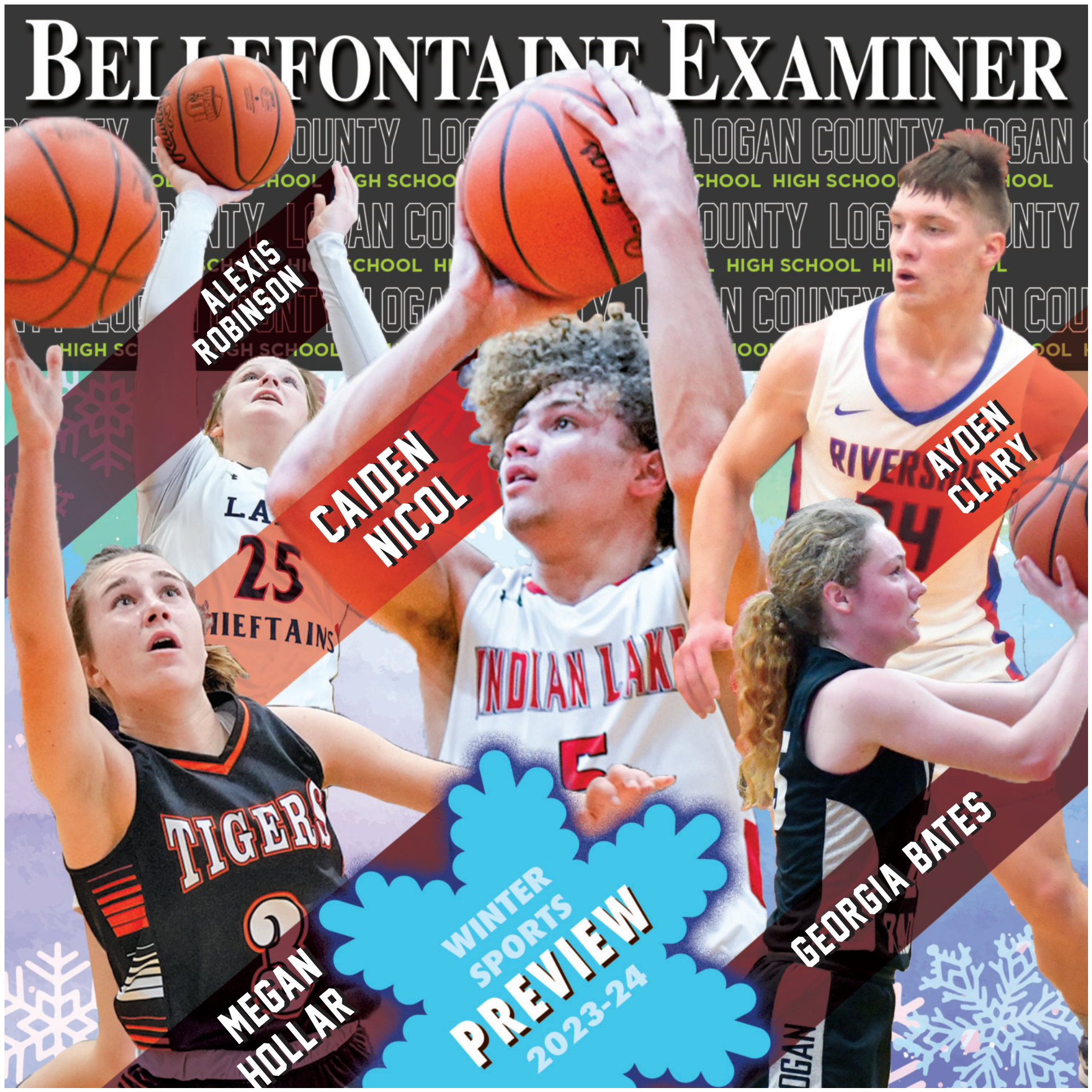


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RAIDERS



Members of the Benjamin Logan varsity girls basketball team are, from the left, front row: Maddy Herring, Georgia Bates, Kyndal Cronkleton, Kara Reeves and Mya Burrey; and back row: assistant coach Tracy Gregg, Mia Stahler, Lahna Cook, Rylan Norviel, Aubrey Harris, Adilynne Gregg and head coach Greg Saylor.

Roster of upperclassmen, talented youth to lead Ben Logan girls hoops team

The Benjamin Logan's girls basketball team is counting on a strong core of returning starters and letterwinners to develop a younger crop of players in order to make an impact this season.

Head coach Greg Saylor will rely on a total of six seniors and juniors to provide veteran leadership to a team aiming to contend in a challenging Central Buckeye Conference Mad River division.

Seniors Georgia Bates, Mya Burrey, Kara Reeves and Kyndal Cronkleton, along with juniors Mia

Stahler and Lahna Cook will be counted on to provide valuable minutes and guidance to a versatile roster that will also feature talented sophomores Rylan Norvel and Adilynne Gregg.

Norvel and Gregg earned varsity letters last year as freshmen, joining each of this year's senior and junior class. With another year of experience under their belts, the Raiders have a game-tested group that can seriously compete in the CBC, their coach believes.

Sophomores Miley Buettner and Aubrey

Harris, along with incoming freshmen Lexi Lovett, Molly Siefiring, Bonnie Brunson, Lauren Kennedy, Elliott Butler and Kaylee Hays will provide additional depth to the Raiders roster.

The team finished last season with a record of 9-13. Despite the challenges, Saylor keeps his aspirations for the team high.

"CBC championships will always be our goal," he said. "We have six upperclassmen that will help develop our younger players."

See HOOPS on Page 39

RAIDERS



Members of the Benjamin Logan wrestling team are, from the left, front row: Maximus Clapsaddle, Brock Henry, Cooper Buck, Jordan Pender, Cole Somerlot, Levi Achor, Owen Weaks and Ethan Carpenter; middle row: Dillion Sweeney, Colin Hill, Cameron Roberts, Kendall Plikerd, Carter Buck, Owen Jordan and Hayden Hites; and back row: Brandon Heater, Holden Lautenschlager, Evan Carpenter, Kameron Larson, Kyle Kibler and Daniel Koehler. Not pictured is Thomas Smith.

Ben Logan wrestlers ready for next step

With talent up and down its roster, Benjamin Logan's wrestling team is poised for a strong season with its sights set on a deep postseason run.

"With four returning district qualifiers and a really competitive group of freshmen, our goals this particu-

lar season are set high for us," head coach Kyle Seeley said. "This is a hard working group of individuals that will push each other in the room and help each other reach their own personal goals this season."

See READY on Page 38

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RAIDERS



Members of the Benjamin Logan varsity boys basketball team are, from the left, front row: Davin Meyers, Kanyon Perez, Ethan Martin, Hayden Alexander, Collin Powell and Cayden Brown; and back row: assistant coach Joel Phillips, Camden Spriggs, Ethan Miller, Peyton Vermillion, Gavin Neeley, Roman Maxwell, Clayton Jenkins and head coach Scott Vermillion.

Vermillion returns to lead Raiders' boys basketball team

BY THE KENTON TIMES

Scott Vermillion is familiar with how to operate the Ben Logan boys basketball program, and he has taken the reins back in stride after a three-year stint from 2008-2010.

His three-year record was 16-47. He has taught within the district for the past 19 years. Cam Saylor was the boys coach for the last six years, but left this offseason to become an assistant coach for the Upper Scioto Valley girls

basketball team.

"I stepped away to spend time with family in 2010, but now I'm back into the fold," coach Vermillion said.

The Raiders didn't win a single game last winter as they went 0-23 overall and 0-10 in Central Buckeye Conference play. They poured in a league-low 35.2 points per game and gave up a league-high 63.2 points per game.

See RAIDERS on Page 38

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RAIDERS



Members of the Benjamin Logan boys swim team are, from the left, front row: head coach Mitch Sweeney, Wyatt Gordon, Liam Sweeney, Colton Walley, Finch Hone, Taavo Simovart and assistant coach Renae Deardurff; back row: Landon Braddock, Carter Yoder, Dylan Vance, Joseph Meeker and Jerrik Stephens.



Members of the Benjamin Logan girls swim team are, from the left, front row: assistant coach Mitch Sweeney, Catherine Bramlage, Evelyn Van Winkle, Anni Kuntonen, Talley Hartranft, Bailey Lewis and head coach Renae Deardurff; and back row: Maille Ricketts, Kelley Forsythe, Junah Tingley, Winnie Bodin and Annika Chappell.

Ben Logan swimmers want to make a big splash this season

Benjamin Logan's boys and girls swim teams are preparing to dive headlong into some lofty goals this upcoming season.

Key swimmers like Anni Kuntonen, Annika Chappell, Winnie Bodin and Kelley Forsythe bring versatility and needed experience to an otherwise young varsity girls team, while Dylan Vance, Finch Hone and Liam Sweeney anchor the varsity boys squad.

Additional returning letterwinners for the boys team include Utah Coleman, Taavo Simovart, Jerrik Stephens and Landon Braddock.

These returning letterwinners boast a mix of skill and experience that could propel the Raiders swimmers to Central Buckeye Conference championships and podium finishes in district competition.

With a solid foundation, the Raiders aim to clinch the CBC title for both boys and girls, setting their sights on a podium finish at the district level, head coach Mitch Sweeney said. Last year, the girls team finished third in the Mad River division. The boys team finished third in the CBC also, missing out on second-place by just a half-point.

The girls team possesses technical prowess in each stroke, which positions them for success.

On the boys side, experience is their asset, with swimmers with over four years of experience in the pool. However, Sweeney emphasizes the need for greater team cohesion to maximize their potential.

The girls team looks to recruit more swimmers versed in all four strokes after graduation losses. Despite their size, Sweeney believes in their potential to secure wins as the season progresses.

See **SPLASH** on Page 39

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RAIDERS



BL boys bowling team has high expectations

BY THE KENTON TIMES

The Ben Logan boys bowling team has high expectations in head coach Barney Sullivan's second season at the helm.

The Raiders were 9-7 last season and finished eighth out of 24 at districts. They were seventh out of 25 at sectionals and fourth overall in the Central Buckeye Conference tournament.

"We've got a group that we called the 'super sophomores' last year, and they're juniors now," Sullivan said. "They were the core of our team. We did lose one key bowler in Gage Hamm, who's bowling at the University of Rio Grande. He did a pretty good job for us last year. Most of our starting lineup will be made up of juniors."

Sullivan's main goal is to make it to state as they were just a couple spots away last year. He also wants to increase middle school interest to develop a

steady pipeline of talent.

His keys to success are: stability in lineup, teamwork, the challenging spirit, strong junior varsity team, senior leadership and bringing enthusiasm.

"We have a very tight-knit group of kids. Last year we were blessed with great parents. Our goal is to make it to state in Columbus," Sullivan said.

The Raiders have five seniors in Aaron Vogelsang, Alex VanVoorhis, Daven Williams, Graham Studebaker and Hayden Godwin.

Williams led the senior bunch with a 400 series in their season opener on Nov. 17, which was fourth-best on the team. It is Studebaker's first year bowling for the Raiders.

It is the juniors that will carry the load this winter. Jarrett Buckenroth, Jason Timple, Caleb Knight, Landon Stoodt and Nate Davis make up that class.

See HIGH on Page 37

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Members of the Ben Logan boys bowling team are, from the left, front row: Caleb Knight, Colton Klopfenstein, Jason Timple and Jarrett Buckenroth; middle row: Aaron Vogelsang, Graham Studebaker, Hayden Godwin, Alexander VanVoorhis and Daven Williams; and back row: head coach Barney Sullivan, Wyatt LeVan, Nate Davis, Landon Stoodt, Dylan Stewart and assistant coach Kerry Sullivan. Not pictured are Paxton Henry and Justin Lamson.

