



Dragons sweep Warriors

North Douglas softball keeps it close but falls to Monroe

By Zach Silva
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In a battle of top 2A/1A teams in the state, it was Monroe walking away with a sweep last week over North Douglas. The seventh-ranked Dragons and ninth-ranked Warriors squared off three times with Monroe winning 5-0, 3-2 and 3-1.

“Well, the conversation I had after this game was how much better (we played),” said North Douglas head coach Jesse Rice after Friday’s final game.

“We went there Tuesday and... we weren’t hitting the ball. We weren’t seeing the ball. Today, we hit the ball, saw the ball. We just couldn’t get that clutch hit when we needed it.”

Tuesday on the road, the team finished with three hits.

Hosting a double-header on Friday, the Warriors were ready for another crack at the top team in league and were inches away from, at the very least, forcing extra innings.

Aided by back-to-back homeruns from Ashley Sutton and Tyler Warden in the third inning, the Dragons went into the bottom of the seventh ahead 3-2.

Joanna Alcantar hit an infield single for the Warriors and represented the tying run. After lead-off batter Payton Black was walked, the Warriors had a runner in scoring position with just one out.

A pop out on the next at bat brought North Douglas to their final out. After throwing a strike, a routine throw from the catcher to the pitcher went awry as the ball ended up getting past the second basemen and into the outfield grass. Alcantar, on second, sprinted to third and headed home. As she ran home, the ball was thrown in to the catcher and was placed perfectly in Alcantar’s path and she was tagged out at the plate to finish the game.

The Warriors finished with six hits.

In the second game of the day, the Dragons started off quick after their lead-off hitter, Peyton Greene, was hit by a pitch and scored two batters later.

In the third inning, the Warriors were dealt a blow after a Monroe runner ran into second basemen Riley Black as she was fielding a ground ball.

“She’s got a great big fat lip,” said Rice. “Well, actually the girl had a facemask on and the facemask hit her right in the mouth. Course it was just that one rail on the facemask and it just split her lip wide open.”

Black’s temporary absence was felt in the fourth inning. With runners on first and second with one out, a grounder was hit to second in what could-have been a routine double-play but resulted in a fielding error that scored a run. Monroe scored two runs in the inning. Black returned to the lineup later in the game.

In the following inning, Lilly Downie recorded a single and scored the lone run of the day for the Warriors off of a dropped ball in left field. North Douglas finished the game with eight hits.

“We let a lot of first strikes go by. We stood in and

N. DOUGLAS continued on B2

Remembering Alisa Whitford



PHOTOS BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

A group of community members look at a bulletin board of pictures and newspaper clippings remembering Yoncalla’s Alisa Whitford on Sunday.

Yoncalla's softball field named after pitcher who won state in 1996 and passed away in 2009

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It was a day of remembering.

On Sunday May 6, a group of nearly 50 friends, family and teammates gathered at the Yoncalla High School softball field to rename it after Eagles legend, both on the field and off, Alisa Whitford.

The event was equal parts family reunion and celebration of life and centered around the unveiling of two signs to honor Alisa: one in the outfield and one on the back of the scoreboard to greet people when they enter letting them know they are at Alisa Whitford Memorial Field.

“It’s bittersweet. I try not to cry. I was nervous about coming but I’m proud,” said Whitford’s mother, Kyra Whitford. “It’s a beautiful sign, we worked on hav-

ing the sign made so that it feels good to see it up. I’m proud. I’m proud that they wanted to name the field after her.”

Alisa Whitford graduated from Yoncalla High School in 1996. It was a busy day for Whitford and her teammates as they began the day by winning the state softball title in Portland and then attending graduation in the afternoon.

“We had to delay graduation because those girls were up playing,” said former athletic director Cheryl Simons. “They came back...and there’s Alisa standing at the podium in her cleats giving her salutatorian speech.”

Whitford was a three-sport athlete (softball, volleyball and basketball) and received all-league honors in addition to league scholar athlete in each sport. But it wasn’t just sports for Whitford who was also the recipient of the outstanding service award for her class, started the yearbook at Yoncalla and was a member of the National Honor Society.

After high school, she attended the University of Oregon and graduated with a bachelor of arts in exercise movement

science in 2001. After college, she travelled the world and met her husband, Trent Williamson, in New Zealand before she returned to Oregon. The couple moved back to New Zealand where they started a fitness business.

Whitford passed away in 2009 from colon cancer that was discovered after she gave birth to her son Chase who currently lives in New Zealand with Wil-

liamson.

“I don’t know exactly what point, if I said something (at her memorial) or when, but I had decided that I was going to try and get this field named after her,” said Simons. “And then life happened. And then all of a sudden it was going to be my last year, so it was like, ‘okay, we better get after this.’”

WHITFORD continued on B2



The Alisa Whitford Memorial Field sign that is in the outfield was unveiled on Sunday.

Cottage Grove rallies for win over Sisters

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Cottage Grove Gwenth Fisk sprints to third during Tuesday’s win over Sisters.

It was a day of celebration for the Cottage Grove softball team.

On Tuesday, May 2, the Lions came away with a dramatic 5-4 come-from-behind victory over Sisters in their first home win since May 4, 2015.

“It couldn’t have gone any better,” said head coach Cheryl Frieze as her players began to walk off the field after having just finished taking pictures to celebrate the occasion.

Down a run in the bottom of the seventh inning, Chelsea Davis came to the plate with two outs and the bases loaded for Cottage Grove. With two strikes on her, Davis hit a line drive through the right side of the field, bringing two runners home as her walk-off single carried the team to a 5-4 victory.

In the pivotal final inning, the Lions came away with three of their six hits on the day. After Gwenth Fisk was walked, Kate Johns dropped a shot to center followed by a Kailey Cox hit through the infield that loaded the bases for Davis’s game-winning shot to right.

“(Hitting), that’s something, too, that we’ve been working on. A lot of tee work, a lot of hitting at practice. Focusing on, looking for contact and not swinging for the fence. That mentality we’ve really been trying

to push and that seems to be helping,” said Frieze. “That if they’re not swinging for the fence they’re realizing that just making contact and the ball is going a lot farther.”

The Lions were able to make contact throughout the game and also found success in the third inning when they scored a pair of runs. After Emma Fain was walked to start the inning, she stole second and got to third off of a Johns pop out to right field.

After Cox was walked and stole second, Samantha Ostrander advanced Fain home on a fielder’s choice before Davis scored Johns with a hit through the infield.

Defensively, the Lions were able to hold the Outlaws in check, allowing four hits on the day to go with four runs. Cottage Grove’s Chloe Malmstedt struck out four batters on the day.

The Lions have given an up an average of 14 runs per game this season; the Outlaws give up 18 runs per game – the highest mark in 4A.

For Frieze, the win was just as much a result of the work on the field as it was the mental side of the game. Throughout the season the team has been taking part in “Thursday Thoughts” to build mental toughness.

“We’ve been digging in and really trying to dig on that mental piece and to never give up and keep fight-

CG SOFTBALL continued on B2

Athletes of the Week



This week’s athletes of the week are the league champion Lady Ostriches of the Cottage Grove Women’s Volleyball Association.



Back row (from left): Brooke Hand, Courtney McGowen, Alexis Gaethle
Front row: Lia Davey, Shawna Burdett, Shannon Davey