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# Falcon baseball team features pitching, speed, experience

OABCIG's baseball team will look to its pitching, speed and experience as it enters the 2021 season.

The Falcons return eight letter winners, all starters, from last year's 9-5 team that finished second in the conference race with a 6-2 mark and won the conference tournament.

The letter winners are seniors Cam Sharkey (IF/OF), Preston Gill (P/IF), Trust Wells (OF/IF/P) and Eric Sibenaller (IF); juniors Easton Harms (IF/P) and Zach Hemer (IF/P) and sophomores Gabe Winterrowd (P/OF) and Treyten Kolar (P/OF/IF).

"The letter winner group of athletes has competed in several sports at various times. I'm hopeful the returning letter winners' experience will show up as performance on the field," noted coach Dan Dotzler.

Dotzler noted the team has a couple of strong pitchers in Gill and Hemer who have considerable varsity experience. Other varsity pitching potentials for the Falcons will be Harms, Winterrowd, Kolar, Kane Ladwig, Kale Ladwig and Max Webb. There are also some younger guys who have pitched junior varsity who will potentially get some innings at the varsity level this year.

"Every year, someone will step up and give us some solid mound innings at the varsity level," said Dotzler. "It will be a key for us to find depth in pitching fairly quick, as we will be playing a full schedule that includes some four-game weeks. It just kind of depends on who can throw strikes consistently for us."

The coach added the infield should be a team strength this year, as there are five starters back in Harms, Gill, Sharkey, Hemer and Sibenaller. Harms and Kale Ladwig are expected to handle a majority of the catching duties.

"There are some new guys to the program who will push the upper classmen for spots along the way," noted Dotzler. "Wells played centerfield for us last year and has been a two-year starter heading into his senior year. Winterrowd and Kolar played the corner outfield positions last year. Winterrowd and Kolar, hopefully, will give us some innings on the mound so we will need to find some other depth at the corner outfield positions."

According to Dotzler, base running should also be a positive for his team as early indications suggest this will be one of the faster groups to play Falcon baseball. "We will do some tinkering with the lineup over the first few games to put the best formula out there to score. Defensively, we should have guys who can play multiple positions and that versatility will help cinch up the defense."

Coach Dotzler stated the key to the season will revolve around how well his players can put the ball in play and how the offense materializes. "We need more consistency this year up and down the lineup over the full season. With eight starters back who are a year older, hopefully, that will be a positive on offense. Cooper Dejean lead off for us last year and was an obvious spark to our offense that we will

need to replace."

The non-letter winning players on the roster include:

Juniors—Max Webb, Zach Thayer, Andrew Sholty and Eli Salcido.

Sophomores—Kane Ladwig, Kale Ladwig, Kyle Spotts, Lennon Wells, Damon Dausel, Cade Mason, Luke Swanger, Chance Buns, Jack Sohm and Blake DeLong.

Freshmen—Kelton Ladwig, Trenton Gilbert and Myles Beck.

Tyler Johnson and Jeff Rasmussen are the assistant coaches.

Dotzler listed several goals for the 2021 season. "It will be our goal to make the conference tournament championship series. Our goal is for the boys to play competitively, be in a position to win every night out and have some fun along the way while staying healthy."

When it comes to the Western Valley Conference race, Dotzler said there are a number of good teams in the league.

"The Western Valley conference will be strong this year," said Dotzler. "There will be some quality teams again this year and I am hopeful we will compete for a top spot. After winning the conference tournament last year and the returning players we have, I look for us to get the opponents best shot."

"Kingsley-Pierson, Lawton-Bronson and Woodbury Central will be very good teams based on returners; however, all of our conference teams will be capable of beating anyone on a given night, depending on who is pitch-

ing."

After a shortened 2020 season due to COVID-19, conference teams will be playing a full home-and-away, 16-game conference schedule this season. In addition, non-conference games on the Falcon schedule include matchups with Denison-Schleswig, Alta-Aurelia, Newell-Fonda, South Central Calhoun and East Sac.

Game times this season start with junior varsity games at 5:30 p.m. followed by the varsity games at approximately 7:30 p.m.

