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Stanfield championship game a masterpiece

By **MATT ENTRUP**
Staff writer

Now that the dust has settled in Corvallis and Keizer from another amazing finish to the high school sports year, it's good opportunity to take another look at what may have been the best 3A baseball game of the season.

The Stanfield Tigers' 5-4 win over Santiam Christian in the 3A championship had everything a spectator could ask for in a game.

It had a back story. The two teams had met about a month prior with the Eagles earning a come-from-behind 2-1 win with a walk-off home run by star pitcher Dru Draper in the bottom of the seventh inning.

It had historical significance. The Tigers had four players on the team who had watched their older brothers win titles on that same field in 2011, and assistant coach Trevor Morris was also on that team. Two of them (Dylan Grogan and Thyler Monkus) were bat boys in that game.

"It means a lot because now (our brothers) can't rub it in our faces," Monkus said.

It had heart. The game was the final one in the third base box for Tigers coach Bryan Johnson, who announced at the beginning of the season that he would be taking a job outside of the district at the end of the school year. His contributions to Stanfield baseball, athletics in general, and the community will ensure he's long remembered and sorely missed.

It had action. Oh boy, did it have action. Double plays, hits in the gap, a game-saving play at the plate, a failed suicide squeeze, great clutch pitching and three extra innings; the only thing this game was missing was the long ball.

It was also painfully long for those of us in the press box nervously watching deadlines as the shadows crept across the infield at Volcanoes Stadium.

"For a sport that you just stand there, I don't know if I've ever been that tired," Grogan said.

The game was a minute shy of three hours, which actually ended up being a good thing as well.

I had just come from watching the Pilot Rock Rockets beat the Union Bobcats for the 2A/1A softball title in true-champion form. There would be no Rocky Balboa story for the Eagles, as the Rockets beat them mercilessly, 9-2, for the fifth time this season.

With just enough time to make the drive from Corvallis to Keizer for the start of Stanfield's game, that left me transcribing interviews with the Rockets' Tehya Ostrom and Bekah Roe as Stanfield took a 2-0 lead in the first inning on a single by Ryan Bailey and sacrifice fly from Brody Woods.

The Tigers came out hitting Bobcats ace Draper hard, a good sign after he'd gone the distance and held them to one run in their last meeting.

Monkus was hit by a pitch in the game's first at-bat, and Tony Flores followed with a double to put runners in scoring position right away. A rare strikeout by Grogan followed (he more than made up for an 0-for-3 day at the plate later), then the first of Bailey's

four hits gave the Tigers the lead. Woods came next with a sacrifice fly to center, and it appeared the Tigers just might continue their high-scoring romp through the postseason after all.

Should have known better.

Although Stanfield would chase Draper from the mound after three innings, the Eagles' bullpen proved up to snuff and lefty Hunter Bain gave his team four scoreless innings of relief to keep the Tigers within striking distance.

Stanfield added its third run in the third when Grogan hit a sacrifice fly to bring Monkus in, and Monkus then made a nice double play in the bottom half of the inning by catching a popped-up bunt and then slinging the ball to first just ahead of a sliding Chance Ottinger.

As I rushed to get the Rockets' game story written and delivered, Bain stranded a pair of Tigers in both the fourth and fifth innings, and Grogan had a pair of strikeouts to go with a pickoff at first by Monkus to highlight two more scoreless innings by the defense.

But then in the sixth, the Eagles sucked the excitement from Stanfield's dugout with a three-run surge led by (who else?) Draper, who finished the game 2 for 4 with three RBIs. After a Stanfield error gave the Eagles a new lease on life, the Tiger killer appeared to have done it again with a bases-clearing double into the gap that tied the score 3-3 and flipped the momentum back to Santiam Christian.

"We had to take a minute because we kind of topped off there and stopped talking in the dugout," Woods said.

"The fans are great. They were so loud. They helped us get back into the game," Bailey said.

