

# Cowboys gear up for first baseball season

**By Greg Stover**  
*The Goodland Star-News*  
After years of effort by players, parents and fans, high school baseball has become a reality for Goodland, and the Cowboys will open their season at 4:15 p.m. against the Cougars of Burlington High at Centennial Park.

The teams will play one seven-inning game.  
The Cowboys, who started practice on March 2, have 16 players on their roster, the majority of whom have several seasons of experience with the American Legion, Goodland Outlaws and K-18 teams.

Steve Jimenez, director of the Goodland Activities Center, is the Cowboys coach. Jimenez played high school baseball in Denver, graduating from Ranum High in 1990.

He played two seasons for the Cougars of Barton County Community College, then two with the Tigers of Fort Hays State University where he earned a Bachelor of Science in sociology in 1995.

Helping Jimenez this season is assistant coach David Avila, a supervisor at Northern Sun Industries.

Freshman Forrest Trachsel is the team's manager.

While in Hays, Jimenez was in-



Jake Alander (right), playing for Goodland's American Legion team, hit a home run against Scott City last June. Alander, a senior, is one of 10 players on the Cowboys' roster with organized baseball experience this spring.

Photo by Liz West/The Goodland Star-News

roduced to coaching as an assistant with the American Legion team there and as a student assistant for

the Tigers under coach Bob Fornelli.

"It's exciting to be part of a first-

year program," Jimenez said, "and to be able to build our program from the ground up. With that excitement

brings some different challenges.

"Learning the details of the game and how to approach the fundamentals has be a point of focus for us during practice. Some of the players are being taught things for the first time, but everyone has responded very well so far.

Three seniors are on this season's roster: Brock Lohr, Jake Alander and Simon Wang. Alander played for the Outlaws last spring, and both he and Lohr played on last summer's American Legion team.

"Brock will be one of out top pitchers," Jimenez said, "and will play first base in games he's not pitching in. On offense, he will be asked to hit in the middle of our lineup and be our main source of power. Brock's natural athletic abilities will be a huge asset for us.

"Jake also will be in the middle of the batting order. He is one of our best all-around players and will be asked to lead the team on and off the field.

"Simon comes to us as an exchange student from China. He has been one of our hardest workers at practice and has shown much improvement the past few weeks."

Six juniors provide the bulk of the team's experience. Derek Fenner, Wyatt Dautel, Brandon Zelfer, Brett

Lalicker and Kelly Lewallen all played for the Outlaws and the Legion team last year. All-around athlete Bobby Miller also is on the roster.

Andrew Pettibone and Tyler Hilmer are the two sophomores on the team. Both played for the Outlaws and on Goodland's K-18 team last season. Freshmen include Jake Kling, Preston Dautel, Josh Doke, Tanner Smith and Tom Terry.

"Our goals are to play the game the way it's supposed to be played and to improve on a daily basis," Jimenez said. "Doing that will ensure that we build a strong foundation for the future of Goodland High School baseball."

Although today's game is the season opener for the Cowboys, the Cougars have already played three games, going 1-2, and were to have a doubleheader against Brush on Monday.

"We appreciate all of the support received from the city and community so far," said Jimenez. "To build the type of program we want, the effort has to start with the younger players in the youth leagues, and the only way that will happen is with the community's continued support.

"I invite everybody to come out and be part of the beginning of Cowboys baseball."

## Former Cowboys on right track

Two former Cowboy track teammates got to compete at the Southwestern Invitational on March 17 in Winfield, although this time they were on different teams.

Aaron Gittinger, a sophomore at Butler County Community College in El Dorado, and Josef Felver, a freshman at Southwestern College in Winfield, were on Goodland's track team together during the 2002 and 2003 seasons.

At the meet, Gittinger placed fourth in the 400-meter dash in 52.33 seconds. Felver was 13th in the 200-meter dash in 23.01 seconds and 15th in the 100-meter dash in 11.71 seconds.

Nine teams competed at the Southwestern Invitational, including six from the Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference. No team scores were kept.

This was the second meet of the outdoor season for Gittinger, who finished third in the 800-meter run at the Dale Remsburg Open on March 11 in El Dorado.

Aaron is the son of Bob Gittinger and Kyle Elliott, both of Goodland, and a 2003 graduate of Goodland High. In 2003, as a senior, he qualified for the state Class 4A championship meet in the 800-meter run and as a member of the Cowboys' 4x800-meter relay team.

Josef, a 2004 graduate, is the son of Jon and Elaine Felver of Goodland.

As a senior, he qualified for state in the 100-meter and 200-meter dashes, and as a member of the Cowboys' 4x100-meter relay team.

"Josef is an outstanding young man with the potential to develop into a quality college runner," said Southwestern coach Jim Helmer.

Felver and Gittinger will have another chance to compete on Saturday at the Tiger Invitational in Arkansas City with Cowley County Community College as the host team. Other squads expected include Cloud County, Johnson County, and Coffeyville community colleges.

## Golf star places third

Former Cowgirl Jessica Osborn, a freshman at Dodge City Community College, started her spring golf season by placing third at the Dodge City Invitational on March 14, helping her team win its opening event of the season.

The Lady Conquistadors had a team score of 362, three strokes better than the Lady Tigers of Fort Hays State University.

Pratt Community College finished third with 373, Northwestern Oklahoma State fourth with 415 and Oklahoma Panhandle State fifth with 443.

The Lady Conquistadors were

led by sophomore Emma Taylor, who won the tournament with a 9-over-par 80.

Krystle McCorgary of Pratt Community College was second with a round of 83.

Osborn's score was 88.

Dodge City sophomores Charity Maune and Rae Ann Williams, both graduates of Syracuse High, finished with 93 and 101 respectively for the Conquistadors.

Freshman Lauren Williams scored a 109.

Jessica, who is studying sports medicine, is the daughter of Chuck



Osborn

Osborn and the niece of Michael and Loretta Borgmann of Goodland.

She graduated from Goodland High in 2004 as a four-year letter winner in golf.

She also lettered in basketball, track and field, and softball.

The Lady Conquistadors will be action again on Friday at the Hastings College Invite at the Southern Hills Country Club in Hastings.

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**School calendar for March 30 - April 5**  
**Wednesday** - "Gold Day"; PDC screening 3:45 p.m.  
**Thursday** - "Black Day"; Seminar - FCCLA; Parent/teacher conference 4 to 8 p.m.; Farm Bureau in auditorium, 6:30 p.m.  
**Friday** - No school; Parent/teacher conference, 8 a.m. to noon; baseball in Garden City, 3 p.m.; softball in Goodland against Garden City, 3 p.m.  
**Saturday** - Track in Ogallala, 9:30 a.m.; Regional Music Festival, solos and small ensembles.  
**Sunday** - Daylight Savings begins.  
**Monday** - Softball in Liberal, 3 p.m.; junior varsity tennis in Garden City, 7 a.m.; baseball in Goodland against Syracuse, 3 p.m.; FCCLA Star Events and Leadership Conference.  
**Tuesday** - "Gold Day" Seminar - Girls Athletic Association and G-Club; enrollment for 2006 seniors, juniors and sophomores, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.; FCCLA Star Events and Leadership Conference; junior high track at the Burlington Invitational 2:30 p.m.

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