

Bucks regroup, fall in extra innings

By MATT ENTRUP
East Oregonian

The Pendleton baseball team showed another glimpse of its talented roster before suffering its most recent loss as a frustrating preseason continued on Saturday at Bob White Field.

Facing a Walla Walla team that had 10-runned them the previous afternoon, the Buckaroos overcame a horrendous start to force an extra frame before the Blue Devils escaped with a 12-10 win in eight innings.

In the end, the Bucks were their own worst enemy on a day that featured some of the season's brightest moments.

Their 15 hits were a season high, but so were the 12 runners they left on base.

Pendleton rallied for six runs in the final two innings, but sloppy fielding and spotty pitching helped Walla Walla jump out to a 4-0 lead before the game's first out.

Center fielder Kyler Lunny said the team's bipolar performance felt like a metaphor for their season so far.

"So much talent on this team, it's unreal," he said after the Bucks dropped to 3-9. "I don't know, I feel like we've had opportunities like that all year and we're just not performing I guess. I know we have the potential."

The only potential the Bucks were showing early, however, was the potential for disaster.

Pendleton starter James Bradt struggled to consistently locate the strike zone and quickly fell behind after walking the game's first two batters.

What should have been Walla Walla's first out ended with Jack Peterson holding the ball between first and second base, first baseman Brady Smith lying in the dirt after tripping on his way to the bag, and the bases loaded with Blue Devils.

Bradt's defense let him down again on the next batter, and when he got Walla Walla cleanup hitter Ryan Kimball to ground into a possible double play, Wyatt Morris' throw from third base skipped in front of catcher Quinn Cockburn to allow the first run. Morris and Cockburn would later connect on a 5-2-3 double play, but not before Bradt walked in another run and Cameron Spencer and Reid Magnaghi added RBI singles.

Neither team's pitching was especially sharp, though, and both staffs finished with a 56 percent strike-to-ball ratio. But Walla Walla starter Mitchell Lesmeister pitched out of jams in the

second, third and fourth innings and was poised to pick up a win when he left with a 9-4 lead.

His replacement stranded two Bucks in a scoreless bottom of the fifth, but Joe Yenney wouldn't last long as the Bucks began their comeback from a 10-4 hole in the sixth.

Caden Smith and Kai Quinn started Pendleton's rally with back-to-back singles that Zack Myers followed with a run-scoring double.

Cockburn piled on with an RBI single that ended Yenney's afternoon, then with both batter and pitcher making their first entries in the game, Tony Papol connected on a sacrifice fly off Wyatt Taylor to make it 10-7.

Taylor got out of the inning with no further damage, but the Bucks kept the momentum thanks to Lunny's quick work in the top of the seventh.

Making his first varsity pitching appearance, Lunny boosted a bullpen wearing thin after seven games in 10 days. The senior southpaw retired Walla Walla in order, inducing ground-outs from its No. 2-3-4 hitters.

"That was definitely exciting, something that I'm going to remember for a long time," Lunny said. "It kept the team going and made me feel like I made a difference in the team."

Lunny was stuck with the loss thanks to an RBI single by Josh Needham in the top of the eighth inning, but may have done enough in his two innings of relief to earn another chance.

"He's a kid that we really didn't have penciled in as a pitcher, but a few days ago at practice he asked to throw bullpen and he looked really good," Pendleton coach Greg Whitten said. "So I thought, 'What the heck? Let's give him a shot.' And he actually doesn't do a bad job. He doesn't throw very hard but if he throws strikes he can get guys out."

"A lot of guys have sore arms and we're always looking for other pitchers, looking for someone to throw strikes," Lunny said after his 39-pitch outing. "So I saw an opportunity and jumped in the bullpen to see what I got."

Lunny went from the mound to the batter's box to start Pendleton's seventh, and found himself on third after a walk and consecutive wild pitches.

Morris brought him home with a single to left field, then following an infield single by Smith, scored on Quinn's team-leading third hit.

Taylor caught Myers swinging for the first out, then Walla Walla coach

Prep track and field

Carlin takes top spot in three events

East Oregonian

MORO — Weston-McEwen's Madison Carlin won three events to pace the TigerScots' fifth-place finish at the Moro County Invitational track meet on Saturday.

Carlin led a crowded field to win the 100- and 200-meter dashes, and then edged a few other locals for the long jump title at the 1A-2A meet.

She edged Echo's Taylor Swaggert in the 100 with a time of 13.37 seconds. Swaggert followed at 13.94, then a second wave of locals rounded out the top five as Condon/Wheeler's Deana Harris (14.15), Heppner's Kaelyn Lindsay (14.18) and Ione's Rachel Holland (14.19) crossed in quick succession.

