



Mandy Decker

Wallowa Senior Christopher Noble with a hit for the combined Joseph, Enterprise, Wallowa and Elgin squad.

Wallowa Valley boys tested, splitting against Vale

Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

The Wallowa Valley/Elgin combined baseball team split their doubleheader against the Vale Vikings on April 12, winning the first, 6-5, but breaking down with a loss in the second, 12-2.

"It wasn't one thing, it was everything," Coach JR Collier said. "The pitching wasn't great and the batting wasn't great. It wasn't a very good turnout."

The first game went the full nine innings before the WVE eked out a victory. The first of two pitchers for WVE was Senior Coy Aschenbrenner who pitched five innings before yielding to sophomore Trace Evans as relief, earning the win.

"He's got a heck of an arm," Collier said of young Evans. "He's a great pitcher, and being only a sophomore, he'll go on to do great things. Coy pitched a great game as well." Ultimately, Aschenbrenner struck out six while issuing just one walk while Evans fanned two and walked three.

Both Gus Ramsden and David Salim went 2 for 5 in the box while senior Christopher Nobles went 3 for 5. "We had a pretty good offense," Collier said. In a back forth battle the Vikings jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first, which WVE matched two innings later. After seven innings the game remained tied 4-4.

The Vikings scored a run in the top of the ninth, but the WVE answered with two runs and no outs in the bottom of the inning earning the victory.



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Wallowa Valley and Elgin cooperative's pitcher, Gus Ramsden on the mound.

"Overall it was a fighting game," Collier said. "We suddenly decided to wake up in the ninth ... It

was a good one to win because it was so close-fought all the time," Collier said.

Round two of the doubleheader tested the grit of both teams, combating rain, hail, snow and wind that particularly affected the hitting.

Still, WVE looked promising from the get-go, scoring two runs in the first, but then bats went silent. "We couldn't get anything going," Collier said. He added that no one had more than one hit.

Windy weather also had an impact, according to Collier. He said that Nobles hit a towering shot, only to be held up by the wind long enough for the center fielder to make the play. "When it came off his bat, it was whistling," Collier said. "We had a few big hits like that."

Salim started the game for WV, finishing out 3 2/3 innings before Evans came on in relief, followed by Gage McKay of Elgin High School.

"No one did poorly, but we gave up a lot of hits," Collier said. "Our pitching was struggling and our hitting was struggling."

On offense, Flynn Nave had a double, as did Salim in the fourth. Collier said nearly everyone got a hit but the team could not string them together for runs.

"We'll be all right," Collier said. "We'll bounce back and come back strong."

WVE is now 3-1 in league play and 7-2 overall. They find themselves sitting in the ninth slot in the 3A state rankings, according to OSAA. The team next plays Irrigon on Saturday, April 20.

Outlaws softball fight hard but drop 2 in first home stand

Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

The Outlaws softball squad dropped both ends of their home opening doubleheader versus Vale on Friday, April 12. Bad luck and bad weather dogged the team through both losses, 11-5 and 22-19 respectively.

The Outlaws saw an optimistic start to the first game. "It was a well-played game until the sixth," Coach Gasset said. The girls were up and looking forward to vic-

tory, leading 5-3 at that point.

He added that less-than-stellar defense added fuel to the Vikings fire as the Outlaws committed five errors. A treacherous wind wreaked particular havoc on the outfielders.

Then, the Vikings brought out the battle-axes and went to work on the Outlaws, scoring seven runs after Outlaws let two runners on with errors followed by a home run. "We didn't play well defensively," coach Gary Gasset said.

For the Outlaws, Liz Row-

ley went 2 for 4 with three RBIs. Coach Gasset said the squad had a number of players with one hit while Rowley was the only player with an second base hit. Pitcher Lexie Gasset took the loss for the Outlaws.

The second game started with fireworks as the Vikings exploded with 11 runs in the first inning, which included a grand slam by the fourth hitter.

A tired Gasset started the game until Rowley came on in a relief role, but she suf-

fered bad luck as well. Kirkland then took the mound and finished the game for the Outlaws, throwing 112 pitches.

"She's a strong girl, unusual for a freshman," Coach Gasset said.

In response, Gasset said that the Outlaws managed a seven-run first inning themselves, and came within three runs of the Vikings several times through the slugfest.

One-woman wrecking-ball Kirkland clobbered Viking's pitching. She went

6 for 6, knocking in five RBIs that included two homers, two doubles and two singles. She also scored four times.

"I've never heard of anyone going 6 for 6 in a game," Gasset said.

Mighty sophomore Claire Farwell was 2 for 5 at the plate with five RBIs, four coming from a grand slam in the seventh inning. Meanwhile, freshman Liz Rowley went 3 for 4 in the box with an RBI. Aysia Salim, also a freshman, went 3 for 5, belt-

ing a double and three RBIs.

"It was pretty fun watching these freshmen," Gasset said.

Senior, Gasset herself went 1 for 3 with a double and walked three times and scored three runs.

"I'd like another shot at Vale," Coach Gasset said. "I think we can beat them. We'll see them in the playoffs."

The ladies are now 2-2 in league play and 5-4 overall while ranked 10th in the state. They next play at Irrigon on April 20.



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