



Caitlin Babcock  
Second Base



Summer Brand  
First Base



Cate Morgan  
Pinch Hitter



Mandy Morrical  
Catcher

# Softball Season Treasured by Players

Story by Shannon Beck

The softball team was grateful for each game they got to play.

This year's season looked a little different than past softball seasons because of the pandemic. "Our team is taking extra precautions such as using our own balls and bats, using hand sanitizer, trying our best to maintain social distancing during practice and around those who are not on our team," said junior Lauren Ryan. The team also had morning temperature checks to ensure no one is sick.

Another thing that was different was the softball team traded their usual high fives for foot fives, kicking their feet together at the end of a good play. "We've been giving foot fives when someone makes a great play or has an awesome hit. It's a little weird, but we'll do whatever we have to in order to keep our season going," said senior Summer Brand.

"One of my favorite things about this team and this season is how special each day feels," said Brand. "We understand that our season can be over the next day, so each day we get to spend together is special and something we don't take for granted."

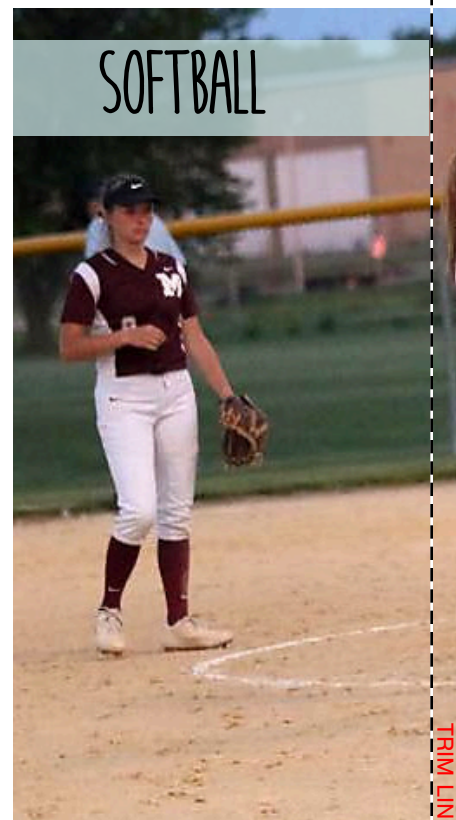
After all of the spring sports were canceled it was unsure if summer sports were going to be allowed. "This season is special because we didn't

know if we were going to have it." Ryan said. "Each day, coach reminds us to be grateful for the opportunity to be able to play. So even if we are put through a really tough practice, in the back of our minds we realize it's not something we have to do, but get to do."

There were six seniors this year and every one of them was grateful that they got to play. "I am really thankful that we were able to have a season this year because of the senior class. It would've been hard on all six of us if we wouldn't have gotten the opportunity to play after the amount of time that we've played together," said Brand. "The way that our senior year of high school had abruptly ended kind of left me wanting more, so the fact that I was able to finish off my senior year playing softball with a great team felt really nice."

The softball team couldn't have been more grateful to be on the field playing with their teammates. "I am really happy to be able to play softball this year and love seeing my teammates each day; it makes this unusual time a little more normal," said Ryan.

Even though the team was separated by distance and safety precautions, they were closer than ever because they knew that every practice and game was a blessing. "It's been one of the most enjoyable seasons because we all realized how special it is," said Brand.

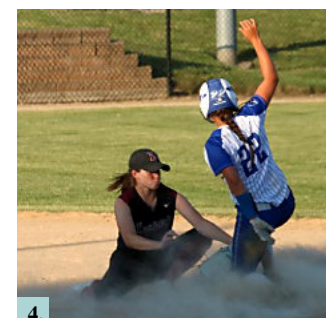


## Score Card

Team	Us-Them
Beckman Catholic	13-0, 11-1
Clear Creek Amana	2-5, 10-5
West Delaware	0-3, 7-1
Alburnett	13-2
Benton	10-0, 4-2
Maquoketa	12-0, 11-0
Independence	13-3, 8-0
Vinton-Shellsburg	10-0, 12-0
Williamsburg	4-3, 2-3

(As of presstime  
July 7)

1. Instead of forming a line at the end of the game to tell the other team "good game," the softball team waves at their opponents from Beckman Catholic to maintain social distancing. 2. Runner Avery Plathe slides into second on June 15. The Mustangs beat Beckman Catholic 11-1. 3. Senior Nicole Sullivan runs to third base in a home game against Clear Creek Amana. 4. Jenna Sprague tries to tag out a player from Clear Creek Amana at second base. The Mustangs lost the first game 5-2, then won the second game 10-5.



