

EAGLES 7, SABERCATS 3

# Eagles soaring into semifinals

BY CODY BASHORE  
Digital Editor

With an eighth consecutive victory, earning a berth in the 4A Conference state tournament, the Flagstaff Eagles baseball team is on a run that’s not only historic from a school perspective, but nearly unmatched at a state level as well.

Initially the No. 15 seed for the 4A play-in round, the Eagles shifted up to No. 14 for the official championship bracket. With three wins in five days — coming against the No. 3 Prescott Badgers, No. 11 Deer Valley Skyhawks and now 7-3 on Wednesday over the No. 10 Saguaro Saber-cats — the Eagles have

found themselves in the 4A semifinals for the second consecutive season.

However, no school within a similar division or conference has reached the state semifinals with a seed as low as the Eagles in recent memory. In its current spot in the 4A Conference or other 4A divisions over the past two decades, Flagstaff’s No. 14 seed appears to be the lowest for any school within those classification to land in the semifinals.

As the state championship brackets have changed, adding rounds for double elimination or expanding the field, the 2011 Min-gus Union Marauders and the 2009 Arcadia

Titans of 4A D-II previously were the previous lowest-seeded semifinalists at No. 13. The most recent double-digit seed to reach the semifinals came in 2018, when No. 11 St. Mary’s won two elimination games after a second-round loss to reach the 4A semifinals.

Flagstaff didn’t need to survive an elimination game for its run to the semifinals, as it jumped out to a 7-0 lead against Saguaro at Tempe Diablo Stadium and never looked back.

The scoring began in the top of the second as the Eagles loaded the bases with one out.

Sophomore Jace

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RORY FAUST, COURTESY

Flagstaff junior Brody Johnson (13) swings at a pitch during a game Wednesday against Saguaro in the 4A Conference state tournament third round at Tempe Diablo Stadium in Tempe.

## HIGH COUNTRY RUNNING

### Musings on momhood and running for Mother’s Day

BY RACHEL SMITH  
Special to the Daily Sun

Running is full of surprises. I’ve considered myself a runner for more than two decades, and I’m in awe of the many things it has taught me and continues to teach me. I’m also amused, and grateful, for the many ways that the lessons I learn from running can translate to, and help me in other facets of life.

Just over two years ago I stepped into motherhood, and while I’m still a baby in this lifelong role, I believe running has helped me prepare for motherhood, and motherhood has made me a better runner. Here are some general parallels I’ve seen in both that might resonate with you in one or both capacities. If I elaborated with specifics or stories behind these broad musings, it would likely become a novel that no one asked for, and certainly not fit for this column!

For me, running and parenting are full of extremes, mainly residing somewhere in the middle, but exposing me to the intensities that come with letting your heart be utterly vulnerable. Sometimes it’s easy like I’m effortlessly floating along with that ‘born to do this’ sensation, while other times it feels so hard it can literally and figuratively bring me to my knees and make me wonder ‘can I do this?,’ sometimes so joyful it delivers what feels like the highest possible highs, while other times making my heart ache in ways I didn’t know possible; sometimes so energy-giving I think I could give up coffee, while other times so exhausting it depletes my battery; sometimes benefiting from more effort, while sometimes benefiting from a nap; and sometimes so mundane and monotonous it feels on autopilot, while other times extremely extraordinary with that fleeting ‘once-in-a-lifetime’ feeling.

Both running and parenting make me want

to be the best version of myself. They both demand major sacrifice, constantly show me the importance of letting go of things outside of my control and focusing on the things within my control, encourage me to keep trying when I don’t get it right, expose my fears but remind me to not let those fears determine my actions, and have made me realize I’m stronger and more capable than I might think.

Both show me the ineffable value of support and community, and the importance of leaning on my people especially when things are hard. There is much to be gained from listening and learning from others, but also in trusting my heart and my instincts. They both show me that comparison can be the thief of joy, and that success should be defined (and sometimes re-defined) by oneself. They have made me realize that it is helpful to have an abundance of patience, grace, compassion, and humor in my toolbox at all times.

Both will change and evolve, and while that might entail some sadness, never forget that joy predominantly lives in the present. A certain day might feel long, but the years are short and time flies by ... so soak in the snuggles, the sweetness, the steps and the sweat and remember that the hard is temporary.

Happy Mother’s Day to all the moms out there! You help keep the world running.

**Rachel Smith** is a professional runner and amateur mother who is writing this from the blissful, sleep-deprived trenches that come with having a 2-year-old and a 1-month-old. She feels extremely lucky to pursue both her running and motherhood aspirations with incredible support from her partner and their communities. She is also the coordinating editor for this column and encourages people to send their stories to her at: [rachschnheid18@gmail.com](mailto:rachschnheid18@gmail.com).

## RED WOLVES 12, EAGLES 0, 5 INNINGS



JAKE BACON, ARIZONA DAILY SUN

Flagstaff’s Mia Garcia (3) gets the out with a catch from the circle during a playoff game against Walden Grove at Flagstaff High School on Thursday.

# Flagstaff bows out

## Eagles ousted from state tourney, ending standout season

BY CODY BASHORE  
Digital Editor

Back on the field for the third time in as many days, the Flagstaff Eagles had one of their most successful seasons in the past decade come to an end with a second straight loss in the 4A Conference state tournament.

Facing the No. 10-seeded Walden Grove Red Wolves in Flagstaff — just about 24 hours after completing their second-round game against the Pos-

ton Butte Broncos — the sixth-seeded Eagles struggled to generate the same offensive results they produced when last on the home field Tuesday afternoon. With five runs in the third inning and another seven in the fourth, Walden Grove moved on to the third round of the elimination side of the state bracket with a 12-0 victory against Flagstaff.

“These girls overcame a lot of adversity from the beginning of the season,” said Eagles manager Tommy Hernandez, who took over the position after the season began. “This game doesn’t define what we’ve been

through and how we were able to overcome all the adversities we faced. We came together as a team and really just had a lot of fun and played hard.”

After completing two innings before their rain delay on Tuesday and continuing with the remaining five at the neutral site of Sandra Day O’Connor High School in north Phoenix on Wednesday, the Eagles faced elimination with a third consecutive stint on the field Thursday afternoon.

The Eagles fell behind 8-0 to the No. 10-seeded Broncos, but had rallied for six runs in the second inning just

before the rain began to fall hard enough to suspend the game. After restarting the game on Wednesday in the top of the third, Flagstaff put up just one more run against Poston Butte as it fell into the elimination side of the bracket with an 11-7 loss.

“It’s a lot. Not just mentally, but physically. We’ve got to travel two hours to play, and we were excited to have a home-field advantage this far into the tournament,” Hernandez said. “To have the momentum we had in that second inning, we put up six runs. We had two home runs. We kind of

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## COCONINO PANTHERS VOLLEYBALL

# Pair of Panthers commits to colleges

BY MIKE HARTMAN  
Associate Editor

Ava Gray and Laurel Cernohous have played a lot of volleyball together over the years.

They shared a special moment connected to the sport last week before departing for different colleges, as Cernohous signed her letter of intent to play for Pima Community College and Gray penned her commitment to the University of Hawaii at Hilo.

The two Coconino Panthers committed during a signing ceremony at their high school on Tuesday, April 29, just days after the close of their beach season.

They both will play indoor volleyball for their respective selections.

## Ava Gray

Gray has connections to the 50th state,

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JAKE BACON, ARIZONA DAILY SUN

Ava Gray and Laurel Cernohous, both volleyball players for the Coconino Panthers, commit to playing at the next level during a signing ceremony at Coconino High School on Tuesday, April 29.