

Elkton/ Yoncalla 10-run ruled

By Zach Silva
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It was a day of learning experiences for the Elkton/Yoncalla baseball team.

On a rare sunny spring afternoon, last Tuesday, the Elks travelled to face 3A Creswell where they were 10-run ruled - by a score of 16-6 - in the fifth inning by the Bulldogs who had their way with the bats.

"If we're going to play with Oakland or Monroe, you know even North Douglas, we've got to figure out how to stay in games like this. So character builder, right?," said Elkton/Yoncalla head coach Bill Shaw.

As not all 10-run rule games are created equally, the Elks were able to get on the board early, create runs and, ultimately, hang around in the game. After trailing by three runs early on, Elkton/Yoncalla squared things away in top of the third inning at 4-4 with hits from Cody Gustafson, Austin Luzier and Jarret Williams.

Disaster struck for the Elks in the form of a Creswell six-run inning in the bottom of the third. A steady diet of the Bulldogs putting the ball in play and Elkton/Yoncalla fielding errors, started the scoring. Pitcher Jarret Williams, the second pitcher of the day, was then replaced with Jeff Tibbetts who got out of the inning but not before two more runs crossed the plate.

"Honestly, the pitching wasn't terrible. They hit the ball pretty good but really it was the little plays. We gave up a couple of infield ground balls that should have been outs. We had a couple of things drop in the outfield that shouldn't have been dropped. You know those little things," said Shaw.

In the top of the fourth the Elks were able to get two runs back off of wild pitches that saw, in separate instances, Cody Gustafson and Cooper Peters both steal home. But a two-run fourth inning followed by a four-run fifth inning for Creswell did the Elks in.

Throughout the game, Shaw was tinkering with when to put pitchers in both situationally and in compliance with last year's pitch count rule that requires a set amount of rest based on the amount of pitches thrown over 25. With a full week of games ahead, Brad Doudna started and finished the game for the Elks, with stints at first base and short stop in between. The team was looking to find the right balance without throwing their second pitcher Luzier in the rotation, in order to have him throw in games later in the week. Tibbetts threw 44 pitches to avoid having to rest for two days which is mandated at 46 pitches.

In addition to finding the pitching rotation that will guide the team throughout the season, Shaw is also finding a place on the team for a group of freshman and looking to see how they can contribute.

"I played four freshman today. Started and played the whole game basically," he said. "So when you're 14-years-old, just short of 15 and you're out there in a varsity game against a 3A school, that's having to step up a little bit."

Lions get pair of team wins in Icebreaker



Cottage Grove's Jacob Woods sprints through the rain to claim a victory in the 200 last week at the Cottage Grove Icebreaker.

PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

Cottage Grove dominates across the board to earn opening meet victories

By Zach Silva
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In a wet, windy and at one point clear day - that fortunately featured no actual ice - the Lions track and field team hosted the Cottage Grove Icebreaker meet last Wednesday.

Competing against North Valley, Pleasant Hill and Thurston at Wally Ciochetti track in the first meet of the season the Cottage Grove boys' and girls' teams both took first place.

"It's just kind of a barometer for the rest of the season. It tells us where we're starting, really. I mean the squad meet gave us a little bit of an indication but I guess I don't have huge expectations for that first meet. I just want to see where we're at and then what we need to work on," said Cottage Grove head coach Ricky Knutson.

"But yeah we saw some great performances considering the conditions once it started raining."

A couple events in the overcast day turned into an unrelenting rain that stuck around until the end of the meet. But regardless of the weather, the Cottage

Grove boys were dominant across the board.

On the track, a Cottage Grove boy won every individual race except for the 400 (Jacob Woods 100 and 200, James Talley 800, Paesen Timm 1500, Drew Chapman 3000, Juice Clafin 110 hurdles, Colton Benner 300 hurdles). Their success carried over to the field events as Clafin won the shot put and Erick Giffen took first in high jump.

"I mean, it was nice being out at the first meet. I didn't get where I really wanted to today. Had some pretty bad events but I mean, it was a good kick-off to the season and I'm excited to see where it goes," said Woods.

Through it all, the group that most impressed Knutson was the distance runners.

"Those guys really stood out today. I was really excited to see where we were. We're way ahead of where we were last year with those guys. So that's pretty encouraging, they've been working pretty hard," he said.

In the 800, 1500 and 3000, it was Cottage Grove runners easing into the race and making a move in the final lap to take command. In the 800, it was Talley, racing at this distance for the first time in high school, pulling away with 300 meters to go.

"Yeah basically Knutson told us to just run the first lap and try to stay with the pack and in the last 300 just try to kick in front of them," said Talley. "I was kind of scared because I was like I think I kicked too early."

It worked for Talley and teammate Konrad Raum who pushed past a Pleasant Hill runner at the line to take second. In the 1500 it was Timm who was waiting in second place until there was 500 meters left in the race.

