

Sports

Baker High School athletes standouts in the classroom

By Corey Kirk
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Baker High School athletes haven't been able to compete on the field, track or court this spring, but they've been performing at a high level academically all year.

BHS sports teams have consistently been in the top tier of average GPA in most sports, according to the Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA).

"We have some high academic achievers in the high school level right now in grades 9 to 12 (and) this trend isn't going to change for the foreseeable future," said Tim Smith, BHS baseball coach.

Baker student-athletes not only have to abide by the school district rules, but also the guidelines set by the OSAA.

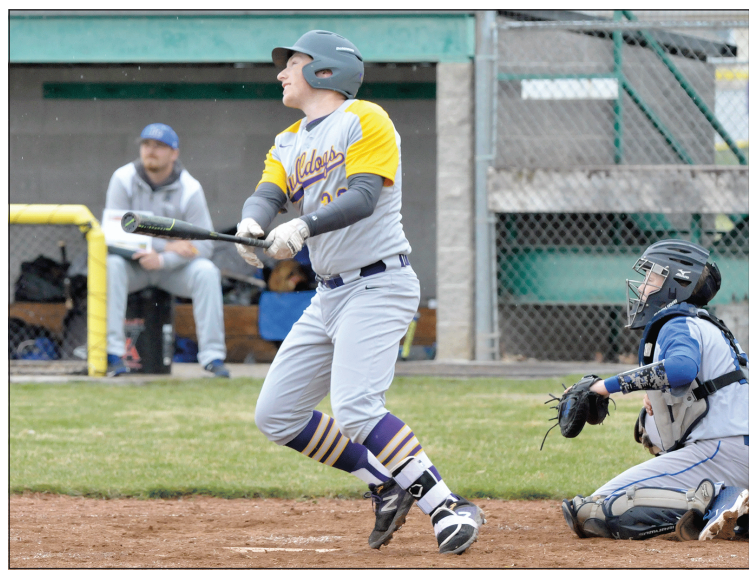
Although spring sports were canceled in early March, OSAA compiled a list of highest achieving schools for spring sports based on participants' grades in the first semester.

"It really doesn't take into account anything that happened at the end of the third quarter or even the fourth," said Buell Gonzales Jr., Baker School District athletic director.

In spring sports Baker's baseball team ranked third among Class 4A schools with a team GPA of 3.57.

"It doesn't surprise me," Smith said. "They're not just good in the classroom, they're good everywhere."

Baker's girls track and field team was fifth at 3.65, and the boys were eighth with a team GPA of 3.4.



S. John Collins / Baker City Herald file photo-2019

Baker's Spencer Smith at bat against Nyssa in May 2019.

Other spring sports:

- Boys tennis — eighth, 3.4
- Boys golf, fifth, 3.5

"We have a strong junior-season boys group, and they did well," Gonzales said. "So of course I'm proud."

Baker's winter sports teams were also standouts. The boys basketball (3.73) and boys swimming (3.76) teams both had the highest GPA among Class 4A squads. The girls swimming team placed fifth at 3.78, and the Baker wrestlers were seventh at 3.13.

The Bulldog athletic program requires students to meet several standards to be eligible for sports.

"You're passing all of your classes, you're in good standing, you have to be in school all day to practice or participate and if you have an absence it needs to fall in the excusable category," Gonzales said.

"Our kids with our better

grades are our student athletes," Gonzales said. "They do take it seriously and the commitment that it takes to be involved, to be a part of the quality experience."

Where success lies for these student athletes depends on their time management skills and the effort they put into their studies.

Smith credits his fellow teachers for letting him know when a student-athlete is struggling to stay eligible.

"We have a heart-to-heart, we sit down and we talk," Smith said. "They are coming to me as a baseball coach and they recognize you as an athlete so we have talks to prevent stuff like this from happening. I credit the high school staff and students for getting the job done."

Ultimately, Gonzales said, BHS will emphasize that for students academics is the top priority, with extracurricular activities second.

NBA draft should happen as planned

Tuesday was supposed to be a big day for basketball fans. Not every team manages to make a splash in the playoffs, so they look to the NBA draft lottery as the start for changing their fortunes.

Not this season.

The draft lottery was canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

But what I propose is that the NBA follow the NFL's footsteps and keep the June 25 date for the actual draft.

NBA officials temporarily suspended the season in early March after Utah Jazz center Rudy Gobert tested positive for COVID-19. As the weeks progressed, other players, including Donovan Mitchell, Kevin Durant, Marcus Smart and Christian Wood, also contracted the virus, increasing skepticism that the season would resume.

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver opted to postpone the NBA combine and draft lottery to protect the health of all involved. But the draft can still happen as scheduled.

I understand the potential challenges. We should be right in the heat of the playoffs right now, finding out who is on a path to hoist the Larry O'Brien trophy. If the season resumes soon, having the draft while games are happening, rather than after the NBA Finals as usual, could disrupt the trajectories of teams.