Grogan got the Tigers out of the inning with a fly ball to right field, where Jason Fitzpatrick was having a good game as the team's only senior starter. Fitzpatrick went 2 for 5 at the plate and in the seventh inning had a sliding catch in foul territory near the dugout called off (some would argue wrongly) for being out of play.

Grogan pitched out of a jam again in the seventh and stranded Ottinger at second with a fly to Justin Keeney in center. Keeney would come up big for the Tigers later in the game.

The top of the eighth started off great for the Tigers as Bailey singled to lead off, stole second and went to third on a fly-out by Renner.

But with one out and runners on second and third (Woods had walked and also advanced on Renner's fly), Johnson made his first risky call of the game with Fitzpatrick at the plate.

Having already put down a perfect bunt for a single earlier in the game, Fitzpatrick was asked to do it again with the added pressure of sending Bailey on the pitch. The pitch came in low and outside, and when Fitzpatrick was unable to make contact a rundown ensued that ended with Bailey tagged out at home by pitcher Daniel Hendrix.

Fitzpatrick then grounded out to the pitcher for the third out, and the writing was starting to

Cougars earn 5 first team honors

Hermiston Herald

The Echo Cougars had a tremendous season in the Eastern Oregon League, finishing second in the district and earning a trip to the state tournament. The Cougars were well represented in the all-league teams, earning five first team selections, one second team selection and one honorable mention.

The first team selections were pitcher MacKenzie Gonzales (11-8, 2.49 ERA, 122 K's, 117.2 IP), catcher Erika Parks (.301 avg., 19 RBI, 27 runs, 19 stolen bases), first baseman Kenzie Blankenship (.402 avg., 7 HR, 32 RBI, 10 doubles), outfielder Hannah McCarty (.400 avg., 37 runs) and designated player Raychal Campana (.391 avg., 12 RBI).



HERALD FILE PHOTO

Echo junior Mackenzie Gonzales delivers a pitch early during the Cougars' 14-0 rout of Colton in this file photo.

Infielder Cheyenne Hilliard was Echo's lone second team selection (.402 avg., 25 RBI, 27 runs) and outfielder Jamie Christopher was named honorable mention (.253 avg., 19 RBI,

33 runs).

The Riverside Pirates were represented by pitcher Skylar Wightman on second team and first baseman Sadie Hasbell an honorable mention.

EOL All-League 2016

SOFTBALL
Player of the Year: Jessica Lambert, sr., West-McEwen
Pitcher of the Year: Jessica Lambert, sr., West-McEwen
Coach of the Year: Jeff Griggs, West-McEwen

FIRST TEAM

Pitchers
MacKenzie Gonzales, jr., Echo/Stanford
Jessica Lambert, sr., West-McEwen
Catchers
Erika Parks, sr., Echo/Stanford
Sydney Peal, jr., West-McEwen
Infield
Isabelle Dillow, sr., West-McEwen
Jordyn Lambert, jr., West-McEwen
Hannah Mizuta, jr., Vale
Asucena Trujillo, sr., Nyssa
Outfield
Arnie Coffman, fr., West-McEwen
Hannah McCarty, jr., Echo/Stanford
Lexi Mulvany, jr., Vale
First Base
Kenzie Blankenship, sr., Echo/Stanford
Utility
Mariah Moulton, so., Grant Union
Designated Player
Raychal Campana, sr., Echo/Stanford

SECOND TEAM

Pitchers
Kelsey Hawley, jr., Vale
Skylar Wightman, so., Riverside
Catchers
Gracie Jacobs, fr., Vale
Brianna Zweygardt, so., Grant Union
Infield
Cheyenne Hilliard, sr., Echo/Stanford
Bailey Hillmick, jr., West-McEwen
Amanda Trenkel, jr., Vale
Rayvn Walker, jr., Grant Union
Outfield
Charmayne Bennett, so., West-McEwen