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RAIDERS



Members of the Ben Logan girls bowling team are, from the left, front row: Hunter McColloch, Reigan Thomas, Madelynn Hamm, Kaelyn Corwin, Ashlynn Johnston, Alyssa Johnston and Kaydon Wilber; and back row: head coach Tammy Poling, Hannah Larsen, Lorali Klopfenstein, Jacey Koehler, G Saunders and assistant coach Deb Ward.

Loss of four to graduation means new opportunities for Benjamin Logan's girls bowling team this winter

Benjamin Logan's girls bowling team rolls out this year a new group of experienced bowlers this season in order to climb the top of the Central Buckeye Conference.

After losing four seniors to graduation from last season, head coach Tammy Poling says the focus for this year is on

gaining valuable experience for the new underclassmen and fostering teamwork among the players.

This year's team features a diverse roster, blending seasoned upperclassmen with the fresh energy of underclassmen. Leading the way are juniors Lorali Klopfenstein, Reigan

Thomas, Jacey Kohler, Gi Saunders and Alyssa Johnston. The sophomore class includes Maddy Hamm, Hunter McColloch, Kaydon Wilber, and Hannah Larsen. The team is rounded out by freshmen Kaelyn Corwin and Ashlynn Johnston.

See GIRLS on Page 37



Members of the Benjamin Logan cheerleading squad are, from the left, front row: Anna Johns and Aaliya Schultz; and back row: Kayley Knox, Summer Litteral, Katerine Vickroy, Leina Brunson and Brooklyn Coder.

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LAKERS



Members of the Indian Lake varsity boys basketball team are, from the left, front row: Cooper Hall, Madden Lillard, Caiden Nicol, Maddux Hall and Lane Tucci; and back row: head coach Zack Overturf, assistant coach Seth Bodenmiller, Carson Barth, Camdon Tuttle, Logan Murphy, Brodey Reisinger, Dawson Finrock, Avery Pequignot and assistant coaches Chris Burden, Josh Shelton and Nick Tucci.

Loaded Lakers eye magical hoops season

It is difficult to identify a weakness when looking at Indian Lake's boys basketball team this season.

The Lakers have the experience, talent and depth to put together a special campaign.

"Our goals are always the same," said head coach Zach Overturf. "We want to go 1-0 in everything we do. We want to keep focusing on the process of getting better each day, and play our best basketball after the first of the year."

The Lakers went 13-12 last year and tied for the

Central Buckeye Conference Mad River division title with Urbana. They won a pair of tournament games before getting knocked out by a talented Miami East squad.

Indian Lake returns nearly its entire team from a year ago.

Led by a pair of four-year starters in senior guards Caiden Nicol and Camdon Tuttle, the Lakers should be extremely dangerous on the offensive end.

See LAKERS on Page14

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LAKERS



Members of the Indian Lake boys wrestling team are, from the left, front row: Silas Holbrook, Christopher Timms, Ke'Shawn Blackwell, Dalton Fulkerson, Draden Stevenson, Zaiden Bates, Tony Cummins, Czar Dickson, Noah Shirk, Nolan Purk, Vincent Wilson, Ben Horsley and Samuel Purk; and back row: assistant coach Phil Mackesy, Zander Davis, Chase Rife, Taylor Clem, Ryan Culp, Tristan Shoffner, Adrian Crumley, Dylan Valerio, Owen Pummel, Emery Wagner, Jackson Young, Gavin Henry, Franklin Kinney and head coach Ryan Dickson. Not pictured are assistant coaches Dylan Knotts and Connor Dixon.

Numbers, talent abound for Indian Lake's wrestling program this season

Indian Lake's wrestling program will boast an experienced and talented team throughout the lineup this winter.

The Lakers were third overall and second in the Mad River division at the Central Buckeye Conference tournament last year.

Head coach Ryan Dickson returns an outstanding group of wrestlers, led by junior Owen Pummel (190), who has already qualified for the state tournament twice in his career.

Junior Czar Dickson (144/150/157) is a two-time district placer, senior Dylan Valerio (heavyweight) and sophomore Ke'Shawn Blackwell (113/120) are former district placers.

Seniors Jackson Young (157/165) and Emery Wagner (215/heavyweight) and juniors Adrian Crumley (190/215) and

Zander Davis (175/190/215) also have postseason experience.

See LAKE on Page 37



Members of the Indian Lake girls wrestling team are, from the left, front row: Tori Roby and Isabel Brunson; middle row: Riley Shaner, Kiylee Haude, Shannyn Brunson, Augusta Biederman and Maddie Miller; and back row: coaches Phil Mackesy and Ryan Dickson

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LAKERS

Lady Lakers want to lean on their veteran leaders

Indian Lake's girls basketball team will need its experienced players to come up big this season.

The Lakers graduated first-team all-Central Buckeye Conference standout Stephanie Altstaetter from last year's squad, which went 9-14 overall and 4-6 in the CBC Mad River division.

Seniors Haylee Edwards (point guard), Savannah Hill (forward), Katie Roby (guard), junior Mackenzie Dixon (forward) and sophomores Kennedy Schwaderer (guard) and Carly Strayer (forward) return to the varsity team.

Dixon averaged 7.5 points and 5.1 rebounds to earn second-team all-CBC honors last year.

Hill averaged 4.5 points, Edwards averaged 3.6 points, 3.9 rebounds and 2.7 assists per game and Roby averaged 3.5 rebounds per contest.

"Our team's key strength lies in the athleticism of our guards, who bring valuable experience from playing numerous varsity minutes throughout their careers at Indian Lake," said head coach Yasmyn Inskeep.

See LEAN on Page 14



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Members of the Indian Lake girls varsity basketball team are, from the left, front row: Mackenzie Dixon, Savannah Hill, Katrina Roby, Haylee Edwards and Carly Strayer; and back row: head coach Yasmyn Inskeep, manager Taryn Bailey, Kail Shoffstall, Kora Fulkerson, Kennedy Schwaderer and assistant coaches Todd Inskeep and Kaylee Shelton. Not pictured are assistant coach Renee Metzger and Alex Kinney.

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LAKERS



Members of the Indian Lake boys swim team are, from the left, front row: Matthew Culp, Caleb Alstaetter and Titus Kelly; and back row: Crew McPherson, Gavin Spring and head coach Lori Zarnosky.

Indian Lake swim teams focused on improving times

A decline in numbers may prevent Indian Lake's swim team from enjoying a lot of team success this year, but the Lakers should compete well in the events they do fill this season.

"We have some spots that need filled in, especially on the relays," said head coach Lori Zarnosky. "Our numbers are down, but that will give everyone a chance to swim more events."

"These kids are willing to put in the work and they are interested in learning new things. All but two have swam before, so we have some experience on our side."

For the girls team, returning swimmers include seniors Annie Braig, KaiLea Miller, Hannah Metzger, Amelia Schmiedebusch, Ashlynn Biederman and Rebecca Bihn and sophomore Danica Braun.

New to the girls team is freshman Sarah Bihn.

See SWIM on Page 14

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Members of the Indian Lake girls swimming team are, from the left, front row: Hannah Metzger, Annie Braig, Ashlynn Biederman and Amelia Schmiedebusch; and back row: head coach Lori Zarnosky, KaiLea Miller, Sarah Bihn, Dani Braun and Rebecca Bihn.

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LAKERS



Indian Lake's girls bowling team hoping to feed off last season's success

Indian Lake girls bowling coach Gina Rucker and her squad had quite the season last year.

The Lakers were the district runner-up and advanced to the state tournament where they finished in sixth place in Division II.

Rucker has three returning letterwinners as they Lakers aim for another successful season this winter.

"Our goals for this year are to build an all-around solid team from the returning girls to the new girls joining the team," said Rucker. "We want to be that team others will always be watching our performance and seeing our growth from the start of the season to the end of the season. Of course, we want to have the success this year as we did last year and hope to do it again."

The squad will be spear-

headed by seniors Kayleigh Zedlitz and Samantha Johnson and sophomore Addison Castle.

"Having a strong leader such as Kayleigh Zedlitz is going to be a key factor in helping guide this team to success," said Rucker. "Kayleigh's game has strengthened in many ways from last year. Her performance on and off the lanes has already shown in getting this team together. She works hard on her game, but also helps the new team members just as much."

The rest of the varsity spots will be up for grabs between senior Lacey Schwieterman and freshmen Aubrey Zedlitz, Raelyn Horne, Kacie Craft and Liliana Woods.

"We have four freshmen joining the team this year and all four already have strong foundations," said Rucker.

Rucker said being good teammates and building self confidence will be keys to having a strong season.

"Teamwork will be a key factor," said Rucker.

"Having the girls support each other in the highs and lows will build confidence as a team but also as individuals. Having that confidence in themselves will benefit their game which will lead to consistent shots, more spares and higher scores."

The Indian Lake head coach expects Graham to be the team to be on the Mad River division side of the Central Buckeye Conference this season.

"The top competition for us will be the Graham," said Rucker. "They have several strong bowlers returning, along with their coach. Graham finished second in the Mad River Division last year, just in front of us."

*Good Luck
to all local teams!*



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Members of the Indian Lake girls bowling team are, from the left, front row: Emily Harford, Samantha Johnson, Kayleigh Zedlitz and Lacey Schwieterman; and back row: Kacie Craft, Aubrey Zedlitz, head coach Gina Rucker, Addison Castle and Raelyn Horne.

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LAKERS



Members of the Indian Lake boys bowling team are, from the left, front row: Jeremiah Galbraith, Chase McMillen, Heath Wilson and Orion Reames; and back row: Collin Seymour, Tommy Jones, Cody Jacobs and head coach Brad Hoover.

McMillen to lead IL boys bowling team

Indian Lake's boys bowling team will rely heavily on senior Chase McMillen this season.

McMillen is the lone returning letterwinner for the Lakers. He averaged 178.7 last season and will look to build on that this season.

The Lakers will need others to step up as well as they look to improve on last year's 4-12 record.

Joining McMillen on this year's team are Jeremiah Galbraith, Heath Wilson, Orion Reames,

Collin Seymour, Tommy Jones and Cody Jacobs. Jacobs does have some

varsity experience as he saw action in 16 games last year.

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Members of the Indian Lake varsity cheer squad are, from the left: Kolten Manahan, Addison Beck, Sydney Hamilton, Porscha Davis, Massie Romanowski, Riley Ross, Makenna Hurley and Ava Faler. Not pictured are coaches Michelle Parsell and Jamie Ross.

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LAKERS

Lean

Continued from Page 10

Schwaderer and Strayer got their feet wet as freshmen last year on the varsity

team are will have expanded roles this year.

Filling out the varsity squad are sophomores Alex Kinney (forward) and Kora

Fulkerson (guard) and freshman Kail Shoffstall (guard).

"This season we want to push the ball and get up

and down the court," said Inskeep. "We also want to be able to put more pressure on defense."

The Lakers also want to

improve their shooting.

"Boosting our outside shooting percentage is pivotal for our team," said Inskeep. "It will effectively

open up and stretch defenses, creating more space for our guards to navigate and operate."

Swim

Continued from Page 11

Returning swimmers for the boys team are junior Caleb Altstaetter and sophomores Titus Kelly, Gavin

Spring and Matthew Culp.

Freshman Crew McPherson is the lone newcomer for the boys team.

"Our goals are always to

improve our times and try to win heats," said Zarnosky. "For the returning swimmers, learning another stroke is important."

Putting swimmers in the best events that they can help the team will be a big focus for the Lakers.