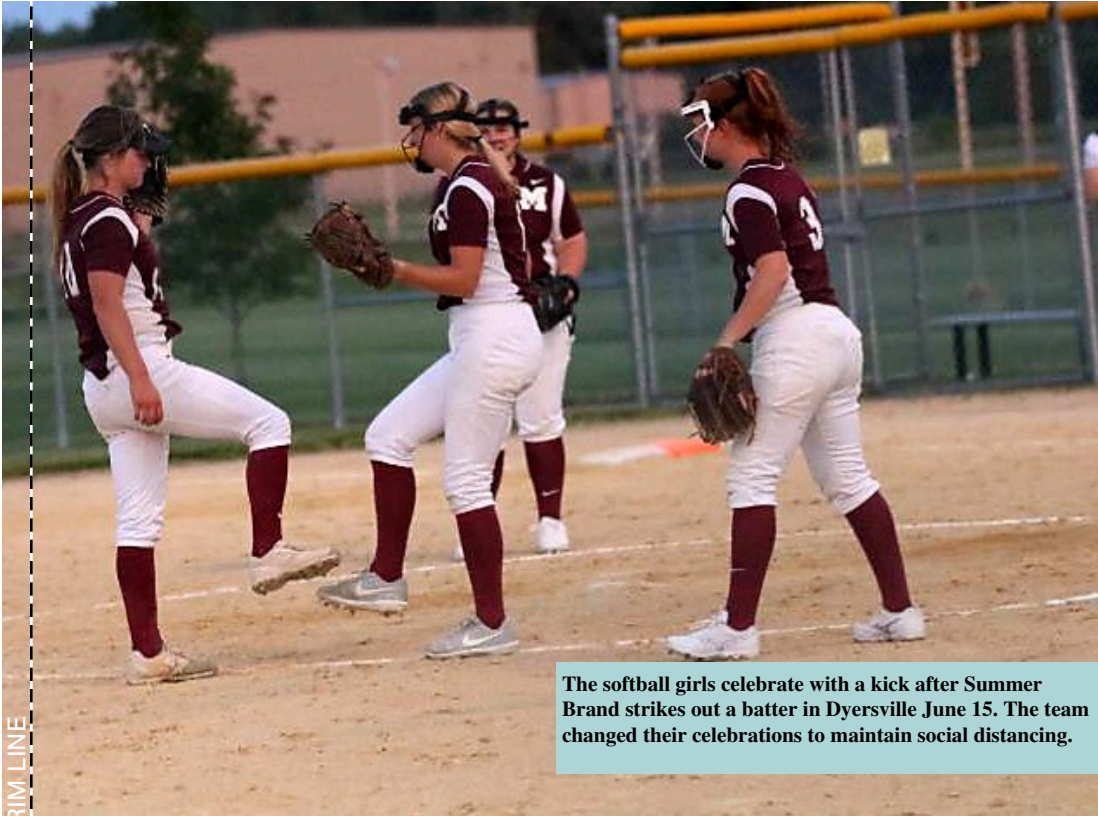


Nicole Sullivan  
Pitcher



Ella Wischmeyer  
Right Field

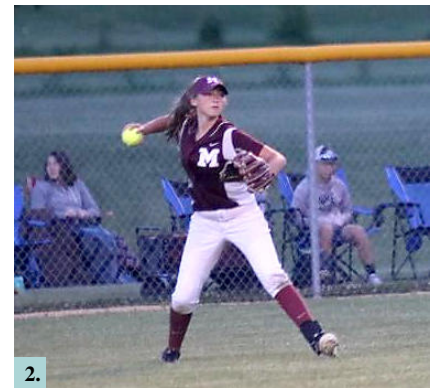
# SENIORS



The softball girls celebrate with a kick after Summer Brand strikes out a batter in Dyersville June 15. The team changed their celebrations to maintain social distancing.



1.



2.

1. Ashlyn Steen plays right field June 17. 2. Cami Streicher returns a ball in left field at a home game against Clear Creek Amana.

## How they prepare for a game



"I prepare for softball games pretty much like I would for my other sporting events or big tests. I eat some good food, pack my bag with my uniform and then always double check it, and I stay hydrated with lots of water. Then when I get to the field I am usually pretty calm because the rest of the team is there and they always put me in a good mood and it just feels like I'm there to have fun and enjoy myself and the teams. I usually do some sort of positive self talk and mental training before we start warmups." - Summer Brand, '20

"Before a game weather it's home or away I always set aside 30 minutes before I have to be on the field. In that thirty I take a cold shower. It is supposed to help keep you alert or wake you up. When it's almost game time I visualize myself making routine plays." -Maia Bentley'22



**VARSITY SOFTBALL.** *Front Row:* Camryn Streicher, Caitlin Babcock, Lauren Swartzendruber, Jenna Sprague, Cate Morgan, Mandy Morrical, Ashlyn Steen. *Back Row:* Assistant Coach Libby Ryan, Nicole Sullivan, Lauren Ryan, Summer Brand, Maia Bentley, Nadia Telecky, Ella Wischmeyer, Avery Plathe.