

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS


SUNDAY, JUNE 3, 2012

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER @EOSPORTS

1B

PENDLETON

## Buckaroos rock Foxes

 **6**  **1** Crawford throws two-hitter while Spencer sisters light up scoreboard for Pendleton's first softball state title



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The Pendleton Buckaroos celebrate their 6-1 win against Silverton on Saturday at the 5A state softball championships in Corvallis.

### Pendleton plays flawless defense to shut down Silverton in 5A championship

By AJ MAZZOLINI  
East Oregonian

CORVALLIS — Pendleton's Kristen Crawford came two outs from a no-hitter and the Spencer sisters provided her with all the run backing she needed. Those powers combined were more than enough to guarantee the outcome at Oregon State University's Softball Complex: Pendleton's first softball state title.

Silverton couldn't manage to get on the scoreboard until the bottom of the seventh

**"I was just trying to get ground balls and make it easy on my defense behind me. And they did so amazingly, not having any errors."**

— Kristen Crawford  
Pendleton pitcher

inning of the Class 5A State Championship on Saturday. By that time, the Bucks were too close to be denied the school's

first girls' team championship, finishing the game off for a 6-1 victory.

"Well the dance team's not the only one

that has a state title now," junior shortstop Kasidee Lemberger said jubilantly amidst a sea of fans and supporters after the game.

The Bucks' title victory came in the school's second straight trip to the big game after a 7-6 loss to West Albany last spring.

Crawford held a normally sure-hitting team in check through six innings. The Pendleton (23-7) ace made her living by throwing high and tight to the Silverton batters, forcing contact hitters to make difficult

See BUCKS/2B

### Bucks make defense a priority this time around

2011 loss taught players how to handle title game

By AJ MAZZOLINI  
East Oregonian

CORVALLIS — After the Pendleton softball team came up short against West Albany in the Class 5A championship game last spring, coach Tim Cary and the girls knew they let one get away from them. The Bucks lost by just one run, 7-6, despite committing six errors in the field that led to five unearned runs.

When the Bucks got a second shot at a title on Saturday, it was obvious what piece of Pendleton's game needed shoring up in order to have the title con-

test end differently.

"Errors. Equal. Runs," said shortstop Kasidee Lemberger, who along with third baseman Darian Lindsey accounted for five infield putouts during Saturday's championship game.

The Pendleton defense — particularly in the infield — gobbled up weakly hit balls with speed and skill as the Buckaroos committed no errors in a 6-1 victory over Silverton from Oregon State University's Softball Complex in Corvallis.

Immediately prior to the championship game, the girls ran through infield and outfield drills, something that Lemberger said they didn't spend as much time on before the West Albany game. They got a little bit more practice in right before the first pitch that calmed some of the nerves

See DEFENSE/2B



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton's Kasidee Lemberger scoops of a ground ball before throwing it to third base for the final out in the game of the Bucks' 6-1 win against Silverton for the 5A state softball championships Saturday in Corvallis.

**"OUR FAMILIES SERVING YOUR FAMILIES AND OUR COMMUNITY"**

Good Shepherd  
Community Health  
FOUNDATION

Hit a hole in one and win  
a \$20,000 trip to next year's  
Masters Tournament

Tom  
Denchel's

### Scramble For Scholarships

Friday, June 8th • Big River Golf Course • Umatilla

Four person scramble • Limited to first 120 golfers

**FORDCOUNTRY.COM**  
541-567-3291

Contact Good Shepherd  
Community Health Foundation  
541-667-3405





AP photo

Oscar Pistorius, right, of South Africa, races against United States' Angelo Taylor, left, in the 400-meter event on Saturday at the Prefontaine Classic athletics meet in Eugene.

# Pistorius falls under ‘A’ standard in Eugene

By ANNE M. PETERSON  
AP Sports Writer

EUGENE — Oscar Pistorius is trying to become the first double-amputee to run in the Olympics this summer in London. The chances are dwindling for the South African.

Pistorius ran the 400 meters at the Prefontaine Classic on Saturday in 46.86 seconds, well below the Olympic "A" standard of 45.30. He thinks he needs to reach that mark in an international meet before June 30 for the South African athletics federation to consider him for the Olympics.

Pistorius finished last in a strong field at the Diamond League event, American LaShawn Merritt won it in 44.91.

"I'm disappointed in myself a bit, it wasn't the race I wanted to have," Pistorius said. "Unfortunately, it's one of those things. I would have liked to run faster."

Known as the "Blade Runner" for his carbon-fiber prosthetic legs, Pistorius ran the "A" standard earlier this season, finishing in 45.20 in the South African capital of Pretoria in March. His best time was last July in Italy,

when he ran the 400 in a personal-best 45.07.

He says he has two more chances to reach the standard, at the Diamond League's Adidas Grand Prix next weekend in New York, and the African Championships in June.

"I'm going to have to put my head down and seriously focus on those," he said. "It's frustrating, really, because I know I'm in the shape to do it. It's ultimately one of those things, I've just got to get back into it."

