

## A perfect ending



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-ObsERVER

**Lauren Wallace gets ready to celebrate with teammates after hitting a home run during Dallas softball team's 14-4 win over Central on May 9. The Dragons finished league play with a perfect 18-0 record. Dallas will host a game in the first round of the state playoffs against a to-be-determined opponent on May 24.**

## PREP BASEBALL

# Dallas to host Ashland

**By Lukas Eggen**  
The Itemizer-ObsERVER

DALLAS — Dallas' baseball team had a rough end to its league season, losing two of three to Corvallis and five of its last six overall.

But the Dragons remain confident ahead of its state play-in game against Ashland Friday at 5 p.m.

"We took away that we can play with anyone," coach Scot McDonald said. "We just need to play clean. If we do the small things, we can play with anyone. We are much improved from the beginning of the year. We just need to keep getting better at having

complete games at what we do."

Dallas finished fourth in the Mid-Willamette Conference. Ashland finished fifth in the Midwestern League.

"Ashland has great pitching and that drives confidence," McDonald said. "We will need to have a great approach against the

guys on the mound and compete every at-bat and don't give up outs cheap."

Ashland gave up 4.4 runs per game during the regular season.

"To come out on top, we need to string some hits together," McDonald said. "We need clutch at-bats with two outs and make them play defense."

### STATE PLAY-IN GAME

**What:** Ashland (13-11 overall, 10-11 Midwestern League, fifth place) vs. Dallas (15-11 overall, 12-9 Mid-Willamette Conference, fourth place).

**When:** Friday, 5 p.m.

**Where:** Dallas High School.

**Admission:** Adults, \$6; students \$4.

**What's at stake:** The winner advances to the first round of the state playoffs on May 24. The loser is eliminated.

# Dallas: Collins wins a district title in the pole vault

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Even the 300 hurdles proved to be more difficult than it may have looked.

"At the beginning, we had a pretty bad headwind hit us," he said. "At the second hurdle, the rain started coming, so even though I thought I had a hold on the race, there are always new variables."

He still found a way to set a new personal record in the race.

Deming will be busy at state — but that's just the way he likes it.

"It's very exciting," he said. "I'm proud of myself to see all the hard work pay off. I'd be disappointed if I wasn't preparing for state (this) week."

Last year, hurdlers Stefani Tallon and Jenifer Webb finished first and second in the 100 hurdles.

Now both seniors, the pair had their sights set on defending their spots.

"It's all I wanted to do this year was to finish 1 and 2 again and have one more shot at state," Webb said.

Mission accomplished.

Webb won the race in 16.14 seconds with Tallon a close second in 16.18 — holding off a stiff challenge from Crescent Valley's Jordyn Edwards, who took third.

"I could see Jordyn Edwards running next to me at the start," Tallon said. "I knew Jen was in the lane next to me and I was won-



Collins

dering where she was. About halfway through the race, I saw her arms start to come up next to me and I thought here she comes. When we crossed the finish line, I knew it was us. It's an incredible feeling, and it's great that we both get to go and share this moment."

Tallon also finished second in the 300 hurdles.

Now, the duo's focus turns to state.

"It all comes down to that final race," Tallon said. "We've prepared for that pressure. We were pretty confident (ahead of districts). At state, we'll go hard and hopefully other people fail under pressure and we don't."

Regardless of what happens, Tallon and Webb are grateful that they get one last chance to experience it together.

"It's so special," Webb said. "We want to leave everything out on the line, reach finals and get on that podium. This is a great end."

Senior Jake Collins had little interest in trying the pole vault when he first arrived at Dallas High School.

But, his mom convinced him to try it his sophomore season.



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-ObsERVER

**Dallas freshman Hailey VanWell qualified for state in the triple jump after placing second at districts on Saturday.**

"She thought I could do well in it," Collins said. "She was right."

Collins took home a district title with a height of 13 feet, 6 inches on Saturday

— the culmination of three seasons of hard work and dedication — and a long way from his first attempts at the event as a sophomore.

"It's scary getting up there," Collins said. "It's an uncomfortable, hard motion but once you get past that, it flows smoothly."

On Friday, it all went smoothly for Collins.

