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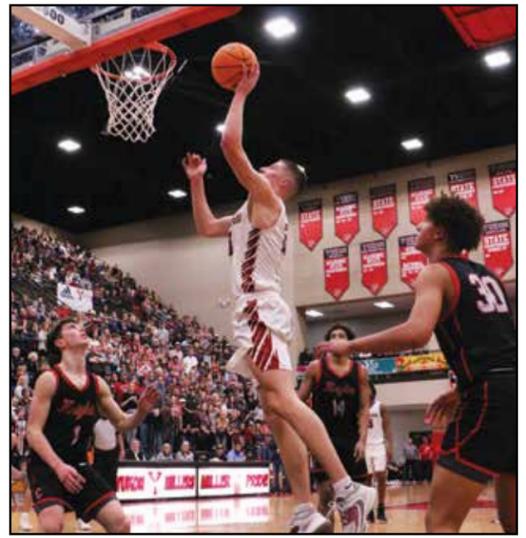
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Weatherford Eagles Fall to Trojans in Championship Game



Jacob Staggs / WW

Sophomore Ethan Sage and Junior Nate Reheman fight off Newcastle Racers following a free throw shot by Sophomore C.J. Nickson



Jacob Staggs / WW

Junior Nate Reheman goes up for a layup against the Crossings Christian Knights.



Jacob Staggs / WW

The Weatherford Eagle student section was out in full force during the state playoff run.



Jacob Staggs / WW

The Boys' Basketball Team poses with the Cheerleaders and student section following their semifinals victory against Crossings Christian.

Chad Gray
Staff Contributor

The Weatherford Eagles boys' basketball team traveled to Oklahoma City on Saturday to face off against the Douglass Trojans in the Class 4A State Championship game.

The Eagles began their State Tournament run this week, defeating the sixth ranked Newcastle Racers 47-35 on Wednesday afternoon under the scoring efforts of sophomore, C.J. Nickson and junior, Nate Reheman which advanced the Eagles to the semifinals game on Friday night.

The Eagles then headed to Yukon Friday night to play against the second ranked Crossings Christian Knights. Tate Sage was dominant against the Knights scoring 27 points with 18 of those points being from beyond the arc. The Douglass Trojans then defeated the top-ranked Yellowjackets from Kingfisher, setting the stage for what might be the last 4A State Basketball Championship in the Big House.

The atmosphere was electric on Saturday night as the Eagle faithful traveled in droves to see one of the most anticipated basketball games of the year.

The Douglass Trojans struck hard and fast and led 36-17 out of the first half. But the Eagles clawed their way back into the game in the last 5 minutes of the 4th quarter. Sparked by 3-pointers from Nate Reheman, Ethan Sage, and C.J. Nickson, the Eagles got within one point, but a controversial technical foul in the waning moments of the final quarter kiboshed the Eagles championship hopes for the 2022-23 season. C.J. Nickson led in scoring for the Eagles in the championship game as the basketball season came to a close in Western Oklahoma.

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Holly Ransom

Holly Ann Ransom was born December 2, 1954, and returned to her Maker on March 7, 2023. She was born to George Andrew Schenk and Zelma Lois (Hollingsworth) Schenk, both of Watonga, OK.



She graduated from Watonga High School and attended Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford, OK where she received her Bachelors of Arts in Education with an emphasis in science. Holly spent many years, teaching middle school students Science and English in both Texas and Oklahoma.

Holly loved to roll up her sleeves and work, whether in the office, on the farm, or caring for her childhood horse Marge. She takes with her a lifetime of beautiful memories. Music was also an important part of her life.

Holly enjoyed good food and a good laugh. She was a smart businesswoman and applied her intellect to help build and sustain the family air-conditioning business in Dallas, Texas, for nearly 20 years.

Holly loved the Lord and enjoyed playing the piano and singing in the choir at Watonga Christian Church for many years.

Caring for her family and the love she felt for them gave her tremendous joy and meaning as well. She will be dearly missed and remembered fondly by her family.