## OABCIG baseball

May 24	MVAOUCOU
26	at Ridge View
28	Denison-Schleswig
31	Lawton-Bronson
June 2	River Valley
4	Kingsley-Pierson
7	at Westwood
9	at Woodbury Central
11	West Monona
14	at MVAOUCOU
15	Alta-Aurelia
17	at So. Cal. (Lytton)
18	at Lawton-Bronson
21	at Kingsley-Pierson
23	Woodbury Central
25	River Valley
28	Westwood
30	Ridge View
July 1	Newell-Fonda
2	at West Monona
5-6	WVC Tour. (TBD)
7	at East Sac (Sac City)
10	Dist. Tour. (TBA)

**Games start at 5:30 p.m. with junior varsity followed by the varsity**

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Photo by: Mike Thornhill

**OABCIG baseball team:** The OABCIG baseball team includes, front from left, assistant coach Tyler Johnson, Preston Gill, Eric Sibenaller, Trust Wells, Cam Sharkey, Easton Harms, Zach Hemer and head coach Dan Dotzler. Second row from left, Max Webb, Zach Thayer, Andrew Sholty, Eli Salcido, Gabe Winterrowd and Kane Ladwig. Third row from left, Kale Ladwig, Kyle Spotts, Lennon Wells, Damon Dausel, Cade Mason and Luke Swanger. Back from left, Chance Buns, Jack Sohm, Blake DeLong, Treyten Kolar, Kelton Ladwig, Trenton Gilbert and Myles Beck. Jeff Rasmussen is an assistant coach.



**OABCIG baseball letter winners:** The returning OABCIG baseball letter winners from the 2020 season include, front from left, Zach Hemer, Treyten Kolar, Easton Harms and Gabe Winterrowd. Back from left, Trust Wells, Cameron Sharkey, Eric Sibenaller and Preston Gill. Photo by: Mike Thornhill

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# OABCIG softball lineup dominated by underclassmen

The OABCIG softball team roster is composed of 30 players, 24 of which are either eighth or ninth graders.

With so many young players, coach Summit Nielsen, who is in charge of the team this summer while head coach Cody Fineran is on maternity leave, is hoping for steady improvement from her girls. "To see improvement from the beginning of the season to the end will be a great accomplishment for our young team," said Nielsen.

The Falcons do return five letter winners from last year's team. Three of the letter winners are returning starters. The returning starters are seniors Anna Winterrowd (utility) and Elle Schroeder (OF) and sophomore Haley Harms (IF). The other letter winners are freshmen Kenai Nielsen (IF) and Abby Winterrowd (utility).

Coach Nielsen also listed sophomore Kaylee Oxendale and freshman Avery Behrendsen as players who will see varsity playing time.

Beyond those players, Nielsen said there are a lot of question marks about who will be in the varsity rotation. "It's so early in the season and with losing a lot of senior starters, it is hard to tell at this point who will step up and where we will be able to use them. We are excited to see what the girls can show us in the next few weeks during practice and the first few games."

Nielsen said she will count on her two seniors to bring out the best in the younger members of the team. "Our two seniors are both great leaders. They will be able to help the younger kids get accustomed to the varsity level. Being such a young team,

it leaves a lot of room for improvement everywhere and we look forward to that aspect.

"There is always room for improvement at every position at each level. The girls are eager and ready for the challenges."

The rest of the roster includes:

Junior—Meadow Olson

Sophomores—Kaylee Oxendale and Alexis Ulrich

Freshmen—Shelby Banghart, Avery Behrendsen, Justice Des Champs, Brooklyn Dunclee, Karter Hemer, Kylie Schluter, Caitlyn Ulrich and Kylie West.

Eighth graders—Jadyn Friedrichsen, Ava Hoefling, Anna Hoffman, Ella Hoffman, Malia Lansink, Abby Minor, Halle Montgomery, Katie Naman, Jocelynn Maier, Josilynn Pritchard, Deim Reis, Alexis Tarr and Calli Ulrich

Andrea Nielsen and Holly

Nuetzman are the assistant coaches.

When it comes to the conference, Nielsen said time will tell who the top teams in the conference will be. "A lot of rosters (of WVC teams) have changed due to seniors graduating and other things. After the shortened season last year, most teams are going to have to get back into having a normal season."

The Falcons opened the season with a home game against MVAOCOU Monday, May 24 and Storm Lake Tuesday, May 25. They played at Ridge View Wednesday, May 26. All conference games will start with the junior varsity games at 5:30 p.m. with the varsity game to follow at approximately 7 p.m.

