

Winter athletes hit gym, slopes, pool as season opens

ISAAC CALLAGAN

Staff Reporter

Hook shot...Takedown... Kickline...Freestyle...Slalom—it's time once again for winter sports and time for the season outlook.

Boy's Basketball: The team is prepared for an impact season, buoyed by the return of nine seniors. The biggest difference between last year and this season is that the frontcourt will no longer be anchored by post Brenton Spickerman, a recent transfer to Jesuit. The good news is that the rivalry between West Linn and Oregon City will be especially heated as the Pioneers open the season ranked #1 in state. A particular strength of this year's team is their versatility and depth, which will allow the team to utilize an uptempo style. The mood is upbeat as the playoffs look to be an achievable goal.

Girls' Basketball: Many key players are returning such as Samantha Dewart, Emily Wattman-Turner, Natalie Pittenger and Rosetta Adzasu, seniors. Two major losses are Nicole Aden, who will be missed for her scoring

and ball-handling skills, and Brittany May, who is out for the season with an injured foot. New player Morgan Joscelyn, sophomore, is expected to make an impact.

Wrestling: After graduating 18 seniors, many teams would be devastated. For the wrestling team, however, this only means an opportunity for talented grapplers to step up and make a difference. Key returners include Donald Paulson, sophomore, and Andrew Kim, junior, both of whom were District Champions last year. Also expected to make an impact are Logan Krellwitz, sophomore, and Devan Schiewe, senior. They will join Mitchell Gaulke, junior, a returning starter on Varsity from last season. The goal for the season is the District Championship, which the Lions are defending on their way to a 12th consecutive title.

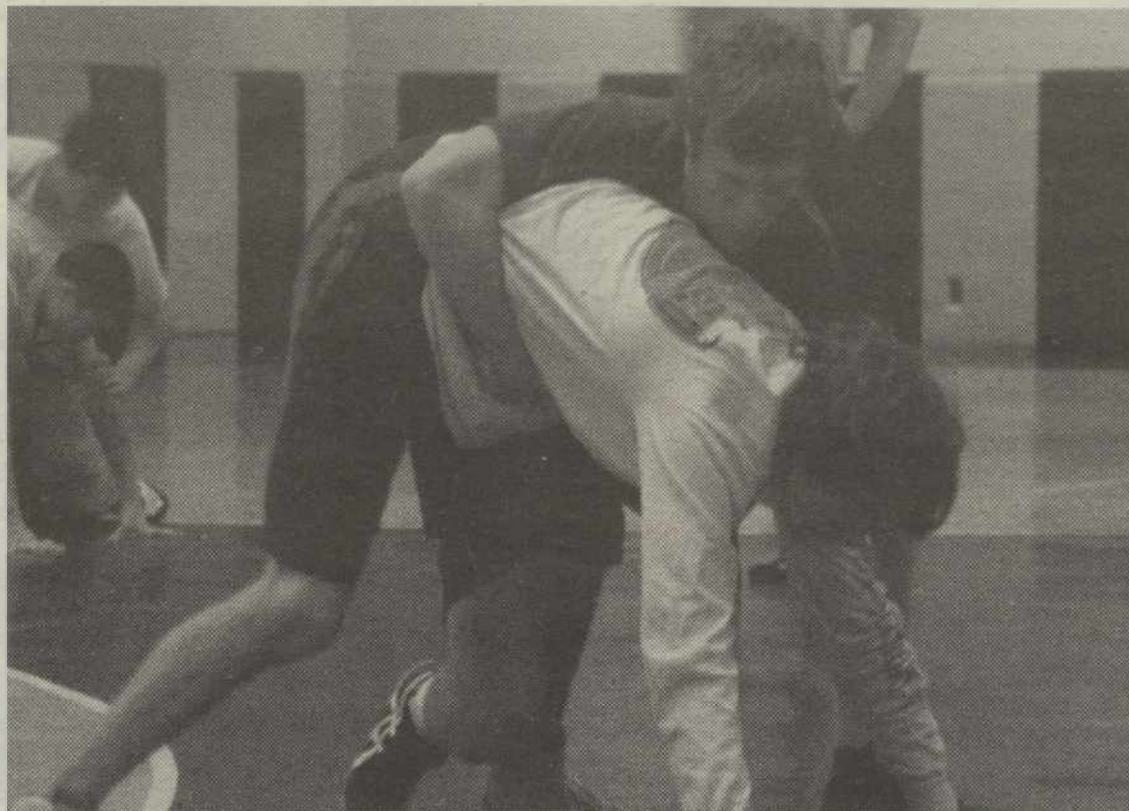
Winter Cheerleading: A team goal will be incorporating tougher and more difficult stunts during halftime. Expect some fresh faces among the squad, as the group includes seven new

cheerleaders. According to Coach Nikki Stroup, "Winter is always exciting because

Lions' chief rival. Although the team is skilled in all areas of the sport, they are

Smith and Zachary Sharp, seniors, will lead the team. Also contributing will be Tanner Kewley, Bryan Toti and Chadwick Boggess, juniors. An especially exciting competition this year will be against Lakeridge, but expect West Linn to prevail. The only issue is the youth of the team, as a large portion of them are freshman. While undoubtedly talented, their inexperience may hold them back in the early going.

