

COLLEGE BASEBALL

Harpole hopes to end WOU career on a high

Western Oregon looks to clinch Great Northwest Athletic Conference title



Western Oregon senior Garret Harpole takes a moment between pitches against Saint Martin's on Sunday.

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — As Western Oregon's baseball team rested between games against Saint Martin's on Sunday afternoon, senior Garret Harpole was all smiles.

The Wolves defeated the Saints 7-1 and 3-2 on Saturday and were coming off a 13-4 win that saw Harpole hit a home run. He would hit one more out of the park in the series finale, a 6-5 WOU victory.

"I thought, competitively, we were consistent throughout the weekend," WOU coach Kellen Walker said. "At times, we didn't execute to perfection, but we gave ourselves a chance because of our effort and commitment to our plan, both offensively and on the mound."

But Sunday also marked another milestone. Western Oregon has one home series remaining in the regular season — Harpole's final with the Wolves.

By The Numbers

8

The number of home runs Garret Harpole has during the 2015 season so far, a team-high.

34

The number of RBIs Harpole has driven in so far this season. The mark is the most on the team.

1

The number of home losses Western Oregon has this year. The Wolves are 10-18 on the road.

Close Finish

• Western Oregon entered the week in first place in the conference standings. Montana State Billings, WOU's next opponent, entered the week in second place.

workouts will hopefully have us prepared and fresh for the weekend series."

With a conference title on the line, Harpole is confident the Wolves are right where they want to be entering the final three series of the regular season.

"We come out every year and expect to win a conference title and the conference tournament," Harpole said. "You have to take it one game at a time and, if you do that, the wins will begin adding up. You always look to play your best baseball at the end of the season, and I think we're getting close to that. You can always be better, but I think we're in a good spot right now."

"It's sad knowing these are probably my last home games here," Harpole said. "This has been my home for four years now, so it's a little bit bittersweet, but I love being out there with these guys and I wouldn't have (my career end) any other way."

Western Oregon enters the week on a five-game win streak. Harpole is playing a major role. He leads the team in home runs (eight) and RBIs (34).

"We've been really trusting our bats and trusting our eyes," Harpole said. "We're making some good things happen."

The Wolves (21-19 overall) enter the week as the No. 1 seed in the Great Northwest Athletic Conference with a 16-7 league record. WOU plays a four-game series with second-place Montana State Billings (17-18 overall, 12-7 GNAC) on Friday, Saturday and Sunday before ending the regular season by hosting Northwest Nazarene on May 1 and 2. The Crusaders entered the week in third place.

"At this point in the year, the main focus has to be making sure you are healthy and rested for the weekend battles," Walker said. "Staying short and crisp with our

Hurdling: Price, Vergin look to go to state meet

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At the Tri-River Preview meet, in her first 300-hurdles race ever, Price finished first in 53.27 seconds.

Since then, Price, who also runs the 100 and tried out the 200, set personal records in the 300 hurdles (51.94) and high jump (4 feet, 6 inches) at Willamina on Thursday. Price's 300 hurdles time is the sixth fastest in Class 2A.

And Price is accomplishing all this while competing on Perrydale's equestrian team, splitting her time between track, school and riding.

"I've surprised myself," Price said. "I do miss softball a lot, but I'm excelling at track more than I ever thought I would."

Now, the junior who thought she wouldn't compete at all, is re-evaluating her goals toward placing at districts.

Price isn't alone in chasing state aspirations this spring.

Senior Alysia Vergin finished third in both the 100 and 100 hurdles at the 1A Special District 1 district meet in 2014, one place from qualifying for state.

"I was only a second or two off from going to state



Perrydale senior Alysia Vergin will try to clinch a state berth in the 100-meter hurdles this season.

last year," Vergin said. "This year, I'm trying really hard to keep going and improving

so I'll have a spot in state." Vergin, who has competed in track throughout her

high school career, set a personal record as the Pirates' lone entry in the Tourna-

ment of Champions in the 100 hurdles, finishing in 17.91 seconds.

"(Alysia) is strong, tough, athletic and determined," Evans said. "She and Taylor are heavily involved in OHSET, and I think her fearlessness in the hurdles is partially due to the amount of time she spends racing on her horses. She is fast and is willing to work on the little things that can get her over the hurdles faster."

And, although she's competing in the triple jump for the first time, she's eyeing a state berth in the hurdles.

"I think it's just the adrenaline I get from doing it," Vergin said. "Having to go over something that you could potentially fall over and being able to race against the clock. It's nice not having people judging you. You're running for the best time."

While Price and Vergin may have taken different paths to the 2015 track and field season, they share similar goals going forward — qualify for state.

"My expectations are for both of them to make it to state in their best events," Evans said. "For Taylor, that is the 300 hurdles and Alysia in the 100 hurdles. It will take hard work, but I have confidence in both of them."

