

Outlaws prepare for baseball season

By Rongi Yost
Correspondent

The Outlaws are hard at work preparing for the season ahead. Sisters graduated several seniors, but they return a core of players who have played together since Little League.

Connor Lake is the lone senior who returns to the varsity squad, and saw only minimal time on varsity last year. Lake will play at first base for the Outlaws, and will also see some time on the mound.

“Connor has real power at the bat,” said Coach Steve Hodges. “He showed signs last year of being a potential power hitter, but I haven’t seen him hit yet this season due to basketball just coming to a close.”

Two juniors return for another year — Alec Gannon and Ryan Funk.

Gannon, an all-leaguer from last year, will be a versatile player for the Outlaws this year. He’s a left-handed hitter and will most likely hit at the No. 1 or No. 2 spot. Alec started as a freshman, has been in playoff situations, and will bring with him over 50 games of varsity experience. Alec will play in the infield at both shortstop and second base, and will be in the pitching rotation.

Funk is a returning first-team all-league catcher, and will start at that position again this year. Ryan has also been on the varsity squad since he was a freshman, and will be the foundation of the team this

season. He hits for power and average and will drive in runs for the Outlaws. Ryan will also see some time on the mound.

Juniors Jake Larson, Jonathan Bertagna, Hayden Parsons, Ryan Cook, and Will Werts all made appearances on the varsity squad last year, but will start for the Outlaws this year.

Larson will play in the outfield, and will see a lot of time in centerfield due to his speed. Hodges noted that Jake is a smart player, understands the game, and will bring quickness and speed on the base pass.

Bertagna is a versatile player and will see time at first base, outfield, and also as pitcher. Parsons will play at second base and also have a spot role as pitcher. Hayden is a very good bunter and fielder, and has very sure hands. Werts will see time in the outfield.

Cook will play third base, outfield, and also pitch.

Hodges said, “Ryan has proven he’s a good contact hitter. He had some key hits for us last year, and coming up from JV to varsity shouldn’t be a hard jump for him.”

Sophomore Zach Morgan returns as a first-team all-leaguer and a first-team all-state pitcher. Zach was a powerful pitcher for the Outlaws as a freshman and will start at

that position again this year. He can pitch to specific locations, and he’s developed his off-speed pitch, which really throws off the batters.

“We’re looking for Zach to build on his experience he got as a freshman,” said Hodges. “It was exciting to see his confidence grow as the year went along, and it was because of the success he was having.”

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Four sophomores will also join the varsity squad: T.J. Lawrence, Taylor Scholl, Jake Stevens and Christopher Luz.

Lawrence will help the Outlaws with the catching duties, and will possibly see time in the outfield. Hodges noted that T.J. will gain valuable experience as he trains and works with Funk, and looks for him to continue to improve throughout the year.

Scholl will see time in the outfield, at pitcher, and possibly first base. Stevens will see time in the outfield. Jake

is one of the fastest players on the team, and will bring his quickness to the game.

“Jake shows a lot of promise and has a lot of tools,” said Hodges. “When those tools get refined we’ll see great improvement.”

Luz will play middle infield, and see time at both shortstop and second base.

“Christopher brings quickness, a good arm, and is a good contact hitter,” stated Hodges. “He loves the game, has good baseball instincts, and I think this year will be a break-out year for him.”

Hodges is excited to have several left-handed hitters; Gannon, Bertagna, and Werts.

“Left-handed hitters have a big advantage,” said Hodges. “Most pitches come from the right side, so the left-handed hitters see the ball better, and the curve ball comes into their

swing, rather than away.”

“We have a lot of guys who are going to have to fulfill the role as pitcher, since a lot of guys that pitched for us either graduated or moved away,” added Hodges.

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The Outlaws’ first appearance this year was in Scottsdale, Arizona, at the Chandler Prep Tournament, which was held March 17-19.

SISTERS Entertainment/Arts/Events

Wed.~Mar. 23

The Belfry Live Music with Hot Buttered Rum & Front Country 8 to 11:30 p.m. \$16 online at bendticket.com or \$20 at the door. For more info go to belfryevents.com.

Black Butte Ranch Doggie Dash Fun Run/Walk 10 a.m. registration, 11 a.m. event. at the Lakeside Activities Center. ~2 miles. \$5 entry goes to Three Rivers Humane Society. Followed by a Doggie Talent Show! Register online at blackbutteranch.com.

Thursday~Mar. 24

Sisters Fire Hall Sisters Trails Alliance Speaker Series 7 p.m. (doors open 6 p.m.) STA presents Marc Thalacker, manager of the Three Sisters Irrigation District. Free to the public, with refreshments. For more information call 541-719-8822 or go to sisterstrails.org.

Sunday~Mar. 27

Creekside Park Annual Easter Egg Hunt 12:40 p.m. for age group divisions (for ages infant to 11). The hunt starts at 1 p.m. Presented by the Sisters-Camp Sherman & Cloverdale fire departments. Limited parking; arrive early! For info call 541-549-0771.

Friday~Mar. 25

Cork Cellars Live Music with Jim Cornelius & Mike Biggers 7 to 9 p.m. No cover! For additional information call 541-549-2675 or go online to corkcellars.com.

Black Butte Ranch Annual Easter Egg Hunt 11 a.m. At the Sports Field. With the Easter Bunny! For more information call 541-595-1252.

Friday~April 1

Hardtails Bar & Grill Live Music with Tommy Hogan 9:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. The guitarist extraordinaire will be performing for the big 5th anniversary party! Never a cover! Info: 541-549-6114 or go to hardtailsoregon.com.

Saturday~Mar. 26

Paulina Springs Books Author Reading & Slideshow with Ellen Bishop 6 p.m. Ellen shares “Living with Thunder: Exploring the Geologic Past, Present, and Future of the Pacific Northwest Landscape.” Refreshments served. \$5 admission refunded upon purchase of the featured book. 541-549-0866 or paulinasprings.com.

Cork Cellars Live Music with Doc Ryan 7 to 9 p.m. No cover! For additional information call 541-549-2675 or go to corkcellars.com.

Saturday~April 2

The Belfry Live Music with Poor Man’s Whiskey 8 to 11:30 p.m. Bluegrass/old-time Southern rock! \$17 online at bendticket.com or \$20 at the door. Info: belfryevents.com.

Hardtails Bar & Grill Live Music with The Weekenders 9 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. for the big 5th anniversary party, with specials starting at 11 a.m.! Never a cover! 541-549-6114 or go to hardtailsoregon.com.

Deadline to submit items is 5 p.m. Fridays. Email teresa@nuggetnews.com

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Sean Watkins
with special guest **Coyote Willow**
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Mon-Thurs 3:30, 6:30

My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2 (PG-13)
Fri-Sat 2:45, 5:15, 7:45
Sun 2:00, 4:15, 6:30
Mon-Thurs 4:00, 6:15

Miracles From Heaven (PG)
Fri-Sat 2:00, 4:30, 7:00
Sun 1:30, 3:45, 6:15
Mon-Thurs 3:45, 6:00

Zootopia (PG)
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Sun 1:30, 3:45, 6:00
Mon-Thurs 3:45, 6:00

Movie times and titles are subject to change. Visit website or call for latest information.

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