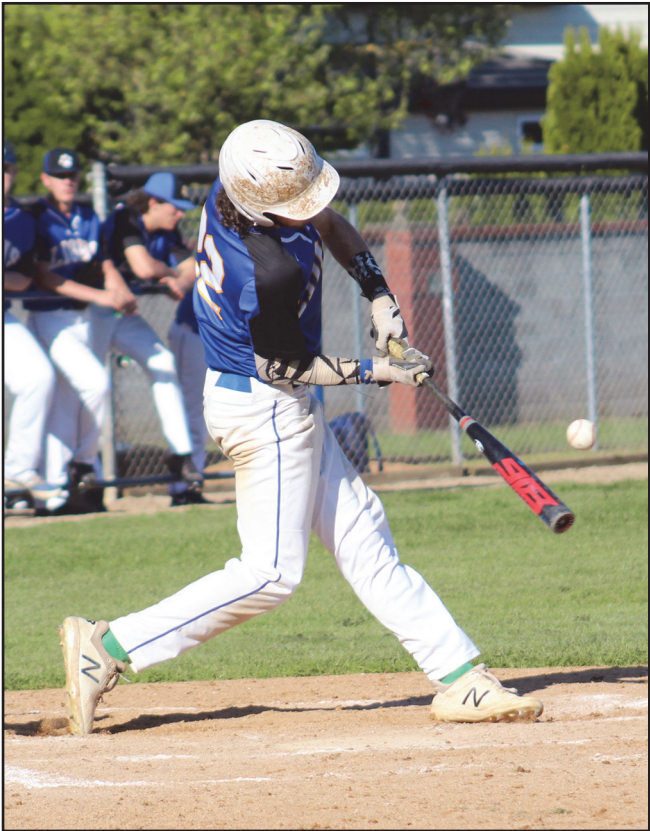


LIONS from B1



From left: Cottage Grove’s Wyatt Sayles records a hit against Marist; Ezra Senters holds off Marist in the final innings on the mound; Gavin Sowa races home to tie the game in the ninth inning. PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

– that saw another timely Cottage Grove double play – Marist was threatening with a runner on third but a key Sayles throw from short to first sent the contest into the ninth.

Sowa got the hitting started for the Lions with a single.

After Bascue was walked, it was runners on first and second that prompted some small-ball play for the Lions. A sacrifice bunt from senior Koltin Britton advanced the runners into scoring position and set up a bunt from junior Ezra Senters to bring in Sowa and take the lead.

“We stole a couple bases and got some timely hits and got a bunt. We just did the little things right and we talk about it a lot, if we do the little things right, we’ve got a good chance to win,” said Geiszler. “And we did that, we did all the little things, for the most part, pretty darn well.”

Marist, as they were wont to do, came back yet again. With a leadoff hit and a runner on third with no outs, the Spartans secured the tying run. Marist had another chance with a runner on third and two outs before a chopper through the middle was scooped up by Sayles and thrown at first.

“I’ve been in a program a long time and I’ve played a ton of other baseball outside of the program so I don’t really buckle under those situations so it’s kind of routine for me, even though it may look hard,” said Sayles. “But for the rest of the guys, man, it was awesome to see them step up. There are some guys that maybe wouldn’t step up in just a normal situation but I almost think the pressure helped some of the boys.”

Sayles’ day wasn’t over yet as he came up in the bottom of the 10th with Sharkey on second after he had just singled to right and stolen second base. Sayles sat back and blasted the ball to left to record an RBI and help the team take the lead for good.

“Today I was a tad off. Couldn’t get my front foot down in time. So going up there, I had it in my head that I just have to get the job done,” said Sayles. “There is no other option. So I just went up hacking. I told myself I’m going to take three big hacks and see what happens and it worked out.”

But yet again, the Spartans looked to come back in the 10th with a pair of runners in scoring position and just one out. After Senters struck out a batter for the second out, Marist’s leadoff hit a fly ball to deep center where Sowa tracked down in the sun and caught for the final out of the game.

Cottage Grove pitchers had success throughout the game with Sharkey getting the start, going six innings and recording five strikeouts. Senters closed the game and added four strikeouts.

Despite losing in the first game of the day, Geiszler noted that it was a learning experience that shaped game two.

“The first game... it was a last resort thing, we started throwing curveballs and they couldn’t hit it. And we came out in the second with a game plan of we’re going to throw a ton of curveballs. And it’s tough. Sharkey came out and threw great. Kept the ball down pretty well, kept them off balance,” said Geiszler. “Ended up Ezra came in and threw half a game himself which is crazy. Ezra has struggled as well, he’s struggled to come in and throw strikes. He came in here and did a fabulous job. So for these guys to stick with it is pretty impressive.”

Offensively, the Lions recorded 11 hits on the day led by Sowa with four and Sayles with a pair. Humphreys, Bascue and Jaxon Simmons all added a hit.

By going 2-1 on the week – with a 13-3 win against Marshfield on Tuesday – the Lions are now one of three Sky-Em teams with two losses in league play as Elmira sits atop the standings at 5-0. But for Cottage Grove, the team feels they are trending in the right direction.

“I think we can use this as momentum. Moving forward I think we’re going to win a lot more games,” said Sayles. “As long as we keep our pitchers in tune, they’re throwing strikes, we’re going to win some games.”

On Tuesday (April 23 and after *The Sentinel’s* print deadline) the Lions faced eighth-ranked Junction City (10-4, 4-2) at home. The team will close the week at home against Marshfield (4-9, 1-5) in a double-header on Friday.

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Sky-Em Baseball			
Team	League	Overall	
Elmira	5-0	11-2	
Junction City	4-2	10-4	
Marist	4-2	8-6	
Cottage Grove	3-2	6-8	
Marshfield	1-5	4-9	
Siuslaw	0-6	1-12	

Sky-Em Softball			
Team	League	Overall	
Marist	6-0	13-2	
Junction City	5-1	13-3	
Elmira	5-1	11-4	
Marshfield	1-5	4-10	
Siuslaw	1-5	1-11	
Cottage Grove	0-6	0-12	

Special District 4 Baseball			
Team	League	Overall	
UVC	9-0	16-1	
Glide	9-0	10-3	
Riddle	5-4	6-10	
North Douglas	4-2	10-4	
Glendale	0-6	4-8	
Elkton/Yoncalla	0-3	2-6	
Oakland	0-9	2-11-1	

Special District 3 Softball			
Team	League	Overall	
Central Linn	8-0	15-1	
North Douglas	8-0	15-1	
Oakland	5-1	9-2	
Monroe	4-3	5-5	
Lowell	4-3	4-7	
Mohawk	2-2	3-4	
Riddle	1-3	3-6	
Days Creek	1-6	2-8	
Oakridge	0-6	0-10	
Yoncalla/Elkton	0-9	2-12	