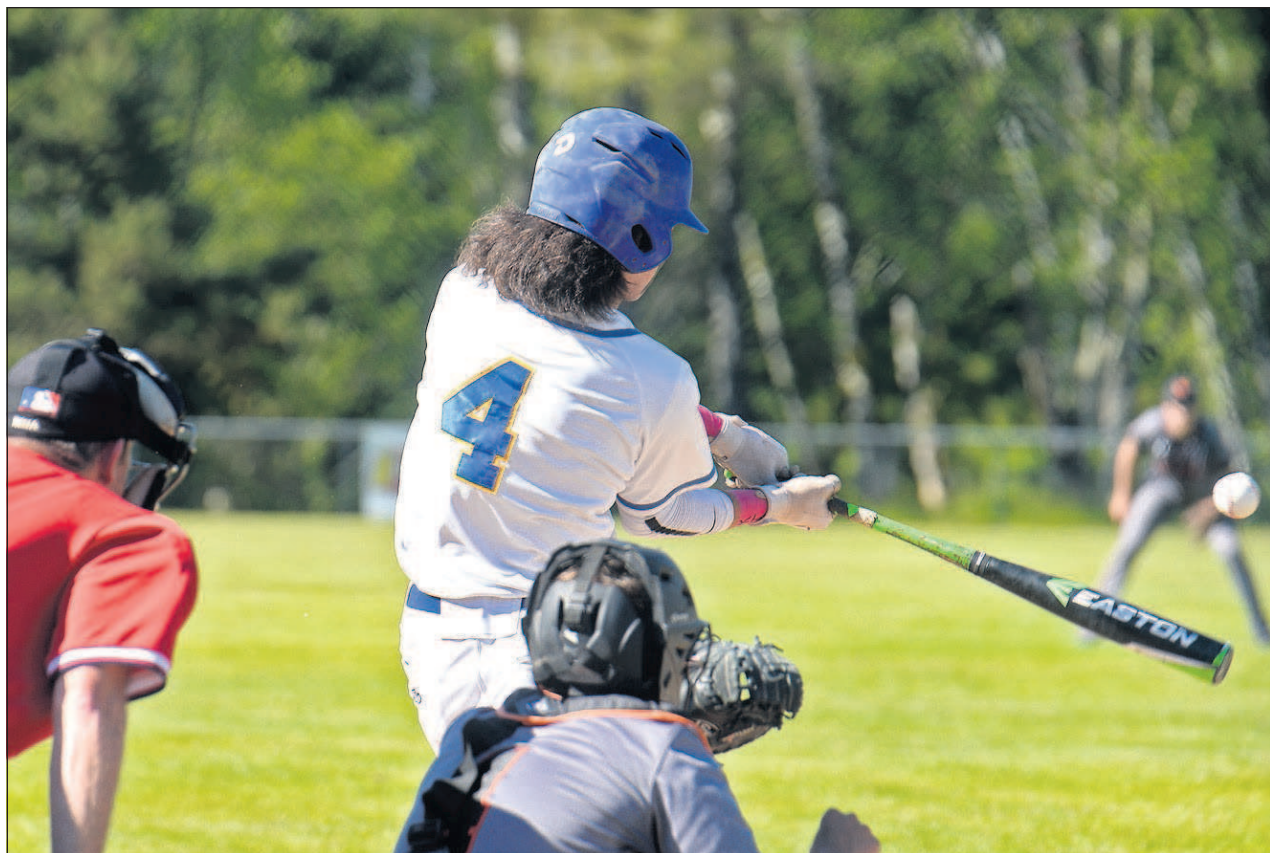


SPORTS

CONTACT US
Gary Henley | Sports Reporter
ghenley@dailyastorian.com

FOLLOW US
facebook.com/
DailyAstorianSports



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Reuben Acosta-Cruz tees off on a pitch for Knappa during Friday's game against Sherman.

Loggers cruise, 22-2

The Daily Astorian

KNAPPA — The march to a state championship is looking more like a stroll in the park for the Knappa Loggers. Make that a walk in the park. Lots and lots of walks.

Knappa's state title run is picking up steam, as the Loggers rolled past Sherman in a 2A/1A quarterfinal baseball game Friday at Teevin Field, 22-2.

Five Sherman pitchers combined to walk 14 batters and hit two more.

In addition to the 16 free baserunners, Knappa pounded out 14 hits, six for extra bases, and led 8-1 after three innings, then tacked on 11 insurance runs in the sixth.

The Loggers — who have outscored their first two playoff opponents by a combined 37-3 — advance to the semifinals for the fourth year in a row (and seventh time in the last nine years), where Knappa will host Regis, 4:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Junior Kaleb "Bubba" Miller was Knappa's big hitter on the day, with a two-run home run and a two-run single for four runs batted in. Eli Takalo also drove in four runs, with a pair of doubles in the sixth inning, while nine different players had hits for the Loggers.

