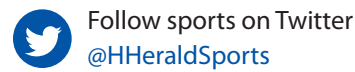


# HeraldSports



## WHATEVER IT TAKES

Irrigon's Zack Henrichs was a force on the mound, at the plate and in the field for the Knights

By ANNIE FOWLER  
STAFF WRITER

Zack Henrichs fell in love with the game of baseball the first time he picked up a ball.

Nothing has changed over the years for the recent Irrigon High School graduate. He honed his game and was one of the best players in Eastern Oregon this spring.

Henrichs was a first team all-league pitcher and infielder, and earned 3A first-team all-state honors as a pitcher. Along the way, he threw a perfect game, a no-hitter and was named the East Oregonian's Player of the Year.

"That feels great, it really does," Henrichs said of the honor. "There are a lot of good players in our area. I'm glad to even be in the conversation. To get it means the world to me."

Joining Henrichs on the first team are teammate Lino Covarrubia, Tanner Sater of Weston-McEwen, Heppner's Tyler Carter, and Pendleton's Ryan Stahl, Justin Duso, Ty Beers, Kyle Field, and Gabe Umbarger.

Pendleton's TJ Haguewood, who took the Bucks to the 5A state championship game, was named Coach of the Year.

"We had a great group of kids, and this is not a one-man show," Haguewood said. "My assistant coaches do a great job. It's more of a coaching staff award."

The Knights won the Special District 5 regular-season title with an 11-1 record. They also won the district title before dropping a 5-3 game to Taft in the first round of the 3A state tournament. They



Staff photo by E.J. Harris/East Oregonian

Irrigon's Zack Henrichs is the All-EO Player of the Year after a successful season on the mound and at the plate.

finished the season 20-5.

"I'm so proud of the guys," Henrichs said. "It's not how we wanted it to end, but there wasn't a time we weren't having fun. It was my favorite baseball season I have ever had."

### Numbers don't lie

During the season, Henrichs was 10-0 on the mound with a 1.42 ERA. He struck out 89 and walked 20 in 53 innings of work. At the plate, he hit .478 with 12 doubles, 29 RBIs and 32 runs scored. He also led the team with 25 stolen bases.

"He is an easy kid to coach," said Irrigon coach Randy Henrichs, who also is Zack's grandfather. "He's a student of the game. We would come home and talk about a game, and he would bring up things I missed."

Henrichs' perfect game came on April 9 against Umatilla. He struck out 12 as the Knights cruised to a 26-0 victory.

"I just got rolling in the zone," Henrichs said. "I knew I had a no-hitter going, but as soon as I struck out the last guy, I thought, 'I just threw a perfect game.'"

It wasn't as easy as he makes it sound.

"Actually, my first two pitches in the final inning were in the dirt," Henrichs said. "(Catcher) Matthew (Moreno) called time and told me to settle down. I struck out that kid, then the next and the next. It was surreal."

Henrichs tossed a no-hitter May 3 against Burns, striking out seven in a 10-0 victory.

"I had a one-hitter last year," he said. "To get both in one season is amazing."

### Getting started

Henrich's first baseball was a Wiffle ball. He was 3 years old.

"We had the Wiffle ball and a plastic bat," Randy Henrichs said. "We got it around Christmastime. We had a big living room and he would hit that ball in the house. I would throw the ball overhand and he would hit it nine times out of 10. When he was 4, he was breaking lamps and we were both getting in trouble."

Zack's first competitive baseball game was T-ball. He was 5.

"He could hit that thing in the outfield," Randy said. "Every time he hit the ball, he would round all the bases and slide into home. Then they would make him go back to first base."

### The future

Henrichs, 18, who played

every infield position except first base his senior year, will take his game to Blue Mountain Community College, where he was an early signee last fall.

"Wherever the team needs me, and it puts us in a position to win, I'm all about it," he said. "It will help prepare me for college. When I get a position, I will know what I am doing. I won't be playing all over the field, which will be different than high school."

One position he likely won't play at BMCC is pitcher.

"I'll miss pitching," he said. "Your mindset is different — you have to think about the batters and where you are going to throw the ball every time."

Henrichs said one reason he chose BMCC is because it was close to home and his family can watch him play.

"For them to be able to watch me play was huge in the decision," he said. "Ever since I was young, my mom (Shelby) and I have lived with my grandparents (Randy and Marie Henrichs)."

Randy Henrichs is ready to settle in as a spectator.

"He had a lot of other offers," Randy said. "But he really liked the coach and the players. That's important to Zack."

### East Oregonian Baseball Team

Player of the Year: Zack Henrichs, sr., Irrigon  
Coach of the Year: TJ Haguewood, Pendleton

**First Team**  
Pitchers — Ryan Stahl, sr., Pendleton; Zack Henrichs, sr., Irrigon.

Catcher — Justin Duso, sr., Pendleton.  
Infielders — Ty Beers, so., Pendleton; Tyler Carter, sr., Heppner/Lone; Zack Henrichs, sr., Irrigon; Kyle Field, so., Pendleton.

Outfielders — Gabe Umbarger, sr., Pendleton; Tanner Sater, sr., Weston-McEwen; Lino Covarrubia, sr., Irrigon.

**Second Team**  
Pitchers — Cooper Roberts, jr., Pendleton; Chris Large, sr., Pendleton.

Catcher — Matthew Moreno, jr., Irrigon.  
Infielders — Anthony Rodelo, sr., Riverside; Michael Connell, jr., Stanfield/Echo; Payton Smith, jr., Irrigon; Andrew Wilson, sr., Umatilla.

Outfielders — Jordan Ramirez, sr., Hermiston; Tanner Sweek, jr., Pendleton; Matt Demianew, sr., Pendleton.

EASTERN OREGON

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