

## The pain of caring too much



**SAM BARBEE**  
FROM THE SIDELINES  
Sports reporter

While the Houston Astros were parading around the bases against the sanity-taking Mariners, I became angry. Not just feign I-wish-this-wasn't-happening angry. No. It was full-fledged I-want-to-punch-something-injuries-be-damned angry.

Then I realized something: I've gotten out of control.

I guess it all started when I thought the Mariners would actually be a good baseball team. On paper they are, but games aren't won with projections and hypotheticals, they're won with runs. And Seattle has the second-fewest runs in baseball, despite having this guy named Nelson Cruz. So as the Astros scored 13 runs and Seattle mustered just two hits, boy was I upset. I stomped around my apartment and pouted with my arms folded. I turned into a first-grader who didn't get to go to McDonald's because he misbehaved.

I texted my dad and told him what was going on. He's in Europe right now with my mom, taking a cruise from Cologne to Vienna, and somehow the nine-hour time difference synced up properly for us to have a brief conversation.

He said to just remember that it's entertainment and ultimately unimportant. It's a sentiment I share but had forgotten. Sure, I'm emotionally invested in the teams I root for. When Washington lost a heart-breaking football game to Arizona last fall, I couldn't watch that day's highlights. They were too painful. But that's a rarity. Usually I don't care enough to have a win or loss affect my mood and my attitude.

It's been happening more frequently lately. My coworkers can attest to my irrational involvement. They see when I come to the office after a series win and I'm glowing, and I have a rain cloud over my head when the Mariners have lost two of three. Editor Jessica Keller tells me I'm in an unhealthy relationship and I have to get out. And you know what? She's right.

So now I'm trying. I'm trying not to live and die with each inning, with each at-bat, with each pitch. I make fun of football fans in the South who obviously take it too seriously. Remember that story about an Alabama fan who poisoned the almost sacred trees on the campus of Auburn a few years ago? That's what I was on pace to become. At one point, I was seriously considering hijacking the train that steams across some tracks at Houston's ballpark as a sort of revenge tactic. See where I was?

I had this coming. At the beginning of the spring, I was telling anyone who would listen that the M's are winning the American League West this season. It turns out I couldn't have been more wrong, yet I still believed. And I guess some of my negative emotions came from the expectations I made in my own head out of hope and desperation. So, it's really my fault. I got too involved, too emotionally connected to a sports team. It can happen to the best of us, but it's also important to have some perspective about the whole situation.

By the end of the day Sunday, with these things hashed and re-hashed in my head, I have a new attitude: lethargy.

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## Darkness ends ASA scrimmage in tie

Hermiston plated four in seventh to stay alive

BY SAM BARBEE  
HERMISTON HERALD

Rarely do softball games end in ties. Usually they go to the next inning with some sort of tiebreaker to swiftly determine a winner.

In an ASA softball scrimmage between Hermiston and Echo Outrage, we got to the eighth inning tiebreaker after Hermiston plated four in the bottom of the seventh to tie things up at 7-7. But during the fourth at-bat of the eighth, the game was called a 7-7 tie due to darkness.

It was both teams' first real competition of the summer, and both coaches walked away with largely happy with how the game was played.

Hermiston coach Kylee Lete and Echo coach Bryan Bailey both were satisfied with their pitching. But Lete wasn't satisfied with the overall effort.

"We were flat," she said. "We played defense flat. We hit flat. Everything was flat."

But despite the flatness, Hermiston scored first. Jaime Hinkley led off with a double in the bottom of the first and moved to third on a throwing error. The next at-bat, Julissa Almaguer bunted home the speedy infielder for a 1-0 lead.

Echo grabbed a brief



SAM BARBEE PHOTO

Echo's Mackenzie Gonzales slides safely into second base as Hermiston short stop Mikayla Kopacz tries to find the ball during an ASA scrimmage Monday in Hermiston. The game was called a 7-7 tie due to darkness.

lead in the third, when two errors created a run with no outs. An out later, Kelly McLoughlin singled home Echo's second run of the day for a 2-1 lead.

