

# Cougars pitch well, hit a ton in opener

**By Rich Rautenstrauch**  
Wallowa County Chieftain

The Wallowa Cougars baseball team opened up their season playing against the Weston McEwen/Helix JV team Monday evening, March 30. Heavy hitting and solid pitching paved the way for a 15-4 Cougars victory. "The boys played well all across the board," Cougars coach Thomas Wenke said. "We didn't practice at all last week because of spring break so it was nice to see the team come together so well, that early." The Cougs also had only one error in the game.

Wallowa's Gareth Murray and Josh Rummell each pitched two innings to start the game with Murray recording 4 K's and Rummell 5. Robert Delancey closed out the game, only giving up three runs. Wallowa had 19 hits in the game with Gareth Murray

going 3-for-4, Josh Rummell 1-for-4 with 3 RBIs, Noah Allen, 4-for-4, Micah Fuller 3-for-3 with a walk, Koby Frye 3-for-4, Robert Delancey 4-for-4, Austin Lindross 1-for-1 (he hurt his ankle in the second inning), newcomer Micheal Pendarvis 1-for-4 with 3 RBIs, Cameron Salm-

on 0-for-3, Daniel Delancey 1-for-2, and Danny Araya 0-for-2. Micah Fuller is now on the baseball team's roster. He'll be a two-sport athlete this spring sharing track time with baseball. Coach Wenke said Micah stole three bases Monday and is one of the

fastest runners he's seen playing high school ball. "He was on second base before the catcher even stood up," Wenke said. The Cougars will take a week off before continuing their schedule April 8, with a rematch against Weston at home.

## EAGLES DROP THREE IN TOURNAMENT



Cheryl Hoefler/EO Media Group

Tate Olsen of the Joseph Eagles gets waved home by coach Calvin Word during a March 27 Les Schwab Icebreaker Tournament game against the Pilot Rock Rockets held in John Day. Joseph lost the game 8-3. The Eagles also lost to Culver twice, 8-2 and 14-4, in the tournament.

## DAYS WITH DR. SEUSS



Courtesy photo

Second-grader Jace Kassahn, left, and Xander Sarbacher, fourth grade, together enjoy the Dr. Seuss classic, "Green Eggs and Ham," during Dr. Seuss Week at Enterprise School.

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# Elk talk, tag drawing attract crowd

**By Steve Tool**  
Wallowa County Chieftain

A special presentation on Rocky Mountain Elk at the Wallowology Center drew a packed house on March 27. Wallowa Land Trust sponsored the event with presentations by Mike Hansen for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Justin Jones of The Nature Conservancy.

A drawing for a Landowner's Preference bull elk tag with a two-day guided hunt on the Conservancy's land on the Zumwalt Prairie capped the evening.

Hansen gave a brief history of elk in the area, which he said had dwindled to unacceptable numbers at the close of the 19th century due to overhunting and the sale of elk meat to urban areas in the state. The U.S. government

saved the local herds by importing about 30 head of elk from Yellowstone National Park in 1911 and 1913.

Through intensive management, elk now number just under 5,000 in the area. The herd grew by about 200 animals last year, even though hunters took about 600 of them.

Hansen also mentioned the number of elk threaten aspen groves and local shrubbery because elk eat them when green grass is scarce. He added that the elk have caused some damage to the Zumwalt because of their large population there as well as causing damage to farmer and rancher crops and fencing. Hansen said about 80 percent of the elk graze on private land.

The Nature Conservancy owns in excess of 30,000 acres of the 300,000-acre Zumwalt Prairie. According to Jones, The Nature Conservancy's mission on the Zumwalt is promoting and

demonstrating human behavior that exemplifies knowledge for, and respect for, non-human inhabitants on the Zumwalt.

Jones mentioned that the Conservancy is not anti-ranching and in fact leases some of its land to cattle ranchers. Jones said the Conservancy and ranchers have a generally amicable relationship and he appreciated the sense of community among landowners on the Zumwalt. "So much of the reason the Zumwalt is still so incredible is because of the community that encourages people to treat the Zumwalt well, and that's been going on for a long time," Jones said.

Besides the community, the Conservancy uses science to determine how to care for its land. "No matter how good our intentions, we always want to be trying to learn something and be knowledgeable about our impacts on the non-human inhabitants. The Nature Con-

servancy feels good about being able to contribute to the scientific knowledge about these ecological systems and how human behavior impacts those systems," Jones said.

Like the ODFW, the Conservancy recognizes that while the elk offer some benefit to the Zumwalt, they also do some damage. The Conservancy gives away a number of LOP tags not only to raise revenue, but to help control the elk population and help local non-profits. The Conservancy is also working to reduce elk damage to aspen and woody shrubs, which supply cover to a number of animal species in the area.

After the two men spoke and answered audience questions, Kathleen Ackley, Wallowa Land Trust executive director, Jones and Hansen gathered around the tumbler of tickets while Hansen drew the name of Jeff Losli of North Plains for the LOP tag. Losli did not attend the event.

Hansen said he appreciated the excellent turnout and found the audience questions thoughtful.

Jones said he enjoyed speaking at the event, and when asked what he'd like people to know about the Conservancy, replied, "We see ourselves as members of this community. We have assets that can help people make a productive living on the Zumwalt while maintaining the native plants and animals. We can also create opportunities for those who don't live and work on the Zumwalt to go out and enjoy that incredible place."

Ackley said the elk tag raised \$10,000 for WLT, and added the money is not earmarked for a particular project. "We'll use it to meet our mission, which is conserving special places in Wallowa County."

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