

Dragons: Dallas returns nearly all players in 2018



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Dallas pitcher Kaelynn Simmons throws against Marist Catholic on Saturday afternoon.

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Kaelynn Simmons and Lauren Wallace each had two hits.

Classen finished the game with three RBIs. Dallas tallied seven total hits.

"It was definitely nerve wracking, but we remembered it was just another game," Classen said. "We knew that no matter what, we had a successful season."

It wasn't the fairy tale ending players envisioned, but it was a landmark season nonetheless.

The Dragons finished the season with a 25-5 record overall — including an 18-0 mark in Mid-Willamette Conference play — and earned the No. 1 seed in the state playoffs.

Dallas dispatched Silverton 10-2 in the semifinals on May 30 to advance to the title game. Nelson had three hits and one RBI, and Simmons had two hits and three RBIs against the Silver Foxes.

"It was amazing," senior Ashlee Lichtenberger said after the win over Silverton. "It feels like a dream."

Saturday marked the first time the softball program advanced to a state title



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Dallas players receive their second-place medals on Saturday.

game in school history.

"This is all you can hope for throughout your high school career," Nelson, a senior, said.

The Dragons could be a major threat at state for the next few years. Dallas loses two seniors to graduation. With nearly the entire team intact — including Simmons, the MWC's Player of

the Year — there is hope that this isn't the end of a journey but rather the beginning of one.

"Making it this far for the first time can be a little intimidating," Jackson said. "We had awesome support. We had all those fans in the stands. You can only hope that with all our underclassmen, we can get here

again and be a little more relaxed next time. It shows that anything is possible whether you're from a small town or not. This gives us a new name, you could say. It shows what can come from showing heart and working hard every single day, and gives us something to work toward every single year."

Hess: Has coached multiple sports at Dallas High

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He's clearly expanded his coaching horizons — and along the way the chance to help students grow as athletes and as people in gener-

al — became just as, if not more, meaningful than the wins and losses.

Hess' coaching career began when someone took a chance on him. And

though he was honored as Assistant Coach of the Year, he hopes his greatest legacy will be helping to inspire future generations of coaches.

"Get involved with the youth programs," Hess said. "Find out if this is something that you want to do. Put yourself in a position where you can do as much

as you can to get a taste of it. Greg gave me the opportunity to coach high school and putting the care into the other coach and myself meant a lot. It made me

grow up considerably and changed how I worked with people. You have to be a listener and follower at first and willing to take a chance."

PREP BASEBALL

Central, Dallas players named all-league

Itemizer-Observer staff report

POLK COUNTY — Six Central baseball players and five Dallas players received Mid-Willamette Conference all-league honors.

Central's Humberto Alarcon (pitcher), Jackson Holstad (outfield), Luis Amador (utility) and Peter Mendazona (infield) earned



Holstad

first team recognition.

Josh Rodriguez (pitcher) was named to the second team and Emiliano Alarcon (catcher) received honor-



Amador

able mention.

Holstad was also voted first team all-state, while Humberto Alarcon and Amador earned honorable mentions.

Dallas' Tanner

Earhart (outfield) and Treve Earhart (catcher) earned first team all-league honors.

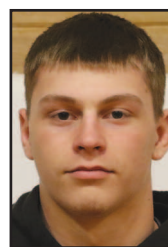
Jaret Stewart (pitcher) and Eric Kessler (infield) received second team all-MWC



Earhart

recognition and Clay Coxen (infield) earned honorable mention.

Tanner and Treve Earhart were also named second team all-state.



