

Baseball Team aims for third consecutive league title

MORGAN JOSCELYN

Staff Reporter

After winning the Three Rivers League title for the second year in a row, the

Varsity Baseball Team is hoping to come out on top again for a third straight year. With only three players returning with Varsity

experience, the young team is working harder than ever to prepare.

"As a coaching staff we have really been challenging

our guys to compete every pitch. So far for the past six games they have been doing a great job," Mike Lord, head coach, said. "We are looking forward to competing in the toughest league in the state. No one team has won three straight league titles since the 1980s."

The team began its preseason against three of the top teams in the state which will give them an idea of how they match up against the competition.

"We work well together on and off the field. Our strong defense, complimented with good pitching, is what is going to win us games," Ryan Barnes, senior shortstop, said.

The team is stacked with talent that works hard during the off-season. According to Lord, Barnes is one of the top players in the state, and earlier in the year signed with Oregon State University. Lord thinks that Elliott Smith, senior left-handed pitcher, will also play a huge role this season on the mound. The pitching roster is very deep and includes Riley Wilkerson

and Warner Edwards, sophomores, Tyler Weber, junior, and Michael Burke, Austin Bailey, seniors.

The team played its first game March 16 against Westview at home. Overall, they played fairly well and managed to come out with a 5-3 win. Smith threw four innings, striking out five batters. Spencer Dube, senior, hit a clutch three run double in the third inning to bring the win home for the Lions.

The Lions were once again victorious on April 1, beating last year's State champion Cavaliers. They won 4-2 over Clackamas.

"Our senior leadership is one of our strengths. We like to laugh and have fun, keeping a light-hearted atmosphere. It really opens things up for the underclassmen," Mitch Halverson, senior outfielder, said. "(Our goal is) to win league title for the third year in a row!"

The team plays its next home game at 5 p.m. against Lake Oswego today and take them on again tomorrow at Lake Oswego at 5 p.m.

Debs make progress, capture third at State

GUNNAR WOLFE

Staff Reporter

It has been a pleasantly surprising season for the Debs Dance Team. Almost half of the team is composed of new members and, in what was supposed to be a growing year for the team, have come together faster than expected, finishing third in State.

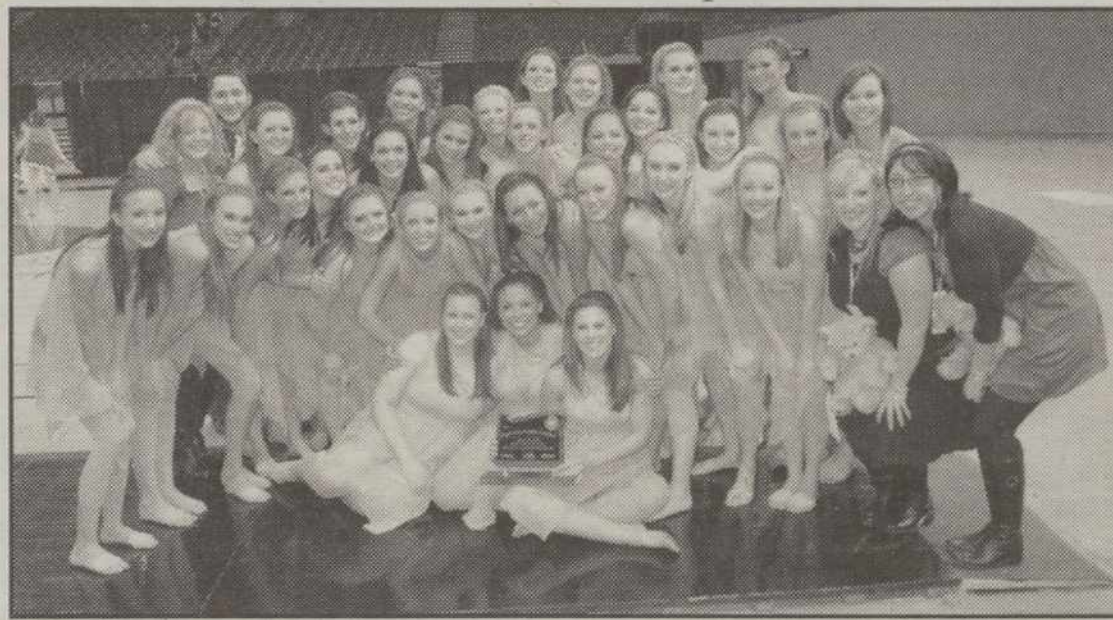
In their first competition, the Debs scored 66.7, placing them in fifth. On March 7, they dramatically improved their score to a 79, which

to place third, the highest the team has placed in seven years.

