

Hit barrage not enough for Outlaws softball

The Sisters High School varsity softball team closed out the 2016 season by honoring its three seniors and out-hitting Sutherlin in a Sky-Em League double-header.

However, the hitting display wasn't enough to send seniors Leah McIntosh, Zoey Nason and Marie Coffee off on a winning note, as Sutherlin prevailed 18-4 and 15-5.

Smith praised his three seniors, noting that catcher McIntosh and third-baseman Nason, will be hard to replace. And that mid-season addition Coffee was making great progress. She singled in her final game.

"There were several positive notes in both games despite our losses," said Coach Dave Smith. "The freshman are really stepping up." He singled out the play of short-stop Grace Maiden and second-baseman Sophie Affatati.

In the 18-4 loss, the Outlaws collected 16 hits and Amanda Smith struck out 11, but 13 errors were costly for the Outlaws. By comparison, Sutherlin committed just one error in the two games.

In the second game, Sisters committed just four errors, but managed seven hits as compared to 16 in the first game.

Junior Kylie Steiner was the big hitter on the day with a single, double, and triple.

"I think the hard part is



Grace Maiden with a catch.

these kids are starting to come alive with their bats and the season is ending," said Smith.

"I have a lot of faith in these young girls because they are always asking to stay after practice and work on the areas where they need to work. A lot of them have asked if we could continue to practice (even though the season has ended)."

For the day, Smith, a junior lefthander, had 18 strikeouts in 11 innings pitched.

The Outlaws finished Sky-Em League play with a 2-13 record and were 2-16 overall.

Elmira (24-1 overall) captured the league title with a 14-1 mark, one game ahead of 13-2 Sweet Home (18-6 overall). Junction City was 9-6, Sutherlin 6-9, and Cottage Grove 1-14.

"I have a lot of faith in these young girls... — Coach Dave Smith"

Nelson seeks to continue as sheriff

By **Craig Rullman**
Correspondent

The Nugget recently sat down with current Sheriff Shane Nelson, and asked him why Deschutes County voters should consider him when they cast their ballots this fall.

Nelson told *The Nugget*, "I'm always going to do the right thing, and I hope my actions, over the last nine months that I've been serving our community as their sheriff, have shown that when we need to take care of business, we'll take care of business."

Asked directly if the recent string of high-profile resignations and firings at DCSO were evidence of a failed leadership culture, Nelson said, "Every agency is going to have challenges. I think it's how you react to those challenges, and how you handle those specific incidents, and move forward, is what is important."

Sheriff Nelson told *The Nugget* that as part of the fallout from those incidents, "We do take a look at our hiring practices, our background practices ... can we adjust, do we need to adjust? We can always be better at what we do."

Sheriff Nelson was born and raised in Central Oregon, and has been with the sheriff's office for 22 years, serving in all three divisions of the agency. He believes that his experiences have helped him develop outstanding community relationships and have helped him "be the best sheriff I can be."

Sheriff Nelson told *The Nugget* that one of the biggest issues facing the sheriff's

office is the growing problem of mental health patients circulating in the criminal justice system.

"Right now we have some vulnerable inmates that we serve in our jail," he said. "We do the best we can to serve them, but some of these people, when appropriate, should be diverted from the criminal justice system. They don't belong in jail. That's not the best thing for them."

Nelson told *The Nugget* that the Medical Mental Health Unit is now releasing vulnerable inmates with two weeks worth of prescriptions so they can make their next appointment.

"That's an investment worth making," Nelson said. "If we don't make it, we're going to see them again in five days."

Nelson also cited the legalization of marijuana as an issue facing his department, noting that legalization on the state and local level puts local law-enforcement in a predicament, when it is still illegal under federal law.

"I don't think anything good can come from it," Nelson said, noting that local emergency-room visits have surged due to the availability of powerful edible marijuana products.

He also expressed concern that the particular potency of edibles may have an impact on mental health at a time when the DCSO is struggling to best serve those with mental illnesses.

Nelson told *The Nugget* that more access to marijuana would mean more use, and that the DCSO is noting a noticeable uptick in DUII cases involving marijuana.

The sheriff also pointed to heroin as an increasing problem in Central Oregon, noting that DCSO deputies are now being trained and equipped with Naloxone, better known as Narcan, which is used to block or reverse the effects of opioids such as heroin.

Asked about response times for calls for service in Sisters, the Sheriff said that due to the recent shuffling of captains, he would need some time to compile the information, but felt confident the city is being served appropriately. The sheriff noted that he enjoyed the DCSO's partnership with Sisters, and could foresee no issues in contract renewal.

Sheriff Nelson praised the hard work of his department through recent public embarrassments and in the face of challenging circumstances.

"I work with excellent people here," he said. "It's our teammates that are out there delivering customer service and serving our citizens on an everyday basis to establish our professional reputation."

The sheriff was candid with *The Nugget* about the agency's problems, but feels his handling of difficult situations should inspire confidence.

"I hope people see by my actions, by what I'm doing, it doesn't matter much what the challenge will be, we'll evaluate it, we'll take a look at it, we'll take input on it, and we'll be better at what we do. We don't ever want to rest as an organization, or be comfortable with how we perform. We always want to reach a little bit further."

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