

Pilot Rock loaded with talent for title defense

COACH: Darin Fitzpatrick, 5th year
2015 SEASON: 26-2, 10-2 SD6 (2nd)
POSTSEASON STORY: Defeated league-rival Weston-McEwen 2-1 in the 2A/1A championship game to capture the schools’ second state title in history.
LOSSES: C/INF Bailey Weinke
KEY RETURNERS: P/UT Tehya Ostrom, jr.; P/OF Rebekka Holman, sr.; INF Sara Weinke, soph.; OF Rhyanne Oates, soph.

The 2015 season was one to remember for the Pilot Rock Rockets.
The team lost just two games and won a total of 26 — none bigger than the 2-1 victory over Special District 6 rival Weston-McEwen to capture the schools’ second state championship.
As they head into 2016, the Rockets are determined to make it No. 3 as the return all but one starter from last years’ team in catcher Bailey Weinke.
“The goal is the same as it was last year which is to win another,” Rockets coach Darin Fitzpatrick said. “But we know we have a target on our backs this year.”
The Rockets return a wealth of talent, returning seven all-league selections headlined by pitcher Rebekka Holman (14-0, 1.05 ERA , 73 K’s), Tehya Ostrom (12-2, 0.86 ERA, 95 K’s), Sara Weinke (.479 avg., .507 OBP), and Rhyanne Oates (.381 avg).
Richardson said that with both Holman and Ostrom returning to the mound, pitching will once again be the Rockets’ strong suit this season, carrying over from last years’ staff that allowed just 39 runs all season (1.4 per game) which was the second-lowest total in all of OSAA.
“Pitching always is because it has to be in the game of softball,” he said. “Without it you won’t get very far.”
On the offensive side of the field, Pilot Rock also returns senior Madison Dave, sophomore Kayla Deist, and junior

Bekah Roe to help carry an offense that averaged just over nine runs per game last season.
The Rockets will have one less hurdle in their road to the postseason, as Weston-McEwen has moved up to 3A this season, something that Richardson said left him disappointed.
“It’s teams like (Weston-McEwen) that make you great because you have to work harder, so it’s kind of a letdown not to play them,” he said. The Rockets still play the Tiger-Scots on Mar. 19 in non-league action, however.
But with that in mind, Richardson is challenging his team during the non-league schedule by playing a tough slate. The Rockets are hosting Central Linn, Scio, and Weston-McEwen on Mar. 18-19 for a tournament that the team will need to dig deep to win.

2016 SCHEDULE

Mar. 14	vs. Riverside	4 p.m.
Mar. 18	vs. Central Linn	9 a.m.
Mar. 18	vs. Enterprise	5 p.m.
Mar. 19	vs. Scio	11 a.m.
Mar. 19	vs. Weston-McEwen	5 p.m.
Mar. 25	at Union Tournament	TBD
Mar. 26	at Union Tournament	TBD
Apr. 12	at Culver*	4 p.m.
Apr. 16	vs. Culver (DH)*	11 a.m.
Apr. 19	vs Burns*	3:30 p.m.
Apr. 23	at Burns (DH)*	1 p.m.
Apr. 26	at Heppner*	4 p.m.
Apr. 30	vs. Heppner (DH)*	11 a.m.
May 2	at Mac-Hi	4 p.m.
May 3	vs. Union*	4 p.m.
May 7	at Union (DH)*	11 a.m.
May 10	vs. Irrigon*	4 p.m.
May 14	at Irrigon (DH)*	11 a.m.

*League game



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

In this April 14, 2015 file photo, Rocket pitcher Rebekka Holman lets one fly Saturday during the second game in a doubleheader with Weston-McEwen in Pilot Rock.

PILOT ROCK BASEBALL

COACH: Dan Ward, 2nd year
2015 SEASON: 17-10, 9-3 SD6 (1st)
POSTSEASON STORY: The Rockets drew into the state tournament as a No. 8 seed and advanced to the 2A/1A quarterfinals before getting knocked out by Monroe 6-2.
LOSSES: P/3B Jacob Pierce, P/1B Mike Hiatt, 2B Ryle Campbell, OF Dalton Lowden, C/OF Dillon Fritz; OF/1B Justin Willingham
KEY RETURNERS: INF Braydon Postma, jr.; OF Chis Weinke, soph.; P/OF Levi Thieme, soph.; SS Bryson Pierce, soph.

