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Seattle's Hit Queen

Bouska ends historic softball career

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

Paige Bouska went to Seattle University just wanting to get better at softball, season after season.

But the 2013 McNary graduate is leaving the program with more career hits than anyone who has ever played for the Redhawks.

"It wasn't really ever about setting records," Bouska said. "I had a goal every year to do better than the year before. For me, it's really cool that I set it but I wasn't really trying to, at all."

Bouska said she didn't think about the record until the start of her senior season once she realized she only needed 48 hits to break it. She made sure the historic hit, the 209th of her career, was one she wouldn't forget.

With Seattle trailing 3-2 in the bottom of the sixth inning, Bouska lashed a triple to left field to drive in two runs. The Redhawks went on to defeat Santa Clara 5-3 on March 26.

"Before the game I knew I only had two hits to break the record, one to tie it and then two to break it," Bouska said.

"That at bat in general I wasn't thinking about it at all. I just knew that we had people on base and we were behind so I needed to find a way to score them or at least find a way to get on so I was just more focused on that. It was super cool and exciting, just because I scored the run to put us ahead and I also beat the record and I hit a triple so there was just so much excitement in that moment."

Hitting a triple wasn't uncommon for Bouska, who also has the single season (7) and career (14) records for triples at Seattle.

During her senior season, Bouska also broke the single season hits record with 74 and led the team with 37 runs scored. From March 11 to March 31, Bouska went on a 13-game hitting streak. She also led the Redhawks with 23 multi-hit outings, including seven games with three hits. She reached base in 24 straight contests, including every game played in March.

Bouska said the key to her success was small

victories.

"Every game I had a goal to just get on base," she said. "I would rarely ever get shutout in a game from getting on base so just having that little goal for every game helped me to be better."

"My job as a slapper is to just get on base so that power hitters can hit me in. If I'm doing my job other people can do their job to hit me in."

Bouska was also named to the All-Western Athletic Conference First Team and voted MVP at Seattle's team banquet.

"That was amazing because it was my team that voted me for that (MVP)," Bouska said. "For them to think of me like that was really cool. It was a nice feeling that my teammates think I'm valuable in that way."

Along with her individual success, Bouska also helped the Redhawks reach new heights as a team as Seattle played in the WAC Championship game for the first time in school history.

Bouska drove in the tying run as the Redhawks upset top-seeded New Mexico State to reach the finals.

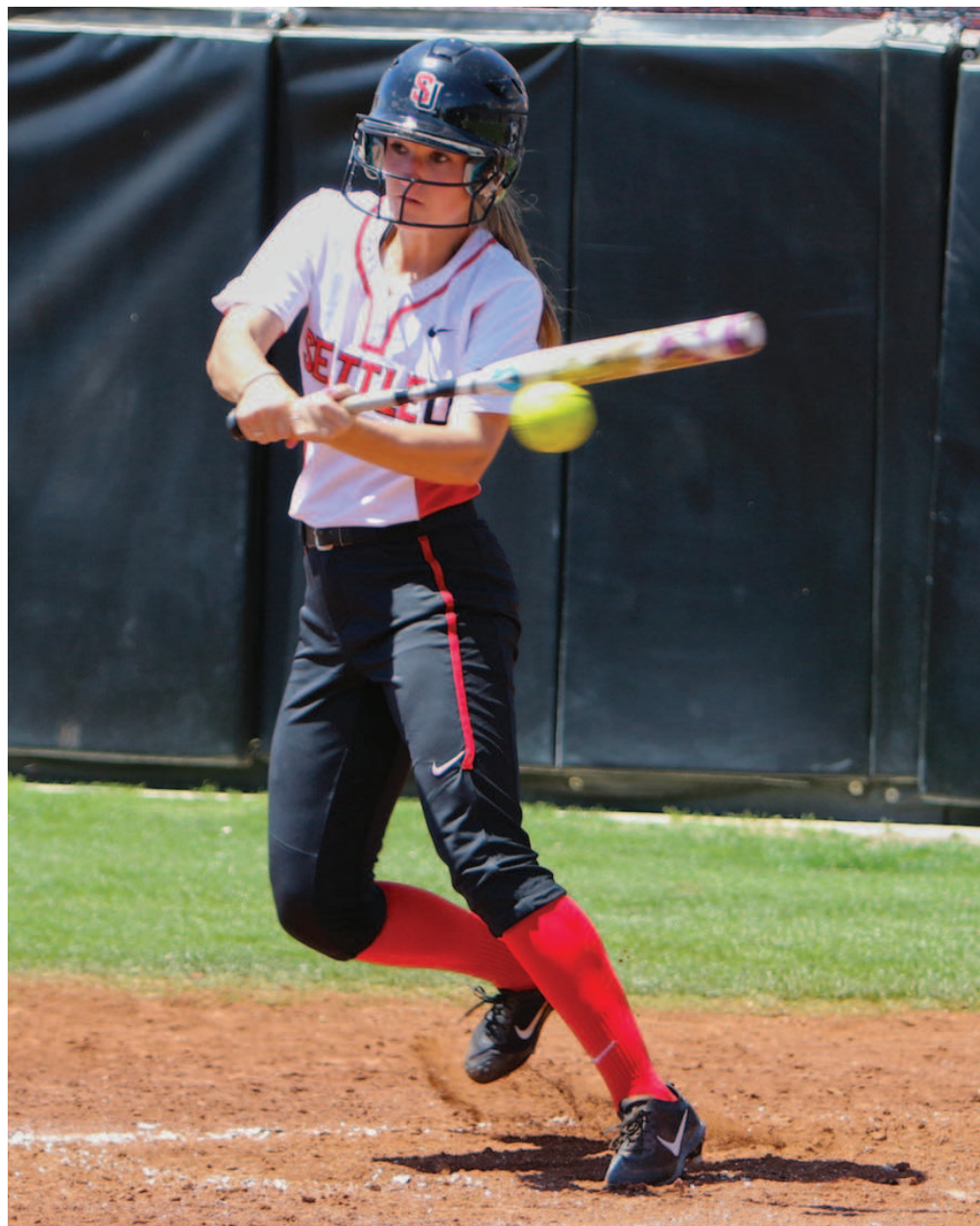
"Just being in tournament play is so exciting because the adrenaline is so high and everyone wants to do so good," Bouska said. "Everyone's behind each other's back so much and cheering each other on. Everyone is so loud and pumped up all of the time. It's an amazing atmosphere to be in. I'll miss that for sure."