Her parents, George Andrew Schenk and Zelma Lois Hollingsworth Schenk, both of Watonga, OK preceded her in death along with her husband Frank Nimmons Ransom, having reached the age of 68 years, 3 months and 5 days.

Holly is survived by her two daughter: Dru Ann Svitak and husband Frank of Weatherford, and Dara Ann Stork and husband Tommy of Ventura, California.

She is also survived by her five beautiful grandchildren: Dalton and Wyatt of Weatherford, and Beau, Jedidiah, and Wesley of Ventura.

Gary Dowty

Gary Duane Dowty was born January 10, 1950, in Carnegie to Duane and Elsie Jo (Taylor) Dowty and passed away on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at Corn Heritage Village of Corn having reached the age of 73 years, 1 month and 27 days.



Gary was raised in the Alfalfa, Colony and Eakly areas. He went to Alfalfa Grade School. At twelve years of age, his father was involved in a plane wreck and passed away when Gary was fourteen. His mother moved him and his little brother to Colony where he graduated in 1968.

Gary met and married Mary Blakey in 1969. He got a job in Weatherford at the new 3M Company at the age of 19, working as their supervisor for 51 years. Gary and Mary had three kids: Garrett, Gerad and Leah. He was involved in Eakly basketball, baseball, track, and softball. He was very proud of all kid's athletic accomplishments. He was also on the Eakly School Board for 10 years. He also farmed peanuts for seven years. Next to his family, hunting and fishing was his greatest loves, which he did his entire life.

Gary was preceded in death by his father Duane; stepfather Cleburn LaFever; one son Gary Duane Dowty, Jr.; nephew Dustin John Dowty; one grandson Gage Calhoun; and best friend Michael Cecil.

Gary is survived by his wife; his mother of Weatherford; two sons: Garrett Dowty and wife Keri of Wichita Falls; and Gerad Dowty and wife Christine of Erick; daughter Leah Smalley and husband Matt of Weatherford; brother Larry Dowty and wife Rita of Clinton; seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Loretta Rodriquez

Loretta Rodriquez was born July 23, 1961, in Tahlequah to Jerry Lee and Lucy Marie (Locust) Cheater and passed away Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at Weatherford Regional Hospital, at the age of 61 years, 7 months and 15 days.



Loretta was raised in Marble City and attended school in Cave Springs. She married Mike Rodriquez in Anadarko and made their home in Eakly.

Loretta worked at the Binger Nursing Home and later Weatherford Living Center for 10 years. Loretta enjoyed riding motorcycles, going to the lake camping, boating and spending time with family and friends.

Loretta was preceded in death by her parents; one brother Pete; and one daughter Cookie.

Loretta is survived by her husband Mike Rodriquez of their home in Weatherford; three sons: Mike Rodriquez, Jr. and wife Jaime of Weatherford, Chewy Rodriquez and wife Rebecca of Hydro, and Jeremy Rodriquez and wife Lindsey of Blair; one daughter Amanda Rodriquez-Rubio and husband Roland Rubio of Weatherford; two brothers: Chuck Cheater and wife Teresa of Hydro and Terry Cheater and wife Brenda of Sallisaw; three sisters: Virginia Hamby of Rocky Mountain, Mary Lou Noel of Tahlequah and Jennifer Renee Noel of Fayetteville, Arkansas

She is also survived by 22 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Brian Whiteshirt

Brian Keith Whiteshirt was born April 12, 1981, to Alfred James Whiteshirt, Sr., and Rosina Marie Lime in Lawton, OK and passed away Sunday, March 5, 2023, in the Weatherford Regional Hospital in Weatherford, OK at the age of 41 years, 10 months, and 21 days.



Brian was raised in Clinton, OK and attended Clinton Schools.

He entered the workforce at an early age and has spent most of his working days in the oilfields.

He loved being with his friends, he was an accomplished artist as well as a tattoo artist, he also loved good music.

Brian was preceded in death by his dad and sister Amy Daun Whiteshirt.