Skiing: The Ski Team comes into the season looking to improve on its performance from last year. They are welcoming two top skiers, Alec Ramsey and Madeleine Martus, freshmen. Despite a lack of senior leadership, Kevin Versteeg and Chelsea Spitzer are the lone seniors, but this is not expected to set the team back. When keeping track of their performance this season, keep a close eye on the competitions with La Salle, Lake Oswego and Tualatin, the team's chief rivals.



Austin Cerny, senior, practices a drill with partner Devon Schiewe, senior, during practice. The wrestling team graduated many seniors last year, but is still pursuing a 13th District title.

Photo by Calley Lathrop

the crowd is closer to the event," and this allows the cheerleaders to be more involved with the attendees.

Swimming: Swim Team is geared up for a successful year and is stacked with talented swimmers. According to Thomas Lord, senior, every one of them is a key part to success. An important meet will be against Lake Oswego, the

"champion breaststrokers," Lord said. The predictions for the season is that though there may be challenges, the year will turn out "okay."

Snowboarding: The Snowboard Team is primed for an explosive year. Spencer

All-star rugby team formed

Rep Side takes on Colleges

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Several players stood out including Zchona "Z" Jones, junior, Sommers, a Canby senior, and Cassie Powell, a Westside senior. Powell was a captain, and played many positions on the back line. Players switched positions frequently, and for the most part, received equal playing time.

With the fall season over, the players will be going back to their regular season teams. Come January, the rivalries will reignite, with

the Renegades starting play in mid-January. Potential players are encouraged to attend an informal "skill session," and open house on Dec. 6, from 6-7 p.m. at the WLHS field, and the yearly team meeting in Dec. 11th, time and place to be announced. More information, including pictures, informative reading and schedule information can be found at www.westlinnrugby.com, as well as a link to the boys' page. All girls are encouraged to give the sport a try.

Football ends season with respectable defeat

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After a first round 17-3 victory over Beaverton in the playoffs, the Lions Varsity Football Team earned a first playoff. The Lions followed with a bitter but respectable

the defense was able to come up with a stop. A 23-yard field goal was botched by kicker Robert Truax, which began a string of unfortunate events for the Lions on both sides of the ball.

West Salem took a 7-0 lead on a grab by Titans

ended drives. As Kyle Kraus drove toward the end zone, he was brought down by the face mask, a personal foul penalty, which was called against the Lions. That call killed the momentum, and the Lions settled for a field goal. It was a case of two high powered offenses colliding and the Titans simply outscored the Lions.

The season was a success from any standpoint. The Lions put together the second of two consecutive playoff seasons while enjoying strong performances from their 21 seniors.

Bryce Baker, junior, performed well at quarterback, on two different occasions setting passing records. The offense and defense performed better while special teams made strides in their performance. The Lions boasted the sixth best scoring defense in the state and were equally proficient in the passing game. Truax enjoyed a season in which he kicked 12 field goals, an improvement from last year. The team also scored in the classroom, ranking number one academically in the state.

Despite a disappointing end to the year, there are a multitude of reasons to look forward to next season. The Lions return starters Baker, Mitchell Gaulke, Josh Oltman, juniors, and Reid Adams, sophomore.



Justin Monahan, senior, holds the ball for kicker Robert Truax, senior. Truax accounted for six of the 26 points during his final game as a lion.

Photo submitted by Tracie Krellwitz

loss on the road at number four ranked West Salem, 26-41. They finished in second place in the Three Rivers League.

The Lions started strong, intercepting West Salem's quarterback Aaron Hire. The Titans QB had not thrown an interception all year, until Joshua Thurston, senior, picked him off on the team's opening drive. Thurston's interception led a drive which ended up inside the Titan's ten yard line before

wide receiver Jordan Bishop, which bounced off Thurston's shoulder pad and allowed Bishop to bring in the catch. Unfortunate breaks worsened for the Lions on offense, which saw multiple penalties go unflagged.

It did not help that the Lions were unable to convert on offense, with four opportunities in the red zone that didn't result in a touchdown. Some of these resulted from poor calls that

All State/All League Honors

Girls Soccer winners included Taylor Brooks, junior (Three Rivers League Player of the Year) Jordan Gilbertson, senior, and Haelee Staskiewicz, junior (Second Team All State) and Hannah Schumaker, junior, received an Honorable mention.

Justin Monahan, senior, won TRL Defensive Player-of-the-Year. Connor Deeks, Erik Koczian and Robert Truax, seniors, earned TRL First-Team Offense. Joshua Thurston, Thomas Patrick, Justin Williams, Koczian, Kyle Kraus and Monahan earned TRL First-Team Defense awards.

Kellie Kawasaki, Michelle Hurt, Alyssa O'Neil and Danielle Sargent earned All-League honors. First Team winners included Kawasaki and O'Neil.