Carlin (28.27) edged Holland (29.98) for the 200 title, then out-leapt Ione's Jessie Flynn for the long jump gold with a distance of 15 feet, 9.25 inches. Heppner's Wilson (14-6.5) and Echo's Kelsey Ranger (14-2.5) were third and fourth in that event.

The highest placing local girls team was Condon/Wheeler in fourth.

Harris won them a gold medal in the pole vault (9-0) and Matney Jamieson scored podium finishes with silver in the

shot put (34-3) and discus (89-3) and third in the 100-meter hurdles (18.71).

Also winning an event for the local girls was Heppner's Wilson with a triple jump of 30-6, and Weston-McEwen's Shylee Stroud with a time of 6:14.63 in the 1,500 meters. Holland also added another silver in the javelin (105-9) for Ione.

Horizon Christian won the girls team title with 92.5 points and host Sherman was second with 84.

The only gold medal earned by a local boy was Codon/Wheeler's Jared James winning the pole vault with a height of 12-0.

Several athletes reached the podium, though, and Heppner's Kaden Clark paced the Mustangs to the highest finish for a local boys team. Heppner was fifth while Bickelton (WA) and Horizon Christian snagged the top two team spots.

Clark placed second in three events, coming in just behind Horizon's Mason Bloomster in the 100 (11.78) and 200 (24.28) and then adding silver in long jump (19-4).

Skyler Palmer added a silver in the 800 (2:19.68) for Heppner, Jacob Speed was second in the 400 (55.35) for

"That was definitely exciting, something I'm going to remember for a long time."

— Kyler Lunny, Pendleton High School reliever, after pitching a 1-2-3 inning

Keith Gradwohl intentionally walked Cockburn to set up a force at any base.

Papol didn't play along, though, and hit another sacrifice fly to tie the score 10-10.

Another intentional walk brought Pendleton reserve T.J. Hancock to the plate for what would have been his first at-bat of the game, but Taylor snuck another pitch past Blue Devils catcher Spencer to jump start Quinn on third. Spencer quickly corralled the ball, though, and his throw from the backstop reached a covering Taylor just in time to apply the tag.

After Needham and Anders Davidson drove in runs to put Walla Walla back on top, Kyle Barker never allowed Pendleton to threaten in the bottom of the eighth.

"It was really disappointing the way we started this game, but I was impressed with the guys with the way they came back and battled back," Whitten said. "It was unfortunate to lose, but we did hit the ball a lot better today and that was good to see, and it was good to see the effort."

"I think the team, towards the end of the game, really bonded in a way," said Papol. "(Friday) was a really tough loss for us and we went and talked about what we wanted to do differently and we said that we really needed to come more together as a team. We had a little bit of difficulty, but I think towards the end we made up for that a lot. We just got behind everybody and if somebody made a mistake we were right there for them and I think that's really what helped us."

Pendleton's next game is its last tune-up before the start of league play. The Bucks play at La Grande on Thursday at 4 p.m., then have a nine-day break before hosting Hood River Valley in their Columbia River Conference-opening doubleheader on Saturday, April 18.

WALLA WALLA 12, PENDLETON 10 (8 innings)									
	R			H			E		
WW	412	111	02	—	12	17	4		
PHS	112	003	30	—	10	15	3		
Mitchell Lesmeister, Joe Yenney (5), Wyatt Taylor (6), Kyle Barker (8) and Cameron Spencer, James Bradt, Jack Peterson (4), Kyler Lunny (7) and Quinn Cockburn. W — Taylor. L — Lunny.									
2B — Anders Davidson, Trevor Coronado (Walla Walla); Kai Quinn, Zack Myers (Pendleton).									

Weston-McEwen, and Condon/Wheeler's Beau Edwards was second in the 110 hurdles (16.95).

3A Track

MADRAS — Riverside's Justyce Smith won both sprints and placed third in the high jump to lead the Pirates at the Madras Invite track meet on Saturday.

Smith held off a pair of La Grande runners for her titles, taking the 100 in 13.28 seconds and the 200 in 27.66.

Her highest mark in high jump was 4-foot-6.

No other Riverside girl made the podium, and the Pirates were last out of eight teams with 26 points. La Grande won with 213.

The Pirate boys didn't have any gold medals, but got some silver from senior Bryant Cardenas.

He was second in the 200 (24.74), and ran the lead leg of the second-place 4x100 relay team (48.10) that also included David Rodriguez, Edgar Guzman and Anthony Ramirez.

Riverside again finished last out of eight teams with 25.5 points while La Grande won with 153.5.

Prep baseball

Rockets drop two in double-header

By ERIK SKOPIL
East Oregonian

PILOT ROCK — Dufur second baseman Connor Uhlade shut down two Pilot Rock seventh inning rallies with fantastic plays in the field Saturday, to earn the Rangers an afternoon league play sweep of the Rockets.

