase could be more difficult for some of our residential members than others, OTEC distributes more than \$1 million each year to help manage or reduce monthly electric bills," the press release states.

Although OTEC hasn't increased its rates for power usage since 2011, the cooperative has more than doubled the monthly delivery charge since 2009.

The sequence of increases in the delivery charge:

- Oct. 1, 2011 — from \$15 to \$18
- Oct. 1, 2013 — from \$18 to \$21.56
- Oct. 1, 2015 — from \$21.56 to \$25.50
- Oct. 1, 2017 — from \$25.50 to \$29.50
- Nov. 1, 2019 — from \$29.50 to \$33.50

In an email to the Herald, Sandra Ghormley, OTEC's director of member services, wrote that over the past decade the consumer price index "increased 17.1% while OTEC's overall residential rate increases were 18.8%. (for the residential consumer using an average of 950 kWh per month). Of that 18.8%, BPA's increases (cost of power) were 10.1% and OTEC related increases were 8.7% overall. Hence, OTEC's average annual increase was 1.8% per year which, I believe, was less than inflation."

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