

Volleyball team returns strong core players

By Rongi Yost
Correspondent

The Outlaws volleyball team returns eight players on the varsity squad and looks to be a very strong contender for the league title. First-year varsity Coach Jason Myhre is excited about his players, the upcoming season, and the camaraderie and cohesiveness the team is building.

Three seniors return for their final season, and all will be big contributors this year. Allie Spear was a powerful hitter for the Outlaws last year and returns with an even stronger swing. Spear will play outside hitter and as a defensive specialist.

Myhre said, "Allie's court awareness is one of the best that I have seen, and she has really stepped into a leadership role on the team. I see endless possibilities for her."

Peytan Zanck is a steady player, and will play at both outside and middle hitter. Peyton is jumping higher and moving faster than last year, which will create big challenges for opposing teams.

"Peytan is long, and has a great reach that presents challenges to opposing hitters," said Myhre.

Isabelle Tara rounds out the senior players. Tara spent most of last year recovering from shoulder surgery, but has come back strong this past summer. Tara has been hitting the ball great in practices and has stepped up her passing game. Myhre and the coaching staff told *The Nugget* they are excited to see what she will do this year.

Junior players include Brook Knirk, Alex Hartford, and first-year varsity player Emma Houck.

Knirk has always been a very solid and consistent

player and has played on varsity since her freshman year. Brook keeps getting stronger and will play at outside and middle hitter this season.

Hartford is a familiar face on the varsity squad and will again be a setter for the Outlaws. Alex has also played on varsity since her freshman year and continues to take her game higher and higher.

"Alex has some of the best hands on the court, and she has turned some sets out that still amaze me today," said Myhre.

Houck's hard work and time spent on the game has paid off, as she will join the varsity team this season.

"Emma is very coachable and is starting to come into her own with seeing what she can really do out on the court," said Myhre. "It will be exciting to see where she can take her game this year."

Four sophomore players, Jessie Brigham, Ashlynn Cantwell, Hawley Harrer and Cassidy Ling-Scott, round out the Outlaws roster.

Brigham is the Outlaws libero and is the spark plug on the team. She is already one of the best position players in the state and continues to improve and get better.

"Jessie is one of the more passionate players and is as quick as lightning," commented Myhre. "She is a real student of the game, and has a gift for leading those around her."

Cantwell is a great all-around player, and can come in at any position and play strong. Most of her time will be spent at outside hitter and as a defensive specialist. Myhre said there are moments when Ashlynn connects with the ball that really get people's attention and turn heads.

Harrer, as a six-foot lefty,

is one of the best setters in the state, and even possibly the Northwest. Hawley has great hands for the ball, and also has incredible placement.

"It's not often you get a six-foot, left-handed setter, but when you get that, plus a load of talent, you have Hawley," said Myhre. "When she isn't setting she is hitting on the right side, and not many people in our league can even get a hand on it for block."

Ling-Scott, in her first year on varsity, is one of the fastest players on the team and will play outside hitter and defensive specialist. Cassidy has quick feet, and quick reflexes.

"Cassidy is starting to connect with her hitting, and her passing is becoming more and more consistent with the speed of the varsity game," said Myhre. "She's a very solid player, and a strong indication of what is going to continue to be a bright future for the program."

Sisters will also have a couple of players swing up for the JV team and help contribute to the varsity season.

Myhre shared with *The*

Nugget the team's quote for the year: "If you don't try today to be better than yesterday, you will just be common tomorrow." He said that a big team focus over the summer and into the start of practice has been to change up the culture of Sisters volleyball.

"It's not that the culture was terrible, but the girls wanted something different," said Myhre. "We talked not only about what we wanted the program to be known for, but what we as individuals wanted to be known for. It has really started to create some strong bonds in the program, and a real sense of mentorship among players. To watch the connections that are being made with all the players is amazing. We are one team with three parts, varsity, JV1, and JV2. I like to think that is the start of being uncommon."

Myhre is also excited about his coaching staff. Claire Rerat has been coaching the JV2 team for several years, and is back again. Claire has a great connection with the players and strives to keep them on a path of continued improvement.

Kelly Davis Martin is the new JV coach, but a familiar face to those that remember the Outlaw Hall of Fame volleyball team. Martin's background to team-building and organization will be a great support for the entire program.

Brad Bulloch and Cris Converse are staples in the program, and back for another season.

“All of this runs together and spells success both on and off the court for these girls.”
— Coach Jason Myhre

"Brad and Cris are solid people, and a huge support for me and the varsity program," said Myhre. "I couldn't do this season without them. We also have some great parents that have been very supportive. All of this runs together and spells success both on and off the court for these girls."

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