

Bulldogs hope competition leads to wins

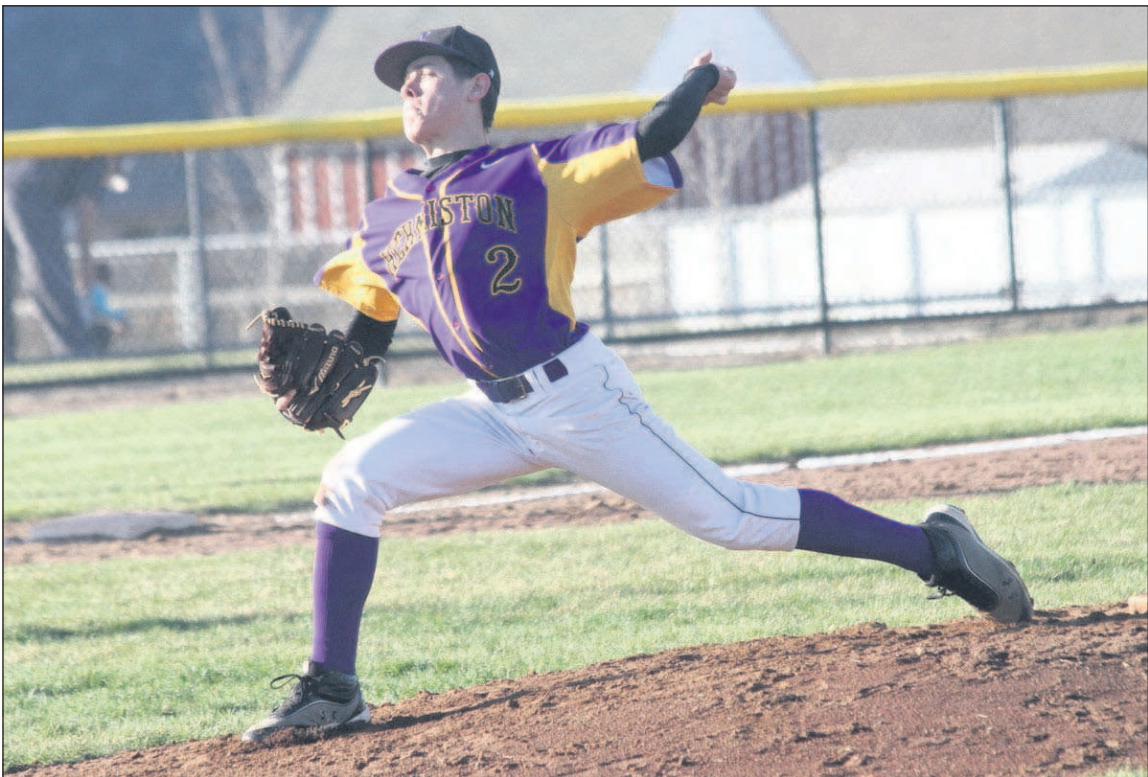
BULLDOG BASEBALL

COACH: Lance Hawkins, 2nd year
2015 SEASON: 11-15, 4-8 CRC (3rd)
POST SEASON STORY: Hermiston lost 1-0 to St. Helens in play-in round. They last missed the playoffs in 2012.
LOSSES: OF/C Jay Lindeman, C Landon Gammell, OF/RHP Cole Smith, 2B Kyler Mikami, OF/RHP Michael Gossler, OF Chase Knutz, 1B Dylan Caldwell.
RETURNERS: OF/LHP RJ Robles, sr., OF/RHP Hayden Edmiston, sr., INF Caden Schwirse, soph., 1B Kaden Caldwell, jr., OF Mitch Brown, jr., 3B/RHP Lukas Tolan, jr., U/RHP Daniel Gossler, jr., SS/RHP Chase Root, sr., 1B/RHP Tyler Sexton, sr.

By SAM BARBEE
East Oregonian

When Pete Carroll took over as head coach of the Seattle Seahawks in 2010, he instituted a policy of team-wide competition, a system he used while in charge at USC.

The policy states that no position is set in stone, each is up for competition between the potential starter and potential back-up. With only a



RJ Robles, a senior lefty for Hermiston, leads a staff that head coach Lance Hawkins is relying on in 2016.

handful of seniors lots of underclassmen, second-year Hermiston baseball coach Lance Hawkins will employ the policy of competition this season with his Bulldogs.

