

Baker softball routs Marsing, Idaho, 24-5

Baker City Herald

MARSING, Idaho — The lightning bolt was not an encouraging sign for Baker softball coach Sonny Gulick.

But the clouds parted before the first pitch, and after that most of the noise came from the Bulldogs' bats.

Baker, playing for the first time in a week, scored 17 runs in the first two innings and went on to rout Marsing 24-5 on Wednesday, April 13.

The Bulldogs improved their season record to 5-4.

During a week when the weather more resembled January than mid April, Gulick said he felt fortunate that Baker was able to get in a game for the first time since April 6, when the Bulldogs dropped a doubleheader at Mac-Hi to open the Greater Oregon League season.

But until the bus arrived in Marsing, he wasn't sure it would happen.

"I was saying that about the only thing we didn't have on the trip was a tornado," Gulick said.

The weather improved when the Bulldogs passed through Caldwell, though, and for the first two innings there was sunshine and, perhaps more important, little wind.

Baker took advantage of the relatively pleasant conditions.

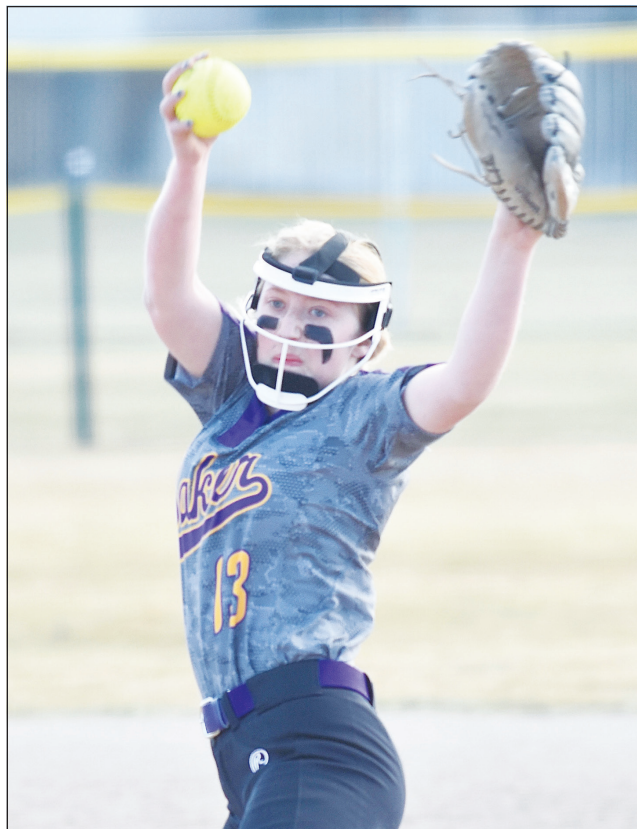
Leadoff hitter Kiley Jo Aldrich was hit by a pitch, and Brooklyn Rayl reached on an error. Makayla Rabourne singled to score Rayl, Kaycee Cuzick singled to score Rabourne, and courtesy runner Kaydence Thomas scored on Kaci Anderson's double.

Ashlyn Dalton and Sydney Fry later scored on passed balls as Baker led 7-1 after one inning.

Baker added to its lead with 10 more runs in the second.

Cuzick and Kaci Anderson both walked, and Anderson and Thomas, as a courtesy runner, both scored on wild pitches.

After Dalton doubled, Fry singled and Aldrich was hit by



Jayson Jacoby/Baker City Herald

Baker's Kaycee Cuzick struck out nine Marsing batters in a complete-game win on Tuesday, March 29, 2022, at the Baker Sports Complex. Baker won 18-2.

a pitch, Rayl and Candace Peterson had RBI singles.

Gulick said he was pleased with Baker batters taking advantage of Marsing's mistakes.

"I thought we did a good job of that all day," he said. "I was very happy. Everybody got the ball in play."

Gulick was equally satisfied with Baker's pitching performances.

Given Baker's long gap between games, he said his goal was to have four pitchers throw. Cuzick started in the circle, with relievers Teygan Coley, Rayl and Rabourne all coming on in relief.

Baker pitchers allowed just four hits and two walks.

Gulick said Rabourne had a strong fifth inning, throwing strikes on 11 of 17 pitches.

Rayl and Rabourne both went 3 for 5 with two RBIs. Peterson was 1 for 4 with 2 RBIs, and Emrie Osborn was 1 for 2 with 2 RBIs.