He is survived by his mother Rosina of the home, daughter Sade' Ramos Whiteshirt and son Isaac Ramos Whiteshirt, both of Weatherford, OK and two brothers: Alfred "Alf" Whiteshirt, Jr., and Christopher Michael Whiteshirt, Jr., both of Clinton.

He is also survived by five grandchildren: Hayven Grace, Ryann Sioux, Vanidey, Luna and Reign, and numerous nieces and nephews.

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Local Oklahoman Stands Among the Strongest

Western Oklahoma native Elijah Yoder from Thomas recently returned from "The Arnold Schwarzenegger Sports Festival" at the Columbus Convention Center in Ohio.

Elijah competed against athletes from all over the globe, placing 2nd in the Heavyweight Class. Events in this competition include the Fatback Farmers Carry, Viking Press, Sled Pull, Odd Object Load, Monster Dumbbell, Ukrainian Deadlift, and Power Stairs.

He was invited to The Arnold Classic by winning first place at October's Strongman Corporation

Nationals in Erie, PA.

He also has 4 Strongman State Records, including the 330 lb. Axel Clean and Press, 705 lb. Deadlift, Launching 80 lb. Sandbag over a 12 ft. bar, and the 700 lb. Yoke--carrying that weight 40 ft. in 6.29 seconds.

Elijah Yoder is also the Oklahoma representative for United States Strongman. He started in 2018 at a sanctioned meet, like the one he is holding on April 1st, in Weatherford, where athletes can qualify for nationals in Dallas in June.

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Carlie Oakenshield, a sophomore in Computer Science at SWOSU in Weatherford, presented her research on "Fostering a Sustainable Workforce in the Information Age" at the annual Oklahoma Research Day held on March 3, 2023, hosted by the University of Central Oklahoma.

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Thanks Rick Walker and Brian Morton for being faithful listeners of The Wright Time!

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Linda Bennett is our Volunteer of the Month for February. Linda is a long time resident of Weatherford and a retired elementary school teacher. Linda has been volunteering with us for nearly 5 years. She has served in a variety of volunteer positions and is always available to step up where needed. We are extremely fortunate to have her dedication and desire to serve others. Linda stated, "It makes my heart happy to serve others."

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HIGHER GROUND

A New Affection



"The Expulsive Power of a New Affection." This is the title of a classic sermon by Thomas Chalmers. I confess that I have not read the sermon. But the truth embodied in the title has intrigued me since I first read it. We have all experienced this. As a teenager a new romantic attraction may have so mesmerized you that you can't think of anything else. You read and reread a letter trying to make every line mean more than it was intended.

Or perhaps a new project or hobby has captured your attention and expelled other plans or needed chores you promised your wife you would get to "today." A greater problem might be (for me) a particular sports team is on a winning streak and your mind is preoccupied with any word about

their success. The Holy Spirit is grieved because He can't get your attention.

Our thoughts are so important. Satan will cause us to be consumed by things that are trivial or just worldly. Our life and character is shaped by what we think about. In 2 Corinthians 5:16, the Apostle Paul records, "So from now on we regard no man from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer." He now saw men from God's perspective.

The word "repent" actually means to change your mind or way of thinking. This is why it is so important to hide the word of God in your heart. When inappropriate thoughts come flashing through, whether they be lustful, envious, resentful, critical or just ungodly, you can bring to mind a verse of Scripture they will displace those hurtful thoughts rather than letting them linger. A simple portion of a verse found in 1 Peter 3:15 might be helpful. "In your heart set apart Christ as Lord." That is a quick reminder that you belong to Him; you have accepted his rule and reign in your heart and life. Or if you let someone's appearance or behavior bring a quick conclusion about that person, you might remember the little chorus, "O how He

loves you and me." When we come to faith and trust in Christ as our Lord and Savior, we forfeit the right to choose whom we will love. Everyone bears the image of God and if God loves him/her then I must also.