But I believe that even if the season resumes, the NBA should keep on court for the draft.

Last month, sports fans were able to tune into the NFL Draft for three days, when we watched NFL commissioner Roger Goodell in his own basement announcing the



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teams' picks.

Viewership numbers were staggering, as more than 15.6 million people tuned in on just the first day alone, according to NFL.com.

Though the NFL draft is months after the football season ends, the league was able to capitalize on the absence of live sports and draw a huge viewership.

The NBA has an opportunity to catch national attention the same way.

Let's say the season comes back during the summer. The NBA can decide that newly drafted players won't be eligible until the 2020-21 season starts, presumably this fall.

The league can determine the odds for teams in the draft lottery based on their records when the season was postponed in March.

Sports fans are longing for that day where basketball returns to our TV screens, but we must remain patient. As sports entities continue to decide what their futures may entail, events that can be hosted safely should stay on schedule.

We have seen this work now, and the NBA has an opportunity to capitalize on this halt in sports.

So just do it, NBA, we are tired of watching reruns of games from the past. We want something to look forward to, and what better way to do that than to see the future of the league try on their new uniforms.

Baker County

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Faith Center Foursquare

A Four Square Gospel Church

Worship Service
10:45 AM

1839 3rd St, Baker City
541-523-7915

BAKER CITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
Sunday Worship
First Service 8:30 AM
2nd Service & Sunday School 10 AM
Jr. High & High School Youth Tues 6:30 PM
Youth Pastor Silas Moe
675 Hwy 7, Baker City • 541-523-5425

Harvest Church
& HARVEST CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
(Preschool-12 Grade)
Harvest Cafe 9 AM
Morning Worship 10:10 AM
3720 Birch St, Baker City
541-523-4233
The first Sunday of each month is Mission Breakfast. Donations and non-perishable donations for NEOCC are accepted.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Saturday Worship
11:00 AM

www.bakercitysda.com
17th & Pocahontas, Baker City
541-523-4913

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

9 AM - Baker Valley Ward
10:30 AM Baker City 1st Ward
Noon - Baker City 2nd Ward
Family History Center - no cost
Tues & Fri 1-4 PM
Wed & Thurs 10 AM - 1 PM
Wed Evenings 5:30-8:30 PM
2625 Hughes Lane, Baker City
541-523-2397

SAINT ALPHONSUS HOSPITAL CHAPEL

Open to all patients, family and friends for reflection and prayer.

St. Alphonsus Hospital in Baker City

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday Worship Service
10:30 AM

1995 4th Street, Baker City
541-523-3533
firstpresbaker.blogspot.com

Third & Broadway
541-523-3891
Calvary Baptist Church
Sundays
10 AM Service
& Children's Church
Thursdays
5:30-6:15 pm
Free Community Dinner
Celebrate Recovery
Classes start at 6:15 pm
www.bakercalvarybaptist.com

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH

Sunday Service
11:00 AM

www.ChristianScience.com

3rd & Washington, Baker City
541-523-5911

Elkhorn Baptist Church

Sunday School 10 AM
Morning Worship 11 AM
Evening Worship 6 PM
Discovery Kids Worship
6:30 PM
3520 Birch St, Baker City
541-523-4332

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sunday Service 11 AM

1734 Third Street, Baker City
541-523-3922

firstlutheranbakercity@gmail.com

Baker City Church of the Nazarene
Sunday Worship 9:45 AM
Pastor Troy Teeter
1250 Hughes Lane, Baker City
(Corner of Cedar & Hughes)
541-523-3533
www.bakernaz.com

St. Stephen's Episcopal
Services at 9 AM
1st & 3rd Sundays, Holy Eucharist
2nd & 4th Sundays, Morning Prayer
5th Sunday, Morning Prayer
2177 First Street • Baker City
Entrance on 1st Street
Corner Church & First Streets
541-523-4812

ST. BRIGID'S IN THE PINES COMMUNITY CHURCH

11:30 a.m. Services
1st & 3rd Sunday
Holy Eucharist

East Auburn Street, Sumpter
541-523-4812
A Mission of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Baker City

St. Francis De Sales Cathedral
Daily Masses:
M, T, Th, F 9 AM
Day Chapel in Cathedral
Wed Daily Mass 9 AM
at St. Alphonsus Chapel
Sat 8 AM at Day Chapel
Baker City Saturday Mass 6 pm
Baker City Sunday Mass 9:30 am
St. Therese in Halfway 2 pm Sat
St. Anthony's in North Powder
11:30 Sun
541-523-4521
Corner of First & Church, Baker City

AGAPE CHRISTIAN CENTER

Sunday Services
10:00 AM & 6:30 PM

South Highway 7,
Baker City
541-523-6586

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