PREP BASEBALL ROUNDUP

Central cruises

Panthers earn sweep of Lebanon

Itemizer-Observer staff report
INDEPENDENCE — Central's baseball team remained unbeaten in Mid-Willamette Conference play after sweeping Lebanon. The Panthers earned a 10-4 win on Wednesday, a 5-4 triumph on Thursday and a 7-6 victory on Friday.

Luis Amador went four for five on Wednesday, including two doubles and a home run.

On Thursday, Ruben Martinez hit a walk-off single in the bottom of the seventh to give the Panthers the victory. On Friday, Central (8-1 overall, 6-0 MWC) jumped out to a 3-0 lead before holding off the Warriors in the top of the seventh.

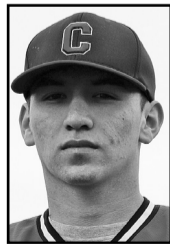
The Panthers were scheduled to host Silverton Tuesday after press time.

Central travels to face the Silver Foxes on Wednesday (today) before closing out

the series Friday at 4:30 p.m. at home.

Central and Corvallis entered the week undefeated in MWC play.

PIRATES DROP LEAGUE OPENERS: Perrydale's baseball team opened Special District 2 play with a pair of losses. The Pirates fell to Country Christian 8-7 on April 7 and to Western Menonite 17-4 on Thursday. Troy Trembly, Haylen Janesofsky and Hunter Johnson had two hits and two RBIs each against the Cougars on April 7. "It was a tight game that came down to the last at-bat as the Cougars rallied late to get the win," Perrydale coach Steve Mabry said. Against Western Menonite, five errors in the fourth inning allowed the Pirates to score nine runs to take control. The Pirates (5-3 overall, 0-2 SD2) play at St. Paul Wednesday (today) before hosting East Linn Christian Friday at 4:30 p.m. Perrydale then hits the road to face Regis on Monday.



Martinez



Trembly

PREP TRACK AND FIELD ROUNDUP

Clem, McBeth lead Panthers

Panthers see strong team showing at Sandy Invitational

Itemizer-Observer staff report

SANDY — Central's boys track and field team showed off its depth after taking fourth out of 11 teams at the Sandy Invitational on Saturday. Senior Doug Clem won the javelin with a throw of 173 feet, 0 inches to lead the Panthers. Senior Kaj Bansen placed third in the high jump with a 5-8, while Gabe Dickson finished third in the long jump with a leap of 19-9½.

The girls squad finished seventh on Saturday. Sophomore Abby McBeth won the 1,500-meter run in 5 minutes, 2.81 seconds.

The Panthers boys and girls squads lost a dual meet to South Albany on April 8. The boys fell 331-307, while the girls lost 365½-224½. Thomas Peterson set a season record in the 200 in 23.43 seconds.

Central hosts Lebanon Wednesday (today) at 4:30 p.m. before participating in the Oregon relays in Eugene on Saturday.

BENZ TAKES FIRST: Dallas junior Kyleen Benz earned a pair of first-place finishes at the

Jump For Joy



Central junior Reba Hoffman competes in the long jump on April 8. Hoffman placed first in the dual meet with a mark of 15 feet, 11½ inches. Hoffman's jump was her best mark so far this season.

Springfield Rotary Invitational on Friday. Benz won the girls shot put with a throw of 35 feet, 8½ inches and the discus with a mark of 110-5. The boys finished eighth. Senior Isaak

Tichenor took fourth in the 400-meter run in 53.20 seconds. Junior Brett Rowden took fourth in the shot put with a throw of 40-11½, and Aaron White finished fourth in the

triple jump with a leap of 41-3¼. The boys lost to Silverton 97-48 on April 7, while the girls lost 93-52. The Dragons hosted Crescent Valley and South Albany Tuesday after press time. "The kids competed well on sore legs," Dallas coach Bill Masei said. "Luckily we are at a spot in our schedule that our varsity kids will have a week and a half off from competition to get healthy."

PIRATES EXCEL AT MEET:

Perrydale's track and field team saw several strong performances at Willamina on Thursday. Senior Alysia Vergin finished second in the girls 100-meter run in 13.84 seconds, while junior Taylor Price took second in the 300 hurdles in 51.80. Sierra Starr placed fourth in the javelin with a throw of 79 feet, 8 inches, while Taylor Rossi took second in the triple jump with a mark of 29-4. On the boys' side, the 4 x 400 relay team of Kirk Fairchild, Logan Shamblyn, Jacob Pope and Josh Baker took second with a time of 4:22.36. Perrydale also competed at Santiam on April 7. Vergin took second in the 100 hurdles, while the 4 x 100 relay team of Fairchild, Martin Lopez, Shamblyn and Pope took second. The Pirates will compete at Gervais Thursday at 4:30 p.m.