



Astoria's Kelsey Wullger, No. 28, hits a pitch in the seventh inning of the softball game against Gladstone Monday. Astoria lost 6-0.

JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

Gladstone pitchers Charlie Brown and Shaye Pinner combined for a two-hit shutout Monday afternoon, as the Gladiators defeated Astoria 6-0 in the first softball game at Columbia Memorial Field. Kennedy Coy opened the game with a double in the first at-bat, teammate Andra Breshears had a triple, two singles and drove in two runs, and Laila Bennett added three RBIs for Gladstone, a Final 8 team a year ago.

The Gladiators were 26-2 in 2014 (15-0 in the Tri-Valley Conference), and were missing several key players after Gladstone's basketball team advanced to the final day of the Class 4A state tournament, played Saturday in Hillsboro.

Astoria was also not at full strength. Senior Bailey Haskell is sidelined with shoulder issues, and junior Taylor Mickie could miss a good portion or the entire season because of concussions suffered in basketball.

The Lady Fish still managed to keep the game close through three innings, trailing 2-0 heading into the fourth.

That's when Amanda Manning and Coy had back-to-back two-out singles for the Gladiators, and Breshears followed with a triple down the left field line.

Meanwhile, Astoria's only baserunners through five innings were Rylee DeMander (two walks) and Libby DiBartolomeo, who drew a walk in the fifth.

Defensively, DeMander caught several line-drive outs at second.



Astoria's Caitlyn Hougham, No. 20, swings at a pitch in the first inning.

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Astoria's Libby DiBartolomeo, No. 12, pitches to Gladstone's Kinzie McLeod, No. 33, in the third inning.

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Brown pitched four innings and struck out seven

with two walks and no hits allowed, before Pinner came on



Astoria's Rylee DeMander, No. 1, attempts to turn a double play in the fifth inning against Gladstone. View more photos online at www.dailyastorian.com

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in the fifth and finished with three strikeouts, two walks and two hits allowed.

Astoria sophomore Caitlyn Hougham broke the no-hitter with a single in the sixth, and DiBartolomeo added a single in the seventh.

In her first game back after a knee injury, DiBartolomeo pitched seven innings, finishing with four strikeouts and a walk.

The Lady Fish host Estacada Thursday.

Warrenton 13, Ilwaco 0
WARRENTON — Warrenton pitcher Nikki Blodgett opened her high school career with a two-hit shutout victory over Ilwaco Monday afternoon, 13-0 at Warrenton.

A freshman at Jewell High School, Blodgett will play for the Warriors this year, since

there is no softball program at Jewell.

Blodgett struck out 12 of the 17 batters she faced in Monday's game, allowing just two hits and a walk.

Offensively, Allysa Casteel led the Warriors with two doubles and two RBIs, while Blodgett scored twice and drove in two runs.

Sophomore Landree Mielke also scored two runs for the Warriors, who scored six in the second inning and added six in the fourth.

Four Ilwaco pitchers combined to walk 10 and hit three batters.

Warrenton hosts Tillamook for a doubleheader Friday.

BASEBALL
Gladstone 10, Astoria 0
GLADSTONE — Astoria had five first-time starters in

the lineup Monday against a tough Gladstone team, and it showed as the Gladiators scored a 10-0 win over the Fishermen in a nonleague baseball season opener.

Gladstone pitcher Trask Telesmanich allowed just one hit (to Fridtjof Fremstad), and struck out 11 with no walks in six innings of work.

Gladstone took a 2-0 lead in the second inning, as Darnell Washington scored on a fielder's choice to open the scoring.

In the third, an error scored Branden Loehr, followed by a single from Carter Watts that brought in Logan Saltares.

Astoria hosts Corbett Wednesday at Aiken Field. The game could be moved to CMH Field if weather forces a change.

Baseball: ‘The field will be a boon for us’

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2006, winning Astoria's first state title the same year.