"It's a short season with

a lot of holidays, so every second in the pool has to matter," said Zarnosky. "We have to decide what our best events will be and focus on that. We won't be

able to have as many entries as other teams so our entries have to be our best."

Lakers

Continued from Page 8

Nicol was second in the CBC in scoring last season

at 19.8 points per game. He also averaged 10 rebounds, 6.3 assists and 2.1 steals per game on the way to

earning the Mad River division player of the year award.

Tuttle averaged 14.6

points and 5.8 rebounds per game and shot 37 percent from three-point range.

Seniors Dawson Finck (6.2 ppg), Lane Tucci (5.5 ppg) and Logan Murphy (4.2 ppg) and sophomore Avery Pequignot (5.3 ppg) also return with an abundance of varsity experience.

"Our depth and experience will be a key strength for us," said Overturf. "We have two guys playing their fourth year of varsity basketball, one guy playing his third, and four guys playing their second full season of basketball at the varsity level."

Junior Madden Lillard and sophomore Cooper Hall got a taste of varsity

action last year and will provide solid depth.

Freshman Brodey Reisinger is also expected to make a significant impact this season, while senior newcomer Carson Barth rounds out the varsity roster.

The Lakers should have no issues putting the ball in the basket this season, but Overturf wants his defense to be strong as well.

"Our biggest focus area will be on the defensive side of the ball," he said. "We took some big steps forward late last season defensively, and we're looking to continue to get better on that end of the court."

The Lakers have five points of emphasis in their

recipe for a successful season.

"Defending, rebounding, taking good shots, playing together and being sure with the basketball are the only things we focus on to have a successful season," said Overturf.

Indian Lake will not have to worry about Urbana, which tied the Lakers for the Mad River title last year, in the league race this year as the Hillclimbers moved to the Kenton Trail division. But the Mad River race should be challenging again as newcomer Springfield Shawnee as well as North Union are expected to be solid.

"Our league is always tough," said Overturf. "There are some really good coaches in the CBC that do a great job preparing their guys. North Union brings a lot of guys back. Coach McGuire does an outstanding job at Shawnee with every group he has. Graham is always a tough out. Ben Logan returns their entire team, and Northwestern has one of the best forwards in the conference. There will be lots of opportunities for some good basketball."



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PIRATES

Defending state champion Pirates set to reload

It was a dream season for Riverside's boys bowling team last year.

The Pirates won sectional and district championships and then followed by capturing the Division II state championship, the first state title in school history.

The Pirates return only two letterwinners from that team, but they retain high expectations.

"Our goals are to have a productive season getting ready for the postseason and advance through sectionals and districts, and make it to the state tournament again," said head coach Zerah Crouch.

Seniors Sam King and Gage Stevenson return from the state champi-

onship team to power the Pirates this season.

New to the varsity lineup are junior Aidden Manning and freshmen Cooper Crouch, Jace Lemly and Xavier Herron.

"We have two seniors with a lot of experience and talent that will be our backbone as well as a freshman coming up who will be a big piece of the team success," said Crouch. "We have some young guys who love to learn and get better and they work hard in practice."

Crouch said he is looking to his seniors to lead the way and help bring along the younger bowlers.

"The keys for us will be leadership from our sen-

iors and good team chemistry," said the Pirates' head coach. "Getting the younger guys to buy in and push through adversity will be important. As a coach, I have to make the right decisions at the right times to put them in a position to be successful."

Like a lot of teams this time of year, the Pirates are focusing on improving spare shooting.

"We will need to improve our spare conversions and our baker scores," said Crouch. "One of our strongest assets last season was our baker scores and we will be working to get to that level this season."



Members of the Riverside bowling team are, from the left, front row: Xavier Herron, Lei Hurley, Hope Harris, Kaitlyn Jackson and Cooper Crouch; and back row: Haylee Jones, Jace Lemly, Aidden Manning, Sam King, Gage Stevenson and Kyleigh Duff.

Duff to lead RHS girls team

Led by retiring district qualifier Kyleigh Duff, Riverside's girls bowling team has the experience and talent to make some noise this winter.

"We have four returning letterwinners that have a lot of experience and continue to get better," said head coach Jaime Yelton. "Our goals are to continue to progress and come together as a team, and work toward making districts as a team."

See RHS on Page 18

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PIRATES



Members of the Riverside varsity boys basketball team are, from the left, front row: Ayden Clary, Nate Copas, Jaxon Woods, Cody Craig, Reece Jenkins and Dylun Burchett; and back row: head coach Tim Woods, Damian Smith, Gavin Robinson, Gavin Orsborne, Dominik Stotler, Myles Platfoot, Landon Purtee, Hayden Sanford and assistant coach Jayden Burchett.

Riverside ready for a turnaround

Riverside's boys basketball team is set to begin this season with an experience-rich roster that could challenge for a spot

near the top of the Three Rivers Conference.

The Pirates roster is mostly seniors and includes six returning let-

terwinners.

Helping to lead the charge are seniors Myles Platfoot, a guard, along with Nate Copas, a versa-

tile forward, and Cody Craig, a presence at the center position.

See **READY** on Page 18

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PIRATES



Members of the Riverside varsity girls basketball team are, from the left, front row: Shaye McGill, Avery Perk, Aubree Huston, Kaitlyn Schlumbohm, Kaylee Fulkerson, Emilee Robinson and manager Stella Shultz; and back row: assistant coach Beth Marks, Gillian Knight, Reagan McDaniel, Emma Saylor, Zoie Armbruster, Taylor Dillon, Kenna Johnson, Madelyn Lemly, head coach Scott Mann and assistant coach Kyle Knight.

Lady Pirates have a new Mann in charge

Riverside's girls basketball team looks to rebound from a sub-.500 season last year, as first-year head coach Scott Mann prepares to lead a young, but emerging roster onto the court.

A solid group of returning letterwinners leads the Pirates into this season. Emma Saylor and Katie Schlumbohm, along with Avery Perk, Zoie Armbruster, Aubree Huston, Kaylee Fulkerson and Reagan McDaniel, constitute the core of experienced players Mann will

rely on.

Among the newcomers are freshmen Emmilee Robinson, Kara Klingler, Madalyn Lemley, Kenna Johnson, Makayla Hurley, Miah Carmen, and Layla Jordan.

The sophomore class comprises McDaniel, Gillian Knight, Shaye McGill, and Jenna Carnes. Having gained a year of experience, these players are poised to make significant contributions.

See MANN on Page 18

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PIRATES

Mann

Continued from Page 17

Juniors Armbruster, Fulkerson, Huston, Perk, and Taylor Dillon add depth and experience to the roster.

Seniors Saylor and Schlumbohm will be counted on to bring leadership and experience to the team.

With a 6-17 overall record and a 2-12 record in the Three-Rivers Conference last year, the Pirates acknowledge the challenges ahead. However, Coach Mann and the team believe in their goals for the upcoming season.

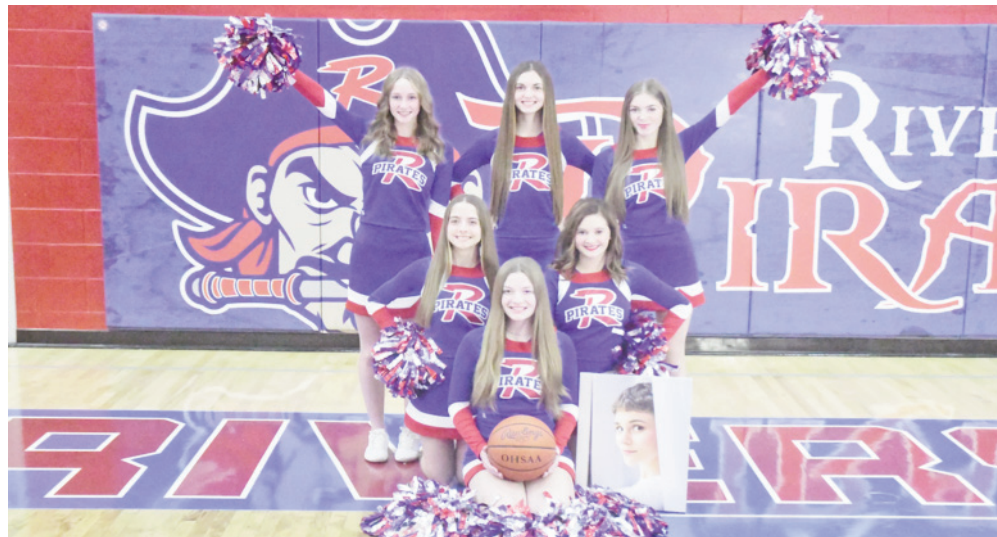
"We want to compete in the league and win in the tournament," Mann said.

The Pirates' strength lies in the collective willingness of the players to put

in the hard work, their coach said. However, they will need to bolster their offensive output and minimize turnovers in order to be successful.

Coach Mann emphasizes a "team-first approach" as the key to a successful season. Hard work and mutual celebration of each other's successes are integral to the Pirates' strategy.

In the competitive TRC, the Pirates are gearing up to face formidable opponents. Last year's champion Bethel leads the pack, closely followed by Miami East and Milton Union. Mann acknowledges the strength of the TRC teams and stresses the importance of preparation and focus heading into each game.



Leading the cheers for Riverside this winter are, from the left, front: Brianna Brandyberry; middle: Kristina Plank and Halyn McClintick; and back: Brook Hunkler, Hadlie Asbury and Makayla Mees.

Ready

Continued from Page 16

Dominik Stotler, Gavin Robinson and Reece Jenkins add depth to the guard and forward positions, rounding out the senior lineup with a combination of versatility and leadership.

The junior class is well represented with Ayden Clary anchoring the forward position. Jaxon Woods, Gavin Orsborne, Landon Purtee and Damein Smith provide energy and depth in the

backcourt.

Hayden Sandford, a sophomore guard, could be another spark of enthusiasm and agility in the lineup.

Platfoot, Orsborne, Woods, Clary, Craig and Stotler return as letterwinners, bringing a wealth of experience and a growing familiarity of what it takes to be competitive in the TRC.

The Riverside boys faced challenges last season, finishing with a 6-21 overall record and a 1-13

league record.

"Having some experience this season should help us in a competitive league against some larger schools," head coach Tim Woods said. "We need to become a more well-rounded team on the defensive side of the ball."

The team's strengths lie in the experience gained from last season. With a core group of upperclassmen returning as letterwinners, the Pirates are well-equipped to navigate a

competitive TRC.

"Our primary goals are to be competitive night in and night out, compete for the league title and win a tournament game," Woods said.

Success for Riverside hinges on controlling the boards and limiting turnovers. A focus on rebounding and ball control will help to maximize offensive possessions, which will make for more scoring opportunities, Woods said.

Miami East should be

the top team this year, but it's wide open this year with the league getting a

little older across the board," Woods said.

RHS

Continued from Page 15

Duff, the team's lone senior, will look to build on her district qualifying season last year.

Also returning to the varsity team are juniors

Hope Harris, Kaitlyn Jackson and Haylee Jones.

Rounding out the squad is freshman Lei Hurley.

Improving spare shooting and baker games are two of the areas Riverside has been focusing on in

practice

"We have to work on spare shooting and having less open frames," said Yelton. "We also need to continue to get baker scores up as the season goes.

"For us to have success, we need the girls to come together and bowl as a term and learn to feed off each other and communicate what they see on the lanes."

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CARDINALS

Lady Cards eye more wins

Triad head girls basketball coach Erica Trainer hopes her team can build on the growth she witnessed from her squad at the end of last season.