**OABCIG softball**

May 24 MVAOCOU

	25	Storm Lake
	26	at Ridge View (Galva)
	31	Lawton-Bronson
June	2	River Valley
	3	East Sac Co.
	4	Kingsley-Pierson
	7	at Westwood
	8	Ridge View
	9	at Woodbury Central
	10	West Monona
	11-12	OABCIG Tour.
	14	at MVAOCOU
	15	Alta-Aurelia
	17	at So. Cal. (Lytton)
	18	at Lawton-Bronson
	21	at Kingsley-Pierson
	22	at West Monona
	23	Woodbury Central
	25	at River Valley
	28	Westwood
	29-30	WVC Tour. (TBA)
July	1	WVC Tour. (TBD)
	6	Reg. Tour. (TBA)

**Games start at 5:30 p.m. with junior varsity followed by the varsity**



Photo by: Mike Thornhill

**OABCIG softball letter winners:** The OABCIG softball letter winners from last season include, from left, Kenai Nielsen, Abby Winterrowd, Elle Schroeder, Anna Winterrowd and Haley Harms.

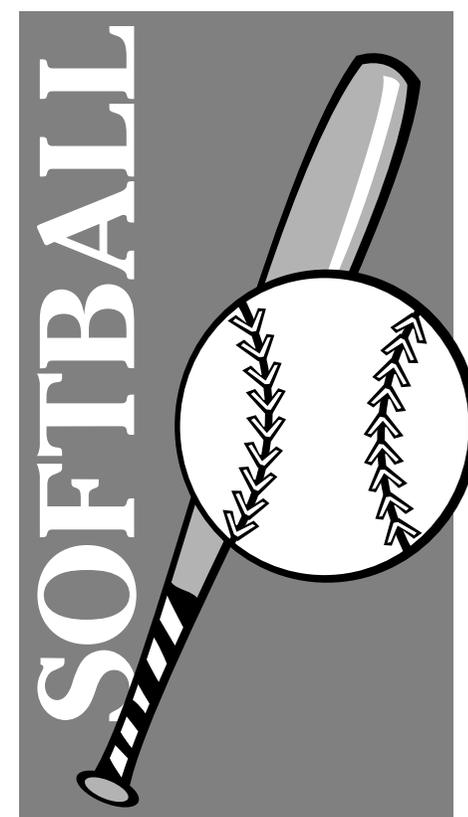




Photo by: Mike Thornhill

**OABCIG softball team:** The OABCIG softball team includes, front from left, Shelby Banghart, Avery Behrendsen, Justice DesChamps, Brooklynn Duncklee, Jadyn Friedrichsen, Haley Harms and Karter Hemer. Second row from left, Ava Hoefling, Anna Hoffman, Ella Hoffman, Abby Minor, Halle Montgomery and Katie Namanny. Third row from left, Jocelynn Maier, Kenai Nielsen, Meadow Olson, Josilynn Pritchard, Deim Reis and Kylie Schluter. Back row from left, Elle Schroeder, Alexis Tarr, Alexis Ulrich, Caitlyn Ulrich, Calli Ulrich, Kylie West, Abby Winterrowd and Anna Winterrowd. Kaylee Oxendale and Malia Lansink are also members of the team.

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# Pitching forms the foundation of Raptor baseball team

The return of the team's top three pitchers from last season and an experienced line-up is giving Ridge View baseball coach Shannon Tesch reason to be optimistic about the upcoming season.

"We return our top three pitchers in Jacob Brinkman, Caleb Kistenmacher and Bo Clausen, so we feel good about that. These guys allow us to compete every game," said Tesch.

"We only graduated one senior from a year ago, so we feel like our players are experienced and understand what it takes to trust the process and win baseball games.

"This team is a fun group to work with. We work hard and have a lot of fun in practice. I'm looking forward to seeing this group compete in games."

Ridge View returns nine letter winners from last season. All of the letter winners are also returning starters. The veteran players are seniors Caleb Kistenmacher (SS/P), Jacob Brinkman (P), Bo Clausen (UT/P) and Brecken Conover (3B/2B); juniors Cade Harriman (OF/P), Tyhler Kolpin (C) and Aiden Martin (3B/P) and sophomores Cael Myrtue (1B/P) and Tracin Price (OF/P).

Tesch said the key to the upcoming season will be developing consistency on offense.

