

Tennis Teams look toward defending District titles

MARK CHIPPERFIELD

Staff Reporter

Last year the Boys' Varsity Tennis Team won its sixth Three Rivers League Title. The team is looking to take on all challengers and is confident of another successful campaign.

"Our goal is to win the league title again and to possibly send four or five players to state," Ward Lewis, coach, said.

They return nine players from last year's team including State runner-up Doubles Team of Christopher Erbin and Miles Rifkin, seniors. Of those nine players, eight of them are seniors, such as Brett Wright, senior, who brings valuable experience to the team.

"There are many seniors on this team that we will be depending on for their leadership and their vast experience," Wright, co-captain, said.

The five newcomers to the team are extremely talented and will bring exuberance that is valued by returning team members according to Wright.

"We have some younger kids who are really good and are excited to start their careers," Wright said. "They have this swagger about them that helps us look more intimidating."

A top prospect to look out for this season is William Risenhoover, freshman, who

has impressed early with his pure talent and beautiful strokes according to Wright.

The early season has been

a bit disheartening due to the large amounts of rain.

"The rain has made us have less available practice time but

we will still be ready to take on the season," Wright said.

The season started on a sour note for the team with a 1-7 loss to Sunset. The lone win came from the four doubles team of Blake Beehler, senior and Nathan Aden, junior. However, the team's loss was without Erbin, Rifkin, and Andrew Brown, sophomore, three key contributors to the team. The team did rebound from that loss with an 8-0 victory against Reynolds High School, followed with a 6-2 victory against Tualatin High School.

The Girls' Varsity Team is also looking to defend its League Title from last year. They also have nine returning players who will bring experience to the team.

A newcomer to the team this year is Ke Ounaphom, coach. He previously had been the Boys' Tennis Coach at Clackamas High School. He is energized with this new opportunity.

"This is my first season coaching at WLHS, and I am looking forward to getting to know all of the ladies. I am looking forward to a great season!" Ounaphom, coach, said.

The recent run of rain has also ruined the beginning of the practice schedule for the girls, but they were looking forward to starting their league schedule April 1 against Clackamas and April 2 against Lake Oswego. Those two teams are most likely to be the toughest competition for the team this year.

"Lake Oswego is an obvious competitor and always a tough team, however we can't count out Clackamas High School," Ounaphom, said.

The team is looking to improve throughout the season and peak toward the end of the season.

"I hope to see the team make consistent improvements and learn from each others strengths and weaknesses in order to peak before the District and State competitions" Ounaphom, said.

Districts begin May 11 while the State tournament begins May 21.

The teams will face off against Oregon City today, with the boys team hitting the road and the girls playing at home starting at 4 p.m.



Brett Wright, senior, serves in a match against Tualatin High School. He and his teammate Sam Tingey, senior, won their match and helped the team to a 6-2 victory.

Photo by Nico Varela

Kelly's high powered offense takes over

Bellotti

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Although many people thought he would stay for one more season as coach, Bellotti decided that the team is in a good state to be handed over to Kelly instead of giving him a team that needs to be rebuilt. As the third most winning football coach in the history of the Pacific-10 Conference in league wins, Bellotti's 62.6 percent winning percentage is 16th in conference all-time. He trails UCLA's Terry Donahue and Washington's Don James.

Kelly will be the Ducks' third head coach in the past 33 years. During his two years as offensive coordinator, Oregon established school records in scoring, rushing yards and total offense according to the *Statesman Journal*. In 2008, the Ducks have ranked second in the country in rushing and seventh nationally in both total offense and scoring. Kelly created an offense for the Ducks that has accounted for 50 points or more in 10 games. His offensive attacks have been responsible for establishing no fewer than 24 school records in his time with the Ducks.

Kelly previously served as the University of New Hampshire's offensive coordinator and quarterback's coach from 1999-2006. Kelly's offensive teams averaged better than 400 yards of total

offense in seven of his eight seasons and more than 30 points a game in his final four years. In 2005, Kelly's best offensive output was when the University of New Hampshire finished second nationally in total offense, third in scoring and fifth in passing. The team also completed the season with an 11-2 record. In 2004, the school broke 29 offensive school records, compiling 5,446 yards of total offense and scoring 40 or more points in seven games according to GoDucks.com.

Some new changes that have begun are that Kelly will be starting practices earlier beginning at 8:30 a.m. Practice will be extended over five weeks rather than four. With Bellotti as coach every practice was divided into five minute periods. The team could then spend 10 minutes in 7-on-7 drills or 15 minutes in full contact scenarios. Kelly will base his practices around six minute segments which will provide 12 minutes for a typical drill.

The team has been handed over with a good record and plenty of potential for next year. Kelly should be able to succeed with the team, especially with Bellotti helping during the spring practices. There will be changes, but with Kelly's previous records the changes should only help the team grow.

Boys Rugby win to remain undefeated, Girls rebound after disappointing loss

CALLEY LATHROP

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Tensions were high as the rugby season began. The boys' team was looking to prove its worth after a winless 2008 season, and the girls were attempting to hold off increasingly competitive teams and defend their State title. So far, records have been made and broken, with climactic final games in the offing.

After a 52-0 shutout against North Clackamas on March 7, the boys were confident about their abilities against Bend, a new team who they took on March 14.

"Unfortunately they're very optimistic. It's easier to get everyone's attention if they lose. We're a bit cocky right now," Tim Medearis, head coach, said.

The boys attained their second shutout of the season against Bend, 31-0. The next week also produced a 32-7 win over Newberg, bringing the team to first place in Division II.

Medearis attributes much of the team's pre-season and league success so far in their athleticism and experience. "We have a mix, about one-half of the team is returning players, and half are new, but good athletes in general," Medearis said.

Also contributing to their success and positive attitudes is the addition of a new member to the program—the Scrum Machine. Large and rolling, it simulates one side of a "perfect" scrum, allowing a team to match itself against it and test its skill. It does for forwards what a row of fake linemen do for a football team. Pat Hogan, coach, bought the \$9,000 machine from University of Oregon for a mere \$150.

According to Medearis, captains Charles Stevens, senior, and Matthew Kilby, Lakeridge senior, have been "very outstanding" in leading the younger team.

"A lot of goals have been met so far, and the team is playing amazingly well together. We are looking to repeat our 2007 trip to State semi-finals," Kilby said.

On March 7, the girls team traveled to Edmonton, Canada, on their bye-week to test themselves against the best team in all of Canada and North America, Carson-Graham. The final score, 15-25 in favor of the Eagles, was a disappointment. However, many players saw the two-try margin as a near victory. The girls are confident after their domination in the Rugby Oregon Pre-season

tournament, in which they skunked all opponents, falling only to Canby. Following that was a 35-0 win against Columbia County.

Over spring break, the Renegades travelled to Fullerton, Calif., to participate in the international Fullerton Youth Rugby Tournament. Twenty-six teams were in attendance from California, Washington and several districts in Canada. Their first three matches were successful, the biggest win coming against the home team, Fullerton, in which they won by two points in the final minutes.

They then lost by a narrow margin to Carson Graham, who went on to take gold. The next day, the team fell in the semi-final round to rival Kent, Wash.. They left the tournament with a bronze finish, which many saw as a great accomplishment.

"We played the best we have in all four years I've been playing," Megan Hackney, senior captain, said. "Our loss to Kent, well, sometimes we win and sometimes we lose, but we will play them again later and be ready as ever. We got a really nice flow going in California, we just need to keep working hard and finish the season strong."