"Coming off of last year, we were really starting to play better heading into tournament time," said Trainer. "My starting five are playing well together and I am very hopeful from what I am seeing from some other players, that we will have some good athletes coming off the bench in the next few months."

The Cardinals have won

just five games total the last two years and three league games during that stretch.

However, they hope to increase their win total this season with a roster that has some experience on it.

Leading the team will be junior Abbey Overfield, who earned honorable mention all-Ohio Heritage Conference honors last year. She led the team in scoring at eight points per game and also pulled down 5.7 rebounds per game.

Senior Emma Ferguson, who received honorable mention all-league honors

earlier in her career, averaged 5.8 points, 3.7 rebounds and 1.9 steals per contest a year ago.

Expected to fill out the rest of the starting lineup are senior Kaley Nott and juniors Mia LeMay and Ashlyn McCoy.

Looking to provide depth will be Gracie Martin, Jazz Ford, Bre Parsons, Elliana Zimmerman, Melissa Graham, Hannah Russell and Arlo Monroe.

"Our numbers are down this season, so 13 is tight to run two teams, but we are



going to do it until we can't," said Trainer.

Trainer said the focal point this season will again be on the defensive end of the court.

"Defense has always

been our main focus, so the girls work hard and they let the offense stem from our defense and look for layups all the time," said the Triad head coach.

"We are guard heavy, and

that means that we bring some speed to the game. We are excited to see how the season goes, and we are planning to be more competitive in the league this year."

Bailey to lead THS boys

The Cardinals went 5-17 overall and 4-12 in the Ohio Heritage Conference a year ago. They hope to be more competitive this winter behind a solid returning cast.

Fueling the Cardinals this season will be senior guard Kane Bailey, who earned first-team all-OHC honors last year. Bailey

averaged 13.7 points, 6.2 rebounds and 1.8 steals per game as a junior.

Senior guard Hunter Thompson averaged 4.6 points and 3.1 rebounds a year ago. Senior guard Cameron Thomas averaged 3.3 points and 2.6 rebounds per game last year and senior guard Gage

Heitman also returns averaging two points, two rebounds and two assists per game last season.

Rounding out the varsity roster are senior guard Wyatt Robison, junior forward Adler Perry and junior guard Brayden Hoffman.

Girls wrestling squad set for 2nd season

While small in numbers, Triad's girls wrestling team will include some talented wrestlers this winter.

There are only three wrestlers on the squad, but senior Kaitlynn Gregg (125 pounds) earned first-team all-Ohio Heritage Conference honors last season and junior Lindsey Walborn (135) received

second-team all-OHC honors.

Rounding out the team is sophomore Riley Haser (130).

"Our individual goals are to win tournaments and get to the state tournament," said second-year head coach Madison Sharp.

Sharp said there is a lot to like about her team this

year.

"They are dependable, hard working and they are supportive of each other," she said.

Long term, Sharp is hoping that more girls in the school will become interested in wrestling.

"We always would like to get some new wrestlers and grow the program," she said.

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TIGERS



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Members of the West Liberty-Salem girls basketball team are, from the left, front row: Belle Sarver, Lili Weaver, Ava Johnson, Megan Hollar, Maddie Adkins and Ava Astorino; and back row: assistant coach Danielle Turner, head coach Dennis McIntosh, Maddie McGill, Ava Poppe, Chaley Wade, Bailey Poppe, Briley Sullivan, Maddie Cole and assistant coaches Aaron Hollar and Stan King.

Lady Tigers return experienced squad

This year's version of the West Liberty-Salem girls basketball team will look almost identical as it looked last year.

The Tigers have all of their key contributors return this season as they aim to improve on there 14-11 record from a season ago.

"Our goals are to win the OHC, make a long tournament run and improve every day in practice," said longtime WL-S head coach Dennis McIntosh.

The Tigers went 10-6 in Ohio Heritage Conference play and finished in third place in the OHC North division last winter.

WL-S has the experience and talent to challenge for the OHC North title this season.

Leading the long list of returning players is senior center Chaley Wade, who averaged 10.4 points and

8.1 rebounds per game last year.

Seniors Lilly Weaver, Bailey Poppe and Megan Hollar and sophomore Ava Astorino will provide a lot of punch in the back court.

Weaver averaged 8.5 points and 4.6 rebounds, Poppe averaged 6.7 points, 6.5 rebounds and 2.2 assists, Hollar averaged 6.67 points, 4.4 rebounds and 3.8 assists and Astorino averaged 5.8 points per game last year.

See TIGERS on Page 23

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TIGERS



Members of the West Liberty-Salem varsity boys basketball team are, from the left, front row: manager Braxton Loudon, Jeremiah Johnson, Hunter Knotts, Miles Hostetler, Caleb Hershberger, Gavin Nance, Sutton Wilcoxon and manager Elin Leichthy; and back row: head coach Darrin Leichthy, assistant coach Mike Loudon, Brevin Loudon, Isaiah Reames, Taran Logwood, Carson Poppe, Garrett Wallen and assistant coaches Sean King, Dillon Callicoat and Jason Steider.

Logwood headlines talented WL-S hoops team

West Liberty-Salem's boys basketball team finished in second place in the Ohio Heritage Conference North Division last year.

With four of their top five scorers from last year returning this season, the Tigers hope to contend for the North championship this winter.

WL-S went 13-11 overall and 10-6 in the OHC a year ago.

The Tigers graduated Matt Jones, who averaged 12.5 points per game.

However, they return an

experienced group of standouts, led by junior Taran Logwood.

Logwood was the OHC North player of the year last season when he averaged 13.4 points and 11 rebounds per game.

Sophomore Brevin Loudon will look to build on a strong freshman campaign that saw him averaged 7.6 points and 3.7 assists per game.

Sophomore Carson Poppe also showed a lot of promise in his rookie season last year, averaging 6.1 points and 5.5 rebounds

per contest.

Senior Miles Hostetler gives the Tigers another experienced threat. He scored 5.9 points per game and also collected three rebounds and two assists per contest last season.

Junior Isaiah Reames saw action in every game last season for the Tigers.

Also looking to step up this year are juniors Caleb Hershberger and Hunter Knotts, sophomores JJ Johnson, Garrett Wallen and Gaven Nantz and freshman Sutton Wilcoxon.

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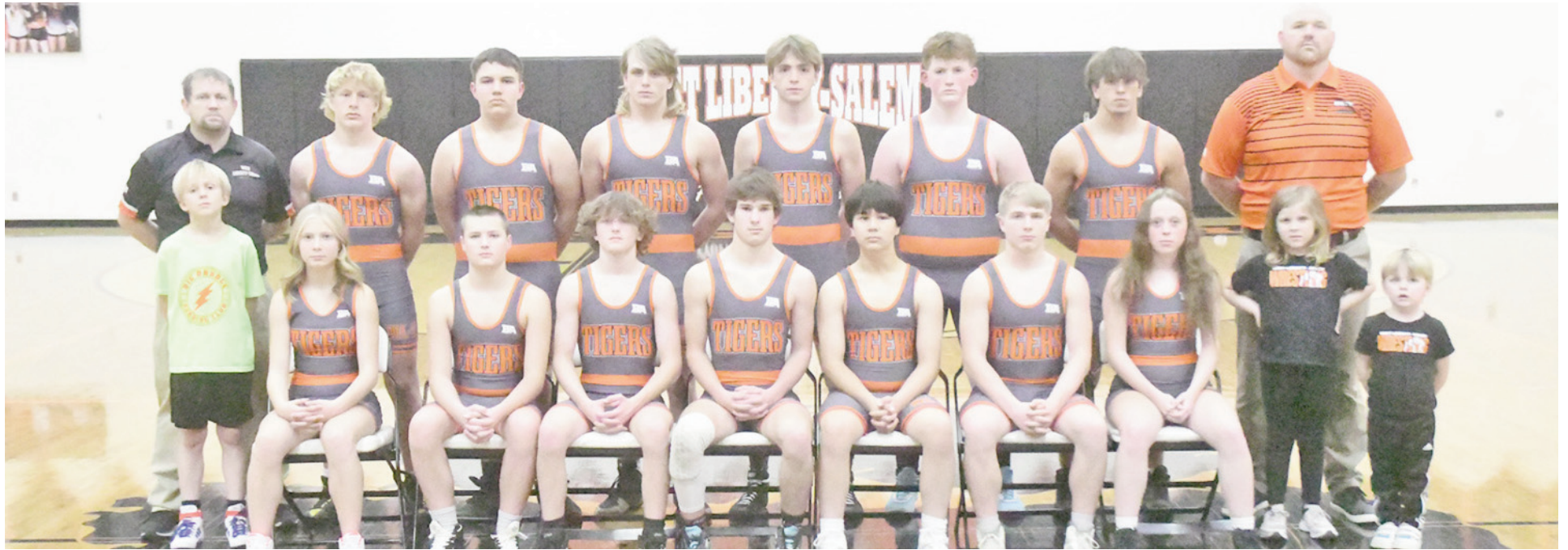
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Members of the West Liberty-Salem wrestling team are, from the left, front row: manager Jordan Griffith, Chloe Griffith, Maddie Kilgore, Lucas Merriman, Lance Saylor, Kyler Langhardt, Jacob Griffith, Jenna Cline and managers Athena Hartshorn and Tracy Hartshorn; and back row: assistant coach Ben Griffith, Silas Krabill, Maverick Reames, Naaman Stidman, Malachi Christison, Eli Sertell, Josiah Stidham and head coach Andy Hartshorn.

WL-S grapplers seeking postseason success in 23-24

Head coach Andy Hartshorn has done an admirable job of breathing life into the West Liberty-Salem wrestling program the last few years, and his Tigers want to continue to show growth this season.

Hartshorn has 12 boys and two girls on the roster this winter.

The Tigers finished third in the Ohio Heritage Conference a year ago and will try to again finish in the top tier this year.

"We ultimately have goals of winning the OHC, however we want to peak at the right time," said Hartshorn. "We feel like we should be finishing top three in our sectional, and have the best performance at districts we have had as a team since I have been the coach. And if we do that, we should have a few guys that make it to the state tournament."

The Tigers have three returning letterwinners in

seniors Jacob Griffith, Slayde Merriman and Malachi Christison.

Those three will be joined by sophomores Lucas Merriman, Josiah Stidham and Chloe Griffith and freshmen Maddon Kilgore, Lance Saylor, Kyler Langhardt, Silas Krabill, Naaman Stidham, Eli Sertell, Maverick Reames and Jenna Cline.

See WL-S on Page 23

TIGERS

Competing for OHC title is the goal for Tigers' boys bowling team

The Ohio Heritage Conference has some outstanding boys bowling programs, but West Liberty-Salem believes it has the talent to compete well with the league's best this winter.

"Our goals for this season are to contend for the OHC title and move out of

the sectionals as a team," said head coach Larry Searles.

The Tigers went 5-7 overall and 3-4 in the OHC last year.

Those win totals should go up this season as Searles welcomes back five returning letterwinners.

That group includes

seniors Adam Jennings and Kayden Francis, junior Luke Thomas and sophomores Devon Jones and Evan Borgerding.

Freshman Tucker Searles should add an immediate impact for the Tigers and sophomore Zander Gluckle will also

provide some depth.

"We have a good mix of classes and there is much competition to be in the starting lineup," said Searles. "We could easily start any of the five in combination and be able to contend in any match."

The Tigers are working

hard on improving their spare shooting.

"We have to improve our spare shooting and baker games," said Searles. "We also have to have the ability to adjust quickly to lanes that we are unfamiliar with and to the transitions the lanes make during competi-

tion."

Searles expects the OHC to be very balanced again.

