

Outlaws lacrosse will field varsity and JV squads this year

By Rongi Yost
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The Outlaws lacrosse program had a very high number of boys turn out for the sport this season — more than they’ve seen in four years, which means that for the first time in several years they will be able to field both a varsity and JV squad.

Most players are freshmen and sophomores, which bodes well for the future, but will most likely present some challenges when they match up against more experienced teams.

The junior and senior returnees are small in number, but they will have a huge impact on the Outlaws’ game. Their experience and leadership will be instrumental to the success of the young squad.

The team’s two team-selected captains are senior Anthony Randolph and junior Titan Kroytz. Anthony will return as the Outlaws starting goalie, and coaches expect his ability and skill in the goal will keep the opponents’ scores down. Titan will anchor the Outlaws’ long pole defensive crew, and Coach Paul Patton said that his tactical understanding of the game will help immensely.

Junior Connor Martin was chosen as a captain by the coaches due to his dedication to improve his game in the off-season. Connor will be a positive influence on both the midfield unit and the attack end of the field.

Sophomore Oscar Rhett showed great commitment in the off-season and will be a leader on the defensive end. Patton stated that Oscar is not only a strong player, but also does a really good job of helping and teaching other players. Gaven Henry (sophomore) will help the team from the attack position.

Other players that are expected to make major contributions at the varsity level are junior Nathaniel Alvarez, and sophomores Austin Ekern and Ricky Huffman.

Nathaniel, who will play defense, is new to the game, but he’s been working on his skills all winter and his soccer background will give him a good feel for lacrosse. Austin will bring great intensity to the defensive unit, and coaches are expecting him to be a big part of the Outlaws’ success. Ricky was new to the game last year, but picked it up quickly, and his athleticism and hustle will make him a key player on the team from the midfield position.

Junior Judah Keeton and sophomore Elijah Johnson will see a lot of action on the field, and hopes are they will score a lot of goals on attack. Wyatt Maffey (sophomore) missed the end of what was promising to be a great season last year due to a wrist injury. The team is excited to have Wyatt back and expect great things from him as a midfielder.

“Wyatt is one of our best defensive middies, which is huge, and he can make plays on offense as well,” said Patton.

Max (sophomore) is another returning player who is expected to be a big contributor. Patton told *The Nugget* that Max is willing to do whatever the team needs for them to be better as a cohesive unit. Max will see action from the midfield position.

Evan Palmer (midfield) is one of the team’s two seniors, and the Outlaws are counting on him to be both a playmaker and a leader. Evan missed significant time in previous seasons due to injury and illness, and the team is hoping he’ll be with them the entire season this year.

Tanner Pease (sophomore) is back for his second season and will fill the critical role of face-off guy for the team, and coaches are expecting great things from him at that spot. Mathew Retherford is another member of the strong sophomore group who promises to be a key member of the defensive squad. Mason Sellers was great last year as a freshman midfielder and is expected to be that and more this year.

New to the high school program this year are: junior Vicente Rebolledo (midfield); sophomores Sean Alvarez (midfield), Ryun Ford (midfield), Jamen Schwartz (midfield), and Riley Sellers (midfield).

The freshmen that have joined the crew have played a lot of lacrosse, which gives them good skills coming into the program. They include: Jason Blake (goalie), Clayton Craig (defense), Boas Harris

(midfield), Clayton Heuberger and Cole Jervis, whose positions are yet to be determined, Ryan Kissinger (defense), Hayden Kunz (midfield), Adam Maddox-Castle (midfield/attack), Gus Patton (midfield), Dexter Payne (attack), and Henry Rard (defense).

Gus Patton and Hayden Kunz were selected by the other freshmen to be a part of the team’s leadership committee, and Coach Patton told *The Nugget* he is sure they’ll do great in that role.

“All of these young men are good athletes and will

pick up the game quickly, and we’re already seeing signs that they’re going to help us for sure,” said Patton.

“Overall, this is a really promising and fun bunch of young men to work with,” added Patton. “Myself and the other coaches are emphasizing building a positive culture that allows these young men to learn and thrive, while playing the wonderful sport of lacrosse.”

Patton made special note of Doug Hull, who he stated is like a co-head coach due to the amount of time and effort that he puts in for all the lacrosse athletes. Lee Kissinger is also a part of the coaching staff. Kissinger coached at the middle school for years, and Patton and Hull are excited to have him with them coaching at the high school level.

The first varsity game of the season will be at home against West Salem on Thursday, March 19.

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— Paul Patton



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