The Pilot Rock Rockets are set up for another successful season as they try to earn a second-straight district title.
Their road to that district title will be a bit different, however, as Pilot Rock moves to over Special District 7 this year where they will face the likes of Burns, Grant Union, Union, and Weston-McEwen in league action.
The Rockets return a plethora of underclassmen talent led by sophomores Levi Thieme, Chris Weinke and Bryson Pierce. Thieme is set up to be the teams’ No. 1 pitcher, and Pierce has a year of experience under his belt after spending his freshman year as the starting shortstop.
Pilot Rock also gets back junior infielder Braydon Postma who finished 2015 with a .406



bating average to land on the all-district team. But after that, Rockets coach Dan Ward said that plenty of spots are still up for grabs.
“We kind of have an idea of the way things will line up, but we’re still waiting for some guys to step up,” he said.

2016 SCHEDULE

Mar. 18	vs. Enterprise (DH)	11 a.m.
Mar. 21	vs. Elgin (DH)	11 a.m.
Mar. 24	vs. Umatilla (DH)	11 a.m.
Mar. 29	at Heppner	4:30 p.m.
Apr. 1	at Irrigon (DH)	11 a.m.
Apr. 4	vs. Heppner	4:30 p.m.
Apr. 8	vs. Sherman	4 p.m.
Apr. 12	vs. Weston-McEwen*	4 p.m.
Apr. 16	vs. Weston-McEwen* (DH)	11 a.m.
Apr. 19	at Burns*	3:30 p.m.
Apr. 22	vs. Burns* (DH)	1 p.m.
Apr. 26	vs. Mac-Hi	4:30 p.m.
May 3	at Union*	4 p.m.
May 7	vs. Union* (DH)	11 a.m.
May 10	vs. Grant Union*	4 p.m.
May 14	at Grant Union* (DH)	11 a.m.
May 21	Districts (at Pendleton)	TBD

*League game

PILOT ROCK TRACK & FIELD

COACH: Phil King, 2nd year
POSTSEASON STORY: The Rockets qualified six individuals to the state track meet, where the girls team placed 20th and the boys team 24th.
RETURNERS: (BOYS) Gunner McCall, sr.; Devin Hasher, jr.; (GIRLS) Abby Rigby, soph.; Megan Glynn, sr.; Siobhan Holman, soph.; Rachel Willingham, jr.

After qualifying six individuals for the 2015 state track meet, the Pilot Rock Rockets are set up for another successful season as they return all six of those runners.
On the boys side, the Rockets are led by senior Gunner McCall — who earned a sixth place finish in the 400 meter dash — and junior Devin Hasher, who finished in second place in the high jump by clearing a 6-foot-1 height.
On the girls side, sophomore Abby Rigby returns and is ready to continue her success after a stellar freshman year saw her earn an eighth-place finish in the 100 meter dash and a fourth place finish in 200 meter dash, as well as serving on the 4x100 relay team that



finished seventh at the state meet.
Also back on the girls team is junior Rachel Willingham (fourth in 300 meter hurdles), sophomore Siobhan Holman (100 meter hurdles), and senior Megan Glynn (400 meter dash). The trio also teamed up for the 4x100 relay team, with Glynn serving as the anchor.

2016 SCHEDULE

Mar. 17	at Buck Track Classic	Noon
Apr. 1	Mac-Hi Carnival	1 p.m.
Apr. 2	Sherman Invite	11 a.m.
Apr. 8	River’s Edge (Umatilla)	3 p.m.
Apr. 9	Stanfield Invite	10 a.m.
Apr. 14	Mustang Invite	10 a.m.
Apr. 15	Green & Gold Invite	3 p.m.
Apr. 19	Grant Union Meet	3:30 p.m.
Apr. 23	Union Pepsi Invite	11 a.m.
Apr. 30	Condon Invite	11 a.m.
May 6	Baker Invite	11:30 a.m.
May 13	Districts (at Athena)	TBD
May 19	State (at Eugene)	TBD

IRRIGON BASEBALL



The Knights’ Austin Rice pitches during a game in Irrigon last season. Rice returns as a valuable leader for the Knights this season.

EO file photo/
Kathy Aney

COACH: Randy Henrichs, 2nd year
2015 SEASON: 16-11, 6-6 SD6 (3rd)
POSTSEASON STORY: The Knights were defeated in the second round of the district tournament. They have never played in the state playoffs.
LOSSES: OF Darin Chapman, OF A.J. Timpy, INF Alan Blackman, INF/OF Ryan Reynolds
KEY RETURNERS: 1B/P Nate Verley, sr.; P/LF Fredy Vera, sr.; C Cougar Kroske, sr.; P/CF Austin Rice, jr.; SS Adrian Roa, soph.; UT/INF Nate Gumbert; 2B Tanner Mills, soph.; 1B Johnny Phillips, soph.; P/RF Hayden White, jr.; OF Jose Covarrubia, sr.

