

# Cottage Grove seniors take next step



Samantha May will be attending Northwest Christian University.



Cassidy Herbert will be attending Lane Community College.



Lauren Witty will be attending Linn Benton Community College.



Wyatt Sayles will be attending Chemeketa Community College.



Konrad Raum will be attending Umpqua Community College.



Paesen Timm will be attending Umpqua Community College.



Dylan Graves will be attending Shasta College.



Erick Giffen will be attending Shasta College.

## Eight CGHS seniors will be playing sports at the next level

By Zach Silva  
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While many athletic careers come to an official end on graduation day, for eight Cottage Grove seniors, Saturday's graduation was just the next step in the process to becoming college athletes.

Taking their talents to a university, community colleges or junior colleges, Cottage Grove's Samantha May, Cassidy Herbert, Lauren Witty, Wyatt Sayles, Konrad Raum, Paesen Timm, Erick Giffen and Dylan Graves will be playing sports at the next level.

"In middle school, when we were coming up to high school, everybody talked about us. 'They're a super athletic class, this is going to be awesome,'" re-

members May. "It's been really fun having a bunch of us playing sports all throughout high school and now we're all going on and doing our own things all over the West Coast."

May, who will be attending Northwest Christian University in the fall, is one of three players from last year's second place volleyball team who will be playing in college. Teammate Herbert will be at Lane Community College while Witty is going to Linn Benton Community College.

"All of us had always dreamed of this day and being able to play at the next level. We never knew if it was really going to be a possibility but having such a successful season it opened some doors for us and now we get to go play," said May, the CGHS class of 2019 salutatorian.

While the volleyball team has found success on the floor unlike any CGHS team before them, for

Witty, she saw that it all started with the team's academics.

"The coaches that have built this program have realized that school does come first. So, because obviously you can't go anywhere just being athletic, you need to have the grades to get somewhere as well," she said. "So by putting school first you create students and then you build on top of that with having athletes do sports and athletics and you push them to be better than they think they could be and that's what's happened over the many years that I've been part of the program."

Another team that found great success over the past four years was the Cottage Grove football team. The 2017 state champions, were aided by the talents of quarterback Graves and wide receiver/defensive back/kicker/punter/kick-returner Giffen. This dynamic duo is heading south to

play football at Shasta College.

Graves reached out to the Shasta College coaching staff, they were quickly impressed with his resume and wanted him to join the team. He then told them about Giffen who they also liked and now the pair that has caused problems for teams across the Sky-Em league and state are together again.

"I'm going to be moving about four hours and 30 minutes away and it's nice having my best friend go with me," said Graves. "It just makes me more comfortable and will be a fun experience once I'm down there."

Another duo that is staying together is Raum and Timm who will be attending Umpqua Community College to run cross country and track.

Similar to the recruiting process for Graves and Giffen, the UCC coach reached out to Timm and Timm told him to also take a

look at Raum.

"It makes it a little more comfortable going into the first day of training knowing that I already know somebody," said Timm.

The pair of runners are looking forward to continuing to run together but more than anything they are excited about the farther distances that they will get to race.

"I'm really looking forward to cross country because now it's an 8K instead of a 5K so that's going to be cool. I think I'm better at longer distances so I'm ready to see what I can do there," said Raum. "I think it's going to be way cooler than anything I've ever done before."

The final CGHS athlete playing in college is the pitcher Sayles who will be joining the Chemeketa Community College baseball team.

# CGHS baseball coach Geiszler headed to Texas

## After 15 seasons leading the baseball program, Dan Geiszler is departing CGHS

By Zach Silva  
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When Dan Geiszler came to coach the Cottage Grove baseball team in 2004, he was unsure how long he would be in that role.

"That was exactly my thinking, I'm here for now and we'll see what happens," said Geiszler reflecting on his time in Cottage Grove. Since then, 15 years have happened. The Lions have had wins, they've had losses and now Geiszler is on to the next chapter of his life and he will be moving from Cottage Grove to Texas with his family.

"Kind of been working on it for a couple years or talking about it at least. And my wife and I, we kind of gave ourselves two years to make it happen and we both got jobs down there and just decided, why not, to be honest with you," said Geiszler. "So we're heading down there a little bit blind. We've been down there once."

The Geiszlers are moving to Tomball, Texas which - at just under a population of 11,000 people - is about the size of Cot-



Dan Geiszler (left) talks to Gavin Sowa during a game earlier this year. PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

tage Grove and is located about 30 miles north of Houston. Geiszler has aspirations to be coaching baseball at the high school level in the future but is taking a break for now as his focus turns to coach his kids.

While head coach at Cottage Grove, Geiszler led the team to the playoffs on five occasions but that is not what he will most remember about his time with the Lions.

"When you look back you think of highs and lows and wins and losses. Looking back you think of all the kids I got to coach. All the boys I got to coach and think of them then and I could see some now. And just that whole progression and evolution of them growing up and becoming men and having families and getting jobs and all of that," said Geiszler.

"I think that, to me, is what I will re-

member the most. More than the on-field stuff is all the off-field stuff and what they became afterwards and their accomplishments. That's kind of what I see when I look back at it."

Across both the league and state, Geiszler was lauded by other coaches for what he could do with his teams.

"They've got the best coach in the league and he's been that way for years," said Junction City head coach Tony Stavros, unprompted, about Geiszler during the season. "For what he does with what he's had the last couple years is, I mean, I don't know if people realize that. His kids play hard and they always do the right thing."

While Geiszler is leaving, he noted that the assistant coaches Jared Hutchins, Rod Gardner and James Berry are going to stay involved in the program. But now they will be waiting for a head coach.

"The coaching staff is going to look similar, it is just getting someone in here who, hopefully can do a better job, to be honest," said Geiszler. "I mean, that's the goal. By all means, I would love somebody to come in here and be better than I was."

Geiszler will coach the summer baseball season that ends in June before leaving for Texas.

# Athletes of the Week



*This week's athletes of the week are the local teams that were named to the academic all-state list. To read about all the teams that had finished with grade point averages above 3.0, turn to B3.*



With a grade point average of 3.73 Cottage Grove's girls golf team finished with the best GPA of all the area teams.

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