

ATHENA

# Knights smother Cougars in semifinals

Irrigon explodes for 19 runs in final two frames

By ERIC SINGER  
East Oregonian

The three regular season meetings between Irrigon and Echo softball went heavily in favor of the Cougars, as Echo won two of three and outscored the Knights 24-11 in the three games.

As soon as the Special District 1 semifinal game between the Knights and Cougars began on Saturday, it appeared to be in Echo's favor as well as the Cougars jacked three home runs in the first inning and tallied five hits to take a 5-0 lead. The Knights could have easily closed up shop and waved the proverbial white flag there, but they kept their spirits high and did their best to battle back.

And in the fourth inning, Irrigon broke through. Thanks to patience at the plate, some timely hits and several defensive miscues by the Cougars, Irrigon put together nine runs in the fourth and then 10 more runs in the fifth to stun the Cougars with a 19-9 victory in five innings.



"We really settled in after that first inning," Irrigon coach Jeff Botefuhr said. "We were rattled a little at the start with nerves. I told the girls that we've had some games where we've been down and came back this season and we've learned a lot more from those games then we would have just rolling through and it showed today. There's no quit in that team."

Cassandra Fleming had standout day at the plate for Irrigon, as she went 2 for 4 with a double, two runs scored and four RBIs from the leadoff spot. Ema



Irrigon's Ema Combes connects on a two-RBI single during the fifth inning of Saturday's Class 3A Special District 1 semifinal against Echo in Athena. Irrigon won the game 19-9 in five innings.

Staff photo by Eric Singer

Softball	
 Echo	 Irrigon
9	19

Combes also had two hits, as well as two runs and two RBI while Karrizima Luna had a team-high three runs scored.

"You tip your hat to them (Irrigon)," Echo coach Javier Garcia said. "Jeff (Botefuhr) kept the girls in it, they kept battling and gave themselves opportunities and we gave them one too many."

The fifth inning especially stung for Echo, as pitcher Kenzie Gonzales began the inning with two straight strikeouts and finished off her third, but catcher Alex Putman couldn't hang on to the pitch and it rolled to the backstop letting the runner reach base to extend the inning. Five batters later,



Echo's Hannah McCarty watches her solo home run sail over the fence in center field during the first inning of Saturday's semifinal against Irrigon in Athena.

Staff photo by Eric Singer

Gonzales induced another strikeout but yet another dropped third strike let another runner reach.

In all, 12 batters came to the plate in the fifth with Irrigon registering four hits and the Cougars scoring three errors.

"Had you told us it would rely on our defense

today I would've been fairly confident we'd come out winners but that's why you play the game," Garcia said. "Unfortunately the bounces didn't go our way ... We got a little lax and there's no switch to turn off you have to ride the momentum and we weren't able to recover enough."

Kendra Hart, Gonzales and Hannah McCarty all homered in the first inning for Echo, which was more than the team's previous season total of just two. Hart and McCarty each had a team-high two hits along with Samantha McQuown who added a team-high three RBI. "We've really not had many home runs so that was fun," Garcia said with a smile. "The wind was helping out, we got some balls up in the air and took advantages of some bad pitches early."

TRICK DEFENSE

Irrigon shortstop Jada Burns has flashed her defensive ability throughout the season and it came up big again on Saturday. In the third inning with a runner on second base for Echo, Putman hit a ball in the air up the middle destined for the outfield but Burns stretched out to her left to make a diving catch and then stepped on second to double up the runner for the third out.

Then in the fifth inning with Echo's Alyssa Ray on second, Jennifer Martinez dribbled a grounder to Burns. Ray watched Burns begin to make the throw to first and then left the bag to advance to third, however Burns actually faked the throw and held onto the ball, tagging Ray for the second out.

Botefuhr said that was actually a set play that he had practiced with her just this week in practice.

"We worked on that this week, the sign when I yelled 'Jada B! Jada B!'," Botefuhr said. "And she tricked me, I thought she blew off the sign and was going to one because she came up and sold it so well."

	R	H	E
IHS 0009(10)	19	10	1
EHS 500 22	9	11	7

W — M. Chapman, L — K. Gonzales.  
2B — J. Burns, C. Fleming (IHS); A. Putman (EHS). HR — K. Hart, K. Gonzales, H. McCarty (EHS).