"[Timm] has no kick. And so I asked him before the race, do you want this to

come down to the last 100 meters? And he said, 'no way.' So he's been putting in the miles so that's the type of race that he's going to have to run in order to be successful at districts," said Knutson.

"I came around that turn and I was like alright I'm going to do it right now and I just passed him and I was gone. I wasn't going to let him catch me," said Timm who was just two seconds off his personal best time. Teammate Jesse Ellingworth placed second.

CG Track continued on B2



Faryn Dahlen glides over a hurdle on her way to a victory.

PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

Successful Sayles pitch, Cottage Grove downs Douglas

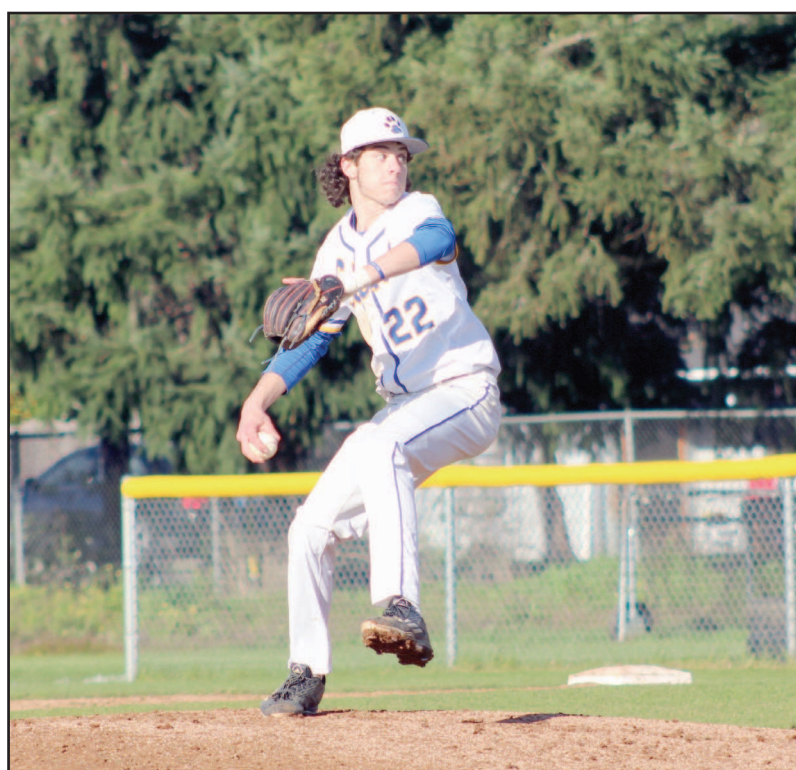


PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

Cottage Grove's Wyatt Sayles delivers a pitch at home last week.

A complete game from pitcher Wyatt Sayles guides the Lions to a victory

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The puzzle pieces of the Cottage Grove baseball season are beginning to fit together.

"I feel like we're on the verge of being a good team. I think right now we're not a bad team by any means but I just think we're on the verge and we're getting some pieces put into place," said head coach Dan Geiszler. "Last week at this time there was like two pieces in place and now we have like five or six. So it feels a little better to coach."

Bookended between days of downpour and snow, it was a, mostly, sunny afternoon last Thursday that saw Cottage Grove (2-2) handle Douglas (4-1) on the diamond as they scored a 4-2 victory. Soaking up the sun for the Lions was pitcher Wyatt Sayles who pitched a complete game, gave up just five hits and threw nine strikeouts.

"Well I was able to get two pitches going for

the first time this year. Prior games I had pretty much just my fastball going and location. This time I was able to get location, fastball, curveball," he said.

"They weren't able to adjust to two pitches. They would either be behind my curveball or behind my fastball so I would stay with my fastball and I could just get them on that and if they got ahead I would just throw my curveball and they would whiff on that. It was good. Felt like midseason again."

In the first inning Douglas, undefeated coming into the game, briefly got the bats going as they saw two hits and scored the opening run of the game. From then on, the Trojans struggled to get their offense in action.

"First off, Wyatt was really unreal. He pitched really well and if he can do that, we're going to be pretty tough when he's on the mound," said Geiszler.

The bats came alive for the Lions in the third inning with two outs as Payton Frieze and Hunter Sharkey hit singles and Sayles was walked. A Jaace Cross shot to right brought in a run to give the team a 2-1 advantage. Cross finished the game two-for-three with two RBIs.

CG Baseball continued on B3

Athletes of the Week



This week's athletes of the week are the freshman girls of the Cottage Grove track and field team. Six girls placed in the top four of eight different events for the Lions. This included Matty Ladd who won the high jump and took third in the 100; Raina Herzog who was second in shot put and third in discus; Adelle Kent who was second in pole vault and fourth in shot put; Mariah Ludkier who was fourth in the 200, Owen Dragt who finished second in the 100 hurdles and Rhea Florez who was fourth in the 800.



Owen Dragt in the 100 hurdles