However, the Aggies came back through the loser's bracket to beat Seattle twice to win the championship.

Regardless, Bouska, who finished with 235 career hits, left the program stronger than she found it.

"The team has definitely improved so much in my four years," Bouska said. "We've grown so much. Coach (Geff) Hirai has really made the program incredible and I'm excited to see where they go now."

"Coming in, my class, that was something that we talked about. We wanted to not only



Paige Bouska finished her career with 235 hits, the most of anyone in the Seattle University softball program.

SEATTLE UNIVERSITY/Brian Vale

leave softball better but the culture of the team and how we treat each other. We wanted everyone to be more like a family and like each other more. Everyone treats each other better and that helps on the field, too. I'm glad the softball is obviously better but the team culture

is also way better."

Bouska graduated from Seattle University on Sunday, June 11 with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. She is back in Keizer to figure out her next move. Her dream job is to work for the FBI.

Richards looks back on career as McNary AD

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

Three things were on Ron Richards' mind as he counted down his final days as McNary High School's athletic director.

"The community of Keizer is outstanding in its support for academics and athletics," Richards said looking back at the last seven years.

"The staff at McNary High School is all about kids, very student centered and a pretty cohesive staff and the student athletes here are outstanding."

Richards moved to Oregon in 2001 when he retired from coaching college football at the University of Montana. After nine years as the athletic director at McKay, Richards took the same position at McNary in 2010.

"McNary was so similar to the high school that I began at," Richards said.

"I began at a high school in Butte, Mont. of about 2,000 students at that time and a single high school in a single town, great athletic success, great academic success. A friend of mine (Mike Maghan) retired and I thought that would be a great place to end my career in a place similar to the one that I started."

Richards strived to be the kind of athletic director that he would want as a coach.

"Basically that's a person that works hard to meet all of the needs for each of the sports but pretty much stays off of day-to-day activities in any sport," Richards said.

"My model has been I hire great head coaches, the expectation is they hire great assistants and I monitor through the head coach."



Ron Richards is retiring after seven years as the athletic director at McNary High School.

KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley

One of Richards' first actions was forming a booster club.

"I put a call out that we needed one. The community stepped up and it's been really supportive of McNary athletics since that time," Richards said.

While the McNary Athletic Booster Club wanted to immediately tackle the turf field, Richards had a different project at the top of his wish list.

"The project in my mind was too big so I asked the booster club, we had a training room that was stuck down

in the weight room, we were trying to treat our athletes and we were doing it in a cubby hole in the middle of the weight room," Richards said. "That just didn't work. We needed a first class training room and I wanted the first project to be doing something to upgrade our training facilities. Community, booster club, they jumped behind it. We repurposed an area. That then led me to believe that we were maybe ready to take on a bigger project."

Next came the \$1-million turf field project.

Please see RETIRED, Page 13



KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley

Matthew Ismay, a First Team all-league selection in both basketball and baseball has chosen to play basketball in college at Linn-Benton.

Ismay to dual enroll at Linn-Benton, Oregon St.

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

Matthew Ismay, three-time Greater Valley Conference Defensive Player of the Year, will be terrorizing a whole new group of opponents over the next two basketball seasons.

The 2017 McNary graduate has decided to play at Linn-Benton Community College in Albany.

Before Ismay chose Linn-Benton, he first had to decide which sport he would play in college.

Playing third base and hitting in the heart of the Celtics lineup this season, Ismay was unanimously voted to the All-GVC First Team by the league's coaches after hitting .425 with two home runs, 11 doubles, 20 RBI and 22 runs scored.

But Ismay's mind was already made up before the baseball season even started.

"I probably had a choice to play either (basketball or baseball) but I've always just enjoyed basketball a little bit more," Ismay said. "I think it's

a little more exciting, a little more vigorous, and that's why I like it. Even though I knew I was probably better at baseball, my goal was always to play basketball."

While Ismay also looked at Southern Oregon and Oregon Institute of Technology, he ultimately chose Linn-Benton for more playing time on the basketball court and a dual enrollment program at Oregon State, where he plans to major in engineering.

Please see ISMAY, Page 14