

# SPORTS



Hood River Valley High School senior Mason Spelley celebrates a run in the team's home opener against Pendleton on April 16, 2021. HRVHS baseball went 1-2 in their first week of play. Walker Sacon photo

## Slow-starting HRV expects to contend in IMC baseball

By Walker Sacon  
Columbia Gorge News

Hood River Valley High School's baseball team will look to contend for the conference title this year despite going 1-2 (0-2 league) in its first week with a series against Pendleton High School, coach Michael Muehlbauer said.

PHS and HRV finished first and second, respectively, in the conference in 2019. Pendleton finished as the runner-up at the state tournament that year before the 2020 season was canceled. "Pendleton's one of the best teams we'll play this year," ace Harrison Howell said.

With both varsity coach Erich Harjo (personal leave) and JV coach Zach Pauls (medical leave) away from the team, Muehlbauer coached his first game at HRV in a 10-3 loss to PHS on April 12.

HRV's pitching will be anchored this season by right-handed starters Howell, a University of Portland signee, and Mason Spelley, Muehlbauer said. Both players have played tournaments since last season with Vancouver, Wash., club, Baum Bats NW.

Howell's fastball was clocked over 90 mph in their last tournament, and he said he is comfortable throwing his 12-6 curveball, slider and changeup depending on the hitter he faces.

Howell and Spelley will also be important in the batter's box and on defense in right field and at shortstop, Muehlbauer said.

Muehlbauer said he expects the outfield to be strong on defense and offense.

"Jacob Von Lubken went yard in the first game. He's an excellent outfielder with a good bat and a good arm," Muehlbauer said. "Trenton Hughes in center can fly."

Eastern Oregon University football commit Emilio Castaneda, Spelley and Howell also hit balls to or near the outfield wall against Pendleton. Gusty winds caused problems on fly balls for both teams' fielders in the Friday doubleheader.

Von Lubken, a sophomore, was the only underclassmen to make varsity for HRV.

Junior Joe Reitz, the team's



Above, HRVHS outfielder Nate Van Dooren hits the ball in a home game on Friday, April 16, 2021. Below left, Harrison Howell pitches for the Eagles. Walker Sacon photos



Above, catcher Joe Reitz celebrates scoring a run against Pendleton on April 16. Below, pitcher Harrison Howell sits in the dugout before his first start as a senior. Walker Sacon photos

full-time catcher, showed his all-around skill against PHS with solid defense, double-hitting power, and base-stealing speed.

Because of this season's shortened schedule, certain games between 5A Intermountain Conference teams will be considered non-league games for seeding purposes, Muehlbauer said. Unfortunately for HRV, its 11-4 win in the series' final game Friday wasn't a league win.



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**Arlet Villa-Justo Student of the week**

Arlet persevered during a challenging time of fully online learning. She has really improved and is beginning to shine in Biology class.

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### Gorge Sports Schedule

The Dalles senior Courtney Hert snags a ground ball during varsity softball action versus Redmond on April 13. Mark B. Gibson photo

### April 20-28

**Baseball**

Tuesday, April 20: Castle Rock at Columbia (DH); Crook County at Hood River; The Dalles at Ridgeview  
Friday, April 23: Umatilla at Lyle (DH)  
Saturday, April 24: Hood River at Crook County; Hood River vs. Summit at Crook County; Ridgeview at The Dalles; The Dalles vs. Mountain View at Ridgeview; Irrigon at Sherman (DH)  
Tuesday, April 27: Hood River at Ridgeview; Pendleton at The Dalles; Dufur at Lyle

**Boys golf**

Monday, April 26: The Dalles, Pendleton at Hood River, Indian Creek

**Girls golf**

Monday, April 26: Hood River at Goldendale

**Girls lacrosse**

Tuesday, April 20: Central Catholic at Hood River  
Friday, April 23: Jesuit at Hood River  
Tuesday, April 27: Cleveland at Hood River

**Boys lacrosse**

Wednesday, April 21: Hood River at Central Catholic  
Saturday, April 24: Summit at Hood River  
Wednesday, April 28: Lincoln at Hood River

**Boys soccer**

Tuesday, April 20: Columbia vs. Ilwaco at Seton Catholic

**Softball**

Tuesday, April 20: Hood River at Crook County; Ridgeview at The Dalles  
Friday, April 23: The Dalles at Ridgeview; The Dalles vs. Mountain View at Ridgeview  
Saturday, April 24: Crook County at Hood River; Summit at Hood River  
Tuesday, April 27: The Dalles at Pendleton; Ridgeview at Hood River

**Boys Tennis**

Tuesday, April 20: Pendleton at Hood River;  
Wednesday, April 21: Hood River at Redmond  
Monday, April 26: Hood River at The Dalles  
Wednesday, April 28: Ridgeview at Hood River

**Girls Tennis**

Wednesday, April 21: Redmond at Hood River; Castle Rock at Columbia  
Thursday, April 22: Columbia at Three Rivers, Longview  
Saturday, April 24: Montesano at Columbia  
Monday, April 26: The Dalles at Hood River; Columbia at Three Rivers, Longview  
Tuesday, April 27: Condon at Sherman  
Wednesday, April 28: Hood River at Ridgeview

**Track and Field**

Wednesday, April 21: Hood River, The Dalles at Redmond  
Friday, April 23: Columbia at Trico League Championship, at Seton Catholic; Glenwood, Horizon, Lyle, Sherman, South Wasco at Jeff Agar Memorial at Trout Lake  
Saturday, April 24: Dufur, Horizon at Arlington

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