"It was very surprising. The team didn't very high hopes for the season. This was a very new and young team and everyone expected it to be a building year," Rachel Tennis, senior captain said.

This season has been very special for the seniors who have been on the Dance Team all four years.

"We really exceeded our expectations. We beat



The Debutantes Dance Team poses with its third place State trophy. They exceeded their expectations during the season, placing higher than they have in seven years. Photo courtesy of Dick Krippaehne

was good enough to earn fourth place at the Parkrose High School competition. They were also dangerously close to beating the always dominant Clackamas, finishing only a point and a half short. Overall, it was a very good season for the team. They improved their scores in every competition coming into State.

At State they made an excellent showing, scoring 80.5. This was good enough

Clackamas, who had been the first place team in past years. It has been a very successful season overall," Jessie Hedman, senior captain said.

Just three years ago, it was a team that barely avoided last place at State. Now they are among the top three in the state. The future looks very bright for this young team.

"They will definitely do well and improve in the future," Hedman said.



Ryan Barnes, senior, leads off from second base during a non-league game against Westview. The Lions edged the Wildcats 5-3. Photo by Carly Halverson

Softball Team hopes to advance to playoffs for first time in six years

JENNIFER SITTON

Staff Reporter

The last time the Softball Team made it to post season play was 2003, when they lost to Southridge in the play-in round of playoffs. This year, as long as their pitching is strong the team should be good enough to win the Three Rivers League, according to Jamie LeVeque, coach.

The season started off a bit slow due to the early March rain and snow. The girls were unable to participate in outdoor practices for about two and a half weeks, but that didn't stop them from working on individual skills in the gym.

The team played Aloha on March 18, beating the Warriors 4-3. The following day, they faced off against the Sunset Apollos, who, according to LeVeque, are possibly the best in the Metro League and lost 3-5. Regardless of the team's current record, it will face various challenges this year, including fielding a youthful team.

"I'd consider our team young with two seniors, three juniors, six sophomores and freshmen," LeVeque said. "However, most (of the players) play ball in summer

and fall, so we are somewhat experienced."

According to LeVeque, Rhianna Russell, junior pitcher, and McKenna Pyeatt, senior catcher, will be key for the team this year. In softball, the pitcher and the catcher are two of the most important components, so Russell and Pyeatt have a lot riding on their shoulders.

"This year is the first real chance our team has had at making playoffs. This year for Ashley Bruser and myself is very important to prove to ourselves and our families that years of playing every weekend through the spring, summer, and fall for club sports, private lessons, and new gear every season has been worth it," Pyeatt said. "It is the Lions' chance to shine and with the great coaching staff, impressive players and dedication to the program, we now have the ability to beat out the other competitors!"

While the team's enthusiasm is high, they do have some things to be worried about.

"This team has a lack of depth at certain key positions. We cannot afford any injuries," LeVeque said. The team also has a slight

disadvantage when it comes to speed, but they hope to make up for it with improved power on offense. They also hope to get their four pitchers enough pitching time in games.

"People will be playing a lot of different positions this year. I'm excited to see how they will gel in those different spots," Jasmine Mondor, sophomore, said.

The team has been working hard this offseason to contribute to the team's hopeful success. They have been working on training individual skill development during workouts. The pitchers throw year round with private coaches and some players practice with summer club teams as well.

This year, the Lions participated in a Spring Break tournament in Bend where they played against mostly 5A schools including Bend and Crook County. They also faced off against Culver, Sheldon and Redmond during the tournament. They finished with two wins and three losses for the tournament.

The team's next home game will be on April 15 against the Milwaukie Mustangs at Willamette Park.