

TWICE AS NICE!



Ronald Bond/The Observer

La Grande's Kara Gooderham hugs teammate Taryn Miller after Miller scored a run during the third inning.



Ronald Bond/The Observer

The La Grande softball team celebrates after receiving the championship trophy following its 4-2 win over Henley in Saturday's state championship game in Eugene. It's the second year in a row the Tigers have beaten Henley for the title.



Ronald Bond/The Observer

La Grande's Allie Brock struck out 12 batters in seven innings during Saturday's win.



Ronald Bond/The Observer

The LHS infield huddles up during a pivotal point in the sixth inning Saturday.

Tigers topple Henley again to win second straight title

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

The high expectations. The pressure. The target on their backs as being the defending state champions.

None of that kept the La Grande Tigers from doing what they intended to do all season — repeat as state champs.

The Tigers scored four early runs to build a lead it would never relinquish and put a stop to a late rally on the way to a 4-2 win over the

Henley Hornets Saturday in the 4A softball state championship game at Jane Sanders Stadium in Eugene.

"The expectation of us coming back (to the championship game) and to win motivated us to play well," junior pitcher Allie Brock said after a 12-strikeout effort in the win. "We play really well under pressure, and I think that contributed to our performance today."

The Tigers faced their share of pressure

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Family meets expectations, pressure for championship

The family that makes up the La Grande softball team accomplished what its players expected and what its coaches expected.

And, probably, what LHS softball fans expected.

Heck, even the coach who guided the Tigers to the title a year ago expected it. And he expects it to continue.

"I've been keeping tabs on them all season long," said former coach Kirk Travis, who



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now lives in Fairview. "I'm impressed with the way they've played. You've got some of the best athletes in the state over there in La Grande when it comes to softball. I see a few more years under their belt. They've

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