A lunging stop and flip to first base beat Pilot Rock's Brayden Postma to close out a 7-4 win in the opener, and slick tag and throw resulted in a double-play to end the second game in a 7-6 Dufur win.

Uhlade's heroics were the type of defensive plays first-year Pilot Rock coach Dan Ward was hoping to see from his own Rockets (4-6). With an infield that features a freshmen starter at shortstop, the Rockets had been error-plagued in all eight games entering Saturday's Special District 6 opener with Dufur (10-1).

Unfortunately play wasn't clean enough for the Rockets on Saturday. Pilot Rock committed two errors in the first game, and booted three in the second to open league play with two narrow defeats.

"If we get a little bit cleaner, we're winning these one or two runs games rather than losing them," Ward said.

Instead, it was Uhlade's glove that closed out both games and Rocket gaffes that helped build the Ranger leads. All three second game errors led to Dufur runs.

Pilot Rock trailed Dufur 7-3 after 6.5 innings in the second game. But, the Rockets didn't back down.

The first six batters reached base in the bottom of the seventh to suddenly make it a one-run game with just one out gone. But, Mike Hiatt chopped a ball up the middle, Uhalde fielded it, took a step, tagged Dillon Fritz before firing an out to first baseman Kolbe Bales to conclude the Rangers sweep.

The pair of losses has the Rockets off on the wrong foot in league play. The competitive nature of each has Ward encouraged, however. Pilot Rock was run-ruled in both games versus Dufur a year ago.

"They're a real good ball club and we can compete with them," he said. "It's exciting to see these guys. We've got a good team. We're still making a few too many errors, but we'll get there."

Ward rotated through Hiatt, Jacobe Pierce and freshman Levi Thieme on the bump. All three were able to eat up innings, but also took a beating from the power-hitting Ranger bats. Dufur finished the doubleheader with 23 hits — 11 of which were of the extra base variety.

Thieme made his first varsity start in game two. Through four innings, the

young right-hander kept the bats at bay, allowing just three runs to touch home.

Things began to unravel in the fifth. Thieme walked the first batter, and allowed three of the next four to reach on base hits, the last of which was a two-run Nick Little double that put the Rockets behind by three runs.

Thieme's emergence as a mound option is crucial to the Rockets success this season. With seniors Hiatt and Pierce acting as the only other reliable arms, the upperclassmen have been forced to throw a ton this year. In Thursday's doubleheader sweep of Sherman, the seniors threw all but one inning.

"I think he's just as capable as the other guys," Ward said of Thieme.

Thieme also turned in a stellar day at the plate. He recorded five hits in two games, including three that scored runs.

Pilot Rock plays a league doubleheader Saturday at Heppner.

DUFUR 7, PILOT ROCK 4									
Game one	R			H			E		
DUF	011	041	0—	7	11	1			
PRHS	011	011	0—	4	10	2			
Trevor Tibbets and Jake Kortge, Mike Hiatt, Jacob Pierce (5) and Dillon Fritz. W — T. Tibbets. L — J. Pierce.									
2B — Kolbe Bales (DUF) Bryson Caldwell (DUF), Connor Uhlade (DUF) Hagen Pence (DUF), Mike Hiatt (PRHS), Bryson Pierce (PRHS), Levi Thieme (PRHS).									

DUFUR 7, PILOT ROCK 6									
Game two	R			H			E		
DUF	021	031	0—	7	12	2			
PRHS	102	000	3—	6	11	3			
K. Bales, H. Pence (4) and B. Keverer, J. Kortge (4), L. Thieme, M. Hiatt (7) and Dillon Fritz. W — H. Pence. L — L. Thieme.									
2B — K. Bales (DUF), Bailey Keverer (DUF), H. Pence (DUF), Nick Little (DUF); B. Pierce (PRHS). 3B — T. Tibbets (DUF); Justin Williamson (PRHS). HR — Bryson Caldwell (DUF)									

SHERMAN 5-3, WESTON-MCEWEN 3-2 — At Athena, the Huskies snuck out of Athena with a pair of narrow non-league victories on Saturday.

Sherman scored three runs in the seventh inning of game one to rally from behind for a win, and then used a complete effort from Maverick Winslow to shut the TigerScots (3-9) out of the win column over the weekend.

The Tigerscots starting pitching was also top notch. Sutter Bell and Travis Hendley allowed just two earned runs in 12 innings on the mound. Reliever Brandan Dearing didn't allow an earned run in relief.

Cedric Hall doubled twice in the opener, but teammates were unable to bring him around.

Weston-McEwen opens league play at Irrigon on Saturday.