Coxen

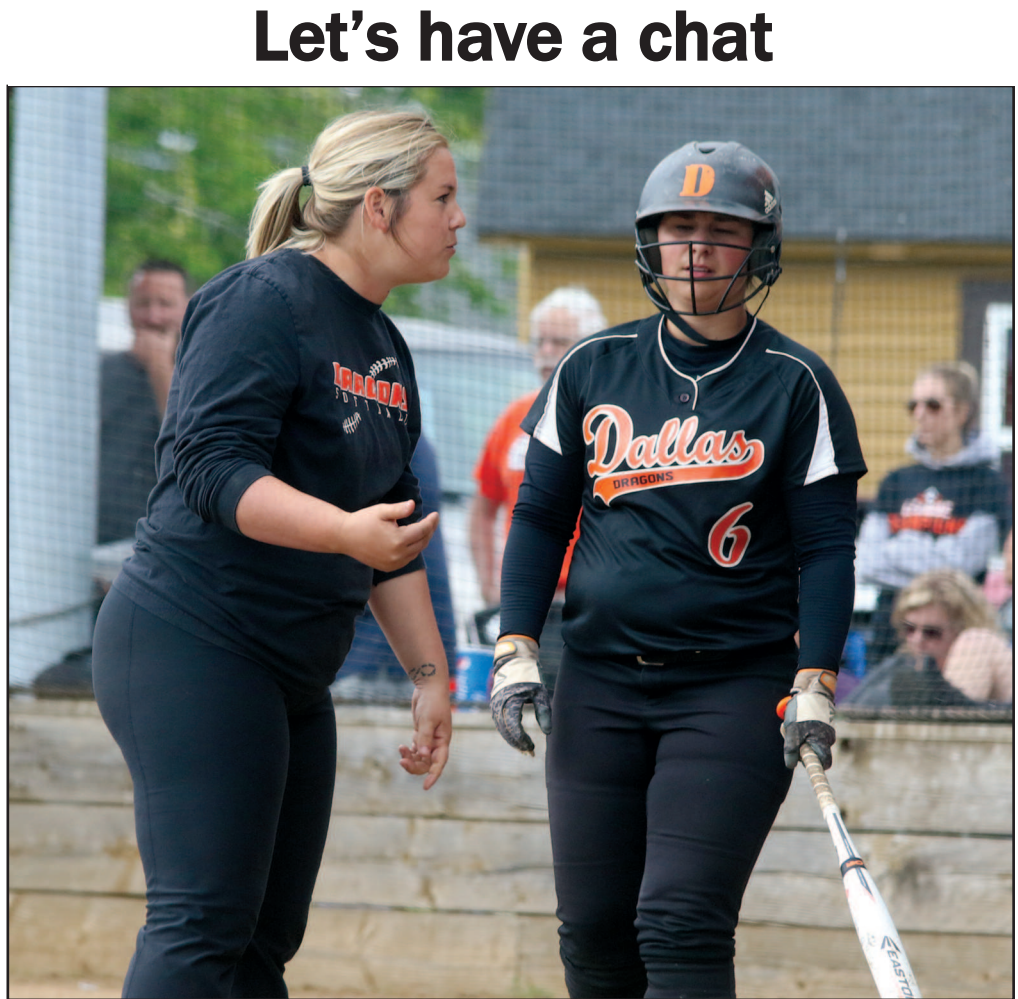
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Dallas softball coach Brandi Jackson talks with Ashlee Lichtenberger during the Dragons 10-2 victory over Silverton on May 30. The Dragons advanced to the 5A state softball championship game for the first time in program history before falling to Marist Catholic 12-7.

Sudoku
Difficulty: ★★☆☆☆

Solution on Page 6A

			2					6
	9		3 8					
2								3
	2 4				3			
	1				2 8			
		7			1			5
	6 8	2 7 4	5					
	5	3						2
1			9					

How to do Sudoku
Fill in the grid so the numbers 1 through 9 appear just once in every column, row, and three-by-three square. See example above.

4	3	2	8	1	6	7	5	9
5	6	9	3	7	4	8	1	2
1	7	8	9	5	2	4	6	3
3	4	7	2	8	5	6	9	1
2	1	6	7	4	9	3	8	5
9	8	5	1	6	3	2	7	4
7	9	1	4	3	8	5	2	6
8	5	3	6	2	1	9	4	7
6	2	4	5	9	7	1	3	8

By Ben Arnoldy