The Court of Arbitration for sport ruled in May 2008 that Pistorius' blades did not give him an unfair advantage, clearing the way for him to compete against able-bodied athletes. He was not able to qualify in time for the Beijing Olympics.

Last year, he claimed a silver medal at the world championships as a member of South Africa's 4x400-meter relay team. He was the first amputee to run in the event.

But the Olympics have long been his ultimate goal.

He said after Saturday's event at historic Hayward Field that he doesn't believe the pressure is getting to him.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton's Darian Lindsey throws to first base for an out in the Bucks' 6-1 win over Silverton on Saturday in the 5A state softball championship in Corvallis. Shortstop Kasidee Lemberger can be seen in the background.

# DEFENSE: Team felt more deserving of title shot this season

Continued from 1B

that came with a championship game.

Just as importantly though, the nerves weren't nearly as intense during a second consecutive trip to the Class 5A state finals. Playing in the team's first ever championship game in 2011 came with a lot of unexpected pressure.

The team's relaxed mindset was one of the major differences in this spring's game, first baseman Jory Spencer said.

"Definitely less nerves," she said. "We've been here before, we felt good about it and we felt good about our team. We knew how hard we worked to get here and that we really truly deserved it."

"Last year, it was just kind of like a surprise. We were all really tense."

There were plenty of opportunities for bobbles in the field Saturday.

Pendleton pitcher Kristen Crawford threw to contact, causing 15 ground outs and five more infield pop outs.

The Buckaroo defense

started the game with nine straight outs courtesy of their infielders, nary a mis-played ball in the bunch. Even when Silverton put runners on base toward the end of the game, Pendleton's infielders rose to the occasion.

With the bases loaded and two outs in the bottom of the seventh inning, Lemberger corralled a sharply stung ball to get the force out at third base, clinching the game and the school's first-ever state championship.

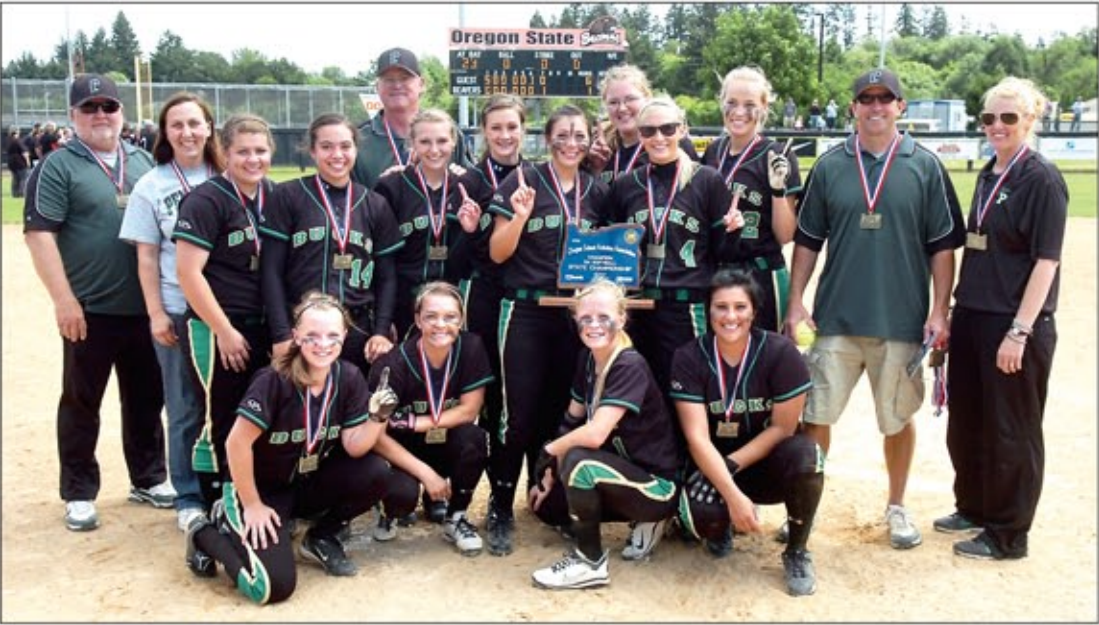
The Bucks had to be ready to move on every Crawford pitch, Cary added. The girls were well conditioned for a game like Saturday's, though, having played behind Crawford all season in the same way.

Pendleton defenders are always on their toes, he said.

"We simply needed to let Kristen just go throw her great game, just like she did last year, but back her up better with great defense," Cary said.

Contact AJ Mazzolini at amazzolini@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0839.

# SPORTS



The Pendleton Bucks display their championship trophy after defeating Silverton on Saturday in Corvallis.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

# BUCKS: Trio of seniors receive diplomas after win

Continued from 1B

adjustments to her pitches' speed and movement. The approach left most batters struggling just to make contact, either tipping balls lightly into the net behind home plate or equally as softly into the infield.