"We had to redo the dugouts, completely redo the grass infield drainage system, build this batting cage ... and all of it was to develop this as a primary baseball field. Because to be honest, there wasn't one in town that worked."

Ernie Aiken himself and a host of volunteers "did Herculean work to make it work," Gasser said, "but the field didn't drain, and Evergreen Field (at Astoria Middle School) was never a replacement for McAllister Field.

"That was the baseball field here in the early '70s, and I know that because my father-in-law Elmer (Blomquist) was the hospital administrator, and the field was right next to John Warren Stadium."

McAllister Field was paved over, "and we never really got a ballfield back after it was gone," Gasser said.

And "I've been on a mission — since it was my father-in-law's hospital — to get one

good, grass baseball field in this community," Gasser said.

Now — not only will the Fishermen have one good grass field — Astoria will have CMH Field as a backup when the weather gets bad.

Gasser wants to "clear up some public misperception" of "why we're continuing to fix up Tapiola, when we have this new facility.

"Just because we have Columbia Memorial Field doesn't change the fact that (Aiken Field) is where the community wants to see a baseball game. This is it. It's always been it."

Over the last 10 years, he said, "the two things that I saw happening was to tear down the backstop that was rusting and falling apart, and to create seating behind the plate so people can watch games."

And that's the work currently taking place at Aiken Field.

Trees have been removed, and once completed, there will be a cement three-level terrace behind the backstop for more fan-friendly viewing.

No need for the city to pay



Wednesday's season opener vs. Corbett will likely take place at Aiken Field.

Daily Astorian photo

for it, Gasser said. It's all taken care of by the Astoria Baseball Foundation.

"Because of all of our facility needs, we started the Astoria Baseball Foundation, and that organization was put in place to improve facilities," he said. "It isn't a support for the Astoria High School baseball team — we're independent of that. It's just trying to

help facilities in our community.

"And they've been wonderful at it. Our last two projects for the Astoria Baseball Foundation are creating a new backstop and terracing the hill."

Wednesday's season opener vs. Corbett will likely take place at Aiken Field, where "We have every intention of playing, when the weather permits," Gasser said.

SCOREBOARD	
PREP SCHEDULE	
TODAY Baseball — Seaside at Molalla, 4:30 p.m.; Nestucca at Warrenton, 4:30 p.m. Track — Lewis & Clark League Ice-Breaker, at Clatskanie, 3:30 p.m.	pa, 4:30 p.m. Softball — Clatskanie at Knappa, 4:30 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Baseball — Corbett at Astoria, 4:30 p.m.; Clatskanie at Knappa, 4:30 p.m.	THURSDAY Softball — Estacada at Astoria, 4 p.m.; Molalla at Seaside, 5 p.m. Track — Astoria/Warrenton at Seaside, 3:30 p.m. Girls Golf — Astoria at Scappoose, 12:30 p.m.

"But realistically, we're going to spend most of our practice time at the new field. It's fantastic. And we'll play about a third of our games there when weather is iffy. Rather than start a game at Aiken and not get it in, if the weather is iffy, we're going to play at Columbia Memorial Field."

Besides serving as a backup field when it rains, CMH Field can be much more for Astoria, Gasser said.

"The field will be a boon for us. Once it's established and some teams have seen it this summer, we're going to be able to get some teams here. We can have our own local tournaments, and save money from traveling expenses. I see (CMH Field) as

offering summer baseball tournaments that we could play at both Columbia Memorial and Aiken. Three-day, 10-team tournaments — it would be like a cruise ship landing in Astoria. But they're not sleeping on the ship — they'll be in beds here in town.

"It will facilitate Babe Ruth Baseball, baseball camps ... we're going to use it a ton."

Ten years ago, "we had no options when the weather was bad," he said. "Now we're going to have two. To sustain a baseball program in Oregon, you need at least two fields that work. Hopefully by the end of this spring, we'll have two really good options, and we'll be using both as much as possible."