"When I stepped onto the runway, I thought of the perform form, planting high and all the little things that it takes to get over the bar, and that carried me through," Collins said. "It's exciting. It's an adrenaline rush, and when you clear a good height, it's just a good feeling."

Collins is ready to take that good feeling all the way to Eugene.

"It's awesome," he said. "I never thought I'd see myself winning a district title in any sport."

If freshman Hailey VanWell had her way, she would have never stepped onto the track at all.

It seemed everyone else — from her mom to her volleyball coaches to coach Jason White all saw what she didn't: Massive potential.

"I remember watching a volleyball match with Aaron, and I saw Hailey, and I stood up and pointed and asked, 'who is that?'" White said.

White envisioned VanWell as a star jumper.

Just one problem. VanWell didn't want to do track and field.

"My mom made me do it," she said. "My volleyball coaches told me it could help and my mom was like, 'oh, you're doing this.'"

Even after she joined, her preference was going to be the javelin — though that was a short-lived experiment.

"I had my mind set on javelin," VanWell said. "I tried it but I wasn't very good at it."

White convinced her to give jumps a try this spring and, despite zero experience with long jump, triple jump or the high jump, she finished second in the triple jump at the district championships on Saturday.

Now, she's headed to state.

"I feel good," she said. "It's been a great experience."

It sure beats sitting at home.

"Coach told me I could go places," VanWell said. "He was right."

Dallas also saw Trevor Cross (second, 3,000-meter run, 9:04.98), Jacob Ronco (second, javelin, 146-7), Aaron White (second, triple jump, 43-11¼), Amelia Burgess (second, girls discus, 115-3), and Kayley Sayer (second, long jump, 16-1½) qualify for state.

Cody Webb did not compete due to injury.

## PREP TRACK AND FIELD

# Pope sets PR, wins a district title

**By Lukas Eggen**  
The Itemizer-ObsERVER

PORTLAND — Perrydale senior Jacob Pope wasn't sure this was the year.

With weather that threatened to bring rain and wind, Pope knew he needed to be at his best in the javelin at the Special District 1 District track and field championships.

Even then, he wasn't sure it would be good enough.

But Pope set a personal record with a throw of 158 feet, 1 inch — enough to put him in first place.

Then, the waiting game began.

"I started thinking, who is going to be able to beat me," Pope said. "I kept holding my breath and wanted to keep composure and not freak out because anything could have happened."

No one was able to beat Pope's mark and, after four years of throwing, Pope could celebrate as a district champion at last.

"There was excitement and relief," he said. "I have a lot of gratitude for my coach (Brian Evans). He's been with me since freshman year. It's really hard to explain. I'm just overwhelmed. I thought if I even got to go to state, it would be in second."



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-ObsERVER

**Amity Deters qualified for state in the 300-meter hurdles, the long jump and the high jump.**

Pope's performance was one Evans won't likely forget.

"Jacob's title was the highlight of the meet for me," Evans said. "I've been working with him for four years and to finish his senior season with the great throws he had, it was a very emotional

moment for me and his family. He has the third best throw in the state at the 1A level."

Pope's performance was far from the only highlight put on by the Pirates.

Amity Deters finished second in the girls high jump



BRIAN EVANS/for the Itemizer-ObsERVER

**Jacob Pope, Amity Deters and Abigail Bibler are headed to state.**

(4-6) and long jump (14-9½) and earned a wild card bid to state after taking third in the 300-meter hurdles (51.34 seconds).

"Amity had an amazing meet and she has a chance to do very well at state," Evans said.

Abigail Bibler also qualified for state after taking second in the shot put (30-8).

### CLASS 1A TRACK AND FIELD STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

**When:** Thursday, 10 a.m.; Friday, 2:30 p.m.

**Where:** Hayward Field, University of Oregon, Eugene.

**Admission:** Adults, \$12; students and children, \$5.

**Perrydale qualifiers: BOYS** — Jacob Pope, sr., javelin (seeded third). **GIRLS** — Amity Deters, fr., 300-meter hurdles (seeded fifth), long jump (seeded 10th), high jump (seeded 13th); Abigail Bibler, jr., shot put (seeded eighth).