"Mechanicsburg, Greenon, Southeastern and Fairbanks should be strong," he said. "Generally, the league is pretty competitive from top to bottom."

Girls bowling team shooting for district berth

The main goal for the West Liberty-Salem girls bowling team this year is to improve on last year's 4-5 record.

With six letterwinners back this year, the Tigers have a good chance of accomplishing that goal.

"We want to continue to

improve upon last season and strive to challenge for an OHC title," said head coach Natasha Mueller. "We are also looking to move out of sectionals and go to districts as a team for the first time in school history."

Returning to the varsity

team are juniors Alexis Lowe, Alyssa Mueller and Lillian Gearheart and sophomore Haylee Earles, Sadie Paul and Elli Ullery.

"We have lots of letterwinners returning and they are still mostly underclassmen, so they have the potential to grow even

more together as a team to achieve their individual and team goals," said Mueller. "We had two individuals move on to districts last year, Alyssa Mueller for her second year in a row and Elli Ullery as a freshman."

Rounding out the squad

are seniors Payton Lightner and Mackenzie Sandefer and freshmen Mars Gibson and Savanna Gluckle.

Mueller said that good teamwork will be essential in accomplishing the team's goals.

"Our keys to having a successful season are

working together to achieve the goals that the team and individuals have set," said Mueller. "If the team and individuals achieve their goals then we should be fighting for the OHC title and moving on to districts."

WL-S

Continued from Page 22

"I would say our biggest strength this year is the fact that we have some truly experienced and successful seniors, paired with a very large group of younger wrestlers," said Hartshorn. "This is essential in consistency and success across long amounts of time. The seniors have others that are

forcing them to develop leadership skills, making them not only better wrestlers, but also better people. And the younger guys will have a good idea of what 'right' looks like."

With such a big group of new wrestlers, the Tigers are focused on learning the fundamentals and working to improve on a daily basis.

"There is always a ton of

room to improve in every aspect of wrestling," said Hartshorn. "There is just so much to learn or work on. WL-S has typically seen an influx of brand new wrestlers in my time as the coach. So for me, I think me finding ways to improve on how I am teaching these new wrestlers, while also preparing the veterans, is

most important. It is a very tough juggling act, trying to satisfy both of those. And if we as a coaching staff can keep improving in that area, we have a great chance to see massive strides."

In a sport as physically and mentally challenging as wrestling, Hartshorn said his team has to remain strong and resilient

through the ups and downs.

"As always, finding ways to push through the adverse experiences, whether in practice or competition, is where I put a lot of emphasis," he said. "Toughness and resilience tend to win out late in the season, when everyone has put in the work all year. Whether

you are a brand new wrestler, or an experienced one, we will all see adversity and have to be resilient. If you can't be resilient, you will really struggle to see the benefits of all the hard work. If you can't see the benefits, you typically fall into the trap of thinking there are no benefits."

Tigers

Continued from Page 20

Also returning for the Tigers are senior Maddie Cole and junior Ava Johnson. "Depth and team quick-

ness are strengths for us and also having all eight letterwinners from last year playing together in practice every day is a big strength," said McIntosh.

Filling out the varsity squad are Isabelle Sarver, Maddie Adkins, Maddie McGill, Ava Poppe and Briley Sullivan.

While Wade gives the

Tigers a strong presence inside with her scoring and rebounding, McIntosh said the rest of the team also has to help out on the boards.

"We need to be much

better rebounding, especially on the offensive end," said McIntosh. "We also have to cut down on turnovers."

The Tigers' head coach

said that he expects Mechanicsburg, last year's OHC North champion, to again be the top competition in the league race this year.

CHIEFTAINS



Members of the Bellefontaine varsity boys basketball team are, from the left, front row: Cooper Sterling, Jacob Salyer, C.J. Wilson, Riley Neer and Elijah Mahaffey; and back row: head coach Henry Stolly, Zayne Huffman, Jamison Clement, Jair Mundy, Trey Taylor, Patrick Stolly, Grayson Lotts and assistant coach Josh Jones.

Chiefs want to be more consistent this season

Bellefontaine's boys basketball team had an up-and-down-season a year ago. The Chieftains will look to be more consistent this season as they hope to rise up the Central Buckeye Conference Kenton Trail division standings.

Bellefontaine went 11-13 overall and 2-8 in the CBC, finishing in sixth place in the KT division.

"Our goals are to have a strong finish in the CBC, demonstrate ongoing improvement throughout the season and play our best at tournament time," said head coach Henry Stolly.

The Chiefs have a stand-out duo in seniors C.J. Wilson and Riley Neer to lead the team this year.

Wilson averaged 10.3 points, 3.6 rebounds and

1.5 rebounds per game in earning first-team all-CBC honors last year.

Neer averaged 4.6 points, 3.3 rebounds and three assists per game as a junior.

"Having that senior leadership from C.J. and Riley is a strength for us," said Stolly.

Also back is junior guard Jacob Salyer, who averaged 3.9 points per contest last

season.

Sophomore guard Patrick Stolly got a taste of varsity play last year and should take on a bigger role this season.

Also in the mix to see time with the varsity team are seniors Zayne Huffman, Elijah Mahaffey, Cooper Sterling and Trey Taylor and sophomores Grayson Lotts, Jair Mundy

and Jamison Clement.

With a lot of inexperienced varsity players, the Chiefs have to jell quickly.

"The challenge is going to be coming together with several new varsity players," said Stolly. "The keys for us will be team toughness and unity, role acceptance and willingness to put in the work."

Stolly expects Jonathan

Alder to be the team to beat in the Kenton Trail division this winter.

"Coming off another Kenton Trail championship, Jonathan Alder will be one of the top CBC teams," said Stolly. "The rest of the CBC Kenton Trail will be very solid with London, Kenton Ridge, Tecumseh and newcomer Urbana showing promise."

CHIEFTAINS



Members of the Bellefontaine varsity girls basketball team are, from the left, front row: Kylee Boggs, Parker Penhorwood, Quinlan Zedeker, Taylor McCafferty and Karys Varner; and back row: assistant coaches Carmen Shumaker and Randy Varner, Gabbe Hoon, Tiffany Boop, Alexis Robinson, head coach Meghan Ashcraft, Alexza Clifton, Laila Butler, Rylie Reames and assistant coaches Michelle Zedeker and Laken Radde.

Lady Chiefs eye CBC title, tourney run

Bellefontaine's girls basketball team returns a group of six letterwinners as they attempt to build off last year's 13-10 season.

"We want to be better than we were the day before so that we can be better than we were last season," said head coach Meghan Ashcraft. "We want to keep working toward being a family and compete as a team on the floor. This team is working hard every day to win a conference championship this season and make a

tournament run."

The Chiefs have three returning players who averaged 10 points or more per game last year.

Leading the way is senior forward Lexi Robinson, who recorded 11.8 points and 6.6 rebounds per game a year ago.

Junior guard Tiffany Boop averaged 11 points, 4.1 rebounds and 2.2 assists per contest and junior point guard Quinlan Zedeker tallied 10 points, 3.2 rebounds and 3.4 assists per game.

Seniors Alexza Clifton (5.7 points, 6.5 rebounds), Parker Penhorwood (3.3 points, 2.1 rebounds) and Karys Varner (2.4 points, 1.7 rebounds) also return to the varsity squad.

Providing depth for the Chiefs will be seniors Kylee Boggs and Taylor McCafferty, juniors Gabbe Hoon, Rylie Reames and Laila Butler and freshman Hailee Lamb.

"We have a fast team, at both levels," said Ashcraft. "So defensively, we will be tough. We have six seniors

and five juniors on varsity, so that will be a strength. We have leadership this year, something we didn't have last season. These young ladies have put in a lot of off-season work and have matured over this last year."

There are several areas of focus for the Chiefs this year.

"Meeting individual and team goals and expectations every day so that we can grow as a team will be important for us," said Ashcraft. "We need to learn

to rise above any setbacks and keep playing. We have to play together and communicate on the floor in

order for us to be as successful as we want to be. This team is ready to do that."



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CHIEFTAINS



Members of the Bellefontaine varsity wrestling team are, from the left, front row: Brandon Wong, Isaiah Roberts, Nicholas Bear, Ricky Smiley, Braelin Saxton, Noah Torsell, Conor Evans, Wyatt Latimer, Justin Robinson, Julius Butler and Drake Hoon; and back row: assistant coaches John Maurice and Hunter Pool, Trent Marcinko, Draven Drake, Xavier May, Zane Tevis, Wesley Morris, Parker Knox, Charlie Bible, Jeffery Smith, Jared Young, Alex Sandoval, head coach Aaron LaBatt and assistant coaches Damon Dixon and Kyle Spence. Not pictured: Maddox Curtis and Ricky Mattox.

Knox, Tevis, Young lead way for BHS boys wrestling team

Bellefontaine's boys wrestling team finished 11th in the Central Buckeye Conference last year, but the Chiefs have the returning talent to improve on that placement this year.

"Individually, we'd like to increase our number of district qualifiers and get someone to state," said head coach Aaron LaBatt. "As a team, we'd like to see ourselves in the top half of tournaments. We need to focus and take each match and each tournament as they come."

The Chiefs will be

sparked by three returning district qualifiers: seniors Parker Knox (175/190) and Zane Tevis (138/144) and sophomore Jared Young (113).

"Parker and Jared were within striking distance of making it to state last year, so I think it's realistic for them to aim at qualifying this year," said LaBatt. "Zane should make it back and is pretty driven in what he wants to accomplish."

LaBatt also believes junior Xavier May (150/157) can make noise in the post-season this year.

"Zavier is a district caliber wrestler, who should have been there last year," said LaBatt. "We also have a handful of others who are capable, but we've got a long road ahead before we can worry about that."

Other returning letter-winners for the Chiefs are seniors Charlie Bible (215/285) and Wesley Morris (132/138), junior Jeffery Smith (106/113) and sophomore Draven Drake (120/126).

See BHS on Page 37

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CHIEFTAINS



Members of the Bellefontaine swim team are, from the left, front row: Coach Lewis, Coach Johnson, Ashton Carey, Ella Costin, Zoey Rister, Emma Costin, Cooper Harman, Alexis Buffkin and Coach Richters; middle row: Beckham Harman, Maria Casanas, Ella Fultz, Kaleigh Flora, Nolan Core, Emma Merrin, Jaylen Henry, Claire McDaniel, Madison Christman and Jai Abhyankar; and back row: Cody Hudson, Will Myers, Blaine Mitchell, Michelle Roberts, Ryan Alexander, Gillian Steele, Elias Abrego, Kaidi Freeman, Claire Grandstaff and Kate Myers. Not pictured are John Fulmer and Alex Crabill.

Chieftain swimmers want to make their mark in CBC

Bellefontaine's boys swim team won the Central Buckeye Conference Kenton Trial division title, while the girls finished third last year.

The Chieftains hope to again be among the top teams in the league this year.

"Our primary goal is growth," said head coach Sharon Lewis. "If each athlete improves throughout the season then we have been successful.

Additionally, we continue to aim to stay in the top 3 of CBC teams. Our athletes

work hard to be ready to fill any needed position so that we can work together towards team success. Beyond the league we aim to send multiple athletes to the district level and have some hopes for state."

The boys team has just 10 members, but there is a great deal of experience on the roster.

Returning letterwinners for the boys team include seniors Cooper Harman and John Fulmer, juniors Elias Abrego, Ryan Alexander and Nolan Core

and sophomores Cody Hudson and Beckham Harman.

Juniors Jaylen Henry and Blaine Mitchell and freshman Will Myers round out the boys team.