Darby Gassett, jr., Enterprise/Joseph/Wallowa
Jocelynn Smith, sr., Grant Union
First Base
Natalie Williams, sr., Enterprise/Joseph/Wallowa
Utility
Ashley Hill, jr., West-McEwen
Designated Player
Natalie Stearns, jr., Grant Union

HONORABLE MENTION

Pitcher
Cody Madden, so., Grant Union
Catcher
Madison Mitchell, jr., Nyssa
Infield
Madison Plew, so., Enterprise/Joseph/Wallowa
Outfield
Jamie Christopher, sr., Echo/Stanford
Whitney McClellan, so., Grant Union
Sicily Simpson, jr., Elgin/Imbler
Kelsy Weber, sr., Vale
First Base
Sadie Hasbell, jr., Riverside
Olivia Olvera, sr., Nyssa
Utility
Bridgett Dunham, sr., Umatilla
Lucy Trujillo, jr., Nyssa
Designated Player
Sydney Thomas, fr., Vale

TIGERS TAKE TITLE IN THE 10TH

Stanfield comes up big in crunch time to win program's second state championship

By **MATT ENTRUP**
Staff writer

The Stanfield Tigers stopped Santiam Christian's comeback bid cold with a play at the plate, and when the game went into extra innings scored the go-ahead runs on hits by Ryan Bailey and Brody Woods to beat the Eagles, 5-4, in 10 innings Friday in the OSAA 3A state championship.

Dylan Grogan pitched eight innings for the Tigers and Woods came off short rest to throw the final two for his third win of the postseason.

It was the second state title for the Tigers under head coach Bryan Johnson, who coached his final game for the Tigers on Friday, and got one last ice shower as the team celebrated on the field.

"It couldn't have ended any better. I'm just so happy we were able to get one for these kids," said Johnson, who also coached the Tigers to the 2A/1A title in 2011. "Both teams, you've got to give them credit. We fought, they fought, that's what great teams do."

"It's nice to beat the private school, too. No offense to the private school but it means something for Oregon public schools. They have a great program."

Stanfield scored two runs in the first and one in the third, but Santiam Christian rallied to knot it



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Stanfield's Dylan Grogan (20) and Brody Woods embrace at home plate after Grogan scored the go-ahead run in the top of the 10th inning of the Tigers' 5-4 win against Santiam Christian in the state 3A championship baseball game on Friday in Keizer.

3-3 in the sixth.

The Eagles appeared to have the winning run in the bottom of the eighth inning when Dru Draper hit a hard fly to the gap in right-center with a runner on first. Tanner Macal rounded third and looked to have a clear path to the plate, but Tony Flores took the relay from Justin Kenney and delivered a perfect ball to catcher Thyler Monkus for the game-saving out.

"That was the most exciting thing ever. Tony made a great throw," Monkus said. "Everybody thought the game was going to be over right there but he made a great throw and got him out."

The Tigers finally broke the tie with no outs in the top of the 10th.

Grogan was hit on the shoulder by Santiam Christian reliever Daniel Hendrix to start the at-bat, then scored from first when Bailey got his fourth hit of the game on a double down the third-base line.

"Honestly I didn't even see the ball when it came

off the bat," Grogan said. "I think I tracked it down at second (base) and once I seen it down and where it was played at by the left fielder I just went on home."

"I had two strikes and I was going to hit it wherever it was pitched," Bailey said. "It just happened to be down the line and (Grogan) was on his wheels. I kind of slowed down when I got to second actually because I was watching him. I saw that he was going to get there and that's more adrenaline than I've ever had going, I think."

Woods followed with a single for his first hit of the game that scored Bailey. Woods finished with two RBIs, Monkus scored twice, and Jason Fitzpatrick and Flores both went 2-for-5 for Stanfield as the only other Tigers with multiple hits.

Grogan started on the mound and lasted eight complete innings, but left with the score 3-3 after throwing 123 pitches. He struck out nine and walked four, and none of the Eagles' three runs were earned.