Paul challenged the Colossians to "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God." Col.3:2. We are to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength. This is not a call to being so heavenly minded that we neglect our responsibilities to our family and others. But we should strive to activate that part of our makeup that shows that our mission as a Christ-follower is always on our mind; not just on Sunday.

We can instruct or train our minds in this way by daily keeping in touch with the Spiritual through Bible study, prayer, reading Christian books, and finding meaningful ways of serving our fellow man. Ask the Father to give you a deeper love for Him; to grasp the height and depth, length and width of his love for you. As you absorb these thoughts you will find the "Expulsive Power of a New Affection."

To comment: 580-302-1142, jhm82@outlook.com

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LOCAL AND AREA NEWS



Mike Smith
News Director

"The Coin Guy"

Coin Hoard Found



Trent Boesen

A metal detectorist in Poland found a lost hoard of coins which was buried in a ceramic jar from the 17th century. According to Polish law the finder notified the proper state authorities.

The hoard contains over 1,000 coins and weighed 3kg (6.614 pounds). Approximately 115 coins had been scattered from plowing. About 62 coins were oxidized due to soil conditions over the centuries.

The hoard was probably buried during a period of conflict. Some hoards are buried to safeguard personal financial security.

The Archaeology Department Museum received the coin hoard for study and to attribute dates, minting, and value.

Anytime is a good time to start a coin collection. Call The Coin Guy 580-890-8076 with your questions. Thanks for your support.



Jacob Staggs / WW

Weatherford's 4H along with Bluth Medical Associates built an Etch-A-Sketch, a Rubik's Cube, and Water Game, for last years' Grand Can Sculpture Competition.

Connection Food and Resource Center's Grand Can Sculpture Competition Awaits Your Vote

The Connections Food and Resource Center in Weatherford is set to host their annual Grand Can Sculpture competition to help fight hunger in Western Oklahoma later this month. Thirteen teams will face-off on March 31st to showcase their imaginative can-based architectural skills while collecting food and money donations that will go towards helping those in need around Western Oklahoma.

The Grand Can Sculpture Competition is one part food drive and one part fundraiser with contestants competing for various awards including the People's Choice award which is determined by a combination of social media "likes" as well as monetary donations.

"We're inviting everyone to come down to vote by donation from 11am to 5:30pm," said Lori Flansburg, Director of the Connections Food and Resource Center. "We've got Venmo, Cashapp, Paypal. and we can accept credit cards, checks and cash." Flansburg suggests that any digital donation should include the team names in the donation, so that points are accurately awarded. Each dollar donated will count as one vote and the team with the most points at the end of the night will go home with the Grand Can Grand Champion.

Other awards given out at the competition include "Best Use of Labels," "Structural Ingenuity," "Best Original Design," and "Most pounds of Food."

Swatty Crew BBQ, Monkey's Food Truck, and Sweet Memories will also be in attendance at the event to sell food from 11am to 6pm or until they sell out. KWEY 95.5 the Coyote will also be on location for a radio remote covering the event.

Voting will conclude at 5:30pm and awards will be given out at 6pm.

Deconstruction of the can sculptures will be handled by Weatherford Public Schools Native American Club On Saturday.

Come out and check out the wonderful can sculptures while supporting a good cause March 31st from 11am to 6:30pm at the Connections Food and Resource Center located at 122 S. 8th Street in Weatherford.

For more information, you can visit their Eventbrite page by searching "Grand Can Sculpture Competition" on www.eventbrite.com or you can follow Connections Food & Resource Center on Facebook.



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CUSTER COUNTY SCAMS - A media spokesperson with the Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority confirms that The Blazed, a Weatherford marijuana grow facility, has had its licenses suspended. The licenses are suspended for, among other things, the OMMA-identified medical marijuana which was neither properly tagged nor accounted for in the state inventory system.

WEST OK / SALES TAX - Sales tax numbers for the city of Weatherford were down 2.5% for January sales. The city collected just over \$998,000. Meanwhile, the city of Clinton was up 27% at more than \$527,000. Elk City had a 15% jump at just under \$1.1 million, and Cordell fell by 1.4% at a shade under \$90,000.

