

Sports

Football, Volleyball, Cross Country, Soccer and Cheerleading

Volleyball faces 100th consecutive win

■ NICOLE HUTCHINSON

Staff Reporter

West Linn is famous for its outstanding volleyball program, and this year is no exception. As of press time, the Lions were poised to win their 100 consecutive league game dating back to 1999.

"On paper we should be there, but you never know. It all boils down to what the kids decide to do on the court," Carl Neuburger, Vastristy coach, said.

Their first win of the season came in an away game at Lake Oswego on Sept. 7 and where they swept 25-10, 25-10 and 25-14, blowing the Lakers out of the water in three games.

On Sept. 9, West Linn played its first tournament at the Central Catholic Jamboree. West Linn won pool play, defeating Lakeridge 25-23, McNary 25-13, and Reynolds 25-16. In the afternoon bracket play, West Linn battled Central Catholic on its home court and won

25-20, defeated Gresham 25-22, played Barlow and won 25-17. They went on to win the championship match against Jesuit, 25-23.

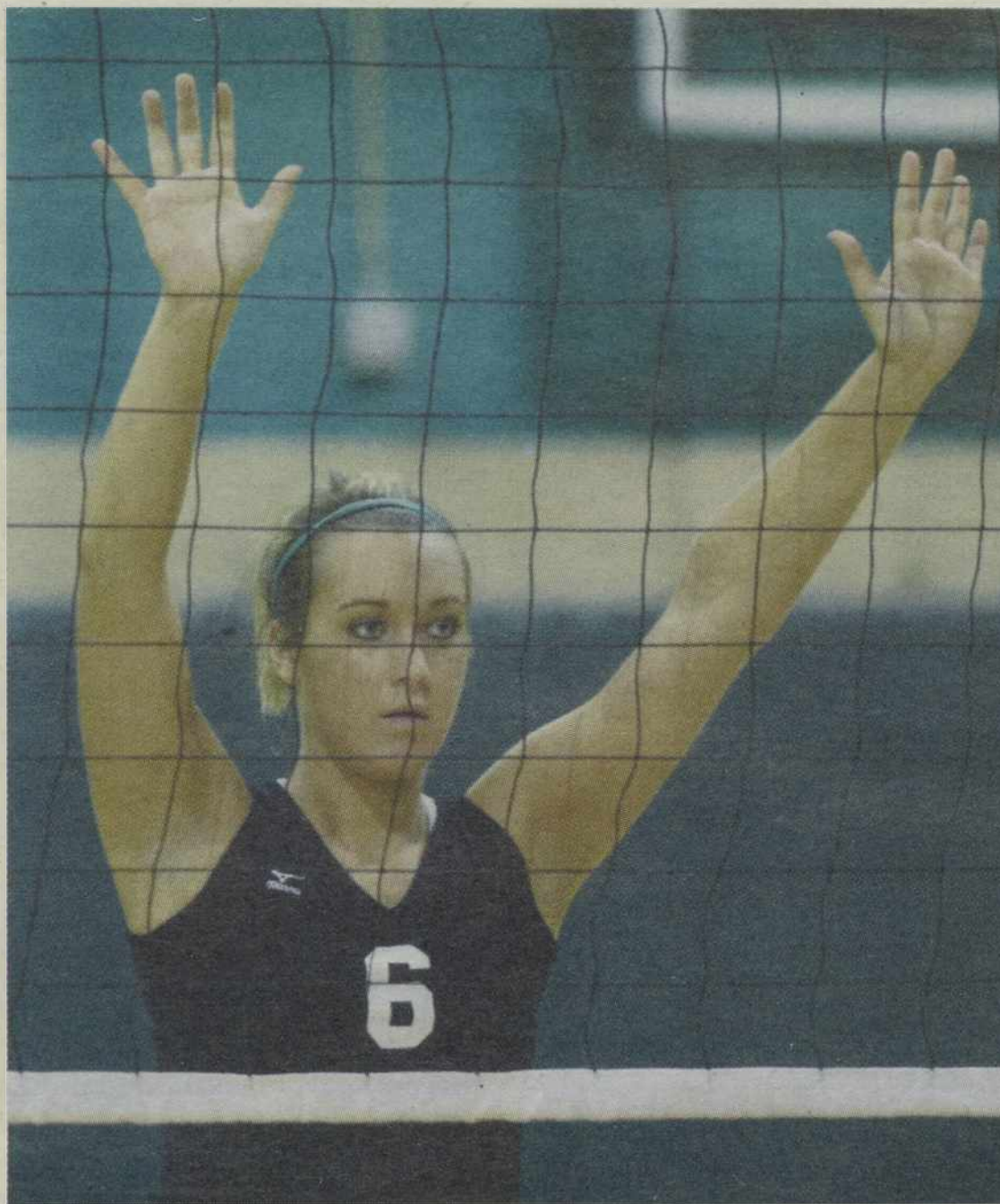
"I was very impressed with the way we competed against the toughest teams in the state," Brittney Beatty, senior captain, said.