"Grogan pitched a great game. He just competed and battled and went as long as he can," Johnson said.

Woods allowed just two hits and one unearned run in the bottom of the 10th.

"Earlier this week my arm was sore, but today I iced it a lot and I'm fine now," Woods said. "Those clutch hits, the amazing plays our players made in the field, it's just amazing, best feeling in the world, probably."

He got the final out on a grounder to Flores at shortstop, who threw to Bailey at first to end the game after two hours and 59 minutes.

"It was tiring, one of the most tiring baseball games ever," said Grogan, who moved to third after leaving the mound. "For a sport that you just stand there, I don't know if I've ever been that tired."

"It was a fun game, those are the games you want to watch."

It was also a win that could make Thanksgiving dinners a little more interesting in a few Stanfield households. Grogan, Monkus, Bailey and Adrian Renner all became the second in their family to win a state title for the Tigers.

"The dog pile is the best thing in the world, honestly. It was insane," Grogan said. "Our brothers are always talking about the dog pile is the best thing, and it honestly was."

"Unreal, absolutely unreal," Bailey said. "The fans are great. They were so loud. They helped us get back into the game. That was tough, they're a solid team."

SHS	201	000000	2	R	H	E	
D. Grogan,	B. Woods	(9)	and T. Monkus,	1	4	1	
D. Draper,	H. Bain	(4),	D. Hendrix	(8)	and G. Carley,	W — Woods,	L — Hendrix,
2B — A. Flores,	R. Bailey	(SHS);	T. Macal,				
D. Draper							

IN BRIEF

Special Olympics recognizes winners

A handful of people and a business were recently recognized during the Hermiston/Pendleton Special Olympics Program No. 510 annual Awards Desert.

More than 60 people attended the May 17 event at The Arc Building in Hermiston, which honored recipients of the 2015 sports season.

Award winners included Remick Arey, female coach of the year; Cal Harris, male coach of the year; Randy Brown, accepting on behalf of Master Printers of Pendleton as business of the year; Jonathan Kinsel, male athlete of the year; Andrea Eiden, female athlete of the year; and Michele Keitzke, volunteer of the year.

Special Olympics provides year-around training and athletic competitions for children, youth and adults with intellectual disabilities. There is no charge for athletes to participate. More than 100 athletes, coaches and volunteers are currently training in golf, bocce and track

and field for upcoming regional competitions.

For more information about volunteering or participating in Special Olympics, call local program coordinator Stu Bance at 541-376-8132.

Hermiston woman wins family showdown

A family showdown resulted in Yvonne LaCoursiere taking the grand prize during the 15th annual Thousand Yard Shoot in Ione.

The Hermiston woman was awarded a long-range rifle scope and \$100 cash after beating her brother, Paden LaCoursiere, and father, Pete LaCoursiere, in a final shoot-out. It was the second year in a row LaCoursiere won the event.

The winner for the open-site 500 yard target was Jules Martino of Silverton, who received \$100. Bill McGovern won the gun raffle, a Tikka Caliber 6.5 Creedmoor, sponsored by Garner's Sporting Goods in Pendleton.

The annual event, formerly known

as the TV Shoot, is a fundraiser for kid's prizes at the fishpond and other games during the annual Ione Fourth of July Celebration.

United Way tees up benefit golf tournament

A four-person golf scramble will benefit the United Way of Umatilla and Morrow Counties.

The event is Friday, July 29 with a shotgun start at 8:30 a.m. at Wildhorse Golf Course, located off Interstate 84 at Exit 216, Mission. The cost is \$100 per person. The entry fee includes green fees, golf cart and lunch. People can sign up individually or as a team. There will be cash awards for contests and pro shop certificates for team prizes.

Money raised from the event will help support local food banks, children's programs and services for seniors.

A registration form is available at www.umatillamorrowunitedway.org. For more information or to register, contact 541-276-2661 or unitedwayumco@eoni.com.