# ALL-DISTRICT:

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seven, while allowing a meager .182 batting average against.

She was also a force atop the TigerScots lineup, hitting .621 in 11 district games, with two home runs and four doubles and an incredible .750 on-base percentage.

"I'm really appreciative that the coaches thought I was player of the year," Hillmick said on Saturday, "because I worked really hard in the offseason for my senior year. I really appreciate my team, too, because if we don't win the league it would've been harder for me to win this so without them I wouldn't be here."

Representing the TigerScots on first team were catcher Sydney Peal, infielder Jordyn Lambert and outfielders Courtney Cain and Amie Coffman.

District runner-up Irrigon had two first team selections with infielder Jada Burns and outfielder Ema Combes.

Echo's four first team selections were pitcher Kenzie Gonzales, infielder Hannah McCarty, outfielder Kendra Hart and utility player Codi Hewlett.

Riverside landed two first team spots with pitcher Skylar Wightman and infielder Sadie Hasbell, while

- Special District 1 All-district teams**
- First team**  
P — Kenzie Gonzales, sr., Echo/Stanford; Skylar Wightman, jr., Riverside.  
C — Sydney Peal, sr., Weston-McEwen  
IF — Jada Burns, jr., Irrigon; Sadie Hasbell, sr., Riverside; Hannah McCarty, sr., Echo/Stanford; Jordyn Lambert, soph., Weston-McEwen.  
OF — Amie Coffman, soph., Weston-McEwen; Courtney Cain, soph., Weston-McEwen; Kendra Hart, fr., Echo/Stanford; Ema Combes, fr., Irrigon.  
UT — Codi Hewlett, fr., Echo/Stanford.
- Second team**  
P — Kayla Gilman, sr., Irrigon; Mya Chapman, jr., Irrigon.  
C — Lily Mills, sr., Irrigon; Abby Hernandez, jr., Riverside.  
IF — Charmayne Bennett, jr., Weston-McEwen; Tyree Burke, soph., Weston-McEwen; Charlene Alvarez, soph., Umatilla.  
OF — Alexis Villegas, Riverside; Lauryn Journot, soph., Umatilla.  
UT — Macy Hancock, Riverside.
- Honorable mention**  
C — Alex Putman, soph., Echo/Stanford  
IF — Cassandra Fleming, sr., Irrigon; Bailey Botefuhr, fr., Irrigon; Monique Montoya, jr., Echo/Stanford.  
OF — Samantha McQuown, sr., Echo/Stanford.  
UT — Emma Burke, sr., Weston-McEwen.

# TRACK & FIELD:

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onto the podium in eighth as Rohrman, Felix Garcia, Isaac Sanchez and Mercado finished in 3:32.23.

Individual stars for Hermiston included Rohrman with a silver medal in the 100 meter hurdles with a PR time of 14.68 and a fifth place finish in the 300 hurdles, Hiram Maciel with a silver medal in the high jump after a PR of 6-feet-5, and Madison Wilson with a silver medal in the 100 meter hurdles with a PR of 15.12 and a sixth place finish in the 300 hurdles.

In the field, Ebony Wilson capped a stellar season and successful career with a fourth place finish in the triple jump with a PR of 36 feet, 2 inches and Maddy Juul placed twice with a bronze medal in the shot put with a throw of 37-00.50 and then sneaked onto the podium in the discus with a PR toss of 108 feet, 10 inches for an eighth place finish.

It was a quiet day for the Pendleton Buckaroos, who had just two athletes find the podium. In the 400 meter dash, Soren Wolf de Gavia turned in a time of 51.29 for a seventh place finish, and Kiara Glover finished off her career with a PR in the triple jump as she flew 35-09.25 to finish in fifth.