WEATHERFORD/ANNEXATION - Weatherford Mayor Mike Brown says the city is looking at expanding the city limits in the future. Brown says Liberty Church, at the former 3-M site, has recently requested to be taken into the city limits.

CUSTER CO DIST COURT / CED 7 - Three defendants have pleaded to no-contest in Custer County district court after having felony charges reduced to misdemeanors. Jerry Lynn Dean, Joe Don Dickey, and Tim Bingham were initially charged with embezzlement and conspiracy, surrounding Circuit Engineering District 7. The three pleaded no contest to misdemeanor charges of a public official this week, neglecting duty and open meetings act violations. Each received a four-year deferred sentence. Meanwhile, felony charges remain against a fourth defendant Monte Goucher. Formal arraignment for Goucher is planned for April 24th.

BECKHAM CO DIST COURT / SPITZER - A Sayre businessman has been charged with child sexual abuse in Beckham County District Court. Sixty-two-year-old Brad Spitzer, the owner of Spitzer Publishing, is accused of molesting a 12-year-old female, beginning when she was 10 years old. Court records indicate that Spitzer told authorities the incidents occurred more than 24 times over two-and-a-half years, dating back to January 2020.

ELK CITY / STRUCTURE FIRE - A structure fire in the 700 block of 3rd Street in Elk City is being investigated as possible arson. Fire Chief Kyle Chervenka says anyone with information should contact Elk City Police.

ELECTIONS - Oklahoma voters shot down State Question 820 at the polls that would have legalized recreational marijuana. Voters defeated the initiative petition, getting only 38% support. Meanwhile in Clinton, voters overwhelmingly supported a proposition to use money from a trust fund to reopen the Clinton Regional Hospital. The proposition passed with 94% support.

CUSTER CO DIST COURT / CASAS - A Clinton man has pleaded guilty in Custer County District Court to a misdemeanor count of negligent homicide. Twenty-five-year-old Mark Anthony Casas received a one-year sentence in the Custer County Jail. Casas allegedly turned in front of an oncoming motorcycle on U.S. 183, just north of Clinton, which resulted in the death of Devin James Flores-Greene of Clinton. Greene collided with the truck that Casas was driving and died at

WEEKLY SHOUTOUTS!



OH HAPPY Day TO YOU!

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Alcohol causing problems? Alcoholics Anonymous meets daily at 928 W. Main, Weatherford. Call (580) 819-0727 for more information. **Christian Free Store** - Donations of school supplies, clothes, shoes, etc. are needed or if you are in need. Please call (580) 637-2345 or (580) 291-3875. **Alfalfa, OK Community Center "Bible Study,"** Every Monday Night from 7:00-8:00 Hwy 58. Five miles South of Hwy 152. For more Information contact (405) 643-9211. **Free and Open to the Public. Oklahoma Parkinson's Alliance,** monthly support group meeting the second Thursday of each month, excluding December, at 5:30 p.m. at Weatherford's Pioneer Center, 1000 Gartrell Place. Patients, caregivers, family or friends are welcome. **Questions? Contact OK Parkinson's Alliance (405) 810-0695 or info@oklahomapa.org.** **Iron sharpens Iron** is a Christ centered adult support group every Tuesday night at 7pm. 233 E Main in Hydro, First Christian Church.

