

Baseball and softball start season with win

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Both the boys' baseball and girls' softball team of the Illinois Valley High School won their first games last week. The boys' varsity team won 9-8 against Gold Beach High School and the softball team won 17-5 in the fifth inning against Ashland. It should be noted that the girls' varsity team played against Ashland's JV team and as such the game was not ranked. For both games the weather was more or less amicable.

"Morale is high," Jessie Dugas, the boys' coach, said, "The boys feel like they should have done a

little better. They pulled off the win in the bottom of the seventh. We were leading by a lot more than that earlier in the game but Gold Beach battled back and some things went their way and they were able to tie the game in the sixth." Overall, the boys stole 19 bases and shows that the team is playing very aggressively. This proves that Dugas' tactics for the season, mentioned in his last interview with the Illinois Valley News, was not merely idle talk. Bryce Bruner, a pitcher on the team, pitched well with eight out of the nine strikeouts against the opposition.

The boys are going to play against Gold Beach Wednesday, March 22 and in the mean time they

have a game against Glendale. Dugas said that beating the opposition from Glendale will not be an easy task because they have a great coach and a good program but the Illinois Valley boys' baseball team is going into the game with a good mindset and are going to, in the words of Dugas, "compete heavily and see what happens."

Beth Boatman, the coach of the girls' softball team, said that they scored eight runs in the first inning, five in the second and then two in the fourth with another two in the fifth. "It was a pretty good game," Boatman reported, "There was a couple of errors but they recovered from it." Mallory Menning, the

pitcher who pitched the whole game, obtained eight strike outs.

The girls are scheduled to play against Glendale Tuesday, March 21, and their next home game will be Friday, March 24, against Gold Beach.

After the game it was apparent to Boatman that this year's team will not suffer like last year's from a poor batting average. "We struggled a bit with good solid hits last year," Boatman said on the topic, "The girls just seem like right out of the gate they're hitting, hitting, hitting. We went through the lineup in that first inning and as long as they can keep their batting going and stay focused then we're going to be OK."

BEAVERS . . .

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Lamberty's layup pulled Bluejays within 54-48 with 6:42 left, putting Creighton's bench on its feet. Hanson and Mikayla Pivec each hit jumpers to answer for the Beavers.

Marissa Janning's jumper got Creighton back within single digits, but Kolbie Orum's baseline jumper gave the Beavers a 60-50 lead with 3:04 to go.

After a pair of Creighton free throws, Marie Gulich made consecutive layups for a 64-52 Oregon State lead — and the Bluejays couldn't catch up.

Lamberty said when the Creighton came within six, the team believed they were going to win.

"We all looked at each other and we even said when we huddled up, 'We can do this. This game is still ours. We've come back from deficits bigger than this with less time,'" she said.

Oregon State eked out a 56-55 victory over surprisingly tenacious Long Beach State in the opening round. The 49ers' chance at becoming the first-ever No. 15 seed to defeat a No. 2 seed were dashed when Raven Benton's shot from out front with five seconds left bounced off the back rim.

The Bluejays routed 10th-seeded Toledo 76-49 in the opening round. Janning scored 15 points in less than six minutes to start the game and finished 19.

Creighton was making its sixth overall NCAA Tournament appearance and first since 2013, when they played into the second round. The Bluejays' seeding matched its best in school history.

"We trailed nine times at half this year and won, which is one of the things that I love about our team, which is we are resilient and we compete and we fight and tonight was no different," Creighton coach Jim Flanery said. "We played from behind the whole

night, but we were never out of the game.

The Beavers, who had a distinct size advantage, jumped out to a 13-6 lead in the first quarter on Gulich's jumper. Hanson's 3-pointer gave Oregon State a 22-14 lead.

The Bluejays got within 23-17 but Hanson and Breanna Brown each hit layups to extend it again and the Beavers went into halftime with a 39-27 lead. Hanson led all scorers with 11 points.

Wiese, a senior and one of the players who helped bring Oregon State to national prominence, hit a step-back 3-pointer to put the Beavers up 48-35.

Gulich finished with 12 points and 12 rebounds.

The Beavers claimed the Pac-12 regular season title but fell in the conference tournament final to Stanford.

BIG PICTURE

Creighton: The Bluejays beat the Beavers 70-62 in Las Vegas the last time they met in 2013. It was Creighton's

fourth straight win in five total meetings. The Bluejays cracked the AP rankings for a week at the end of the season at No. 23 after claiming a share of the Big East regular-season title. They had not been ranked in the AP Top 25 since 1992.

Oregon State: The seniors are Oregon State's first class to have gone to the NCAA Tournament in each of their four years. The game marked the seniors' final appearance at Gill, where they finished 60-6. ... A booster donated free tickets for the first 600 students through the door.

WIESE'S FINALE: Wiese put her name in Oregon State's record book several times over the course of her career. She broke the Pac-12 career record for 3-pointers earlier this season, surpassing Stanford's Candice Wiggins, and currently has 373. She also set Oregon State's career assist record this season and now has 624.

SECOND SENIOR

DAY: In addition to Wiese and Hanson, Orum is also a senior and Breanna Brown is graduating but still has a year of eligibility left.

"That ovation at the end. That gives you chills. It gives me chills right now just thinking about it. That's all a coach can hope for these girls," Rueck said.

UP NEXT: Oregon State: The Beavers move on to play Florida State in the Sweet 16.



Mikayla Pivec

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