Experience and familiarity are two things the Knights have plenty of this season as Coach Henrichs enters his second season with the high school, but has been coaching most of his players since they were in Little League.

The Knights also bring back a strong group of leaders that includes seniors Nate Verley, Fredy Vera and Cougar Kroske, and junior Austin Rice.
“They are the best leaders you could ever ask for for a coach,” Henrichs said. “They’re just doing a great job for me.”
Add in some talented underclassmen that are pushing for playing time and the Knights are looking for their best season yet in

2016.
“We’re looking really good, I’m looking forward to a good season,” Henrichs said. “The kids are working really hard, they’re focused and listening well. I’m just really pleased with them. I think they’re going to be pretty competitive this year.
“We want to make districts and we want to make state and from that point we’ll set goals for higher when we get there.”

2016 SCHEDULE

March 17	vs. Riverside	3:30 p.m.
March 22	vs. TBD (Irrigon Tournament)	12:30 p.m.
March 23	vs. TBD (Irrigon Tournament)	TBD
March 28	vs. Riverside	4 p.m.
April 1	vs. Pilot Rock (DH)	11 a.m./1 p.m.
April 12	vs. Dufur*	4:30 p.m.
April 16	at Dufur (DH)*	11 a.m./1 p.m.
April 19	vs. Culver*	4 p.m.
April 21	at Umatilla	4 p.m.
April 23	at Culver (DH)*	11 a.m./1 p.m.
April 26	at Heppner*	4:30 p.m.
April 28	vs. Umatilla	4 p.m.
April 30	vs. Heppner (DH)*	11 a.m./1 p.m.
May 10	at Sherman*	4 p.m.
May 14	vs. Sherman (DH)*	11 a.m./1 p.m.

*League game

IRRIGON SOFTBALL

COACH: Jeff Botefuhr, 1st year
2015 SEASON: 13-13, 5-7 SD6 (4th)
POSTSEASON STORY: The Knights made their most recent state playoff appearance in 2013.
LOSSES: OF Anna Ayala, 3B Desi Jo Roybal
KEY RETURNERS: P Julisa Garza, sr.; CF Kelly McLaughlin, sr.; 2B Bailey Vandecar, sr.; SS Bea Aguilera, jr.; P/UT Kayla Gilman, jr.; 1B Cassandra Fleming, jr.; UT Mya Chapman, soph.



The Knights are looking for a return to the state postseason with several key returners for Coach Botefuhr’s first season.
“I’m real excited for what I’ve seen the last two weeks,” he said. “It’s just been nothing but positive, and the communication between the kids has been great. Of course we want to win and we want to compete for league champs and districts, but at the same time we’ve got a goal for that at the end of the season, but for now we’re just going week by week and just going form there.”

Julisa Garza and Kayla Gilman return as the team’s top pitchers and Botefuhr said he’s got a lineup that should be able to produce plenty of runs to support them.
Along with key defensive returners, Botefuhr said junior catcher Lily Mills has looked strong in practice and sophomore Jada Burns will be playing various positions as she makes her varsity debut.
“They’re all working hard and that’s our motto this year, it’s all about team, team, team,” Botefuhr said. “I think we’ll be definitely be competitive.

2016 SCHEDULE

March 17	vs. Riverside	3:30 p.m.
March 22	vs. Willamina	10 a.m.
March 22	vs. Burns	3:30 p.m.
March 23	vs. Toledo	1 p.m.
March 23	vs. Knappa	3:30 p.m.
March 28	vs. Riverside	3:30 p.m.
April 5	vs. Umatilla (DH)	3/5 p.m.
April 12	vs. Union*	3:30 p.m.
April 16	at Union (DH)*	11 a.m./1 p.m.
April 19	vs. Culver*	4 p.m.
April 23	at Culver (DH)*	11 a.m./1 p.m.
April 26	at Burns*	3:30 p.m.
April 30	vs. Burns (DH)*	1/3 p.m.
May 3	vs. Heppner*	4 p.m.
May 7	at Heppner (DH)*	11 a.m./1 p.m.
May 10	at Pilot Rock*	4 p.m.
May 14	vs. Pilot Rock (DH)*	11 a.m./1 p.m.

*League game

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