

**SOFTBALL**

## OUTLAWS CONCLUDE SUCCESSFUL SEASON

Softball team finishes with the most wins since 2010

By **RONALD BOND**  
For the Wallowa County Chieftain

**E**NTERPRISE — Rilyn Kirkland homered three times and finished with five RBIs, powering the Wallowa Valley softball team to a victory in a high-scoring first-round playoff game against Dayton on Wednesday, May 25, 9-7, for its first state playoff game victory in eight years.

Kirkland finished the day 4-for-4 and added a double in the win. She also scored four times. The senior accounted for roughly half of the team's offense on her own, as she had four of the team's nine hits and runs, and had five of eight RBIs credited to the Outlaws.

Abby Straight added two RBIs, Cooper Nave had two hits and Liz Rowley scored twice for the Outlaws.

The last time the program won a playoff game in softball was in 2014, a 6-5 victory earned over Santiam Christian. The team lost in the quarterfinals that year, interestingly, to Dayton.

Rowley tossed a complete game in earning the playoff victory despite a rough day in the circle. The senior allowed seven runs on just five hits, walked eight and struck out four. Two of the runs were unearned.

On May 27, the Outlaws saw their season end with a 10-0 road loss in the quar-



Wallowa Valley players mob Rilyn Kirkland after a home run Friday April 29, 2022, during a doubleheader sweep of Riverside.

Melissa Kirkland/Contributed Photo

terfinals to Yamhill-Carlton, the same team that eliminated Wallowa Valley from the playoffs in 2019.

Nave and Aimee Mey-

ers had the only two hits for Wallowa Valley, while the Tigers had seven hits and scored 10 runs, six earned, off Rowley.

The Outlaws wrapped up the season with a final record of 20-8, the most wins for the program since going 23-5 in 2010.

## Wallowa Valley rewarded for strong play

By **RONALD BOND**  
For the Wallowa County Chieftain

The Wallowa Valley softball team had its best season in close to a decade, and could chalk up the success to solid play across the board.

The Special District 2 all-league selections are evidence of that.

The Outlaws had eight players garner recognition on the all-league squad, including two who earned honors at multiple positions, giving the team 10 selections. Five of those athletes, in fact, gained first-team notice.

Leading the way was Liz Rowley, who had two first-team nods, one as a first-team pitcher and one as an outfielder. Rowley was part of a strong 1-2 punch in the pitcher's circle for the Outlaws along with Aimee Meyers.

Meyers was tapped as a first-team infielder, and also garnered a nod as a pitcher, landing on honorable mention.

Rilyn Kirkland, who provided a constant force in the batting order for Wallowa Valley and was a strong



Liz Rowley had two first-team nods, one as a first-team pitcher and one as an outfielder.

Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

catcher, was selected as a first-team utility player. Cooper Nave gained a spot as a first-team first baseman and Sophie Moeller was tagged a first-team infielder.

Alex Rowley was selected to the second team

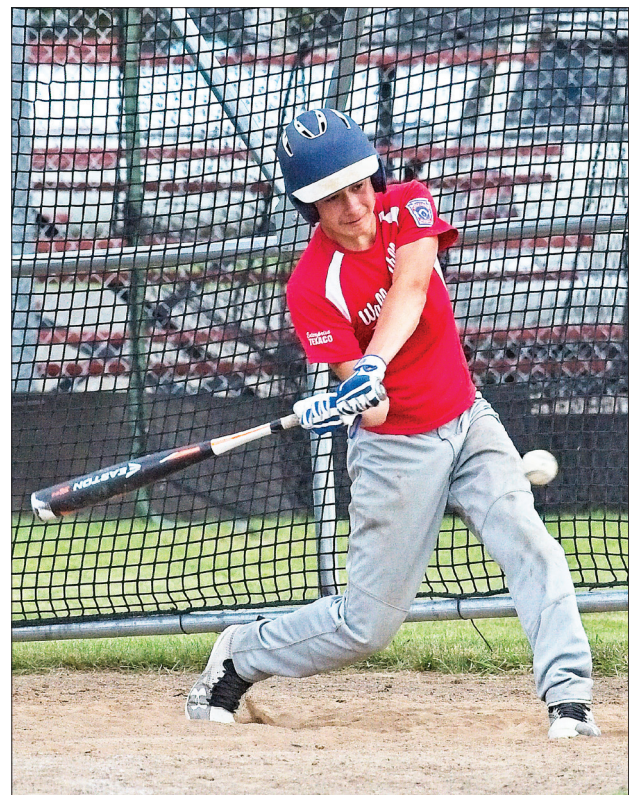
as an outfielder, the Outlaws' lone second-team selection.

Rounding out the selections were juniors Sydney Hopkins and Maci Marr, both of whom were honorable mention in the outfield.

The 10 selections bested

everyone in Special District 2, including Burns, who went undefeated in SD2 play. Burns, though, did land the league pitcher (Ayla Davies), player (Merissa Medley) and coach (Robert Medley) of the year.

**BASEBALL**



Ellen Morris Bishop/For the Wallowa County Chieftain

Jaxon Grover earned all-league selections for Wallowa Valley at infield and pitcher.

## Eagles earn 11 spots on all-league team

By **RONALD BOND**  
For the Wallowa County Chieftain

The Eagles had two additional players earn a spot on the second team — Jackson Decker as an infielder, and Lane Rouse as an outfielder.

The Wallowa Valley baseball team had 10 players garner a combined 11 spots on the Special District 5 all-league team, including three who were selected to the first team.

Jaxon Grover led the way by landing two selections — one as a first-team infielder, and one as an honorable mention pitcher.

Maclane Melville was tapped as a first-team outfielder, and Caden Fent rounded out first-team nods, landing a spot at first base.

Receiving honorable mention, in addition to Grover, were Drew Beachy and Cody Fent as pitchers, Spencer Decker as an infielder, Kyler McQuead as an outfielder and Trace Collier as a utility player.

The Eagles posted a record of 14-12 overall, and went 8-4 in SD5 to take third place. The slate included a regular-season sweep of district runner-up Vale, and two close losses to district champion Burns.

## Wallowa Valley ends season 14-12

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out 12 batters and keeping the Eagles off the board until the fifth inning.

MEDFORD — The season is over for the Wallowa Valley baseball team.

The Eagles, who drew a tough first-round matchup against top-seed Cascade Christian in the 3A state baseball playoffs, fell on the road to the Challengers on Wednesday, May 25, 13-3, in five innings.

The Eagles never led, as Cascade Christian scored the game's first nine runs, got home runs from both Austin Waits and Cole Shields, and had 13 hits.

Owen Thompson did it all for the Challengers, going 4-for-4 with five RBIs.

He doubled in the game's first run in the first inning and later scored, added a two-run double as part of a five-run fourth that ended with Cascade Christian ahead 9-0 and had two RBI singles along the way. He also pitched all five innings, striking

In that frame, Gabe Nobles reached on a dropped third strike, moved to third on a one-out single by Spencer Decker, and scored on a bunt by Maclane Melville. On the play, an error by the Challengers also allowed Decker to score. Melville scored later on a Caden Fent RBI single to pull the Eagles within 9-3.

But Cascade Christian put an end to the game in the home half of the frame. Thompson had his fourth run-scoring hit, an error led to two runs and Liam Benade hit an RBI single to enforce the 10-run rule.

Lane Rouse had two of the Eagles' six hits. Four pitchers struggled to contain the Cascade Christian offense, combining to allow 13 hits in 4½ innings, walking six and striking out five.

The Eagles wrapped the season with a final record of 14-12.



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