Hermiston responded in the home half of the third when Hinkley singled, moved to second on an error, stole third and scored on a ground out to tie things at two apiece.

Hermiston got another in the fourth when Almaguer walked to lead off, moved to second and third on wild pitches and scored on Hermiston's second safety squeeze on the day for a 3-2 lead.

But Echo got one back in the fifth on an error to tie it again at three.

Then Echo appeared to take control. Echo worked

three walks in the sixth, took a base on a bean ball, and scored three runs. A run scored on a wild pitch with Mackenzie Gonzales at the dish, and she singled home another. Gonzales herself scored on another wild pitch to push Echo ahead, 6-3. They got another in the seventh on yet another wild pitch.

Then it was Hermis-

ton's turned to play chicken with the sunset.

Two errors and a wild pitch got Hermiston its first run of the frame with one out, then a single and a walk loaded the bases. Almaguer singled on the first pitch she saw, getting two and putting Hermiston down a single run at 7-6 still with one out. A shallow fly ball to center popped out of Jamie Christopher's glove in center, allowing the tying run to cross the plate.

We moved to the eighth, then, and with a modified Texas tiebreaker. Instead of just one runner at second and one out, it was decided to have runners at second and third and no outs in an attempt to speed up the process. Echo plated a couple of runs before it got too dark, and both coaches, along with the single umpire, decided to call the game a tie because of darkness.

For Bailey and Echo, who travel to McMinnville for a tournament this weekend, it was good to get some live action.

"It was good to get over here and get away from typical practice stuff," Bailey said. "It was definitely what we needed to prepare to go to McMinnville for a tournament."

ECHO 7, HERMISTON 7		
ECHO	002	013
1-7 5 6		
STAN	101	100
4-7 6 5		
B. Nailor, J. Almaguer and T. Betz; M. Gonzales and J. Garza.		
2B: J. Hinkley (HERM).		

## Four Bulldog golfers honored with scholarships

Kings and Queens Tournament gives \$1,500 in awards

BY SAM BARBEE  
HERMISTON HERALD

Four Hermiston golfers got a little help paying for college expenses. They are recipients of the Kings and Queens Scholarship, which gives \$250 and \$500 awards to a male and female golfers from Umatilla and Morrow counties.

Paden LaCoursiere and Madison Welch received the \$500 scholarships, and Zack Adams and Saige Smith received the \$250 scholarships. They were awarded based on involvement in golf, essays written about how the sport has affected their lives and letters of endorsement from coaches.

"They've been involved in golf a number of years and just the



LaCoursiere



Welch



Adams



Smith

way they handle themselves on the golf course (was reason to select them)," Committee Chairman Don Obrist said. "I've watched them play for several years and they really just stood out."

The scholarship is related to

the Kings and Queens Tournament, a couples event that's in its fifth year. A year or two after the inaugural tournament, Obrist and the committee decided to start raising money, and that quickly morphed into scholarships.

"We saw some ways to raise some money and we decided to raise money to give it away," Obrist said. "Because all the couples were involved in golf, what better way to give the money in scholarships?"

The Kings and Queens Tournament is July 25-26 at Big River Golf Course in Umatilla. The entry fee is \$180 per couple and that includes a dinner Saturday night. A horse race auction is also on the docket for Saturday.

The tourney is a 36-hole flighted tournament separated into three categories based on handicaps. The sign-up deadline is Saturday, July 20.

## Stanfield splits with Tri Cities Badgers at home

Grogan tosses one-hitter in win, walks doom Tigers in loss

BY SAM BARBEE  
HERMISTON HERALD

The Stanfield AAU baseball team split a pair of games in Stanfield over the weekend.

Bolstered by a one-hitter from Dylan Grogan in the opener, Stanfield cruised to an 11-0 win over the Tri Cities Badgers, but a big sixth inning from the Badgers completed a comeback in the second game to down Stanfield, 11-10.