A Destinee Sandlin ground out to third base to end the sixth inning marked the 17th out recorded by Crawford's infield over a span of 18 outs up to that point. It wasn't until Katie Mannion singled through the infield in the seventh inning that Crawford's no-hit bid finally ended.

Silverton (22-9) would avoid the shutout when Jordan Martin singled home the team's first run later in the inning. The score was unearned for Crawford after the runner, Shelby McIntire, reached base earlier in the inning on a dropped third strike.

"I was just pitching my heart out, trying to play the best game I could in my last game," said Crawford, who along with seniors Jory Spencer and Courtney Schumacher-Sweek, received high school diplomas after the game. "I was just trying to get ground balls and make it easy on my defense behind me. And they did so amazingly, not having any errors."

Pendleton held its school graduation Saturday at 1 p.m., the same start time as the 5A softball championship.

Silverton, which averaged better than 7.5 runs per game this year while finishing third in the Mid-Willamette Conference, couldn't get around on Crawford's pitches even when they knew what was coming, Foxes shortstop Haley Hibbs said.

"Truthfully, it's nothing that we haven't seen before, she wasn't throwing too fast," said Hibbs, the Mid-Willamette Player of the Year who went 0 for 3 against Crawford on Saturday. "She just had the real inside corner, throwing some sliders."

That inside work led to Silverton's first base runner in the second inning. Taylor Medley took a pitch off the elbow with one out, but no runner would get farther than first base in the inning.

As Crawford focused on blanking the Foxes, the Buckaroo bats gave her a big lead to work with. In the first inning, Pendleton scored five runs off of Silverton's Mannion in the circle. The pitcher had thrown four straight shutouts in the playoffs coming into the championship game.

Pendleton, the Columbia River Conference champs, played as the designated away team because the Bucks drew more home games during their playoff run as the No. 1 overall seed. Silverton hosted only their semifinal game on Tuesday, a 1-0 victory over The Dalles Wahtonka.

The girls were ready to swing right away as No. 2 hitter Darian Lindsey got on with a single before Lem-



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

ABOVE LEFT: Kristen Crawford throws from the pitching circle on Saturday in the 5A state softball championships in Corvallis.

ABOVE RIGHT: Rayne Spencer is all smiles as she rounds the bases after hitting a solo home run in the top of the sixth inning.



berger followed with another. With runners on second and first, Rayne Spencer connected on a rocket right down the line to third base. The ball skipped over the bag and rattled down into the left field corner, allowing both runs to score.

After an Evangelina Olivera walk, Rayne's sister Jory stepped to the plate and grabbed hold of every bit of a pitch, raking a shot toward the scoreboard on the other side of the left field fence. The three-run home run put the Bucks up 5-0.

"When (coach Tim) Cary told us we were going to be the guests and batting first, we knew we couldn't start slow," Jory Spencer said. "We wanted to jump on them right away."

"I think it just gave us some real excitement, got us pumped up," Rayne Spencer said of the early fireworks. "We thought, 'All we have to do is keep doing that and the game's ours.'"

Rayne Spencer's offensive domination was only just beginning. The junior catcher would triple in the top of the third inning, clubbing a ball into the gap in right center. From there, Mannion started to get her pitching legs back under her.

Until Spencer came back to the plate in the sixth.

After two three-up, three-down innings Spencer led off the sixth inning. The catcher turned on the first offering she saw and lifted the ball to left field. Silverton outfielder Dani Schaecher gave chase momentarily, but slowed up long before the softball came down for

Pendleton's second home run of the game. The solo home run put the Bucks up 6-0.

Watching her sister crush a home run on Saturday created an everlasting memory for Jory Spencer, the first baseman said.

"It was our last game together with me as a senior so it's kind of an unforgettable moment," she said. "I'll always cherish this game where my sister and I both performed our bests."

The Spencer girls had never hit home runs in the same game before. Their bombs were nearly identical, both landing in the same spot.

After her homer, Rayne Spencer had all the makings of a cycle performance except the single, usually the easy one. In the top of the seventh inning, the Bucks needed to get two runners on to give her another at-bat. But the inning ended with the slugger waiting in the on-deck circle.

"You know it would have been nice but it didn't bug me much," Spencer said. "I was just happy to get the seventh inning done so we could come out on top."

The Spencer sisters finished with all six RBIs in the game. Rayne Spencer was the lone batter on either side with multiple hits.

Mannion struck out nine batters for the seventh-seeded Foxes, who were also chasing their first state title. Silverton had won 21 of 22 games before Saturday's loss.

Contact AJ Mazzolini at amazzolini@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0839.

I got screened.  
Now I'm talking  
about it.

Robin Alexander  
Pendleton, Oregon

Screening can prevent colorectal cancer or catch the #2 cancer killer early when it's highly treatable.

Most people get screened because they're encouraged by someone they know and trust.

So if you've been screened, please talk about your experience. And encourage others to get screened too.

COLORECTAL CANCER  
The cancer *you* can prevent.

www.TheCancerYouCanPrevent.org