Returning letterwinners for the girls team are seniors Alexis Buffkin, Zoey Rister, Ashton Carey, Ella Costin and Emma Costin, junior Kate Myers and sophomore Kaeleigh Flora and Emma Merrin.

Joining those swimmers are juniors Jai Abhyanker, Madison Christman, Kaidi

Freeman, Claire Grandstaff, Claire McDaniel and Michelle Roberts, sophomores Maria Casanas-Meijias and Gillian Steele and freshman Ella Fultz.

"Our team has a great deal of experience," said Lewis. "Led by seniors John Fulmer, Cooper Harman, Ashton Carey, Zoey Rister, Emma and Ella Costin, and Lexi Buffkin, our athletes know what it takes to be successful.

See CBC on Page 36



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CHIEFTAINS



Members of the Bellefontaine boys bowling team are, from the left: Beckett Vilaysane, Truman Howell and Garrett Brede; and back row: coach Dave Overholser, Alex Moon, Paul Lafollette, Alex Williams, Brandon Pinkerton, David Allen, Timothy Phillips, Rory Pierce, Jacob Lynch, Colton Wisner, Eli Stone, Jeffrey Knotts and coach Tammy Overholser.

Bellefontaine's boys bowling team wants to make a leap this season

With a team full of new faces, it was a season of growth for the Bellefontaine boys bowling team last season.

This year, the Chiefs hope to use last year's experiences and make a big leap forward.

"Our goals are to make steps with fundamentals sooner than last year, after a total rebuild last year," said head coach Tammy Overholser. "We have made strides but still need to push each bowler to their level."

The Chiefs, who went 2-

14 last season and finished in sixth place in the Central Buckeye Conference Kenton Trail division, bring back seven letterwinners.

That group includes seniors Garrett Brede and Beckett Vilaysane, juniors Rory Pierce and Jacob Lynch and sophomores Eli Stone, David Allen and Alex Williams.

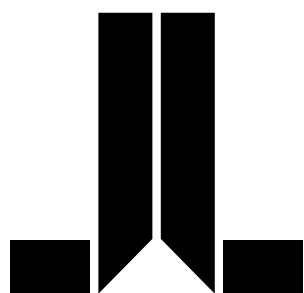
"We have several leaders on the team," said Overholser. "They are always willing to help out. They are a great group of boys."

The rest of the roster includes senior Truman Howell, junior Jeffery Knotts, sophomores Timmy Phillips, Colton Wisner, Brandon Pinkerton and Paul Lafollette and freshman Alex Moon.

Overholser said good teamwork and staying positive will be important factors for the Chiefs this season.

"Making each roll a positive will mark is a key for us," she said. "And playing as a team, doing your best even when a teammate is struggling."

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CHIEFTAINS



Members of the Bellefontaine girls bowling team are, from the left, front row: Arissa Carver, Gracie Hood, Haylee Yelton, Isabelle Gunnett and Skybree Knotts; and back row: Kenzie Bernard, Chloe Heminger, Nevaeh Lafollette, Kyrah Moon, Avery Mullins and Rhiana Bear. Not pictured is Haylee Rutherford.

Lady Chieftains aiming for return trip to state tourney

After going 15-3 and making it to the state bowling tournament last year, Bellefontaine's girls team is hungry for another successful season this winter.

"We want to win the Central Buckeye Conference, bowl well at sectionals, make it to the district tournament and qualify for state," said head coach Jane Kline.

The Chiefs have three returning letterwinners in sophomores Gracie Hood and Chloe Heminger and juniors Haylee Yelton.

Bellefontaine graduated CBC Kenton Trail division bowler of the year in Kayla Watkins, but Hood,

Heminger and Yelton will provide an experienced nucleus of talent to lean on this season.

Hood and Heminger both earned spots on the CBC first team last year.

As a freshman last year, Hood was sixth in the CBC with a 186.6 average.

Heminger ranked 15th in the conference with a 170.7 average.

Senior Haylee Rutherford and juniors Avery Mullins and Nevaeh Lafollette will help fill out the varsity lineup.

The rest of the team includes senior Skybree Knotts, junior Rhiana Bear, sophomores Kinzie Bernard, Arissa Carter, Isabelle

Gunnett and Kyra Moon.

"Our strengths are having three returning letterwinners and having three girls that have been bowling on the JV team the past couple years who have improved a lot and will be stepping up to varsity," said Kline. "Gracie and Chloe bowl in the travel league so they get a lot of experience bowling head-to-head matches as well as bowling at a lot of different bowling centers so they are stronger mentally and their physical game has really improved. We have a good team, and if we bond well as a team we will do great things."

“

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CHIEFTAINS



Members of the Bellefontaine varsity cheerleading squad are, from the left, front row: Lauren Valdez and Ella Kuba; middle row: Harper Penhorwood, Mia Oppy and Halle Hunt; and back row: Annabelle Myers, Alexis Yoder and Natilee Canter.

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Lady Chiefs focused on fundamentals

With only two girls on the roster, there will be plenty of coaching opportunities for Bellefontaine's girls wrestling team this year.

The squad consists of sophomore Maci Flesher (110/115) and freshman Rylee Yelton (125/130).

"The girls are excited to wrestle and work hard in practice," said head coach Brady Hiatt. "Both are very young to the sport. Maci is a first-year wrestler and Rylee started in seventh grade, so both are in their first year of high school competition. We have a big junior high team with 12-plus girls, so we are excited for what the future holds here."

Hiatt simply wants his girls to enjoy their experience and improve as the season goes on.

"I want them to have



fun and get one percent better every day as we build for the future," said Hiatt.

There are many areas of importance to achieving success in the sport of wrestling, and the two Lady Chieftain wrestlers will attempt to learn all of those aspects.

"We need to improve in every area of the sport," said Hiatt. "That includes technique and mental and physical approach."

"We have to be consistent: consistent in attendance, consistent in effort and consistent in attitude. If the girls do this, we will be just fine."

GOPHERS



Members of the Ridgemont varsity boys basketball team are, from the left, first row: Robbie Fenwick, Foster Manns, Brantley Rudasill, Camden Thompson and Trenton Overly; second row: Mason Howard, Dominic Curl, Dawson Manns, Eldar Musayev, Kody Kiser and Clayton Patterson; third row: head coach Tyler Tillman, Connor Manns, Kolton Manns, Colton Bailey and assistant coach Chris Weyant; and back row: assistant coach Tye Sherman, Xavier Stuck, Shane Selt, Landon Eaton, Harrison Reppart and Grant Reppart.

Tillman takes over Ridgemont boys basketball program

BY THE KENTON TIMES

The Ridgemont boys basketball team will utilize a similar version of the free-flowing offense it ran last year, but first-year head coach Tyler Tillman wants the Gophers to switch to being a defensive-minded unit.

Tillman was an assistant

under Shawn Smith, who stepped down after last season. He is already implementing his philosophy.

"We had a pretty good summer I thought," Tillman said. "I was very pleased for the most part. We had a good camp at Findlay. We played a lot of tough competition this summer so I think that has

helped us grow as a team."

The Gophers lost Wes McKinley, Donovan Brose and Kevin Eckstein to graduation off of a team that went 7-16 overall but 4-3 in Northwest Central Conference action.

"Wes was our big man, kind of pounded the paint for us. Donovan was another athletic

forward/guard style player. Kevin came off the bench and just got after it. We definitely lost some leaders. They had some good leadership qualities and we are trying to develop that this year," Tillman said.

His main goal is to compete in every single game.

See BOYS on Page 36

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GOPHERS



Members of the Ridgemont varsity girls basketball team are, from the left, front row: Kylie Shreve and Laney Elsasser; middle row: Ruth Eckstein, Prezley Furer and Anna Ramsey; and back row: assistant coach Brittany Rose, Maddie Gossard, Jayda Dondrea and head coach Faith Newland.

Lady Gophers in search of some positive momentum

BY THE KENTON TIMES

The Ridgemont girls basketball team is hungry for a win after a tough season marred by injury, sickness and adversity.

Longtime head coach Tim Weyant stepped down and Faith Newland took over in the offseason. The Gophers were often overmatched as they went 0-23 overall last year and only had one game within striking distance. They were 0-6 in Northwest Central Conference play.

"Last year they were low on numbers, and there was injury and sickness," Newland said. "They just didn't come out on top and never gave up. I have several of them coming back this year that are hungry for a win, and I'm thankful for that."

Ridgemont lost just one player to graduation in guard Charlie Chronister. Post players Breann Vermillion and Lauren Wingfield didn't come out this winter.

Chronister averaged 2.0 points, 3.2 rebounds, 1.3 assists and 1.1 steals per game. Wingfield totaled 3.0 points, 4.3 rebounds, 0.5 assists, 1.0 steals and 0.4 blocks per game.

"All we lost from last year was Charlie Chronister. It's a great

group of girls," Newland said.

She knows it will take time to change the culture.

"As plain as it gets, we definitely want to win. That is a turnaround. I just want to change the culture for Ridgemont girls basketball. We want to bring a higher level of competition to the league. We are working on our skills and our basketball IQ. We want to play the game and play it well. We want to make it fun again," Newland said.

She said the strengths of this group are that they play well together and they are a high-effort group.

"Even though we are low on numbers, I think we are going to be a defensive threat this year. We are improving every single day," Newland said.

She said she doesn't plan to press because they are low on numbers, but could do it if the situation calls for it. They will often operate out of a 3-2 half court zone.

On offense, the Gophers will try to keep defenders on their heels.

"We are going to play a 5-out offense. It's read-and-react. It's looking good so far. Getting the defense moving and finding open cutters this year," Newland said.

See LADY on Page 33

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GOPHERS



Cheering on Ridgemont this winter will be, from the left, front row: Kaelyn Sailor and Kamryn Kiser; middle row: Kaytlin Billenstein, Bailee Wright and Albrey Bailey; and back row: Emmanuel Kellso, Olivia Newland, Lauren Wingfield and advisor Jessica Billenstein.



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Lady

Continued from Page 32

Jayda Dondrea is the team's lone senior this year. She is their starting center and leading returning rebounder. She put up 5.6 points, 5.9 rebounds, 0.5 assists, 1.7 steals and 0.7 blocks as a junior. She sets good screens and helps direct teammates to where they need to be.

"She's a leader, a good role model for the younger players. She's good down low. We just have to make sure action happens," Newland said.

Combo guard Kylie Shreve is the only junior on tap. She led the Gophers with 7.0 points and 2.5 steals per game. She loves to play quick and shoot the ball. She was their leading scorer in many games. The

Gophers only averaged 20.4 points as a team and she accounted for more than one-third of that.

"She definitely has that scoring mentality you would want in a player," Newland said.

The sophomore guard class of Laney Elsasser, Ruth Eckstein and Anna Ramsey will take the team as far as they can.

Elsasser is one of the team's leaders and will run point. She can score from multiple levels and manage an offense. She had 2.1 points, 3.1 rebounds, 1.6 assists, 1.3 steals and 0.2 blocks per game as a freshman.

"Laney is our point guard. She's a leader of the court. She's going to be taking charge this year over the team, and hopefully

leading us to some wins," Newland said.

She said she looks forward to Eckstein being able to chip in some points with her hustle and effort. She had 1.1 points, 3.7 rebounds, 0.4 assists and 1.3 steals per game as a freshman.

Ramsey, a shooting guard, has impressed Newland.

"She's a shifty girl. She's a scorer. She can get buckets. I'm looking for her to be a breadwinner for us. She can definitely get us some points on the board," Newland said.

Prezley Furer and Maddie Gossard are the freshman forwards.

"Prezley is a hard worker. She does the things that effort is the key focus of. She's a rebounder, she's a hustler. She's a defensive threat. Maddie is a great teammate, an energizer for us. We are working on her development," Newland said.

