

## BAKER SOFTBALL

# Six Bulldogs picked for GOL all-league teams

BY IAN CRAWFORD

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Six Baker softball players have been recognized by the Greater Oregon League and given placement on the 2022 all-league teams.

The Bulldogs advanced to the Class 4A playoffs for the first time since 2018, losing a first-round game to Marist Catholic of Eugene, which advanced to the state championship game.

Coaches from GOL teams, Baker, La Grande, Ontario and Mac-Hi, chose the all-league players.

“Coaches get together and look at the girls’ statistics for the season,” Baker coach Sonny Gulick said. “We take fielding, pitching, catching, and hitting all into account.”

Besides statistical values, “attitude and work ethic can also play a part in the decision,” Gulick said. “We discuss what girls have done for their team and which girls performed the best during the season.”

Baker had three players on the GOL first team:

- Junior Kaycee Cuzick as utility player.
- Junior Makayla Rabourne as an outfielder.

## Check the June 11 issue for Baker baseball all-stars

Nine Baker baseball players earned Greater Oregon League honors for the 2022 season.

See the Saturday, June 11, issue of the Baker City Herald for a list of the Bulldogs who were named to all-league teams.

- Freshman Brooklyn Rayl as an infielder.

“It is nice to see the girls get recognized for their hard work,” Gulick said. “Kaycee led us in batting average and Brooklyn in hits.”

Baker’s second-team picks:

- Cuzick as a pitcher.
  - Junior Kaci Anderson as catcher.
  - Junior Kiley Jo Aldrich as an infielder.
  - Senior Emrie Osborn as an outfielder.
- “Having so many ladies selected is a credit to the team,” Gulick said. “I am really looking forward to next year.”

Five of the six Bulldogs who earned all-league honors will be eligible to play next spring, as Osborn was the lone senior.



Ian Crawford/Baker City Herald

Baker’s Kaci Anderson swings at a pitch during the Bulldogs’ 5-0 win over Heppner/Lone on April 25, 2022, at the Sports Complex.

## OSAA honors Baker coach and BHS graduate

BY IAN CRAWFORD

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The Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA) honored two Baker City men, one current and one former, for their efforts promoting sports both locally and statewide.

Jason Edwards, an assistant football coach at Baker High School, received an assistant coach of the year award.

And Brad Garrett, a 1981 BHS graduate who has worked for the OSAA since 2001, was given the Marv Heater Distinguished Service Award.

Both were honored during the OSAA’s annual awards ceremony May 21 at the University of Oregon.

### Jason Edwards

BHS head football coach Jason Ramos expressed gratitude for Edwards’ support.

“Coach Edwards brought a background of knowledge and experience that made him an excellent fit for our program,” Ramos said. “He instantly made connections and built relationships with all of our student athletes. He has a real passion for making himself available for kids to improve themselves.”

### Brad Garrett

Garrett, an assistant executive director for OSAA, which is based in Wilsonville, received the Marv Heater Distinguished Service Award, which is not given every year.

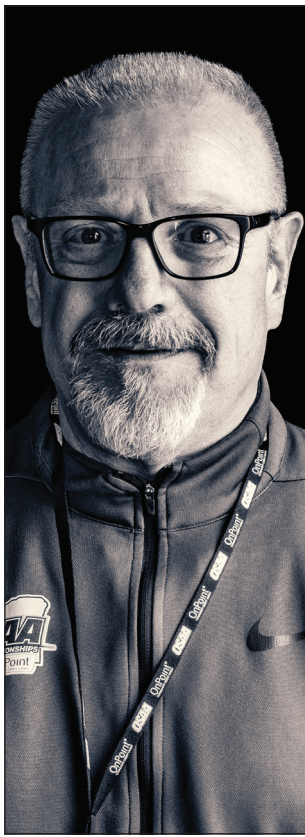
The award honors Heater, a linchpin for the Oregon Athletic Coaches Association (OACA), initially hosting it from his own basement. After Heater was succeeded by Rob Younger in 2010, the award was established to commemorate his life dedication Oregon high school athletics.

Garrett oversaw the state’s cross-country, football, wrestling, track and speech and debate programs this school year.

“Brad’s impacts on high school activities in Oregon, and nationally, have been tremendous,” OSAA Executive Director Peter Weber said during the awards ceremony. “Simply put, he’s a leader who gets the job done every time.”

Garrett served as national chair for the National Federation of State High School Associations.

In an interview, Weber talked about his 20-year association with Garrett, and the crucial role Garrett played as OSAA helped schools and athletes navigate the challenges of the pandemic.



Jeremy Lanthorn/Contributed Photo

Brad Garrett was awarded the Marv Heater Distinguished Service Award by the OSAA on May 21, 2022.

“We all worked together to work with the state to get activities back and running,” Weber said.

Garrett reflected on his 21 years with OSAA.

“Every day is a battle out here, sports are such a part of the fabric of society, as staff members we have opportunities to deal with all kinds of scenarios at a really basic, human level,” he said. “Over the last 21 years I would certainly consider it a success on the number of those interactions that were super positive.”

He touched on the consistent changes he saw in sports, noting how much football particularly has had to adjust.

