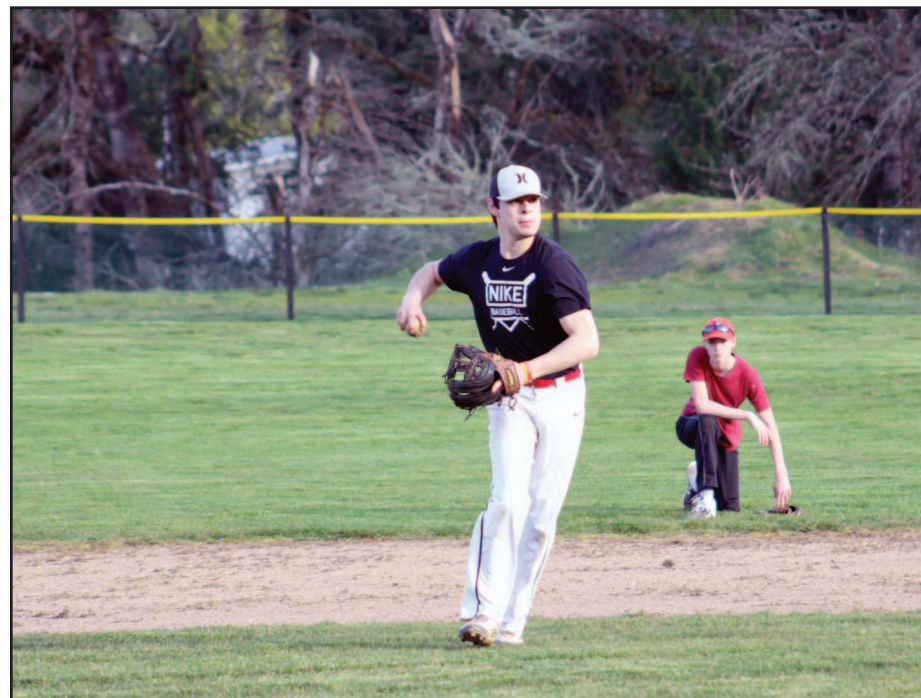


Elkton/Yoncalla Baseball



Mark Russell throws a ball in from the outfield.



Austin Luzier prepares to fire a ball to first.

Team Rundown:

While the snow hit the area hard, it hit Elkton especially hard. While the city is regaining power and working back to the way things normally are, during that time of outages, down trees and the school's gym being used as a center for the Red Cross, baseball took a backseat.

"I think it will have lasting consequences (for the season). I just don't know if anybody has had quite the complications that we've had," said head coach Bill Shaw. In addition to losing a week of practice, once the team could practice, it was still hard to get the players from Yoncalla that are on the team over to Elkton. And then, with the gym in use, it was a question of where to practice. "It's crazy."

But since the slow start, the Elks have got back out on the field and

are now dealing not with a humanitarian crisis but the normal issues of how they are going to make it through a season with an inexperienced group and just a handful of pitchers. Leading the way on the mound is senior Austin Luzier, but the questions come for who replaces him and when should he pitch.

"There's the old debate: do I throw him at every weak team so we have every chance to get a win or do I save his innings and try to go after some teams that I think he can handle if we play well behind him?" said Shaw.

The next step for the Elks is figuring out where to plug everyone in. The Elks have a solid infield when Luzier is on the mound or at short and Jayce Clevenger at catcher, Trace Graham at first, Jeff Tibbatts

at second and Cooper Peters at third. The problems arise when one of those players goes to the mound and jumbles up all the other positions.

"Probably one of the hardest things in coaching is if you're not careful, sometimes if you make one move means you move four guys around," said Shaw. "So to replace one position, you move four people out of position."

Once the positions are set, then comes the task of a reformed new league that still features North Douglas and UVC but adds talent in Oakland, Glendale and Glide, there will be no easy ways to get a win.

"There's not a patsy in that schedule," said Shaw. "We may be the patsy in that schedule."

One-on-one with Austin Luzier:

Did the snow impact the product of the quality of play from the team?

I thought it would be bad because there are a lot of kids that aren't baseball players and haven't played at all or at all. But first week, everyone got so much better, it was weird. *What are some of the challenges the team will face this year?*

Well last year we lost our first baseman and we lost an athlete, Brad, could put him wherever which we don't have this year. There's a hole everywhere.

We're trying to get new people in different positions, try them out and see how they do. A lot of people are throwing bullpens that have never pitched before, haven't even stepped on the mound before.

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