"We've shown the past couple of years that we can put up runs, but not every game or even every inning. We are working to put pressure on a defense every single inning of the season," said Tesch.

The head coach said, with the talent his team returns, one of the goals for this year is to compete for a Western Valley Conference championship. He pointed to Kingsley-Pierson, Woodbury Central, Lawton-Bronson and OABCIG as the top teams in the conference.

"We feel like we are right there with those teams, but the WVC is tough from top to bottom. There are no off-nights," said Tesch.

The non-letter winners on Ridge View's roster include:

Senior—Ben Spina

Juniors—Cameron Spina, Brady Clausen and Connor Naberhaus

Sophomores—Caden Biede, Mason Lewis, Levi Albers and Cael Myrtue

Freshmen—Payton Wittrock, Cayden Clausen, Asher Endrulat, Ethan Mason, Gavin Stehr, Maguire Neumann and Gabe Chance.

The team's assistant coach is Brian Hoepfner.

Ridge View opened its season at Kingsley-Pierson May 24. The first home game is this Wednesday, May 26, against OABCIG. Junior varsity games will start at 5:30 p.m. The varsity games will follow the JV games.

## RV baseball

May 24 at Kingsley-Pierson  
26 OABCIG

	28	at West Monona	22	at Westwood
	29	at Akron-Westfield	23	at River Valley
	31	MVAOCOU	25	at Wood. Central
June 2	Woodbury Central	26	at Carroll Kuemper	
4	at Lawton-Bronson	28	at East Sac (Sac City)	
5	at Sheldon Tour.	29	at Newell-Fonda	
8	at South O'Brien	30	at OABCIG	
9	River Valley	July 2	at Westwood	
10	at Cherokee	5-6	WVC Tour. (TBA)	
11	Westwood	8	Storm Lake (Early)	
14	Kingsley-Pierson	10	District Tour. (TBA)	
16	West Monona	<b>Home games are played in Holstein unless otherwise noted.</b>		
18	at MVAOCOU	<b>Games start at 5:30 p.m. with the junior varsity followed by the varsity</b>		
19	Ridge View Tour.			
21	Lawton-Bronson			



Photo courtesy of Ridge View High School

**Ridge View baseball letter winners:** The returning letter winners on the Ridge View High School baseball team are, front row from left, Caden Biede, Tyhler Kolpin, Aiden Martin, Cael Myrtue and Tracin Price. Back row from left, Jacob Brinkman, Bo Clausen, Brecken Conover and Caleb Kistenmacher.



Photo courtesy of Ridge View High School

**Ridge View High School baseball team:** The 2021 Ridge View High School baseball team includes, front row from left, Payton Wittrock, Gavin Stehr, Maguire Neumann, Ethan Mason, Cayden Clausen, Gabe Chance and Asher Endrulat. Second row from left, Tracin Price, Cael Myrtue, Mason Lewis, Caden Biede, Levi Albers, Cameron Spina and Connor Naberhaus. Back row from left, assistant coach Brian Hoepfner, Aiden Martin, Tyhler Kolpin, Cade Harriman, Ben Spina, Caleb Kistenmacher, Brecken Conover, Bo Clausen, Jacob Brinkman and head coach Shannon Tesch. Brady Clausen is also a member of the team.



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## Raptor softball team returns a wealth of talent from state tournament team

Ridge View's softball team returns 13 letter winners from last year's team that qualified for the class 1A state tournament. The Raptors, 11-9 in 2020, lost to North Linn in the first round of the state tournament.

"It was a strange and shortened season in 2020 with COVID-19 going on, but our kids improved as the season progressed," noted coach Scott Phelps. "This year's squad will be a competitive group of athletic kids who can be successful if they work hard, stay focused and trust each other."

"We are very confident the kids can put together a solid season with hard work and improvement on a daily basis. Last year was last year and this year is this year. This is a fun group of kids to work with; they have passion for the game and they are determined to be successful."

Ridge View's returning letter winners are seniors Autumn Henkel (C/3B/DP), Anya Kistenmacher (SS) and Mikayla Kolpin (2B); juniors Addison Schmidt (P/3B); Emma Vohs (OF/1B); Abby Wandrey (OF), Sky Henkel (3B/C) and Katie Pickhinke (1B/OF); sophomores Beth Mentzer (P/1B) and freshmen Shae Dutler (CF/C), Faith Freese (OF/1B), Tatum Shepherd (P/C) and Madison Stowater (SS/2B).