Happy Birthday Wishes for March 15 - Brenna Butler, Mike Goossen, Casey Murray, Jennifer Scruggs; **March 16** - Calvin Browning, Tucker Goodall, Jara Griffin, Morgan Hanson, Richie Hull, Floyd King, Julie Maddox, Craig Nabors, Virgal Slagell, Darren Tozko; **March 17** - Keith Ansted, Steven Bagby, Andrew Patrick Basgall, Ron Henderson, Patrick Janning, Mike Kidd, Robert Middleton, Shersha Moody, Clifford Prichard, Katie Roach, Jennifer Schultz; **March 18** - Michelle Agan, Stephanie Buckner, Riley Grogan, Elizabeth Gwinn, Margaret Hamlin, Jack Melton, Frank Sewell IV, Pat Scholar; **March 19** - Agustin "Augy" Castorena, Claudia Castro, Elisie Jo Lafever, Josh Nickels, Krisha Shantz; **March 20** - Letha Bentley, Hayden Billings, DaLynn Brinkley, Spring Cordes, Maxine Crissman, Barbara Deevers, Scott Guthrie, Oma Hicks, Nicholas Janning, Bryale Johnson, Tena Leatherbury, Don Morris, Trevor Ridgeway, Adam Rogers, Savana Schmidt, Bethany Shannon, Denny Smith; **March 21** - Mary Ellis, Aspen Martin, Mustafa Sami, Kay Sewell, Presley Sperle, McKenzie Sprowls, Jim Wahnee, Nina Wilhoit.

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Bulldog Baseball Claims Three Wins Over East

Grant Kopycinski
SWOSU Sports Assistant

SWOSU Baseball scored a total of 47 runs over three wins over East Central, and in doing so, earned a weekend sweep of the Tigers.

ECU pitchers walked 11 in the game and hit another three SWOSU batters. The Bulldogs took full advantage of the free baserunners to deal most of its damage. They scored 15 runs on just eight hits, three for extra bases, in the contest. Every player in the starting lineup crossed home plate except for one.

Geoff Marlow, Markus Coronado, and Brooks Red all had two hits to lead the way. Marlow drove in a team high four runs.

Game 1 – SWOSU 13, ECU 8

SWOSU Baseball scored in six consecutive innings from the second to the seventh and handled East Central, 13-8, in the opening game of the conference series. Six of the 14 hits SWOSU accrued went for extra bases including a trio of home runs from Geoff Marlow, Brooks Red, and Reece Burke. It was Red and Burke's first home runs of the season.

Cade Hamilton finished 3-5 with an RBI double and a bases clearing RBI triple. Alex Rice wasn't in the extra-base hit conversation but led the Dawgs with a 4-6 day at his lead off position. All but one in the starting lineup drove in at least one run in the contest.

SWOSU led 10-8 after ECU chipped into the margin with three runs in the top of the seventh, but answered back with three of their own the next half inning to negate the momentum.

On the mound, Chris Goldston got the start and threw 4.0 innings while striking out five and walking two. Bryson Armstrong (W, 1-0) threw the next 2.2 innings to earn the decision. Philip Sanders (1.1 IP) and Ernesto Hidrogo (1.0 IP) held the Tigers scoreless the rest of the way.

Game 2 – SWOSU 15, ECU 4

After falling behind 4-0 midway, SWOSU turned things around with nine runs through the fourth inning and tacked on five more in the fifth and one final run in the sixth to end things early via run rule.

Game 3 – SWOSU 19, ECU 3

Eleven runs in the second inning all but eliminated any ECU chances in the final game of the day. The Tigers managed to lead 2-0 and again 3-2 early, before SWOSU's 11-run bottom half of the second.

SWOSU added three runs in the third and sixth to conclude their scoring while ECU was held scoreless the rest of the way.

The lineup finished with 16 hits and was aided by five East Central fielding errors.

Marlow and Coronado again had a multi-hit game, along with Alex Rice, Emilio Trevino, and Griffin Larsen.

Jackson Phillips (W, 3-1) threw 5.0 innings and struck out five. He was pestered by the Tigers early, but settled in to deliver a quality start. He ended with five strikeouts while scattering three hits. Patrick Babcock and Jack Correll both pitched scoreless innings in relief.

SWOSU (10-11, 6-6 GAC) concluded a five-game homestand in a non-conference matchup with Cameron.

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SWOSU's Softball Team Falls in Three Games at ECU

Grant Kopycinski
SWOSU Sports Assistant

SWOSU Softball ended their series against East Central with a 0-3 defeat.

The Tigers scored one in the bottom of the third thanks to their own double. This was the only scoring of the game until the final frame.