Ridgemont's closest game was a 31-30 loss at Ridgedale on Feb. 7 of this year. They had two other games within 20 points (Triad and Upper Scioto Valley).

Hardin Northern is the defending NWCC champions, but the league is wide-open this winter as the Polar Bears lost three of their top players.

Newland said cutting down on turnovers and building up the confidence of the girls are two of the major keys to success. If they can get better at the fundamentals and make less mistakes, they will see the program shift in a positive direction.

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SPARTANS



Members of the Calvary Christian varsity girls basketball team are, from the left, assistant coaches Eric Cook and Daniel Wilt, Madhuri Cook, Allena Miller, KayLee Hurley, Nora Thornton, Megan Palmer, Kaylie Carter, Kari Gantz, Gracie Gaertner, Lila Wilson, Abigail Reinhard, Laileigh Beatty, head coach Lee Reinhard and manager Aly Reames.

Spartans' core returns for chance to stay atop OVCC

Calvary Christian's girls basketball team returns most of its starting lineup this season, and looks to maintain its spot on top of the Ohio Valley Christian Conference.

With that solid founda-

tion from last year's success, head coach Lee Reinhard is setting the team's sights on continued excellence on and off the court this season.

With three starters returning from last year's

OVCC championship team and a roster that blends experience and youthful talent, Calvary Christian is poised for another stand-out season.

Junior KayLee Hurley and seniors Madhuri Cook,

and Abigail Reinhard were starters last season and will be counted on to provide leadership to Spartans newcomers.

Other returning varsity players include juniors Kari Gantz and Nora Thornton,

and sophomores Megan Palmer, Kaylie Carter and Laileigh Beatty.

That core of players went 14-5 last season and a perfect 11-0 in the OVCC. They will be counted on to help show the way for first-year players including sophomore Aleena Miller, and freshmen Iva Wilson and Gracie Gaertner.

"We are looking to Madhuri and Abigail, our two seniors, for steady leadership this year while we develop chemistry as a team," Reinhard said. "We want to be known for our hard work and determination to give maximum effort."

Reinhard also stresses the

Spartans are driven by a higher purpose – to bring glory to God through their performance on the court. With an impressive track record from last season, the team is eager to build on its success and continue representing the school with pride.

"Our team goal is to bring glory to God with the way that we play basketball," he said.

Despite a successful previous season, the team recognizes the importance of further developing their chemistry. Reinhard emphasizes the need for players to work seamlessly together, fostering a strong sense of unity on the court.

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SPARTANS



Members of the Calvary Christian varsity boys basketball team are, from the left: assistant coach Wade Wylie, head coach Rob Rogan, Daniel Young, Evan Schmidt, Wyatt Schlatter, Greger Hanson, Phillip Davie, Charles Krumm, Zeeke Wylie, Luke Gaertner, Christian Rogan, Evan Patton, manager Joe Harmison and assistant coach Thomas Rorrer.

Calvary Christian boys hoops team looks to repeat as OVCC champions

With the majority of its starting lineup returning for this season, the Calvary Christian boys basketball team looks to build upon a successful campaign a season ago that included 15 wins and a conference championship.

With an experienced roster coming back this

year, head coach Rob Rogan said that players come in knowing their role on the team with a firm grasp on the offense.

Returning letter winners include seniors Charles Krumm, Wyatt Schlatter, Evan Patton, along with junior Philip Davie.

"Players have a great overall grasp of the offense (and) great understanding of their role on the team," Rogan said.

The varsity roster also includes seniors Greger Hanson and Luke Gaertner; juniors Daniel Young and Zeeke Wylie; sophomore Evan Schmidt;

and freshman Christian Rogan.

The Spartans went 15-8 last season on their way to the top of the Ohio Valley Christian Conference.

Dayton Temple and Spring Valley will pose formidable competition this season for Calvary in the

OVCC, Rogan said.

He said the team aspires to repeat as conference champions this year, including winning the OVCC tournament as well as one game in the OHSAA state tournament.

In order to achieve those lofty postseason

goals, the team will need to improve its perimeter shooting and continue to stay within the system, their coach said.

"Players should stay within themselves, function as a team, and not try to do too much individually," Rogan said.

Boys

Continued from Page 31

"We have some tough games on the schedule. We are really trying to switch it over to a defensive-minded team. We've always been an offensive-minded team, what can we do to score and this and that. So we're really trying to switch it over to what we can do to stop the other team from scoring. If we keep them under 50 points a night, that will give us a good chance to win night in, night out," Tillman said.

He said the offense will still be the read-and-react style but with some minor tweaks.

"Once they see it all start to come together, I think we'll start buying in and we'll start rolling," Tillman said.

The strengths of the Gophers are their shooting ability, their depth and their team athleticism. Tillman wants them to get the ball up the court as quickly as possible.

On defense, Tillman said he wants them to pick players up full court.

"We are really blessed this year. I have nine guys that I feel confident in to give me solid minutes. I

think we are really going to lean on having that deep bench. We are going to pressure a lot, we are going to be up in your face picking you up full court. If I get my way, it's going to be 32 minutes a game. We will see what happens with the new foul rules. It's all going to change a little bit with the foul rule. Everything is going to be high intensity. Hopefully you can turn the ball over and we can score in transition, that's our goal," Tillman said.

The Gophers have one senior in 5-foot-10 senior shooting guard Clayton Patterson. He excelled on the football field, using his elite track speed to race to four kickoff return touchdowns and a punt return score.

"He is a huge spark off the bench with that defensive-minded mentality. He will come in and lock you up. You're never comfortable when he's guarding you. He's worked a lot on his finishing and scoring in the offseason. I look to him to be a scoring threat this year, not just a defensive threat. Clayton is our only senior, he's going to be a leader and we are going to lean on him more than he thinks," Tillman said.

Mason Howard, a 5-foot-9 sophomore combo guard, was described by Tillman as a "natural playmaker." He's not always looking to score, he makes sure to get his teammates involved. He's a defensive-minded, hard-nosed football player that brings the energy to the team.

5-foot-11 junior point guard Connor Manns is the one in control of running the offense, which he also does as the Gopher starting quarterback.

"He's a quarterback, he's a point guard. We are really trying to work with him on his leadership stuff and just taking the reins and telling people where they need to be. He's a playmaker, he does have a scoring ability. He's shot well at our scrimmages. We are looking for him to take a step," Tillman said.

Kolton Manns, a 5-foot-11 junior combo guard, was a second-team All-NWCC player last year. He's very athletic and good at drawing fouls by slashing the lane. He can hit from the outside.

6-foot-3 junior Colton Bailey is a deadeye shooter who will see playing time at all five positions depending

on certain rotations.

"He's a microwave. When he's hot, he will go off. The rim starts to look like a trashcan for him sometimes. He puts up tough shots and they fall for him. He's maturing and realizing what good and bad shots are. He stretches the floor out. He will be our five-man since we don't have a lot of size. He can pound the paint, but he can stretch it out, too. We would like for him to pull big guys away from the rim," Tillman said.

Harrison Reppart, a sophomore 6-foot-2 guard/forward, is a knock-down shooter.

"He's really worked hard. Kid's got a love for the game. He's played AAU as long as I've known him. Another guy we are looking to grow as a leader. We really need him to step up. Him and

Xavier [Stuck] are both just big-body guards that go out there and do everything for us. Rebound, score, play defense, go inside, outside, all of it," Tillman said.

6-foot-2 junior guard/forward Xavier Stuck is a jack-of-all-trades type player. Tillman said they will definitely lean on

him for his offense and his defense. He is a solid shooter and adept at getting

to the free throw line. 5-foot-9 sophomore guard Dawson Manns is a sharpshooter that will split time between junior varsity and varsity.

"He's got touch, he's a good golfer. He just picked golf up this past year, and really excelled at it.

He's a pure sharpshooter that can light it up. I told the coaching staff don't be surprised if you see

Dawson scores 12 points in a varsity game because we may need him. He definitely has the ability," Tillman said.

5-foot-11 junior shooting guard Dominic Curl is a depth piece.

"I have always had the utmost confidence in Dominic. Sometimes he doesn't have that confidence and it hurts him. Sometimes I can put him right in there with the starters," Tillman said.

The Ridgemont coach said 6-foot-3 big man Landon Eaton feasts in the paint. Tillman wants him to protect the paint and dominate the glass.

5-foot-10 freshman combo guard Kody Kiser

will be dressing varsity.

"He's really impressed me the last three months. He really gets after it. He doesn't play like a freshman. He won't make a lot of the freshman mistakes. We rewarded him with a varsity jersey and he'll be a very impactful player for the junior varsity team," Tillman said.

He noted that they will lean on their bench a lot this year.

"We lost a lot of games because of not having the court experience last year so I hope to take a step there. We feel confident we can start any of those nine guys any night," Tillman said.

The Gophers had a winning conference record at 4-3 and they want to do the same. The league is perhaps more wide-open than it has been, but Tillman said it still runs through McGuffey.

Upper Scioto Valley returned two of its top three scorers in Alex Sanders and Maddox Underwood, so they will be a force again as the favorites.

Tillman said Lima Perry will get after it and mentioned Hardin Northern as a darkhorse candidate.

CBC

Continued from Page 27

"All of our swimmers have done at least some level of competitive swim prior to this season. We also have a large list of swimmers who qualified to the district tournament last year including Elias Abrego, Cooper Harman,

John Fulmer, Nolan Core, and Kate Myers. Further, we have some very self-motivated athletes this year who have set high goals for themselves and put in work in the off season. No matter how hard the workout is they are pushing through."

The Chiefs will have to

rely on some new faces, especially on their relay teams.

"While we do have vast experience, we will be rebuilding our relays and lineup this season as we graduated a talented group of athletes," said Lewis. "I believe we have the swimmers to make this transi-

tion fairly seamless as their effort already has been outstanding. We are focusing on the details for our swimmers with less experience and really pushing the pace with some of our most experienced athletes."

The focus again for the Chiefs is to swim their best times at the end of the sea-

son.

"To be successful our athletes must trust the process, put in the work, and enjoy the sport," said Lewis. "Preparing to swim at our best is not an easy task, practices are grueling and athletes have to push through. They also have to accept that every race will

not be their best but trust that if they keep working, listening, and believing it will all come together. Our minds are a powerful thing and keeping a positive attitude is a must. If we aren't having fun it's easy to get caught up in the struggles along the way and miss out on the end result."

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Filling out the team are juniors Conor Evans (285), Trent Marcinko (138/144) and Maddox Curtis (285), sophomores Wyatt Latimer (120/126), Isaiah Roberts (113/120), Justin Robinson (215) and Ricky Mattox (285) and freshmen Nicholas Beair (138/144), Noah Torsell (165/175), Ricky Smiley (126/132), Julius Butler

(215), Alex Sandoval (285), Drake Hoon (165/175), Brandon Wong (132/138) and Braelin Saxton (144/150).

With an experienced group of wrestlers back, LaBatt is optimistic his team can take a step forward this year.

"I think an immediate strength is that we return everyone from last year," said LaBatt. "Any time you can return this many guys

it puts you slightly ahead of schedule in terms of teaching. That doesn't guarantee or translate to immediate success, though, so we still have to put a lot of work in.

"Our group is also very enthusiastic and eager to be on the mat. That stems from our senior leadership. Those guys want to see our program get to the next level, so they've been holding

everyone accountable and keeping them focused."

One of the keys for Bellefontaine will be getting the new wrestlers acclimated to high school wrestling.

