

BASEBALL

OC Cougs in Yakima

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By Daily Courier Staff B3

After a long and active off-season, the Okanagan College Coyotes will welcome the fresh air and outdoor baseball this weekend in Yakima, Wash.

The second-year Canadian College Baseball Conference team opens its spring exhibition season by playing in the Yakima Valley Community College tournament.

With fields still closed in Kelowna, the OC boys haven't had any live, outdoor practices, but thanks to the CNC indoor facilities and the batting cages at Elks Stadium, they're as ready as they can be and counting the minutes to the first real pitches.

After the fall season, the players spent four months hitting the weights at Global Fitness, taking batting practice and throwing every second day indoors at Elks.

The Cougars' CCBC regular season gets under way March 27-28 in Langley against Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

Defending champions in the Larry Walker Division of the CCBC, OC will have quite a different look in 2010 as last season's mainstays Corey Smith, Brett Sanguin and Cody Valgardson are gone.

Coaches Geoff White and Jared Johnson already feel the pitching will be their long suit this year. Last season's 2009 starters Nick Peruzzo, Rob Alksne and Blake Young have returned and will be bolstered by solid newcomers Brendon Peron of Kelowna, who played at Douglas College last year, Corey Wood, Kiefer Rodway and lefty Derek Friesen. Also returning are solid relievers Bryce Wilkie and Peter Tollenaar.