Momentum was on the SWOSU's side after the huge top of the inning. All that was left was to get three outs. Things went awry almost instantly though as after a ground out to start, two singles put two chances to win on base for ECU. A pinch hitter then came in and sent a walk off home run over the outfield fence to end the game.

Game 1 – SWOSU 13, ECU 8

Brianna Cryer had an almost perfect start in the circle. She went 3.2 innings without giving up a hit, only walking three batters. On the offensive side, the Bulldogs couldn't get much going. They had base runners in all three innings, but left all five on base.

The fourth inning is where the scoring started. Multiple singles got people on base to start for SWOSU. A Maddie Rahon hit eventually scored one, but again the Dawgs left three stranded. East Central responded in the bottom of the inning.

Two outs from their first two batters didn't faze the Tigers. Their next five batters reached base, just managing to get on. Three singles and two walks saw three players cross home plate for what would be the winning runs

SWOSU scored in the fifth thanks to a couple errors, but ECU tacked on one more insurance run in the inning as well. The Bulldogs had numerous chances to score more runs, 11 left on base to be exact. They could not string together enough hits in a row to do this.

Maddie Rahon led the way, going 3-4 with an RBI. Brianna Cryer received the loss, giving up one hit and walking two with two strikeouts in 3.2 innings.

Game 2 – SWOSU 15, ECU 4

Neither team had much working for them in the early goings. The third inning saw SWOSU have runners on second and third base thanks to a double into right center, but popped up with two outs to leave them on base.

Game 3 – SWOSU 19, ECU 3

After an almost promising comeback in game two of the doubleheader last night, the Bulldogs put up just two hits and six base runners overall in this one. The two hits coming from Katie Boline and Kaylee Barkley.

East Central wasted no time getting on the scoreboard. The first batter of the game reached on a single and the Tigers almost batted around the order in first frame. They would score three in first inning to lead 3-0 after one inning.

ECU reached base in all six innings they batted and put up two runs in the third and fifth innings as well. The Dawgs' offense was stifled by a great day pitching from the Tiger starter.

Brianna Cryer received the loss after going 2.0 innings. Taryn Westbrook and Barkley both made relief appearances.

The Bulldogs move to 4-18 and 1-8 in the GAC. They have a short turnaround for their next contest when they'll host rival Northwestern Oklahoma State in a doubleheader.

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Oklahoma History: The Worst Day of the Infamous "Dust Bowl" Event



Chase Wright
Staff Writer

The Dust Bowl (1930-1936), one of the many crushing economic moments that impacted the Great Depression, was one of Oklahoma's and the nation's worst catastrophes. The Dust Bowl refers to the period of severe dust storms that damaged the ecology and livelihood of its residents. These storms were so tremendous that an estimated 100 million acres were affected, and the billows of dust reached as far as New York City and Washington, D.C (National Weather Service, Oklahoma; 2012). The Dust Bowl caused a mass exodus of Americans, looking for work and relief. Oxford's University Press reports that "approximately 3.5 million people migrated to California" which became the largest migration in American history in a short amount of time. Many of the migrating families came from Oklahoma and were referred to as "Okies" – a term alongside "Arkies" that referred to those who had lost everything and were struggling the most in the Great Depression. Not all of the families who left were farmers, either; almost half of the migrants were professional or white-collar workers. The Census Bureau has reported that almost one-eighth of California's population has "Okie" heritage.

The dust storms that coined the term "Dust Bowl"

were caused by a misunderstanding of the Great Plains' topsoil. Prior to the first wave of storms, farmers had been switching to more mechanized farm equipment so they could deep plow their land to turn the arid grassland into cultivated cropland. Centered around the Oklahoma and Texas panhandle, these farming techniques ended up removing the deep-rooted containment layer of grass that kept the fine soil trapped and protected during droughts and high winds. Then, in the 1930's, the region suffered some of their biggest droughts since 1895 which led to the top layer of soil to become dry and powdery. The frequent high winds in the area swept through, gathering all the topsoil and creating massive columns of clouds that billowed over the land. These clouds buried homes, equipment, and anyone who happened to get caught in the storm (which happened often). On May 9, 1934, one of the first and strongest storms ripped topsoil from the plains and dumped almost 12 million pounds of dust in Chicago. Two days later, that same storm reached the East Coast. By winter, New England states reported "red snow."

