

Kings of the hill

Dominant pitching staff leads La Grande Legends

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The La Grande Legacy Ford Legends have themselves a staff full of aces this summer.

The Legends are holding opponents to just over three runs per game and have compiled an impressive 19-4 regular season record heading into state competition, which starts next month.

“They throw fastballs for strikes, off-speed for strikes, and no one relies on one pitch,” La Grande Legacy Ford Legends head coach Parker McKinley said. “They’re able to throw strikes in tough counts. They do a good job.”

Three rising juniors at La Grande High School have carried the largest workload on the mound for the Legends this year. Jace Schow has compiled a 2-1 record and struck out 19 batters over 20.1 innings. Sam Tsiatsos totaled a 2-1 record throughout the regular season and struck out 18 batters over 19.2 innings. Logan Williams has taken advantage of a major increase in innings compared to his high school season, compiling a 3-0 record and 28 strikeouts over 19.2 innings.

“I’m pretty comfortable pitching around these guys,” Schow said. “I feel like we’re only going to get more comfortable as we get older.”

According to Schow, most of the team has been playing together since they were 8 years old.

“We’ve come a long way since we were little and have really progressed and gotten older and stronger,” Tsiatsos said.

At the La Grande American Legion wood bat tournament on Friday, July 23, Schow pitched a five-inning shutout in a 10-0 victory over Hodgen Distributing. He allowed only one hit and struck out four opposing batters in a composed outing on the mound.

Not to be outdone, Tsiatsos earned a win on Saturday, July 24, against Baker in which he struck out nine batters over five innings. He was dominant on the mound, allowing only one run on three hits as the Legends won 11-1.

The duo highlighted two of the top individual performances during the tournament to conclude La Grande Legacy Ford’s regular season. The Legends went 4-0 during the tournament at Optimist Field at Pioneer Park in La Grande.

“We pitched really well and gave up only three runs on the weekend,” McKinley said. “We were throwing strikes and playing defense, the pitching and defense was huge.”

Williams has been dominant all summer for La Grande,



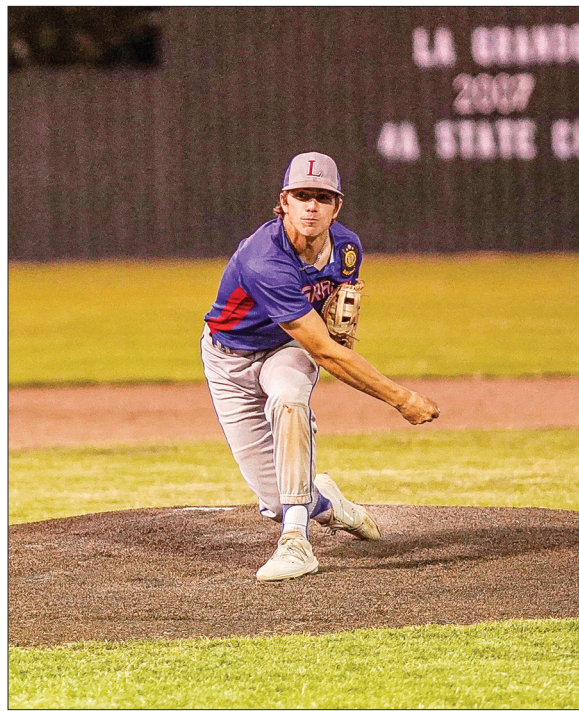
Alex Wittwer/The Observer

The La Grande Legends get ready for the fourth inning against Baker City during the La Grande American Legion Tournament at Optimist Field on Friday, July 23, 2021.

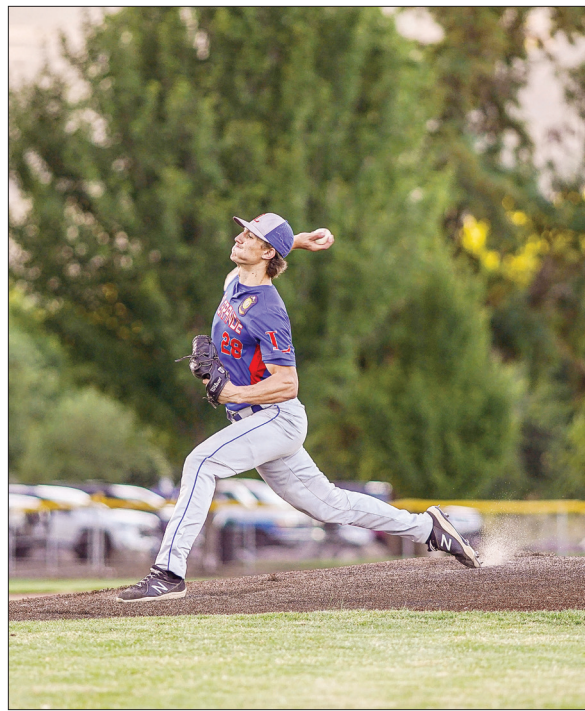


Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Sam Tsiatsos (14) juggles baseballs in the dugout during the La Grande American Legion Tournament held at Optimist Field on Friday, July 23, 2021.