In their first home game on Sept. 14 against the Milwaukie Mustangs, the Lions dominated 25-11, 25-8 and 25-10.

The Lions had yet another victory against Oregon City on Sept. 19 where they won 25-10, 25-8 and 25-10.

Going into an away game at Clackamas on Sept. 21, senior captain Kaitlan Locke said, "I'm not going into this match overconfident. They got better, and we need to be prepared." Even though it was a tough match, the Lions prevailed with scores of 25-18, 25-20, and 25-15.

Coaches, spectators, parents and players alike were on edge for the first



Leah Bergstrom, senior, guards the net. Bergstrom helped bring the team to victory against Oregon City.

Photo by Nicole Hutchison

game of the season. The team lost only three seniors: Megan McAfee, Melissa Loney and Kelli Burris. But there were plenty of players to fill in the spaces. New to the team this year is last year's swinger Jessica Johnson, junior, and new swingers Dani Sargent and Lindsey Wickert, sophomores. Along with the swingers are Betsy Wilhelm, sophomore, Lacey Mannex, a senior newly transferred from Jesuit High School, Stephanie Hutchinson and Caitlin McDonnell, sophomores.

Leading the team this year as captains are Locke, Torie Bechtold and Brittney Beatty, seniors.

"We have a really fun group of girls this year. We're practicing hard and playing harder, and I'm proud to be a captain of a team full of girls who are giving everything they have every play of every game, every drill of every practice," Bechtold said.

Lions beat Clackamas for first time in seven years

■ IKE MCGINNIS

Staff Reporter

The Lions football team are in a new 6A division but it's mostly familiar faces returning to the Three Rivers League. The only team missing from last year's league is St. Helens. The TRL will send four football teams to the State playoffs and West Linn was projected at fourth place in the seven team league pre-season coach's poll on Oregonlive.com. The Lions expect to be league title contenders and prove games are not just played on paper.

"Pre-season rankings do not mean anything. Right now we are taking every week one game at a time," Mychal Zito, senior, quarterback and team captain, said.

The Lions proved that was true when they defeated pre-season top ten Clackamas at home, 28-23. The home team surprised many by walking through the stadium before the game to get on the field. Clackamas also had their own pre-game surprise when they disrespected the Lions by jumping up and



The West Linn Lions charge onto the field at the end of halftime while being cheered on by a myriad of Lions fans.

Photo by Malia Chong

down on the midfield WL logo during the national anthem.

The Lions came back after being down 17-7 after a game changing interception by RJ Sewell, senior defensive back. The Lions scored just before the half to make it 17-14.

They kept it going through the second half, scoring another two touchdowns. The defense

physically beat the Cavaliers. The Cavs had one scoring drive in the second half and other than that drive, they had six yards total offense.

Sam Stevens, senior, had a crucial fumble recovery at the one yard line to set up a score. West Linn fans stormed the field after the game was over to celebrate the win. West Linn had not beaten Clackamas since

1999.

The Lions have not returned many starters, but that does not mean the team is not talented. Running back Kyle Quinn, senior, was called on against Milwaukie last year when starter Brendan Pitts, 2006 graduate, was hurt. He was very impressive in his game experience against the Mustangs and has kept it going through

this season. Quinn rushed for all four touchdowns in the win against Clackamas.

The Lions have a great duo of tailbacks with Kyle Kraus, junior, running the ball with Quinn. Justin Williams, junior fullback, will be blocking for Quinn and Kraus.

"The Kyle's (Quinn and Kraus) make our running game strong and keep defenses honest," Zito said.

Kraus is also the starter at safety which is a big difference from his starting duties as a middle linebacker last season. The strategy is to have a fast and strong Kraus read the plays deep so he can step up and make big hits. This will be key to the Lions defense and a big momentum builder.

Zito will be throwing to a pair of junior wideouts, Erik Koczian and Justin Monahan. Koczian had two catches in the final game of last season and Monahan proved to be a deep threat receiver in JV last season.

Lions beat Clackamas

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