

Sports

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Cougars falter against Brookings-Harbor



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Senior pitcher Curtis Paulson tries to pick off a Glide player who was a little too antsy to get to second base. Senior first baseman Josh Free didn't get the ball in time to tag the potential thief Saturday, April 2 at home.

Glide steals two in the valley

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

Sometimes, one inning can make or break a baseball game.

After allowing only one run in five innings

against Brookings-Harbor High School, the Illinois Valley High School baseball team gave up five runs in the sixth inning in a rescheduled game Wednesday, March 30.

The Cougar defense kept them in the game nearly the entire time, though their bats went cold in their only scoreless game so far this year. But on Thursday, players were eager to practice hitting to get the offensive game back on track.

"The kids knew they weren't swinging the bat really well, so they were all eager to get in the cage [March 31] and learn, and that's what

it's all about," said coach Bob Johnson. "We'll see if we can correct some of the problems and next game we'll see if we can do better."

Senior Bryan Biggs pitched for Illinois Valley during the first five innings, allowing one run from an on-field error, Johnson said.

Fellow senior Zach Anderson pitched the sixth and seventh innings. According to Johnson, Brookings-Harbor scored five runs from three hits, and Anderson struck out four players. Senior Josh Free had a double for the team's lone hit.

"I have a really confident attitude towards

the team," Johnson said. "They're hustling and for the most part playing good defense. If we hit the ball and score some runs we're going to win a lot of games. I think we'll get going here shortly."

The Cougars faced Glide in a doubleheader Saturday, April 2 and were scheduled to play Umpqua on Tuesday, April 5.

Against Glide, the baseball team lost the first game 3-10, but fell just short in the second game 4-5. They're next scheduled to play Hidden Valley High School on their turf Thursday, April 7.

Lady Cougars come together as a team

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

The 2011 softball season has quite a few firsts for the Lady Cougars: a first-time softball coach, several first-time players and the first run scored this past weekend, April 2.

The team has struggled to get wins in the past few seasons and has undergone many coaching staff changes. But this year's coach, Cathy Pope, has high hopes for the team as her players may be a more cohesive unit than in previous seasons.

"I think our team is really preparing themselves well for the season," Pope said. "We've done a ton of team bonding and the girls are really accepting of each other regardless of playing experience. [They're] very coachable and it's easy to work together."

Three Illinois Valley softball players are team veterans, but Pope said the rest are freshman and first-time players.

So far, the girls have drilled in basic fundamentals, learning signals and developing ways to score points and get steals. Pope says on-field defense is one of the strongest team elements, but that players are working on improving their offensive game.

On Saturday, April 2, the Lady Cougars faced Glide in a double-header, losing the first game 0-19 but cutting the gap to 1-12 in the second.

According to Pope, recent practice on bunting was a factor that helped the team score the run in the second game.

Pope, who also coaches volleyball at IVHS, took up coaching softball this season after playing herself when she was in high school.

"I'm probably learning as much as the girls are learning," Pope said. "I graduated ten years ago and everything's changed. I am learning every game and making my own mistakes, learning how to better coach myself."

IVHS golfers begin 2011 season

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

The rain finally held off long enough for Illinois Valley High School golf teams to get their first few rounds of golf in this season.

The boys golf team kicked things off Tuesday, March 29, at Eagle Point Golf Course, earning fourth place overall out of ten teams.

Coach Matt Knight says the team didn't quite play at its best level, but with the first round jitters out of the way, he has high hopes for upcoming matches.

"We can do better as a team, but the weather was a factor and some of them just got off mentally," Knight said. "I am looking forward to this Thursday [April 7] when we play at Stone Ridge; our kids do pretty well at that course."

Knight said the team scored 383 March 29, higher than their average. But several golfers played well on Tuesday.

According to Knight, Roger Hults led the Cougars with an 88, just one shot ahead of his brother Fred Hults who recorded an 89. Tyler Robbins scored a 95 and Jesse Bethke ended the day at 111.

Lady Cougar golfers played in a junior varsity tournament Thursday, March 31, at the Applegate River Golf Club in Grants Pass. This year, they have a roster of three: freshman Brelyn Dhenin, sophomore Miranda Stiles and senior Laurissa Tausaga.

One of the girls' golf coaches, Dave Bullock, said the match was an opportunity for the students to see how they stack up against other schools and learn how to handle themselves on an



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Laurissa Tausaga practices Friday, April 1 at the Illinois Valley Golf Course.

unfamiliar course. "It helped to see how the girls reacted to being out on the golf course," Bullock said. "It was [Stiles'] first time ever playing kids from other areas. I think they had a really good time and learned an awful lot."

Bullock said Tausaga is only in her second year, but believes she could set the standard for the team. Tausaga was named Most Improved last season.

Despite the team's relative inexperience, Bullock has high hopes for the potential for improvement and believes the students will encourage

their friends to try out next year.

"Golf is a lot tougher than people think it is," Bullock said. "The big thing we concentrate on is the attitude and sportsmanship on the course. Golf is really a sport of honesty. You have to keep track of [yourself] and it teaches things you have to learn in life."

Up next, the boys' golf team is scheduled go to Stone Ridge April 7. Bullock said the Lady Cougars will have the chance to compete again Wednesday, April 6. The full schedule is still being finalized.



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Cindy Moore in command of the mound Saturday April 2 at home against Glide.