Above left, Logan Williams (2) throws one of the final pitches of the game against Baker City during the La Grande American Legion Tournament held at Optimist Field on Friday, July 23, 2021. Above right, Riley Miller (28) throws a pitch against Baker City during the tournament on Friday.



Alex Wittwer/The Observer



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Head Coach Parker McKinley looks on as a player from the La Grande Legends bats against Baker City during the La Grande American Legion Tournament held at Optimist Field in Pioneer Park on Friday, July 23, 2021.

finishing the regular season with a 1.83 ERA. In his sophomore high school season with La Grande, he pitched only 10.1 innings and started one game. This season with the Legends, Williams has developed into a go-to ace on the mound.

“Our guys are able to throw different pitches and different counts and not just rely on having to try and get a fast ball across all the time,” McKinley said. “They’re keeping hitters off balance and it pays off.”

The trio of pitchers are joined by upperclassmen Nick Bornstedt, Devin Bell and Riley Miller as regular starters for La Grande Legacy Ford.

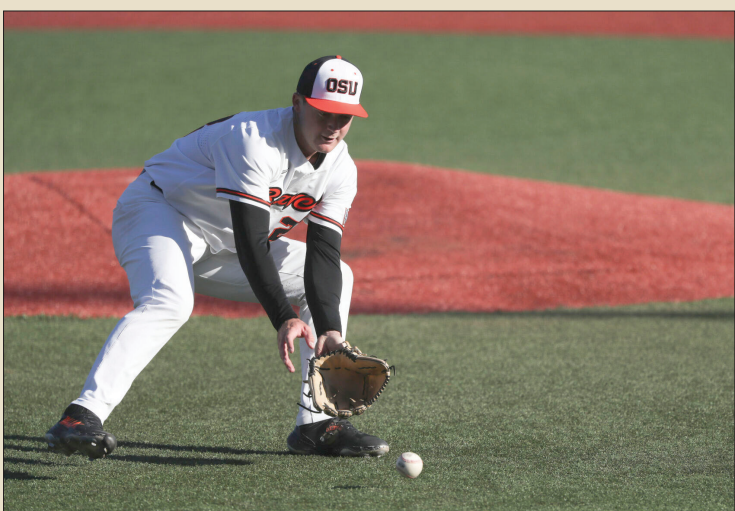
Miller, a 2021 4A all-state first team pitcher, is committed to play collegiate baseball next fall at Clark College in Vancouver, Washington. He is 3-0 with a 4.20 ERA this summer with the Legends and has struck out 23 batters over 15 innings. Bornstedt is 2-0 with a 7.00 ERA over four starts and Bell is 3-0 with a 5.06 ERA through three starts.

“We’ve got a lot of guys that can be on the mound and we have confidence in them,” McKinley said. “I like where we’re at as a team and there’s a lot of trust between the guys.”

Looking forward, the Legends will have a brief pause before traveling to the Oregon Legion state tournament at North Marion High School in Aurora from Wednesday, Aug. 4, to Sunday, Aug. 8. La Grande will look to lean on its dominant pitching staff to lead the team against the state’s top competition.

“The mindset is to not slack off and stay together as a family,” Schow said. “We’re all really close, on and off the field, so we’re pretty comfortable with each other.”

SPORTS SHORT



Amanda Loman/The Associated Press, File

Oregon State pitcher Kevin Abel fields a ball during an NCAA baseball game against California on Friday, April 16, 2021, in Corvallis.

Oregon State athletics reports three NCAA Level III violations

By **NICK DASCHEL**
The Oregonian

CORVALLIS — Oregon State committed three NCAA Level III violations during the 2020-21 school year, a significant drop from recent years.

Level III infractions are considered minor, are usually self-reported and minimally penalized.

Oregon State’s Level III

infractions came in baseball, women’s track and field, and wrestling.

In 2019-20, Oregon State had nine Level III infractions, 14 the previous year and an average of about 15 per year dating back to 2014-15.

The baseball violation actually occurred in May of 2020, when an assistant coach gave an impermissible endorsement of a recruiting ser-

vice. Action came during the summer of 2020, with the baseball coaching staff instructed to undergo mandatory education for recruiting service regulations.

Oregon State did not reveal the sport for the other two violations in a public records request by The Oregonian/OregonLive, though one was committed by women’s track and field, the other wrestling.