

Softball improves on last season, finishes fifth

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Staff Reporter

This year's Softball season is winding down and with a league record of 6-12 and an overall record of 7-14, the Lions are tied for fifth place in the Three Rivers League.

"We're doing really well," Jamie LeVeque, head coach, said. One of their most significant achievements was a 2-1 win over the Putnam Kingsmen on April 23. Putnam is number one in the Three Rivers League, and has a 21-2 record overall. LeVeque also applauded the girl's defense and the team's gains in hitting.

"We really improved since last year, and will only keep improving," Susan Schrank, senior shortstop, said.

"We're worked better as a team. We got along outside of school, and that's helped us to work as a team on the field," Jessica Houck, senior pitcher, said.

The Softball Team played the Lake Oswego Lakers on May 4. The teams were tied



Kassandra Vernon, senior, gets ready to make a catch in the game against Clackamas on April 27. The Lions lost the game, 7-5. Photo by Jon Helmkamp

until the sixth inning, and the Lions ended up losing 6-1. They then played a close game against the Clackamas Cavaliers, losing 3-2 in the ninth inning.

They also played a close game against the Oregon City Pioneers on May 7 and were down 6-7, until the Pioneers scored two runs in the top of seventh, to put them ahead 9-6. Houck pitched in the games against Lake Oswego, Oregon City, and Clackamas.

The team faced the Milwaukie Mustangs in its last home game on May 11, it was also senior night. The Mustangs defeated the Lions 5-3. The regular season ended on May 14 with a third game against the Putnam Kingsmen. The Lions beat the top team in league again, this time by a score of 7-6. The win was boosted by a triple by Schrank, and a home run by McKenna Pyeatt, sophomore.

"They are a great bunch of girls. They always cheer each other on," said LeVeque.

Wacky NFL Draft welcomes new talents to league

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 "With the first pick in the 2007 NFL Draft, the Oakland Raiders select, JaMarcus Russell, quarterback, LSU." This was the pick everybody expected but nobody was 100 percent sure would actually happen. Would they draft Calvin Johnson? Would they trade the pick? These were the questions that people were asking right up until the announcement by League Commissioner Roger Goodell. This is the type of big armed quarterback that the Raiders need. Russell has been seen throwing the ball 40 plus yards on his butt.

 "With the second pick in the 2007 NFL Draft, the Detroit Lions select, Calvin Johnson, wide receiver, Georgia Tech." With JaMarcus Russell now off the board, Matt Millen, Lions general manager, was put in an interesting situation. Would he take his fourth wide receiver in the last five years, and arguably the most talented player in this year's draft, or would he go in a different direction? Many people believe this was the correct choice.

 "With the third pick in the 2007 NFL Draft, the Cleveland Browns select, Joe Thomas, offensive tackle, Wisconsin." This was one of the first big surprises of the draft. Everybody was expecting Brady Quinn, quarterback, Notre Dame, in this spot, but the Browns surprised everyone by

drafting Thomas. They were able to get the best of both worlds though, by trading up to draft Quinn at pick number 22.

 "With the fourth pick in the 2007 NFL Draft, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers select, Gaines Adams, defensive end, Clemson." Adams gives coach Jon Gruden an excellent pass rusher. His lightning speed and ability to get to the quarterback is something the Bucs have been desperately needing.

 "With the fifth pick in the 2007 NFL Draft, the Arizona Cardinals select, Levi Brown, offensive tackle, Penn State." The Cardinals have one of the top running backs in the league, Edgerrin James, but they have had problems getting someone who can open up holes for him and protect their quarterback, Matt Leinart. They attempted to ratify that problem by drafting Brown, who can open up holes and wear down opponents. The Browns by far were the team with the best overall draft. They drafted the top left tackle in the draft (Joe Thomas), a player who was predicted to be a top five pick (Brady Quinn) and a player in the second round who has first round talent but also has a big attitude (Eric Wright, cornerback, University of Nevada-Las Vegas).

 The team that greatly improved its already loaded roster were the New England Patriots.

The Patriots traded a fourth round pick to the Raiders, for one of the most talented, yet disgruntled, receivers in the league, Randy Moss. They also added Brandon Meriweather, safety, University of Miami, in the first round. Plus they traded for the San Francisco 49ers first round pick. The 49ers will probably be in the top half of the draft next year.

 The Atlanta Falcons were another team who finished off the 2007 NFL Draft with a good core of players. They took Jamaal Anderson, defensive end, Arkansas, who has star potential, Justin Blalock, offensive lineman, Texas, and Chris Houston, cornerback, Arkansas on the first day. They also added athletic cornerback David Irons on the second day to give the Falcons one of the top drafts.

 The Washington Redskins automatically get credited for the worst overall draft. They had one first round pick, one fifth round pick, two sixth round picks and a seventh round pick. It's hard to get top quality talent when you don't have top quality picks. The best they had to show for it was LaRon Landry, safety, LSU who was taken with the sixth overall pick in the first round.

 The team that had the most interesting draft was the Seattle Seahawks. They drafted a bunch of players that probably will not make an immediate impact. They did find a

wide receiver with lightning speed, Jordan Kent, Oregon Ducks. He will bring a different aspect to the Seahawks receiving corp.

 The Philadelphia Eagles get the award for wackiest draft. They have one of the best quarterbacks in the NFL, Donovan McNabb, and plenty of quality backups. So what do the Eagles do? They take a Kevin Kolb, quarterback, Houston, a projected fourth round selection, in the second round. According to many different sources, this was an unnecessary pick that didn't fill the team's needs. Now that the draft is over, the Super Bowl favorite automatically becomes the New England Patriots, just based on the acquisition of Randy Moss. He is a talented go-to receiver that Tom Brady has needed since the departure of Deion Branch to the Seahawks.

In addition to Moss, they already had a talented roster with Super Bowl experience, and a coach, Bill Belichick, who knows what it takes to win a Super Bowl. As long as Moss can keep his mouth shut, and play the game without being a distraction, this was a great acquisition. Another benefit for the Patriots is that the Raiders really wanted to get rid of him. This is obvious because he came really cheap, only costing the Patriots a fourth round pick.

 In last year's draft, the New Orleans Saints had the second overall pick, and went on to win the NFC

South. The team that has the best chance to do what the Saints did last year are the Cleveland Browns. Even though they could be a repeat of the 2006 Saints, don't expect it to happen. The New Orleans Saints are a solid team that was just missing one or two pieces. They were able to get those pieces in last year's draft, along with a new coach. The Browns are a team that has a few pieces in place, but they may need a lot more than they were able to get in this draft. Plus, they play in a much tougher division than the Saints. If these players drafted are as good as they are hyped up to be, the Browns have good things to look forward to over the next few years.

 An early Offensive Rookie of the Year to watch out for is Adrian Peterson, Minnesota Vikings. He is a top notch running back who fits well in Minnesota. The Vikings have a questionable quarterback, Tarvaris Jackson, so that may lead to even more touches by Peterson.

An early Defensive Rookie of the Year candidate is Jamaal Anderson, Atlanta Falcons. His ability to burst through the line with his size and power will cause some problems for opposing quarterbacks next season.

The 2007 draft class wasn't full of big name college players who can make an immediate impact like last year's draft. But the impact of this year's draft will definitely be seen over the next three to five years.