"We have a decent number of freshmen and a few guys who are new to the sport," said LaBatt. "We will need to get them caught up to speed and get them as much mat time as

possible. For some of our other guys, we need them slow down. They need to focus on what they are strong at on the mat and utilize that. I want them to be great at using five moves instead of mediocre with 20."

Looking at the league race, LaBatt sees the traditional powers being at the forefront again.

"Graham is still going to be at the top of the

league this year and will win another state championship," said LaBatt. "Indian Lake is going to be battling for second overall. Coach Dickson and his guys are making some big strides. I think Jonathan Alder will probably win the Kenton Trail division and be in the up tier of the league followed by Tecumseh."

Lake

Continued from Page 9

Other returning letter-winners on the boys side include seniors Ryan Culp (165/175) and Tony Cummins (138/144/150), junior Taylor Clem (165/175) and sophomores Gavin Henry (126/132),

Draden Stevenson (138/144/150), Christopher Timms (215/heavyweight), Franklin Kinney (heavyweight).

Filling out the boys team are senior Vince Wilson (126/132), junior Tristan Shoffner (175/190/215), sopho-

mores Silas Holbrook (120/126), Noah Shirk (138/144) and Chase Rife (175/190) and freshmen Dalton Fullerton (150/157), Zaiden Bates (144/150) and Sam Purk (175/190).

The Lakers will also have a team of seven girls this season.

Senior Tori Roby was a district placer in the girls tournament last year. Senior Isabel Brunson and sophomore KiyLee Haude also received varsity letters last year.

Those three will be joined by sophomores Maddie Miller, Riley

Shaner and Augusta Biederman and freshman Shannyn Brunson.

Dickson said the goal of his team this year is the same as in the past: be at the best by the end of the season.

"We want to work to improve each event and

peak for the postseason," he said. "We also have to focus on what is in front of us, compete with a purpose and use the regular season as practice, so when we get to the postseason we excel."

Girls

Continued from Page 7

The Raiders are counting on the return of five key letter winners including Klopfenstein, Hamm, Thomas, McColloch and Saunders. With last year's record standing at 7-9 and a fourth-place finish in the CBC Mad River division,

the team is eager to build on this foundation.

"Having four returning varsity players with experience is a big plus," Poling said. "The girls work really well together as a team and present great teamwork."

With the addition of two freshmen and two sopho-

mores who are new to the sport, the team anticipates a gradual start to the season. Attention will be devoted to proper mechanics and honing their skills. The challenge of introducing new bowlers to varsity play and securing necessary equipment underscores the need for a

focused effort to start the season.

"With having two new freshmen and two new sophomores that haven't bowled before and having girls not bowled varsity before and having to get balls makes for a slow start for the season," Poling said. "We will have to focus

on their mechanics and improving skills."

Success for the Benjamin Logan girls bowling team hinges on hard work, dedication and individual practice, Poling said. Given the constraints on practice time, players are encouraged to work on their skills independently.

Looking ahead to league competition, Poling identifies Graham and Urbana as formidable opponents.

With a blend of experience, fresh talent and a commitment to hard work, the Raiders are ready to roll into a season full of promise and potential.

High

Continued from Page 6

"We're pretty excited about what they will bring to the table. They've made tremendous strides in the offseason for us," Sullivan said.

Knight led the Raiders with a 451 series (237, 214)

in their season-opening win over London.

"He's one of those that really blossomed in the off-season," Sullivan said.

Buckenroth was third on the varsity team with a 405 series (234, 171) against London and Nate Davis rolled a 392 series

(188, 204) for fifth.

Timple, Stoodt and Vogelsang were in the junior varsity lineup. Timple had the second-best overall score as he rolled a 449 series on games of 202 and 247. Stoodt had a 413 series on games of 191 and 222, while Vogelsang chipped in

a 314 series on games of 148 and 166.

There are two sophomores on tap in Paxton Henry and Wyatt Levan.

The three freshmen have already shown great promise. Dylan Stewart had the second-best varsity score in their season open-

er with a 427 series on games of 213 and 187.

"He's going to be seeing key varsity time as a freshman," Sullivan said.

Justin Lamson and Colton Klopfenstein are the other two freshmen.

The Raiders have an intriguing roster makeup

that will shift as the season goes.

"I expect our team to be a strong contender for the league title. Northwestern, Graham and Urbana in the Mad River division should be strong again," Sullivan said.

Raiders

Continued from Page 4

"It's difficult to get kids to come and play, to sign up after that. Our numbers are about the same as last year. A lot of our guys are back. They want to give it another shot. The effort is there. We still have a lot of learning to do. A big selling point for us right now is 'are they going to put the effort in to be more competitive,'" coach Vermillion said.

He wants to get past last year and is working on building confidence. The Raiders lost three players from last year in Ty Anspach, Yale Scheiderer and Jonas Hoffman.

Anspach averaged 7.6 rebounds, 1.3 assists and 1.1 steals per game. Scheiderer put up 4.1 points, 4.3 rebounds, 0.8 steals and 0.9 assists per game. Hoffman totaled 2.1 points and 1.7 rebounds per game.

"The goal is to just be competitive. We graduated our best rebounder, but we still have a lot back," coach Vermillion said.

There are just three seniors on the Raiders this time around: Hayden Alexander, EJ Martin and Kanyon Perez. Martin and Alexander are the team's captains.

"Those are the two that stuck it out. They've been here through the difficult years. They keep coming back. It was an easy decision," coach Vermillion said.

Martin was the team's top scorer, averaging 10.1 points, 4.3 rebounds, 1.7 assists and 1.4 steals per game. He is a solid shooting guard and can play forward. Coach Vermillion said they have several point guards that are in contention for the starting job.

Alexander played point guard for the junior varsity team last year, and coach

Vermillion has gotten a lot better since. He saw time on varsity as the year went on.

Junior Collin Powell and sophomore Cayden Brown are also vying for the job. Powell is very fast and Brown is one of the team's top defenders.

"All of them can run point. We are definitely lacking varsity experience, but they seem to be picking up quickly on the offense. I'm not overwhelming them with a lot of sets, we are just trying to learn basketball fundamentals. Pass, cut to the basket, screen away. Just things that you have to do to be more efficient. We are starting at the beginning," coach Vermillion said.

He wants them to put pressure on teams this year and be more aggressive defensively.

"We don't want to sit back in the paint and let them come at us. We want

our defense to dictate their offense, that would be a goal. That takes a lot of effort. We are still learning," coach Vermillion said.

Junior small forward/power forward Ethan Miller is long, super athletic and one of their better defenders. He had 5.5 points, 5.4 rebounds, 1.7 assists, 0.5 steals and 0.2 blocks per game.

"He's one of our top defenders. He can cover space really well. When we run a zone, he can guard the high post and get rebounds, which is always tough in a zone," coach Vermillion said.

He said the offense will run through 6-foot-5 junior center Camden Spriggs. He totaled 3.3 points, 3.5 rebounds, 0.5 steals and 0.3 blocks per game.

"He's super aggressive. We can basically run the offense around him. Four-out, one-in. He's

doing a good job of being aware of where the cutters are and finding the open space in the offense. He's doing what we ask. We just have to get him finishing around the basket better," coach Vermillion said.

6-foot-3 junior forward Gavin Neeley can play at the three or the four. He had 4.5 points, 2.2 rebounds, 1.6 assists and 0.9 blocks. He made 21/75 threes (28%).

"He's an excellent shooter. When he gets a gap, he attacks the rim well. He finishes well. He's one of our offensive threats. He's a tall forward. He's one we want to step up. We need him to play some defense and grab some rebounds because we are missing one of our top rebounders from last year," coach Vermillion said.

Sophomores Peyton Vermillion and Roman Maxwell will split time

between junior varsity and varsity.

Coach Vermillion added that the guys have bought into the system and have been very supportive of each other. It is a tight-knit group.

"If we can be more aggressive and put forth more effort on defense, that's where we are going to see improvements. Right now one of our biggest weaknesses is shooting. We didn't put up a lot of points last year," coach Vermillion said.

Urbana and Indian Lake were both 8-2 in league play to earn shares of the Central Buckeye Conference Mad River Division. Jonathan Alder was the Kenton Trail Division champion at 8-2 as well.

It will take time for the Raiders to turn it around, but they are up for the challenge.

Ready

Continued from Page 3

The backbone of this year's team lies in the returning letterwinners, a formidable group including Carter Buck, Evan Carpenter, Colin Hill, Cameron Roberts, Kendall Plikerd, Thomas Smith, Kameron Larson, Owen Jordan and Daniel Koehler.

Reflecting on the previous season, the Raiders finished sixth overall in the Central Buckeye Conference. However, the focus now shifts to this season, and Seeley is setting the bar high. With four returning district qualifiers and a slew of competitive

freshmen, the team is gearing up for a season marked by ambition and hard work.

A total of 12 freshmen join this year's squad including Owen Weaks, Cole Somerlot, Jordan Pender, Holden Lautensch, Kyle Kibler, Hayden Hits, Brock Henry, Brandon Heater, Max Clapsaddle, Ethan Carpenter, Cooper Buck and Levi Achor.

Sophomores include returning letterwinners Buck, Koehler and Smith. Juniors are Dillion Sweeney, Roberts, Plikerd and Jordan. Returning seniors are Hill and Carpenter.

A standout feature of this year's team is the heightened level of competitiveness within the wrestling room. District qualifiers Carpenter, Larson, Plikerd, Carter Buck— alongside middle school state placers Hites and Carpenter -- should make the daily practices an intense competition. The blend of seasoned athletes and talented newcomers sets the stage for a promising season, Seeley said.

Seeley identifies mental toughness as an area for improvement.

"Wrestling is known to be 90% mental when out on the mat, and we need

to be tougher when we face adversity, because as student athletes you will face it on and off the mat everyday," he said. "Again, our room will be very competitive with the experience and success that was achieved this past season.

An "all in" mentality from the wrestlers (is what it will take to be successful). (W)restling is a long season and is very mentally and physically exhausting. Our wrestlers have to stay committed and keep grinding when it gets to the point where they are trying to take short cuts for themselves."



Members of the Benjamin Logan girls wrestling team are, from the left, front row: Raegan Hites, Breannah Sweeney and Clarissa Bates; and back row: coach Bryan Newland, Sophia Harris and Olivia Achor.

Splash

Continued from Page 5

"We lost a lot of experience due to graduation, but I like our group," Sweeney said of the girls team. "They are small in number, but toward the

end of the season they will be a team that will get some wins."

For the boys, building teamwork is paramount. While individually strong, the challenge lies in fostering a collective spirit for

formidable relay performances.

"I need these boys to work together to build each other up," Sweeney said. "The relays should be a real strong point this season, but I need them to sacrifice

for each other to really improve our team."

Limited pool time adds pressure, making efficient practices crucial. Sweeney emphasizes mental practice and dryland workouts as vital tools, given the

scarcity of pool hours. Overcoming these challenges requires dedication beyond the water, he said.

In the girls Mad River Division, Northwestern and Indian Lake pose stiff competition, with strong

rosters from the previous season. For the boys, Bellefontaine stands out with a solid returning lineup, while London could be a formidable challenge with their top swimmers.

Hoops

Continued from Page 2

Although the team's strengths lie in its experience, the focus for

improvement centers around consistently scoring the basketball, Saylor said, adding that balancing a competitive spirit

with a positive and enjoyable environment is a key focus for a successful season. Saylor stresses the importance of nurturing

both skill development and team camaraderie.

In the quest for league supremacy, the team eyes formidable opponents in

the Mad River division, including North Union and Indian Lake. Additionally, in the Kenton Trail division,

tough matchups are expected against Urbana and Bellefontaine.



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