Not only were these storms causing crops to fail and leaving fields open to erosion, when enough dust gathered it created heavy black clouds that

reduced visibility to 3 feet or less. Dubbed "black blizzards," these choking clouds meant anyone trapped outside could be dead within minutes. One of the worst black blizzards came on April 14th, 1935, "Black Sunday" when a storm blew down from Canada through Texas and blocked out the sun. Nightfall fell upon the Great Plains as an estimated 300 million tons of topsoil was displaced by this storm. Black Sunday hit the Oklahoma panhandle and northwestern Oklahoma the hardest with its most severe conditions, racing across the state. An unknown number of families were killed or displaced, but it's believed to be in the hundreds of thousands.

The Dust Bowl was officially over in 1941, but the lasting impact would remain forever. As the Department of Agriculture established new farming techniques and relief packages, banks (that failed the heaviest during the Great Depression in the Dust Bowl region) redesigned assistance programs, and farmland and revenue increased. During WWII, land and population in affected locations increased consistently and have continued their upward trend. Today, the growth has had a few slight dips and the rise is very gradual, but the Great Plains American Spirit is alive and well.



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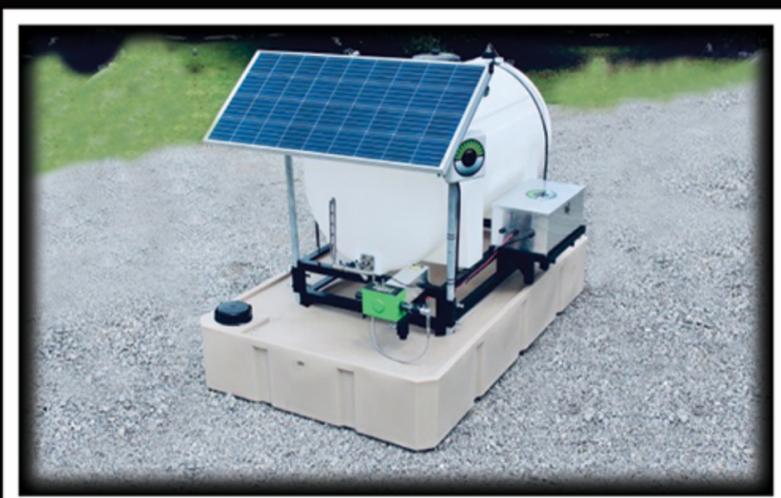


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SWOSU Women Winners Sweep Bulldogs of the Week

Grant Kopycinski
SWOSU Sports Assistant

Peyton Foster (track & field) and Sadie Wolaver

(rodeo) have been named the latest Bulldogs of the Week after both finishing first place in their respective events over the weekend. This award is brought to you by Wright Wradio, the official partner of SWOSU Athletics for both livestream and radio.

Foster (Weatherford, Okla.) claimed the top spot in high jump at the Hendrix Invitational by jumping 1.55 meters. It is the first time this spring a Bulldog claimed the top spot at a meet in any event.

Wolaver (Fayetteville, Tenn.) won the average in barrel racing at the Fort Scott Rodeo by clocking times of 14.3 and 14.5 seconds in both rounds. Her time in the long round, 14.3 seconds, represented the fastest time of any competitor. Wolaver, last year's national champion, picks up her first event win of the new season.

BULLDOGS OF THE WEEK
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The New Van & Jon Show

From left to right; Misty Crider, Sarah Creason, Kalea Bruce, Brooke Ward, Lori Flansburg, Sally Drinnon, and Steve Drinnon joined Van & Jon this past week to talk about the Grand Can Sculpture competition scheduled for March 31st at the Connections Food and Resource Center in Weatherford.

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