The rest of Ridge View's roster includes: Junior—Vanessa Nuemann (IF)

Sophomores—Kendra Schossow (C/IF), Chloe Gottschalk (IF), Alyina Herrera (OF) and Lakota Altena (IF).

Freshmen—Jolynn Tiefenthaler (3B/C), Delainey Hansen (P/3B), Evie Kado (IF) and Janella Faist (IF).

Eighth graders—Addison Voge, Gabi Mason, Emma Mentzer, Mazee Henningson, Mya Henningson and Makayla Rasmussen.

Beth Pickhinke and Kara Richard are the assistant coaches.

"This group of kids is very flexible as they can play many different positions, which gives us many options," noted coach Phelps. "The coaches are happy with how the kids are working hard to improve and put together a good season. The kids have good passion for the game and we are excited about their desire to improve, but time will tell how much progress they make from last season."

Phelps added how well the team does

will be determined by how disciplined and how dedicated the kids are to the program. "Our kids have been working hard in the off-season with our strength/conditioning and agilities program and with our pitching and catching sessions. Many of kids have also put a lot of time in at clinics, so we believe we can put quality athletes out on the field."

The head coach said the strength of the team should be good hitting, good group of pitchers and good foot speed. Areas that have question marks going into the season are being consistent with pitching and defense (cutting out errors), discipline at the plate, leadership, staying focused, staying healthy and getting off to good starts each game and finishing games. Phelps said, while those are areas the team needs to work on, he is confident the players will improve.

Phelps expects the Western Valley Conference to be one of the toughest conferences in the state.

"Many of the teams are returning a lot of their key players from last year and we will have to perform at a high level on a consistent basis to be successful," said Phelps. "I think every team can probably be the favorite if they play up to their abilities. I wouldn't count any of the teams out because they are all capable of winning on any given night. You need to bring your 'A' game every night or bad things will happen."

The Raptors opened the season Monday, May 24 at Kingsley-Pierson and hosted OABCIG in Galva Wednesday, May 26. All conference games will start with the junior varsity games at 5:30 p.m. with the varsity game to follow at approximately 7 p.m.

	RV softball	
May 24		at Kingsley-Pier.
26		OABCIG
28		at West Monona
31		MVAOCO
June 2		Woodbury Central

4		at Lawton-Bronson
5		at Sheldon Tour.
8		at OABCIG
9		River Valley
10		at Cherokee
11		Westwood
12		at South O'Brien
14		Kingsley-Pierson
15		at Newell-Fonda
16		West Monona
17		Pocahontas
18		at MVAOCO
21		Lawton-Bronson
22		at Westwood
23		at River Valley
25		at Wood. Central
26		at Alta-Aurelia
30		WVC Tour (TBA)
July 1		WVC Tour (TBA)
3		at Storm Lake Tour.
6		Regional Tour (TBA)

**Home games are played in Galva. WVC games start at 5:30 p.m. with junior varsity followed by the varsity.**



Photo courtesy of Ridge View High School

**Ridge View softball letter winners:** The returning letter winners on the Ridge View High School softball team are, from left, Shae Dutler, Beth Mentzer, Abby Wandrey, Emma Vohs, Anya Kistenmacher, Autumn Henkel, Mikayla Kolpin, Sky Henkel, Addison Schmidt, Katie Pickhinke and Tatum Shepherd.



Photo courtesy of Ridge View High School

**Ridge View High School softball team:** The 2021 Ridge View High School softball team includes, front row from left, Makayla Rasmussen, Addi Voge, Mya Henningson, Mazee Henningson, Evie Kado, Emma Mentzer, Sidney Blackmore and Gabi Mason. Second row from left, Janella Faist, Delainey Hansen, Tatum Shepherd, Faith Freese, Jolynn Tiefenthaler, Madison Stowater and Shae Dutler. Third row from left, Sky Henkel, Beth Mentzer, Mikayla Kolpin, Anya Kistenmacher, Autumn Henkel, Lakota Altena, Vanessa Neumann, Abby Wandrey and assistant coach Kara Richard. Back row from left, coach Scott Phelps, Chloe Gottschalk, Katie Pickhinke, Addison Schmidt, Kendra Schossow, Emma Vohs, Aylin Herrera and assistant coach Beth Pickhinke.



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