

BAKER BASEBALL OPENS GREATER OREGON LEAGUE PLAY

Bulldogs sweep Mac-Hi to open league schedule

Logan Capon throws no-hitter in second game

BY JAYSON JACOBY
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Baker opened the Greater Oregon League baseball schedule with a powerful performance, routing Mac-Hi in both games of a doubleheader on Wednesday, April 6, at Milton-Freewater.

After a sluggish first four innings, Baker rolled to a 15-3 win in the opener. Logan Capon tossed a no-hitter in the second game as the Bulldogs won 10-0 in six innings.

Capon's bid for a perfect game ended when he hit a batter to start the fourth inning. That was Mac-Hi's only baserunner. Capon struck out 13 of the 19 batters he faced. He also threw a first pitch strike to 11 hitters and had 54 strikes on 76 total pitches.

"It was the best pitching performance of the year for our team, without a doubt," Baker coach Tim Smith said. "Logan was in a zone. Hopefully he can find that zone every time he goes out."

Smith said if Capon had managed the perfect game it would have been the first in Smith's coaching career.

Capon helped himself with the bat as well, going 3 for 4 with 2 RBIs.

Hudson Spike drove in two runs, and Hayden Younger was 3 for 3 with an RBI.

Baker had 13 hits. Although the Bulldogs didn't have many defensive changes given Capon's dominance on the mound, Baker made all the plays, finishing without an error.

Baker took control of the second game from the start.

Younger led off with a triple and scored on Spike's groundout.

Jaxon Logsdon doubled and later stole home, and Capon had a single to drive in Thomas Smithson, who had walked.

Baker added two more runs in the second to boost its lead to 5-0. Younger again started the surge, doubling with one out and scoring when Mac-Hi botched Logsdon's ground ball. Cody Skidgel drove in Logsdon with a single.

Baker scored four more runs in the fifth. Smithson, Capon and Cole Hester had consecutive singles to load the bases. Smithson scored on a passed ball and Capon scored on an error. Younger hit a sacrifice fly and Spike had an RBI double.

Game one

Mac-Hi led 1-0 after three innings, and the score was tied at 2 after four.

"We let them hang around through four innings," Smith said. "We talked about that, I told them that we're an error away from coming out with a loss."

The Bulldogs responded, breaking the game open with a six-run rally with two outs in the top of the fifth. After the first two batters flied out, Younger reached on an error, advancing to second on the play. He scored on Spike's single.

Logsdon walked and Skidgel was hit by a pitch to load the bases. Smithson was hit by a pitch to score Spike. Hester drove in two runs with a double, and three straight walks plated two more runs to boost Baker's lead to 8-2.

"We took advantage of (Mac-Hi's) mistakes," Smith said. "Starting in the fifth inning we hit a lot of line drives, and that continued into game two."

Baker added five more runs in the top of the seventh, including Spike's RBI single, Logsdon's RBI double and Connor Chastain's sacrifice fly.

Starting pitcher Silas Carter allowed

FIRST GAME

Baker 0 0 0 2 6 2 5—15
Mac-Hi 1 0 0 1 1 0 0—3
Carter, Chastain (5) and Logsdon.
Yensen, Esparza (5) and Esparza,
Yensen (5).

SECOND GAME

Baker 3 2 0 0 4 1—10
Mac-Hi 0 0 0 0 0 0—0
Capon and Logsdon. Waltermire and
Esparza.

three hits and struck out nine before being relieved by Chastain in the fifth inning. Chastain didn't allow a hit or a walk in 2.2 innings, striking out six.

Smith said both pitchers threw well. Carter allowed three hits and struck out nine batters.