SHERMAN 5, WESTON-MCEWEN 3									
Game one	R			H			E		
SHE	100	001	3—	5	7	3			
WMHS	000	030	0—	3	3	6			
Justesen, Troutman (5) and Moe. Sutter Ball and Cedric Hall. W — Troutman. L — Ball.									
2B — M. Martin (SHE); C. Hall (WMHS) 2, Shaw Broncheau (WMHS).									

SHERMAN 3, WESTON-MCEWEN 2									
Game two	R			H			E		
WMHS	000	100	1—	2	3	1			
SHE	010	011	X—	2	3	2			
Travis Hendley, Brendan Dearing (6) and C. Hall, Winslow and Moe. W — Winslow. L — Hendley.									
2B — Brett Speed (WMHS). 3B — Vince Roff (WMHS).									

College baseball

Blue Mountain loses both games in doubleheader

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Blue Mountain baseball team again found itself in a pair of tight games with the region leaders only to fall away at the end on Saturday in a NWAC-East doubleheader against Columbia Basin.

Coming off a pair of one-run losses to Treasure Valley earlier in the week, Blue Mountain fell to their East Region co-leaders 8-1 and 4-2 on Saturday.

It wasn't until the sixth inning that Columbia Basin (19-5, 6-2) pulled away in both, though.

The Hawks broke open a 2-1 Game 1 with three runs in the sixth, then tacked on three more in the eighth for good measure.

Joey Cotto led the Hawks at the plate going 2 for 4 with a walk and three runs, and Jason Gleichman pitched eight innings for the win, giving up five hits and one earned run while striking out six and walking one.

Eric Purcell started for BMCC and went 5 1-3 innings while surrendering four

hits, three earned runs and four walks in the loss. He struck out four. Jacob Butcher led BMCC's offense going 2 for 4 with one RBI.

Game 2 went into the sixth inning again with CBC up 2-1, and Cotto connected on a one-out double to get them rolling. Zack Chamberlain drove him in with a single, then added an insurance run on a BMCC error with two outs.

Jordan Ackerman scored in the seventh for BMCC, but the T-Wolves went down in order in the eighth and ninth.

Adam Mathews got the win, lasting six full and giving up four hits and two earned runs while striking out three and walking one. Drew Loera led the CBC offense going 3 for 4 with an RBI and a run.

Austin Wilson took the loss after lasting 3 2-3 innings and giving up three earned runs off seven hits and two walks. He struck out two. Ackerman led BMCC's offense going 1 for 3 with a walk and two runs.

BMCC will play a doubleheader at Yakima Valley on Wednesday.

Prep softball

TigerScots fall to defending state champs

East Oregonian

UNION — The TigerScots made too many mistakes to unseat defending champion Union in both school's league softball openers.

Weston-McEwen committed nine errors in two losses to the Bobcats. Union won the first 9-4, and at took the second in six innings by score of 12-2.

The TigerScots (6-3, 0-2) were especially sloppy in the second game, committing six fielding errors, leading to 10 unearned Union (7-1, 2-0) runs.

Taylor Entze was sharp in both games at the plate. The senior turned in a pair of multiple-hit games. She

drove in three runs in the first game on a trio of hits and two in game two.

Weston-McEwen turns its attention now to top-ranked Pilot Rock next Saturday. The Rockets have yet to lose in 10 games this season.

UNION 9, WESTON-MCEWEN 4									
Game 1	R			H			E		
WMHS	000	030	1—	4	6	3			
UNI	000	603	X—	9	11	3			
Jessica Lambert and Sydney Peal, Jaiden Wright and Carsyn Roberts. W — J. Wright. L — J. Lambert.									
2B — Keegan Shepard (WMHS); Keesha Sarman (UNI) 2.									

UNION 12, WESTON-MCEWEN 2 (6 innings)									
Game 2	R			H			E		
UNI	005	061	—	12	14	2			
WMHS	002	000	—	2	7	6			
Jenna Monson and C. Robert, J. Lambert and S. Peal. W — J. Monson. L — J. Lambert.									
2B — J. Wright (UNI), Ashten Wright (UNI), Taylor Baremore (UNI), Kindra Moore (UNI), J. Monson (UNI); Megan Coffman (WMHS).									

IRRIGON 8-9, HEPPNER 4-8 — At Irrigon, timely hits and the return of Juliza Garza to the pitching circle boosted the Irrigon Knights in their Special District 6 openers on Saturday.

Making her first appearance this season after getting her tonsils removed, Garza threw the complete game as Irrigon (7-1, 2-0 SD6) won the opener 8-4, then shut down a hot-hitting Heppner (1-7, 0-2) from a relief role to earn the win in Game 2.

Cassandra Fleming, Kayla Gilman, Kendra Roberts and Garza all had key hits in a six-run sixth inning that put Irrigon up 8-0 in Game 1.

Then Roberts and Kelly

McLaughlin each drove in three runs to lead the offense in the night cap.

McLaughlin drove