

SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3

Baseball: Central at South Albany, 4:30 p.m. Dallas at Crescent Valley, 3 p.m.

Boys golf: Central at Regionals (at Quail Valley in Banks), TBA.

Boys tennis: Silverton at Dallas, 4 p.m.

Softball: Crescent Valley at Central, 4:30 p.m. Dallas at Corvallis, 4:30 p.m. Perrydale at Amity, 4:30 p.m.

Track and field: Falls City at Horizon Christian, 3:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 4

Baseball: East Linn Christian at Perrydale, 2:30 p.m. Northwest Nazarene at Western Oregon (DH), 1 p.m.

Boys tennis: Central at Silverton, 4 p.m. Dallas at Lebanon, 4 p.m.

Girls tennis: Silverton at Central, 4 p.m. Lebanon at Dallas, 4 p.m.

Softball: Great Northwest Athletic Conference Championship: No. 4 Western Oregon vs. No. 1 Central Washington (at Lacey, Wash.), 2:30 p.m.

Track and field: Falls City, Perrydale at Sheridan, 3:45 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 5

Baseball: South Albany at Central, 4:30 p.m. Crescent Valley at Dallas, 4:30 p.m. Western Mennonite at Perrydale, 4:30 p.m. Northwest Nazarene at Western Oregon (DH), noon.

Softball: Lebanon at Central, 6:15 p.m. Silverton at Dallas, 4:30 p.m. Western Mennonite at Perrydale, 4:30 p.m. Great Northwest Athletic Conference Championship (at Lacey, Wash.): Western Oregon vs. TBA, TBA.

Track and field: Western Oregon at Oregon Twilight, all day.

SATURDAY, MAY 6

Softball: Great Northwest Athletic Conference Championship (at Lacey, Wash.): TBA vs. TBA, noon.

Track and field: Central at Dick Baker Invitational, 11:15 a.m.

MONDAY, MAY 8

Baseball: Perrydale at Santiam Christian, 4:30 p.m.

Girls golf: Central, Dallas at Regionals (Trysting Tree), 11 a.m.

Softball: Perrydale at Santiam Christian, 4:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 9

Baseball: Central at Lebanon, 4:30 p.m. Dallas at Corvallis, 4:30 p.m. St. Paul at Perrydale, 4:30 p.m.

Girls golf: Central, Dallas at Regionals (Trysting Tree), 11 a.m.

Softball: Dallas at Central, 4:30 p.m. St. Paul at Perrydale, 4:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10

Baseball: Central at Lebanon, 4:30 p.m. Corvallis at Dallas, 4:30 p.m. Great Northwest Athletic Conference Championship (at Portland): Western Oregon vs. TBA, TBA.

Boys tennis: Central, Dallas at Mid-Willamette Conference District Championships (at Timberhill Tennis Club, Corvallis), TBA.

Girls tennis: Central, Dallas at Mid-Willamette Conference District Championships (at Timberhill Tennis Club, Corvallis), TBA.

Softball: Central at Corvallis, 3 p.m.

Schedules Subject to Change

QUICK HITS

Polk Pedalers meet Saturday

DALLAS — The Polk Pedalers will meet Saturday at 8 a.m. at Courtyard Coffee House, 156 SE Mill St., Dallas.

The group will take part in a road cleanup day. A round-trip ride from Dallas to Independence (25 miles, easy) will be made.

All ages are welcome, but children must be accompanied by an adult.

Helmets are required. There is no cost to attend.

For more information: 503-623-6533.

COLLEGE ATHLETICS

Wandering Wolves

Baseball, softball programs deal with life on the road

Western Oregon's baseball and softball teams have yet to play a game at home because of weather.

LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

By Lukas Eggen

The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — The last time Western Oregon's softball team played in Monmouth was April 20 — 2016.

As the Wolves defeated Central Washington in a doubleheader on Sunday, WOU thanked its "home" crowd — in Corvallis.

The game, held roughly 22 miles away from Monmouth, was the closest thing to a home game the Wolves have sniffed all season long.

In an average year, softball coach Lonny Sargent said the Wolves play between 12 and 14 home games.

That number was zero this season, as the softball squad traveled to Nevada, Hawaii,

Washington, California, Idaho, Montana, British Columbia, Portland and Hillsboro with travel miles totaling more than 14,500 according to Sargent.

The result has been a season that has presented a number of challenges on and off the field.

COSTLY CANCELLATIONS

It's a situation that's all too familiar for Sargent and baseball coach Kellen Walker, whose team hasn't played at home since May 7, 2016, during the spring.

Sargent is on the phone. He's not talking to family or friends. He's scrambling to get a postponed game moved to a new date and location.

"I get on the phone (with the opposing coach) and we find the best possible date



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer file

Western Oregon's softball team didn't play a home game in Monmouth in 2017.

we can play at," Sargent said. "We balance what's best for us and what's best for them. The big thing, especially this time of year, is a lot of places are booked, so finding a place to play can be difficult."