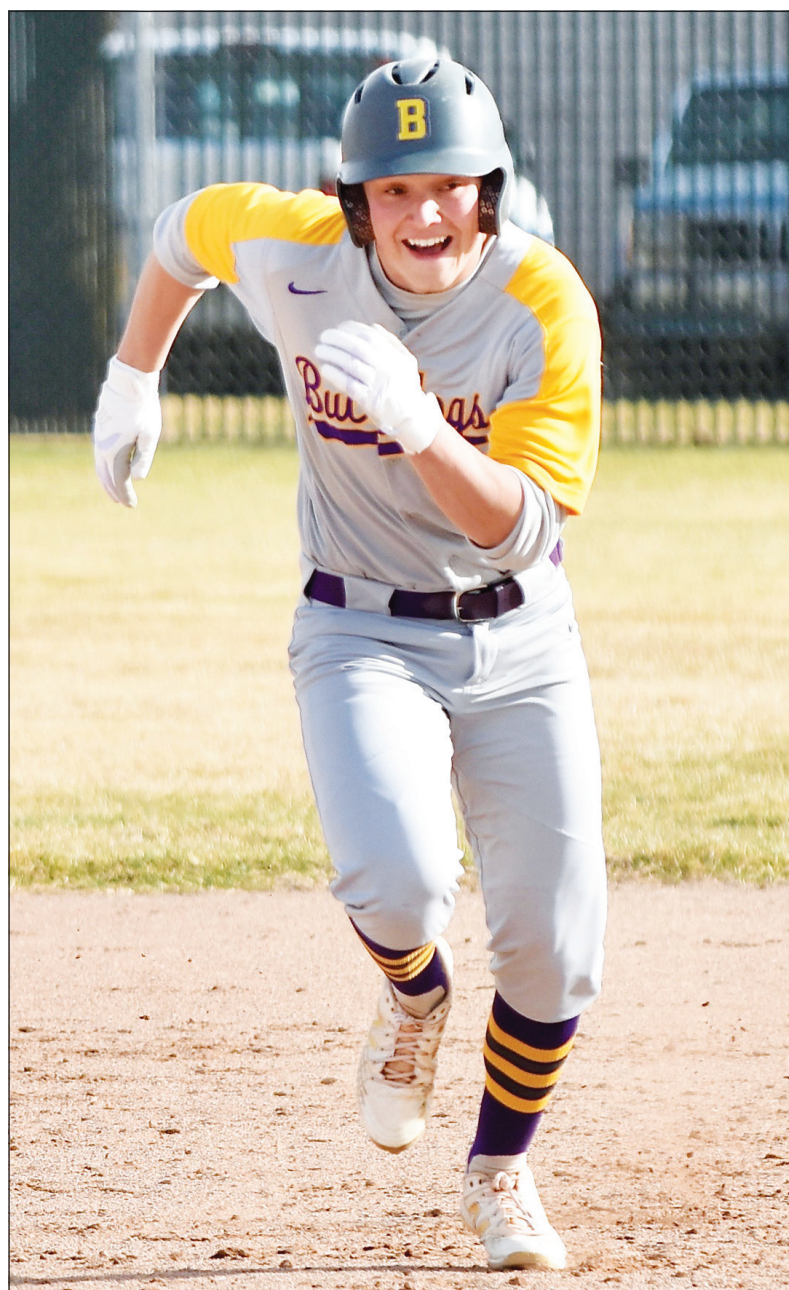
Baker had its only error of the doubleheader in the first game.

That's a major improvement from the Bulldogs' three-game road trip to the Oregon Coast last weekend, when they committed 15 total errors.

The Bulldogs improved to 6-6 overall. Baker returns to league play on Friday, April 15, playing host to Ontario in a doubleheader at the Baker Sports Complex. First pitch is set for 2 p.m.

Although Smith said Baker will face more formidable opponents later this season — two doubleheaders against La Grande, which is 10-1 and ranked seventh in the state, are looming — he was pleased with the Bulldogs' performance against Mac-Hi, coming off the disappointing road trip.

"We can't control who we're playing," he said. "We need to take care of our business, throwing strikes, playing error-free defense and putting the ball in play. We're kind of a work in progress at this point."



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

Baker's Logan Capon runs the bases during the Bulldogs' 8-6 win over Homedale, Idaho, on Wednesday, March 30, 2022, at the Baker Sports Complex.

BAKER TENNIS

Baker wins 8 of 9 matches at Mac-Hi

Baker City Herald

MILTON-FREEWATER —

The Baker tennis teams nearly pulled off a complete sweep of their matches against Mac-Hi on Thursday, April 7.

