

Outlaws softball numbers up

By Tom Mauldin
Correspondent

Two weeks ago, Sisters High School head softball coach Dave Smith was grooming his field in preparation for the start of practice for the 2018 season. He was in a short-sleeved shirt and smiling from ear to ear.

Last week, he was looking at the field from the school’s parking lot, some 200 yards away. He was bundled up just trying to stay warm as the snow fell hour after hour. He wasn’t smiling.

Though forced indoors by Mother Nature, Smith was smiling this week as he and his assistants were running 15 players through their drills in preparation for their mid-March season opener.

To some, 15 players at a softball practice might not seem like a reason to smile. But when Smith took over the program two years ago, his first practice featured three players, followed by two weeks of daily recruiting just to get enough numbers to field a team.

“These numbers are great,” said Smith. “I look at when I started with this program and we barely had enough, but each year gets better and better.”

“In a perfect world, a coach would like a solid 12 or 13 with deep pitching, but I wouldn’t change a thing on how this program is coming along,” added Smith. “It’s not about me or my assistants, its about these girls and we are very proud of them.”

The Outlaws roster the

first week of practice includes six returning players – Sarah Hartford, Sophia Affitati, Grace Maiden, Nancy Montecinos, Denis Tapia and Beth Ann Yount.

“I have had the pleasure of working with these girls over the last two years and to see how much they have improved makes me proud,” said Smith. “We’re happy to have six returning players.”

In addition to the returnees, all juniors, the Outlaws have three transfers and six newcomers to the team, including five freshmen – Anessa Stotts, Tatum Sitz, Hanna Maiden, Maddie Powell and Sydney Wright.

The transfers include Jourdan Andrews, and juniors Isabelle Spitler and Keeley Malloy. Andrews, the team’s lone senior, and Spitler come from Bend High while Malloy transferred from Las Vegas, Nevada.

The Outlaws went from two wins in 2016 to seven wins in 2017, and Smith’s goal is for the progression to continue. If early practice progress is an indication, that trend should continue.

Smith said, “I am extremely happy with how things are going ... with the numbers and how everyone is working as a team and how well the coaching staff is communicating with each other and the players. I think each year we are inching forward with these girls to be more competitive and I am happy to see it happening.”

Assisting Smith this season are Desmond Boots and Shad Sitz. Boots was an assistant

baseball coach at Portland’s Benson High School and has three years experience with Sisters Little League. Sitz, who has coached basketball at the high school level, also coached with the Sisters Little League the last few years.

“They bring a lot to the program,” said Smith. “I like where the program is heading.”

Except for the weather.

“Once again Mother Nature has dictated how we do practices and I am not going to tangle with her,” said Smith. “She won last year with Snowmageddon. I hope she has mercy on us this year.”

The Outlaw softballers are sharing gym space with all the other Outlaw spring teams from track and field to lacrosse to tennis to baseball to golf. And the boys’ basketball team is in the playoffs.

“We just have to manage with the space we have and sharing with the other sports,” said Smith. “It does get frustrating, but as coaches we have to lead by example and show the girls how you take on different sets of problems.”

The veteran Outlaw coach noted that the first week of practice was sticking to basic fundamentals of hitting, throwing, fielding and general game terminology.

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Alpine skiers race in season finals

By Rongi Yost
Correspondent

The Outlaws Alpine Ski Team raced in the Oregon School Ski Association season finals on Friday and Saturday, March 2 and 3.

Friday’s slalom conditions were snowy and beautiful. Cold temperatures that hovered around 16 degrees made for soft, but fast snow for racing. The Sisters team had a strong racing day, and most of the team scored their best scores of the season. The Outlaws moved ahead of Marist High to take the fourth-place spot in the slalom race.

George Chladek was Sisters’ top scorer on Friday. George took fifth place with 76 points. Evan Palmer didn’t finish his first run, but placed 11th on his second run, and scored 24 points. Kincaid Smeltzer was 18th on his first run with 13 points, but did not finish his second run. John Banks finished 31st, Conner Petke was 40th, Christopher Lundgren 45th, and Corbin Johnson 49th.

Conditions were a bit warmer for Saturday’s giant slalom race, but the course held up well. Sisters finish order was: Chladek 21st, Palmer 16th on his first run

(didn’t finish his second), Smeltzer 29th, Lundgren 55th, Petke 56th, Banks 59th, and Johnson 66th.

The boys placed fifth as a team in the GS. On the JV side, big breakthroughs were made by Petke, Lundgren, and Johnson, who all moved up significantly in the finish order.

Sisters girls had their best slalom race of the year. Skylar Wilkins finished 27th in the combined. Holland Hartman also had a top-30 finish. She was 27th on her first run, but did not finish her second run. In the giant slalom, Hartman took 30th, and Wilkins was 36th.

For the season overall, the boys took fifth place out of 14 teams. The girls raced as individuals, as there were not enough girls to fill out a team. At the awards assembly, the Sisters team was awarded “The Team Spirit Award” by the other coaches. The team was awarded a silver ski boot to be displayed until next year, when it will be passed to next year’s spirited team.

Chladek said, “As a coach, I’m already looking forward to coaching this great team of skiers next season, and skiing some powder snow with them for the rest of this season.”



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