In the opener, Stanfield scored nine runs in the top of the fifth to break open a 2-0 game. Ryan Bailey scored on a single from Grogan in the fourth and Grogan scored on a double play for a 2-0 lead. Meanwhile, the lanky sophomore Grogan was dealing. TCB got its only hit of

the day in the first — on a bunt single — and Grogan followed that with a walk. But Grogan struck out the next two batters to slip out of the jam. After a walk in the second inning, Grogan retired 11 straight Badgers. His final line: 5.0 innings pitched, one hit, no runs, two walks and nine strikeouts.

In the fifth, Stanfield scored all nine with two outs. Damian Curiel singled with two away and Thyler Monkus followed with a walk. Adrian Renner and Bailey both singled, driving in Curiel and Monkus and giving Stanfield a 4-0 lead. Grogan then walked to load the bases and Tony Flores walked to plate Renner for a 5-0 lead. Klay Jenson then singled, Hunter Barnes walked, Makiah Blankenship singled and Jason Fitzpatrick doubled. Fitzpatrick's was a three-run, base-clearing two-bagger to put Stanfield up 11-0. Fitzpatrick was 1 for

3 with three RBIs in the game, Ryan Bailey was 2 for 2 with two runs scored and an RBI, and all but two Tigers had an RBI.

### STANFIELD 11, TRI CITIES BADGERS 0

STN	000	29-11 10 0
TCB	000	00-0 1 3
D. Grogan and T. Monkus; Nelson, Hartwig, Dickson and Ritala. W—D. Grogan. L—Nelson.		
2B: J. Fitzpatrick.		

Through five innings of the nightcap, Stanfield appeared to be in control.

Leading 8-5, sophomore right-hander Tony Flores was set to relieve starter Hunter Barnes after he went five innings, allowing five runs, four earned, on eight hits while walking one and striking out three.

But Flores experienced his second straight outing with poor control, walking five Badgers in just 1/3 of inning, allowing six earned runs on just one hit. The six-run sixth put the Badgers up 11-8, and though Stanfield got a

couple in the bottom of the seventh, it wasn't enough.

Stanfield scored three in the first when Ryan Bailey doubled to drive in Thyler Monkus, who walked, and Flores, who singled. Klay Jenson then shot a single into left, plating Bailey for a 3-0 lead. TCB got a two-RBI double in the second to pull within a run at 3-2.

After a couple quiet innings, Stanfield plated another three in the third. Bailey and Jenson each singled again to plate a run each and give Stanfield a 5-2 lead. Keith Wampler later walked with the bags packed to send home Dylan Grogan, who had singled.

TCB got one back in the visitor's fourth with a sacrifice fly, and got two more in the fifth with an RBI double and single.

Wampler came up with RBI singles in the home fifth to extend Stanfield's lead back to three at 8-5, then the miserable sixth.

An RBI walk, a passed ball, an RBI double, and an

RBI fielder's choice provided TCB's six runs and the 11-8 lead. Monkus and Flores each walked to lead off the home sixth, then Bailey reached on an error to plate Monkus. Flores moved to third and Bailey to second on the play. Grogan then reached on an error, allowing Flores to score. But a ground out and line out ended the threat, and Stanfield couldn't get anything going in the seventh.

Stanfield is at Armand Larive for a doubleheader against Hermiston June 23. First pitch is set for 4 p.m. Stanfield's next game is at Irrigon June 22. First pitch is set for 5 p.m.

### TRI CITIES BADGERS 11, STANFIELD 10

TCB	020	126
0-11 9 2		
STN	303	022
0-10 11 1		
Mencado, Ritala and Long; H. Barnes, T. Flores, A. Renner, D. Grogan and T. Monkus. W—Mencado. L—T. Flores.		
2B: Ritala 2 (TCB), C. Ritala (TCB), Harlow (TCB), K. Jenson (STN), T. Monkus (STN), R. Bailey (STN).		