And when they weren't drawing



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Mason Hoover slides home safe for Knappa during Friday's game versus Sherman.

walks, the Loggers were rounding the bases on wild pitches. Knappa baserunners scored three times on eight wild pitches, in addition to scoring twice on bases-loaded walks and once on a balk.

Brothers Dale and Eli Takalo had an easy day on the mound for the Loggers, combining on a six-hitter

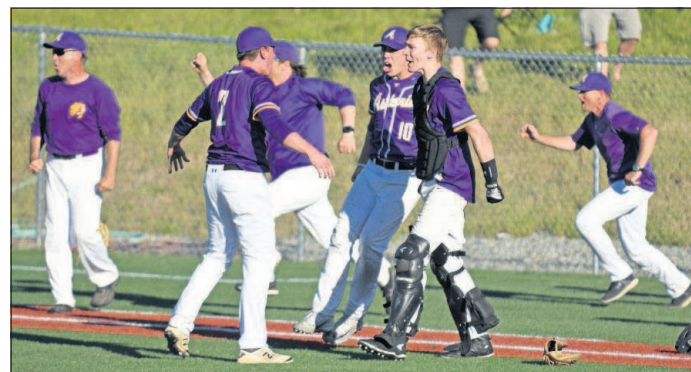
with nine strikeouts and four walks.

Sherman (18-7 overall) finished second behind No. 1-ranked Dufur in Special District 6. Dufur — a potential matchup for the Loggers in Saturday's championship game — defeated Sherman three times, but only by scores of 10-0, 12-6 and 5-0.



Mason Hoover tags out a runner at second during Knappa's game Friday against Sherman.

Colin Murphey/
The Daily Astorian



Scott Stoddard/Grants Pass Daily Courier

While Astoria coaches celebrate in the background, Fishermen Fridtjof Fremstad (2), Zac Patterson (10) and Jasygn Gohl begin the player celebration following the final out in Friday's win.

Astoria advances after Mustang rally falls short

Fishermen in semifinals

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

GRANTS PASS — Those "Road Warriors" from Astoria are at it again.

The same Fishermen magic that worked in 2006, 2009 and 2011 — and a few other years in between — is working again in 2017. Winning on the road, in the playoffs.

Since their championship run in 2006, no program at the 4A level has done it better than Astoria baseball.

Two days after a victory at Estacada, the Fishermen knocked off the top dog Friday, with an 8-7 win over No. 1 seed Hidden Valley in quarterfinal action in Grants Pass.

Now it's on to La Grande for another long road trip and another semifinal (La Grande had just one hit in a 4-0 win over Sweet Home).

"It's Mr. Toad's Wild Ride," said Astoria coach Dave Gasser, who has been on similar road trips before. Then again, road games seem to work well with this group, he said.

"For whatever reason, we just don't play well at Aiken Field," Gasser said. "It's just pop-up after pop-up after pop-up."

"For the last two games, we've been facing all-league pitchers and Players of the Year, and we're just crushing it."

Still, after one inning Friday, Astoria trailed 4-0. From there, the Fishermen scored eight runs over the next four, then held off a Mustang rally to advance to the semifinals for the second consecutive year.

The Fishermen bats also came alive, and Astoria scored their most runs in a game in three weeks, since a 15-4 win over Valley Catholic.

Trey Hageman had three of Astoria's 14 hits, with two doubles and two runs scored; Kyle Strange was 2-for-4 with

an opposite field home run; and Fridtjof Fremstad added two line-drive doubles in five at-bats.

Even Samboy Tuimato was back doing what he does best, getting hit by a pitch.

Hidden Valley's player of the day was Kolton Fisher, who belted two home runs with four RBIs.

On the mound, Astoria's Olaf Englund pitched five innings, allowing just four hits with five strikeouts and two walks, before Fremstad closed out the game for the save.

But not without some anxious moments.

In the bottom of the seventh, "First pitch, a single up the middle (by Jaykob Pereira)," Gasser said. "Second pitch, a bunt back to the mound, and Fritz showed his shortstop skills — fielded it and all in one motion throws a laser to Ole at second (to get Pereira)."

Not only that, but Pereira went in cleats high, slid past the bag and took out Englund on the play, resulting in the batter being called out for a double play.

"That was the play of the game," Gasser said. "Fremstad to Englund. If he doesn't make that out, it's first and second with no outs, with the tough part of their lineup coming up."

Hidden Valley, the 4A's No. 1-ranked team, finishes 22-4 overall, while Astoria improves to 20-5. With a win at La Grande Tuesday, the Fishermen would advance to the state championship game Saturday against either Philomath or Henley.

It's more long travels for the Fishermen — something Astoria baseball is familiar with in the post-season.

"Our kids just play better on the road," Gasser said. "We're like a Single A ball club, traveling all the time. We stop for lunch and some batting practice (at Grants Pass High School, before Friday's game). No proms, no distractions ... it's just us."