“It’s constant battle. We need that everyday competition, because that’s how you get better,” Hawkins said. “And I think we get complacent. We’re gonna put some guys in uncomfortable positions and go, ‘Let’s battle it out.’ ... It’s the

Pete Carroll: Compete, compete compete.”

Hermiston has talent, but most of it is young. The Bulldogs are buoyed by lefty RJ Robles, who, as a junior, might have been Hermiston’s best and most consistent starting pitcher. Along with senior side-armer Hayden Edmiston, Robles will consistently be at the top of the rotation, and Hawkins is depending on them.

“I’m relying on our

pitchers,” Hawkins said. “I’m relying that our pitchers do what they did last year. There’s no reason why they shouldn’t. The league’s gonna be tougher than hell, again.”

A bright spot on last year’s squad was third baseman Lukas Tolan. He accrued the most varsity innings of any player last year, and figures to have the inside track on the penultimate bag.

However, that policy of competition still rings true

at the hot corner.

“He’s gotta carry himself, hate to say it, like more than a sophomore,” Hawkins said of Tolan. “I tell you what, there’s some guys who are gonna push him, even though he started every game.”

The Columbia Basin Conference is traditionally a good league, with Pendleton, The Dalles and defending state champ Hood River Valley all returning hefty portions

of their lineups from last season. Hawkins knows the league schedule will test his club, but is optimistic his new policy of competition can cultivate a winning culture in Hermiston.

“We gotta win. We gotta win now. We haven’t had a CRC championship or an IMC championship since ‘82. It’s time. There’s no reason why we can’t be right in the mix. Just gotta have these guys start believing it.”

HERMISTON GOLF

GIRLS
COACH: Josh Brown, 1st year
2015 SEASON: The Hermiston girls did not advance out of districts last season.
LOSSES: Madison Welch, Taurie Brock, Saige Smith, Lyndsee Anderson, Britnee Hayden.
KEY RETURNERS: Sydney Adams, jr., Makenzie Lind, jr., Grace Blackhurst, soph., Sonja Peterson, soph., Alexis Lambert, jr.

The Bulldogs graduated their top varsity five from last season, and have a whole new group for the 2016 slate.

Juniors Sydney Adams and Makenzie Lind were close to the varsity five last season, according to head coach Josh Brown, and played in a couple events. He’s hopeful that the girls can gain confidence as the season goes and advance to state.

“The girls are doubtful (they can get to state) because they’re young,” Brown said. “They’re doubtful, but I keep painting that target. It’s definitely feasible.”

2016 SCHEDULE		
Mar. 15	at The Dalles	8 a.m.
Mar. 21	Portland Golf Course	TBD
April 1	Eagle Ridge GC	1:30 p.m.
April 2	Eagle Ridge GC	TBD
April 4	at Pendleton	noon
April 6	at Hood River	10 a.m.
April 7	at Pendleton	noon
April 12	at La Grande	1 p.m.
April 20	Big River GC	9 a.m.
April 22	Central Valley (WA)	9 a.m.
April 28	Corvallis Tourney	8 a.m.
May 8	SD Qualifier (Hood River)	TBD
May 19	Special District Qualifier	TBD
May 20	Special District Qualifier	TBD

BOYS
COACH: Aaron Lind, 1st year
2015 SEASON: The Hermiston boys finished fourth at the state tournament last season. Paden Lacoursiere finished tied for 15th, and Zac Adams and Keegan Crafton finished tied for 18th. Anders Lind came in tied for 27th, and Jared Thacker was tied for 38th.
LOSSES: Zac Adams, Paden LaCoursiere, Keegan Crafton.
KEY RETURNERS: Anders Lind, jr., Zach Thacker, jr.

2016 SCHEDULE		
Mar. 18	at The Dalles Invitational	10 a.m.
Mar. 21	vs. Sunnyside	10 a.m.
Mar. 31-April 2	at Raven Rumble	8 a.m.
April 4	at Wildhorse Invite	TBD
April 10	at Bend Invitational	11 a.m.
April 11	at Bend Invitational	TBD
April 14	vs. Pendleton	TBD
April 18	at Mountain View Tourney	10 a.m.
April 19	at Mountain View Tourney	TBD
April 21	Hermiston Invitational	9 a.m.
April 25	at Crook County Tourney	11 a.m.
April 26	at Corvallis	8 a.m.
April 27	at Corvallis	TBD
May 5	at 5A Regional Qualifier	11 a.m.
May 6	at 5A Regional Qualifier	TBD
May 7	at 5A Regional Qualifier	TBD



Anders Lind is one of the top returning golfers for the Hermiston boys this season.

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