Baker won all four girls matches and four of five boys matches.

The lone loss was in the longest and most competitive match of the day, as Baker's boys doubles team of Ethan Hills and Jayden Yencopal played Mac-Hi's Sean Molina and Jose Gomez.

The first set went to a tie-breaker, and it was as close as the rest of the set had been. Molina and Gomez eventually prevailed, 11-9.

The second set was almost as tight, with the Mac-Hi duo winning 7-5.

Baker coach Amy Younger said Hills and Yencopal played a great match.

Other boys results:

Singles

Danny Cunningham def. Connor Batchelor, 6-1, 6-0
Caleb Hills def. Bryan Garcia, 8-2

Ashton LeTourneau def. Carlos LeDezma, 8-1

Doubles

Noah Lien and Weston Downing def. Talen Alexander and Bryan Garcia, 8-0

GIRLS

Singles

Isabel Cunningham def. Avery Lewis, 6-2, 6-4
Maya Smith def. Jocelyne Arroyo, 8-1
Olivia Jacoby def. Kaylee Bower, 8-4

Doubles

Maya Smith and Olivia Jacoby def. Ariana Torres and Johanna Martinez, 6-1, 6-3

Next week

Baker will travel to Weiser, Idaho, on Monday, April 11, for matches starting at 3 p.m. PDT.

The Bulldogs will have their first home match of the season on Tuesday, April 12, against La Grande. Play starts at 4 p.m. at the Ash Grove complex near the BHS track.



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

Baker's Caleb Hills returns a shot during his match on Thursday, March 31, 2022, at Pendleton. Hills won his singles match at Mac-Hi on Thursday, April 7, 2022.

CJ McCollum scores 23 points, Pelicans beat Blazers 127-94

BY BRETT MARTEL

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — CJ McCollum scored 23 points in 29 minutes against his former team and the New Orleans Pelicans moved closer to clinching a home play-in game with a 127-94 victory over the Portland Trail Blazers on Thursday night, April 7.

Jonas Valanciunas, who returned from a sore right ankle, scored 14 points in 21 minutes for the Pelicans, who were without leading scorer Brandon Ingram (right hamstring), but wound up not needing any starters on the floor for as many as 30 minutes against a reeling Blazers team that had a patchwork lineup and lost its ninth straight.

"Our bench was great. They brought energy, pushed the pace," McCollum said. "From top to bottom, this was a good team win. Now we've got to finish the season strong. Hopefully, we can take care of business and host the play-in game."

The victory, combined with the San Antonio's loss at Minnesota, left New Orleans needing either one more victory or one more Spurs loss to lock up a home play-in game on Wednesday.

McCollum appeared to hurt his right hand, with which he shoots, when he was fouled and crashed to the floor in the third quarter. But after missing two free throws and a subsequent 3, he remained in game for nearly eight more minutes, hitting his fifth 3 of

the game and a finger roll, before checking out for good.

Reserve center Willy Hernangomez had 17 points and 14 rebounds for New Orleans. Larry Nance Jr., sent from Portland to New Orleans as part of the trade that also brought McCollum to the Pelicans, scored 12 points, as did rookie Trey Murphy III.

Reserve guard and undrafted rookie Jose Alvarado had nine assists and four steals for the Pelicans, who led by 13 at half-time and by 25 after three and widened their lead from there.

Trail Blazers coach Chauncy Billups said he suspected his players could be getting "really fatigued" mentally as the season winds down.

"You see the finish line, the season is coming to an end.

We're not playing for the playoffs," Billups said. "It's just a natural thing that happens. So we have to, as a staff, do a better job of just getting them up to play."

Drew Eubanks scored 20 points and CJ Elleby had 17 points for Portland, but the Blazers were sloppy with the ball and outworked around the basket. Portland committed 22 turnovers, leading to 36 Pelicans points. New Orleans also turned 23 offensive rebounds into 33 second-chance points and out-rebounded the Blazers 49-27.

"We wanted to be active on our defense ... try to cause havoc with deflections and steals," Pelicans coach Willie Green said. "This triggers our offensive ability to get out and play in open court. I thought our guys did a really good job."

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