SCOREBOARD

PREP SCHEDULE

TUESDAY

Baseball — 4A Semifinal: Astoria at La Grande, 3:30 p.m.; 2A/1A Semifinal: Regis at Knappa, 4:30 p.m.

BASEBALL

Astoria 8, Hidden Valley 7
Astoria 023 210 0—8 14 1
H.Valley 400 012 0—7 8 2
Englund, Fremstad (6) and Gohl; C.Kissel, Lawson (3), B.Kissel (5), Pereira (6) and Pereira, C.Kissel (6). **W:** Englund. **L:** C.Kissel. **S:** Fremstad. **RBI:** Ast, Strange 2, O'Brien, Hageman, Gohl; HV, Fisher 4, B.Kissel, Wright, Dimatteo. **2B:** Ast, Fremstad 2, Hageman 2, Tuimato; HV, B.Kissel. **HR:** Ast, Strange; HV, Fisher 2, Wright. **HBP:** Ast, Tuimato, Englund. **LOB:** Astoria 10, Hidden Valley 2.

Knappa 22, Sherman 2
Sherman 010 000 1—2 6 1
Knappa 50312(11)x—22 14 2
Justesen, Winslow (1), M.Martin (4), Fields (6), T.Martin (6) and Winslow; D.Takalo, E.Takalo (6) and K.Miller. **W:** D.Takalo. **L:** Justesen. **RBI:** Sher, Homer, Winslow; Kna, K.Miller 4, E.Takalo 4, Hoover 2, J.Miller 2, Goozee 2, Cruz, Bartlett, Weirup. **2B:** Sher, Homer, Winslow, Colby; Kna, E.Takalo 2, J.Miller, Goodman. **3B:** Kna, Goozee. **HR:** Kna, K.Miller. **HBP:** Kna, Bartlett, Goozee. **LOB:** Sherman 8, Knappa 7. **DP:** Sherman; Knappa.

Sato holds off Helio to give Andretti another Indy 500 win

First Japanese winner of race

By JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — At the end of 500 miles around Indianapolis Motor Speedway, it was a former Formula One driver who took the checkered flag.

He even drove for Andretti Autosport.

It just wasn't Fernando Alonso.

Takuma Sato became the first Japanese winner of the Indianapolis 500 on Sunday when he denied Helio Castroneves a record-tying fourth victory as the two traded the lead in the closing laps.

"I know Helio is always going to charge," Sato said. "But he's just such a gentleman and such a fair player."

The Andretti family has struggled for decades to win this race, but as a car owner, Michael Andretti certainly knows the way to victory lane.

Sato's victory gave Andretti a second consecutive win in "The Greatest Spectacle in Racing." An Andretti



AP Photo/Michael Conroy

Takuma Sato, of Japan, celebrates after winning the Indianapolis 500 auto race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway Sunday.

driver has now won the 500 three times in the last four years, and five times overall dating to 2005 with the late Dan Wheldon.

Last year, it was with rookie Alexander Rossi. This time it is with Sato, who joined the team just this sea-

son and had largely been overlooked at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The Andretti camp expanded to six cars for the 500 to add Alonso, a two-time F1 champion who brought massive European interest to the race.

Six cars never seemed to spread the team too thin, and the main issue facing Andretti Autosport was the reliability of its Honda engines. Alonso put on a thrilling show and even led 27 laps — third most in the race — but he was sent to the paddock when his engine blew with 20 laps remaining.

"We didn't build the thing that was smoking down the front straight," said McLaren boss Zak Brown, who engineered Alonso's trip to Indianapolis. Part of the reason Alonso was able to skip F1's showcase Monaco Grand Prix earlier Sunday for Indy is because the McLaren team — and its Hondas — have grossly underperformed this season and Alonso is not a current title contender.

Alonso did have a spectacular race and simply fell victim to his engine late in the race. The crowd gave the Spaniard a standing ovation as he climbed from his car.

"I felt the noise, the engine friction,

I backed off and I saw the smoke and, yeah, it's a shame," Alonso said. "It's a very nice surprise to come here with big names, big guys, the best in open-wheel racing and be competitive."

He still drank from a carton of milk to close out his experience at Indy, and didn't rule out a potential return.

"The last two weeks, I came here basically to prove myself, to challenge myself," Alonso said. "I know that I can be as quick as anyone in an F1 car. I didn't know if I can be as quick as anyone in an Indy car."

The Honda teams had a clear horsepower advantage over Chevrolet, but things were dicey in Indy for more than a week and certainly on race day: Before Alonso's failure, 2014 winner Ryan Hunter-Reay lost his Honda and so did Charlie Kimball. Hunter-Reay led 28 laps and was a strong contender late.

"I'm really happy for Honda. They worked really hard to get us here," said Andretti. "I know how big this news is going to be tomorrow when they wake up in Japan. It's going to be huge. I'm really happy for them, that we were able to give them a win with our Japanese driver here."