

Sports

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The perfect throw



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, *Illinois Valley News*)

A perfect throw from Catcher Anthony Becker allowed second baseman Zach Welch to tag out the Cascade player attempting to steal second. The Cougs dropped two Friday, May 6 on the road in Medford.

Cougars improve but fall short to Challengers

On Saturday, May 7, the Illinois Valley High School baseball team faced the Cascade Christian Challengers in Medford, falling 4-5 and 3-7 in a double-header.

But the Cougars improved from the last time they played Cascade Christian April 19, where they lost 3-10.

The Challengers are now 18-1 overall and 8-1 in league play as of Tuesday, May 10, the first-ranked team in the 3-A

Southern Cascade league.

Illinois Valley was scheduled to play St. Mary's May 10 and a double-header against Rogue River Saturday, May 14 at home.

Johnson throws to victory



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, *Illinois Valley News*)

Four-sport standout Kayla Johnson in a game May 6, after taking first in javelin and discus earlier in the week.

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

Many Illinois Valley High School athletes placed in the top eight Monday, May 3, at the Brookings-Harbor Twilight meet.

Senior Kayla Johnson led the team with two first-place throws in javelin and discus.

When not playing softball for her school, Johnson participates in throwing events, consistently at or near the top of the rankings. On Monday, Johnson threw 120 feet in discus, beating the second-place athlete by eight feet.

But the most surprising win might have been javelin, where Johnson threw more than 107 feet compared to the second-place throw

of 79 feet, 9 inches.

"Kayla has won almost all the meets she's been to this year," said IV track coach Ray Yarbrough. "She's got to be one of the favorites going into Regionals to place in the top two for state. We're very confident she's going to be able to do that."

Illinois Valley freshman have also made strong improvements over the course of the season. Samantha Milner finished the 1500-meter race in 5:48, more than 20 seconds before the next runner.

Last week, freshman Amanda Brooks won the 100-meter hurdle event in 18:25, and on May 3 finished second with 18:40.

On the boys' side, freshman Joshua Allan also won the 1500-meter event against three athletes

from Gold Beach High School. Celilo Nordal and Jesse Bethke earned fourth and fifth place, respectively, in shot put among 12 competitors.

For track practice Wednesday, May 4, the Illinois Valley High School team mixed things up by trying a U.S. Marine-style workout.

Not surprisingly, the fitness test is no cakewalk, combining intense strength training and running. According to Yarbrough, athletes at one point carried around 35-pound ammo cans (in a safe manner) as part of the workout.

"One thing I noticed...the commitment to not give up was so evident with our kids," Yarbrough said. "The Marine who came in told me that almost every school he goes to, people quit. Not one of our kids

quit. They all finished it."

Yarbrough said many Cougar track athletes viewed the Marine fitness test as a challenge, trying to get the numbers needed to pass the test, beyond just getting through it.

"Seeing that in our kids, the drive to compete and the drive to not give up and get better all the time is pretty awesome," Yarbrough said.

The Cougars went to Rogue River for the Chieftain Invitational meet starting 10 a.m. for the throwing events.

On Thursday, May 12, IVHS is scheduled to go to the Sunset League Special District meet. In just a few weeks, 3-A State Championships will be held Friday, May 20 and Saturday, May 21.

Golfers barely miss mark for State

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

Illinois Valley golfers had their best games of the season at the 3-A/2-A/1-A District tournament in Eagle Point May 5 and May 6, but just missed the cut for State competition.

According to athletic director Casey Alderson, junior Fred Hults fell short of a spot at State by just one stroke, shooting a 75 on the second day. Senior Roger Hults also barely missed State contention, finishing the tournament two strokes behind

his brother.

"Our conference is probably one of the toughest in the State," Alderson said. "If you have two who both shot under par and still didn't make it...it's tough to grab other spots."

Boys' golf coach Matt Knight said Illinois Valley finished third as a team in the two days. Both Roger and Fred Hults made the top ten; Fred with a total score of 158 on both days and Roger totaling 160.

Jesse Bethke and Matt Coultas also put up points for their team,

holding their own among the tough competition on all sides with 187 and 225 respectively. Keaton Bradley also finished with 250 for the Cougars.

In the end, Rogue River's Kevin Murphy outshone his rivals to take the top spot, followed by St. Mary's Dylan Wu.

"I'm proud of the way our guys played this year and the way we finished the season at Districts," Knight said. "I couldn't ask for a better group of guys to coach and we had a great season."



(Photo by Darcy Wallace, *Illinois Valley News*)

Senior Matt Coultas following through on a tee shot during the District tournament Thursday, May 5.