Baker	7	10	1	2	4	—	24
Marsing	1	2	2	0	0	—	5
Cuzick, Coley (3), Rayl (3), Rabourne (5) and K. Anderson, Astorquia, Thoene (3) and Gluch.							

Baker was slated to return to its league schedule by playing host to Ontario in a doubleheader starting at 2 p.m. on Friday, April 15.

Despite the wintry weather — about 2 inches of snow fell in Baker City early Thursday — Gulick was optimistic that the Ontario games would be played.

"Our field has always been pretty good about holding water," he said.

Gulick said the Bulldogs practiced on their field the afternoon of Tuesday, April 12, even though there was snow on the ground that morning.

BMCC plans deep cuts to faculty

BY ANTONIO SIERRA

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — After warning about impending budget cuts for months, the other shoe has dropped at Blue Mountain Community College.

At an April 25 budget committee meeting, BMCC administration will propose shuttering three programs and eliminating 10 full-time faculty positions in addition to several part-time positions. Should the BMCC Board of Education approve the move, the college would lose its criminal justice, college prep and industrial systems technology programs while also dropping instructors from its business, English, humanities/fine arts, math/computer science, science and social science departments.

In a Wednesday, April 13 interview, Blue Mountain President Mark Browning said the budget cuts need to be made to help close a \$2 million shortfall in the 2022-23 budget.

"We have to start living within our means," he said. "That's the bottom line."

The news was not well received by the Blue Mountain Faculty Association, the union that represents the college's instructors.

Union President Pete Hernberg described the list of proposed cuts as "extraordinary and shocking" and raises questions about the college's commitment to the community.

"These cuts are shocking," he said. "They are arbitrary. And they are unnecessary."

Hernberg questioned why BMCC administration wanted to cut the college's criminal justice program at a time when law enforcement was trying to recruit skilled personnel.

He added that eliminating the industrial systems technology department represented a "broken promise" to Boardman, which would still have its Workforce Training Center but not one of the signature programs the center houses.

Browning was prepared to defend his administration's choices.

He said a degree from the college's criminal justice program isn't a requirement to enter the law enforcement field, and while he admitted



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

Blue Mountain Community College will consider proposals to shutter three programs and eliminate 10 full-time positions and additional part-time positions.

the industrial systems technology had been a "good idea" when it was started, the program's low enrollment meant it can be replaced in Boardman by the higher-demand diesel tech program.

Browning turned his focus to the English program, which would lose one of its instructors under the administration's proposal. He said the department's four-person staff is the same size as it was a decade ago, even though enrollment has shrunk 65% over the past 11 years.

BMCC, and other community colleges across the state, have seen significant enrollment declines in recent years, and Blue Mountain staff are starting to see the effects of that trend.

Since 2019, the college has reduced its workforce by 39 positions, albeit under different presidents. Those figures don't include additional staffing cuts made when Blue Mountain was forced to renegotiate its prison education contract with the Oregon Department of Corrections during that time period.

This round of proposed cuts differs from previous years because it mostly focuses on making cuts to faculty. With previous staff reductions focused on administration or classified staff, Browning said there was little room to cut in those areas.

But Hernberg argued that BMCC was using its budget to deprioritize instruction and programming in favor of contracts with consultants and tech companies.

"What our community needs is jobs and training for those jobs," he said. "What our community needs are de-

grees and classes toward those degrees. That's the promise that our taxpayers expect us to keep. They don't expect us to hire some consulting firm. They don't expect us to send a giant chunk of cash to some tech company."

Browning contested Hernberg's interpretation of the proposed budget, saying they were one-time investments in improving the college's website and conducting a review of Blue Mountain's programs, moves that will better position the college for the future.

At a time when BMCC is facing increasing competition from nearby community colleges in Washington and trade schools, Browning said the staffing cuts could actually help with recruitment.

"We're not actually offering fewer classes," he said. "We're having fewer people offer the classes that we do currently have, and we'll be offering new and different approaches to some of the outcomes so that (students are) better employable upon completion. The assertion that we're offering fewer classes is simply not borne out in the data."

While BMCC is holding firm on its cuts, the faculty union is not treating them as a settled issue. Hernberg said the union plans to explore its legal options and is also planning a "vigorous" public campaign to convince the college to reconsider its plans.

"We believe that there is a sacred trust between this community, these educators and our students, and we're going to do everything we can to protect that," he said.



Local Cancer Care Is Getting an Upgrade

We're committed to investing in the Fruitland community. St. Luke's Cancer Institute is installing a new linear accelerator in Fruitland this spring.

The upgrade will ensure local cancer patients who need radiation treatment will receive the very best in modern care.



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