“From 2008 we saw safety changes on a state and national level, concussions changed everything for the high school realm,” Garrett said. “We had to find ways to make the game as safe as possible.”

Garrett also talked about the challenge of school athletics competing with the growing popularity of club sports.

“One of the biggest challenges moving forward is maintaining the balances between athletes and coaches that have become more exacerbated,” Garrett said. “As club athletics have become more popular over time, we’re fighting to keep educational based athletics viable and part of the fabric moving forward.”

## La Grande rolls to state baseball title

BY RONALD BOND

For The Observer

KEIZER — The La Grande Tigers are back on top of the Class 4A baseball world.

And they used a punishing offensive attack and a lockdown pitching effort to get there.

“It was pretty great, to be honest,” Jarrett Armsrong said. “It felt like it was deserved in a way because of last year getting so close. It was a big sigh of relief for the whole team to finally get that work in and get the result you wanted.”

Nick Bornstedt and Armstrong both had three RBIs, Jace Schow outpitched both of Hidden Valley’s aces, and the Tigers (28-1 overall) rolled to a 10-1 victory Tuesday, June 7, at Volcanoes Stadium to claim their third OSAA state title. La Grande claimed its other state titles in 2007 and 2017.

“Phenomenal. Fantastic team win,” head coach Parker McKinley said. “They were ready to go. We knew we needed to get right after their starting pitcher. ... Kids had some great approaches.”

Schow, who also homered in the win, tamed the high-powered Mustang offense, striking out 11 and allowing just one run on six hits. The lone run he surrendered scored on a balk in the second inning.

“That’s a really, really good lineup, a strong-hitting lineup that he pitched against,” McKinley said. “He pitched beautifully. He executed his pitchers, hit his spots.”

Schow, who said having the early lead helped drop his stress, said he found success in knowing his defense would make plays behind him. He pounded the strike zone, deftly mixing up his fastball and changeup.

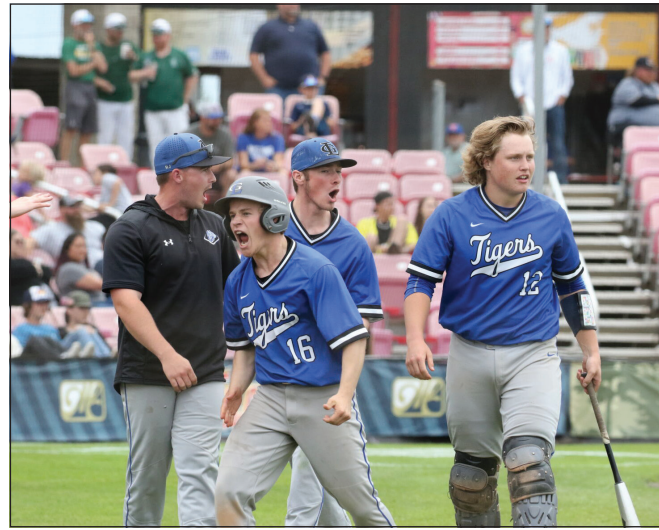
“I was trying to get them to put the ball in play and throw strikes,” he said. “I was keeping them off balance by throwing my changeup and (making them hit) it to my defense.”

The Tigers’ offense, meanwhile, scored early and often against Hidden Valley aces Isaac Hill and Nate Vidlak. Hill started, but lasted just five batters, leaving with what McKinley said appeared to be an issue with his throwing arm.

“Isaac, hopefully, was not (out with) anything serious, but his arm was bothering him,” the coach said.

Hill walked the first two batters he faced, then after two strikeouts surrendered a two-out, two-run single to Nick Bornstedt for an early 2-0 lead.

“I think that definitely set the tone,” Bornstedt said. “It was really kind of what got us going. I feel like it was a spark. The rest of the team rallied behind me after that. A credit



Suzanne Collman/Contributed Photo

La Grande’s Braden Carson (16) celebrates after scoring during the Tigers’ 10-1 win over Hidden Valley in the OSAA Class 4A state championship game on Tuesday, June 7, 2022 in Keizer. La Grande finished the season with a 28-1 record en route to the program’s third state title.

to the first two guys that got walked, too, just to be on and be in that situation for me.”

The Tigers added single runs in the third and fourth

against Vidlak on a Bornstedt RBI single and an Armstrong sacrifice fly in the fourth, then delivered the knockout blow in the fifth.

“Eventually the dam broke,” Bornstedt said. “As a team we were putting a lot of pressure on them the whole game.”

La Grande loaded the bases with one out, and Cesar Rodriguez walked to force in a run for a 5-1 lead. On the next pitch, Braden Carson hit a two-run single to center, and three pitches later, Armstrong hit a two-run double to chase Vidlak from the game and push the lead to 9-1.

“We just put everything together, didn’t let up on the gas, and I would say just tied some runs together that needed to happen,” Armstrong said of the fifth-inning barrage. “It was momentum building, one piece at a time.”

Schow iced the win with a solo home run to lead off the sixth.

“The game is so much about momentum,” McKinley said. “When you get it going in your direction special things can happen.”



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