- OSAA Track & Field Championships**  
at Hayward Field, Eugene  
Local placers in Saturday's finals
- Class 5A BOYS**  
4x100 relay — 2. Hermiston (Gutierrez, Ena, Rohrman, Mercado), 43.30  
1,500M — 6. Isaac Sanchez, Hermiston, 4:06.02  
400M dash — 7. Soren Wolf de Gavia, Pendleton, 51.29  
110M hurdles — 2. Tyler Rohrman, Hermiston, 14.68  
800M run — 8. Isaac Sanchez, Hermiston, 2:00.10  
300M hurdles — 3. Tyler Rohrman, Hermiston, 41.16  
4x400 relay — 8. Hermiston (Rohrman, Garcia, Sanchez, Mercado), 3:32.23  
High jump — 2. Hiram Maciel, Hermiston, 6-05

- GIRLS**  
4x100 relay — 2. Hermiston (Wilson, Reagan, Lincoln, Torres), 48.83  
100M dash — 7. Scout Reagan, Hermiston, 12.60  
400M dash — 8. Elsa Torres, Hermiston, 1:02.63  
100M hurdles — 2. Madison Wilson, Hermiston, 15.12  
300M hurdles — 5. Audrey Lincoln, Hermiston, 47.05; 6. Madison Wilson, Hermiston, 47.56  
4x400 relay — 2. Hermiston (Torres, Wilson, Reagan, Lincoln), 4:04.65  
Discus — 8. Maddy Juul, Hermiston, 108-10.  
Triple jump — 4. Ebony Wilson, Hermiston, 36-02; 5. Kiara Glover, Pendleton, 35-09.25.  
Shot put — 3. Maddy Juul, Hermiston, 37-00.50; 8. Stephanie Miesars, Hermiston, 35-01.75



TOP: Alexis Mercado, of Hermiston, leads the 4x100-meter dash on Saturday. His team won the section and placed second overall.  
BOTTOM: Madison Wilson, of Hermiston, competes in the 100-meter hurdles final on Saturday. Wilson placed second with a time of 15.12 seconds.

Staff photos by Kathy Aney



The Weston-McEwen TigerScots pose with the Class 3A Special District 1 championship trophy after defeating Irrigon 4-1 in the district championship game on Saturday in Athena.

Staff photo by Eric Singer

# TIGERSCOTS:

Continued from 1B

starting a new game," she said. "It's zero to zero and we have to do what we have to do."

"And for me, I just needed to keep the ball low and I knew we'd take the bats at them."

After Hillmick retired Irrigon (16-10) 1-2-3 in the top of the first, Weston-McEwen jumped on the Knights in the bottom of the frame. Hillmick started things with a leadoff single and then a one-out walk by Jordan Lambert set things up for Charmayne Bennett, who unloaded the bases with a three-run home run that was blasted to center field for a 3-0 lead.

And the TigerScots played add-on in the second when Courtney Cain blooped a single into shallow left field, which took a funny hop past the Irrigon defender and allowed Tyree Burke to score from third for a 4-0 TigerScot lead.

Irrigon's only offense came in the fourth inning, when Mya Chapman unloaded on a 2-2 pitch that Hillmick left too far up in the zone and sent it over the center field fence for a solo home run. Lilly Mills followed Chapman with an infield single, which proved to be the Knights' only hits of the day.

In fact, Irrigon had just three baserunners the entire



Weston-McEwen's Lillian Duckett slides safely into third base as Irrigon's Karrizima Luna coralls the throw during Saturday's Class 3A Special District 1 championship game in Athena. Weston-McEwen won the game 4-1.

Staff photo by Eric Singer

game as Weston-McEwen's defense never flinched and made some tremendous plays along the way. Head coach Jeff Griggs said he was ecstatic with the team's play in the field, especially completing a game with zero errors.

"Bailey stayed strong in the circle, but in the middle innings we really made some nice defensive plays," he said. "And that had to be a factor today, to keep Irrigon off the basepaths because they came into this game with a lot of momentum."

"Irrigon's a really good team and I look at this as a huge win for us."

Griggs was also happy to have his lineup card filled out the way he had envisioned prior to the season, something that has been a rarity with a rash of

injuries and illnesses that have continuously hit the team this season.

"We were counting on one hand this year when we really add everyone all healthy and all together, so this felt fantastic," Griggs said. "All the spots one through nine were filled in with what we expected at the first of the year, we weren't running with 11 or 12 or what it had been in the past and I was pretty excited to have everybody ready to play."

UP NEXT  
Weston-McEwen will host a first round playoff game on Wednesday afternoon in Athena, while Irrigon will hit the road for the first round.

	R	H	E
IHS 000 100 0	1	2	1
W-M 310 000 X	4	6	0

W — B. Hillmick, L — K. Gilman.  
HR — M. Chapman (IHS); C. Bennett (W-M).