Moving a home game affects the Wolves beyond fans losing a chance to see them play.

Each move requires finding a date that works for both teams and a new location — that can lead to extra travel costs and fees to rent a facility, and it's up to the coaches to work it out.

"In some cases, other programs have helped us,"

Sargent said. "Northwest Nazarene helped us with bus costs, even though we had to take vans because there were no buses available. The extra trip up to Western (Washington), they helped us with hotel costs. Sometimes, like going up to Portland to Concordia, we had to cover all of the costs, and against Simon Fraser, we had to cover transportation and renting the facility."

Those costs can add up quickly.

Final budget totals won't be calculated until after the season is over, but Sargent said travel expenses could

be significantly more than during a normal season. Walker said he did not have estimates ready.

How those funds will be handled remains to be seen. "It'll be interesting to see how it pans out, I'm not sure," Sargent said.

The athletics department declined an interview request to discuss budgets.

TAKING A TOLL

Money isn't the only cost of losing home games. Additional travel means more time on the road — and less time in the classroom for the student-athletes.

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By The Numbers

0

The number of home games Western Oregon's softball team had during the 2017 season.

2

The number of countries the Wolves have played in (United States and Canada).

49

The total number of games the softball team has played so far during the 2017 season.

PREP TRACK AND FIELD

Altamirano, Burgett stay on track

By Lukas Eggen

The Itemizer-Observer

INDEPENDENCE — Central track and field coach Eli Cirino had seen junior Bethanie Altamirano run cross-country in middle school. Though she was solid, she was unimpressive.

"As a distance runner, that's not her strength," Cirino said.

During her eighth-grade year, Cirino saw Altamirano run a 400-meter race in 63 seconds — and his perception changed.

"It blew me away," he said. "I had never seen that aggressiveness from her as a runner. I don't care what age you are, 63 is a solid number."

Cirino reached out to Altamirano after that race.

"He told me that I had chance to be able to achieve something special if I worked hard," Altamirano said. "He told me I can do more with myself, but I had to train harder."

There was a noticeable difference in the way she approached the 2017 season. In the past, she took four weeks off after cross-country.

She cut that down to two — and only because Cirino made her take time off in between seasons.

She also hit the weight room to do squats, adding strength to her legs.

Track meet

• Central's boys track and field team defeated Dallas 99-45 on April 26. The girls lost 72-70.

• Isaac Burgett won the 400 in 51.26. Matt Raines won the 1,500 (4:22.76) and 3,000 (9:57.78). Jaydon Aydelotte won the 110 (16.17) and 300 hurdles (42.85). Kyle Aklin won the shot put with a throw of 42 feet, 1 3/4 inches. Isseah Kamis won the javelin (134-7 1/2) and the high jump (5-8); James Rand took first in the pole vault (11-6); Peter Mason placed first in the long jump (20-6), and Cody Baldwin won the triple jump (36-1 1/2).

• Bethanie Altamirano won the girls 100 (13.44) and 200 (26.90). Bailie Hartford took first in the 800 (2:31.30) and 1,500 (5:16.86). Diana Nye placed first in the 3,000 (12:22.54). Rachel Stanley took first in the pole vault (6-0). Sophia Henke won the high jump (4-10) and triple jump (32-1).

"When we added squats to her routine, her strength levels blew up," Cirino said. "I think that can be the difference between kids at the next level in her events."

Rain or shine, Altamirano was fully dedicated to her training.

"I felt stronger," she said. "I know

my starts are way stronger. It was freezing during the winter, but it was worth it. I'm way more in shape this year."

As a sophomore, her first 400 time was 65. This season, she began the year with a 61 and has gotten faster each race, most recently finishing in 59.64 seconds at the John Oliver Invitational on April 21. She's taken first each time she has raced the 400, and is ranked first in 5A as of Monday.

Altamirano has all the physical tools, but what separates her from others is her drive.

"She has this look when she competes," Cirino said.

"She doesn't like to lose and doesn't accept anything less than her best. She's like that when she's training in December."

That intensity is because every time she steps on the track, she's racing for more than herself.

"Before a race, I get into a zone,"

she said. "I think about what I'm going to do, what I'm racing for and who I'm racing for. I think about everyone who supports me. I pray to God before I run my race and I think, 'I'm doing this for you mom.'"

Junior Isaac Burgett was always attracted to the 400. He viewed the race as one of, if not the, most difficult events in track and field — and he wanted to conquer it.

"In my opinion, it's the hardest race," he said. "You know you're good if you're good at the hardest thing."

As a sophomore, he qualified for state in the 400, but was disappointed with his performance.

"Last year, it didn't go so well," Burgett said. "It was a little scary."

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Altamirano