

Sports

Track Team exceeds expectations in growing season

SEAN PEBLER

Staff Reporter

The Track Team consists mainly of sophomores in what is considered to be a growing year. They are graduating very few seniors this year, as only Varsity athletes Bryce Baker, Alexander Schlitt, Tremayne

the time, John Othus, social studies teacher, was the distance and cross country coach, but when he was diagnosed with colon cancer, he asked Linman to take over coaching.

It is a wide-held belief that Linman has done a stellar job,

is Linman's ability to communicate with his runners.

"He's a really good coach, and he knows how to push each person as an individual," Chelsea Ollar, sophomore, said.

The leaders of the distance crew are Cullen Wannarka,

and the boys' 4x100 Meter Relay Team of Jake Gianuzzi, junior, Keaton Hedman, sophomore, Mason Finnerty, freshman, and Baker.

Some second place finishers included Baker in the 300 meter hurdles, Gianuzzi in the javelin, Nowlin in the 1,500 meters, and Ollar in the 3,000 meters.

On April 8, the Lions had their first dual meet since the Sister's Tournament. They faced Rex Putnam at home, with firsts from Schlitt in the 110 meter hurdles, Baker in the 300 meter hurdles and Gianuzzi in the javelin.

Girls' first place finishers were Casey Livesay, sophomore, in the 100 meters, Madeline Wise, freshman, in the 400 meters, Morrow in the 800 meters, Nowlin in the 3,000 meters, Maria Green, freshman, in the high jump, and Danica Jungerman, junior, in both the 100 and 300 meter hurdles.

The following week, the Lions took on a quality Oregon City team. Some highlights from the meet included first placers Wannarka in both the 1,500 meters and 3,000 meters, Baker in the 300 meter hurdles, Green in the high jump, Morrow in the 800 meters, and Ollar in both the 1,500 and 3,000 meters.

After a bye week, the Lions took their select athletes to a Centennial Tournament, where the guys placed ninth out of 40 other teams. One

major highlight from the meet was Wannarka's 3,000 meters in nine minutes flat, good enough for second place.

After that, the Lions headed to Lakeridge for a dual meet against the Pacers where they recorded many personal records and highlights. Hedman won first in both the 100 and 200 meters, and Ian Monihan, junior, placed first in the 400 meters. Jefferson Chandler, sophomore, came back from an injury to take first place in the 1,500 meters. Graham Frank, sophomore, also placed first in the 3,000 meters. Schlitt once again took first place in both hurdle events. Justin McKee, sophomore, ended up taking first in the boys' javelin. Markstaller again won both the long jump and triple jump.

Nowlin had another strong showing, placing first in both the 1,500 and 3,000 meters. Another first place finisher included Jungerman in the girls' pole vault.

At the Jesuit Twilight Relays held on May 1, West Linn faced some of the best competition in the state. Schlitt ended up taking fifth place in both the 110 meter hurdles and the javelin.

In their last regular dual meet the Lions faced Milwaukie at home. Both the girls and boys performed very well at the meet, and one surprise was Corinne Carver, freshman, earning first place in the girls' long jump.

The Lions were successful at Districts, sending many athletes to the State meet.

For the boys, Hedman won first place in the 100 meters, earning him a spot at State. Other athletes that will be moving on to the State meet for the boys are Wannarka in the 3,000 meters, Schlitt in the javelin, and the 4x100 meter relay team of Baker, Finnerty, Hedman, and Gianuzzi. The girls sent only Green in the high jump.

Linman held high expectations for his distance crew at Districts, and for those runners who moved on to State.

"I think everybody will run their fastest time at the District meet, unless they made it to the State meet, they'll run their fastest time there. And then we'll take a couple weeks off, and start training for cross country!"

At State, Green placed eighth in the high jump, scoring the only points for West Linn, clearing five feet three inches. Wannarka almost placed in the 3000 running an impressive 8:53.



Erin Morrow, sophomore, and Kelsey Guerins, junior, run in the 800 meters at a home meet against Rex Putnam on April 8. The Lions split the meet, with the girls edging out the Kingsmen and the boys falling. Photo by Jessica Broberg

Phillips, Ian Markstaller and Taylor Nowlin will be leaving.

Part of the Lions success has to do with both the boys' and girls' distance crews coached by John Linman.

"I haven't been surprised. They've done exactly how I expected them to do. One person who has surprised me is Zach Boyd-Helm, running faster in the 800 than I thought," Linman said.

Linman has lived in West Linn since 1984 and raised both of his children here. At

as many of his young runners have been successful in past years. Linman deflects most of this attention to his runners.

"They're talented, and they work very hard. One of my favorite quotes is 'the desire to win is nothing without the will to train'. You can't do that (win) unless you put the two together," Linman said. "We're lucky to have so many kids at the sophomore level that run this fast."

One of the things that runners cite as a strength

sophomore, and both Kathryn Flyte and Kelsey Guerins, juniors, for the girls.

On April 4, the team took all Varsity athletes to a 16 team meet in Sisters. The boys' side took home first place out of all 16 teams. The girls' placed sixth.

Wannarka placed first out of 27 runners in the 1,500 meters with a time of 4:17.16. Other first place finishers included Max Hays, junior, in the long jump, Erin Morrow, sophomore, in the 800 meters,

they dropped games at Oregon City, Wilson and the last contest of the season against Clackamas.

"The first two wins against Clackamas were huge because they gave us the tiebreaker over them, and the three wins against Milwaukie were huge for us too," Lord said.

The Lions had an opportunity to prove themselves against a couple of non-league teams: South Salem and Wilson. Against the South Salem Saxons, the team came out on top, winning in impressive fashion 10-6 at home. The Lions were competitive with the Trojans, but couldn't pull out the victory, losing 4-7 at Wilson.

A big part of the Lions success this season is attributed to the team's top players Eliot Smith and Ryan Barnes, seniors. Smith has been the Lions ace this season, pitching in all the big games and finishing the season with a 7-1 record. Barnes has been batting over 400 and has hit

eight home runs. Mitchell Locke, junior, and Riley Wilkerson, sophomore, have also been cited by Lord for their contributions.

Entering the playoffs, the Lions are hoping to make a

the team will need to rely on good pitching and defense, but said, "Good pitching will always beat good hitting."

The Lions opened the playoffs with a win against Sprague by a score of 8-1,



Ryan Barnes, senior, slides into second base during one of the Lions home games against Oregon City. The Lions won two out of three games in the series and finished in second place in the Three Rivers League. Photo by Carly Halverson

run at the championship game for the first time since they lost to Sprague in the 2005 State finals. Lord believes that

the team took on Barlow in the next round on Tuesday. Results were not available as of press time.

Top seeded Lions hope to make play for State

MAX HAYS

Staff Reporter

The Varsity Baseball Team has established itself as one of the top teams in a Three Rivers League that contains three of the top 10 teams in the State. They have beaten Clackamas, the defending State champions, twice; Sunset, the fifth ranked team in state; and South Salem.

"At the beginning of the season we wanted to win the TRL and be one of the top seeds in the playoffs," Mike Lord, head coach, said. "We finished second in league, but we ended up still getting one of the top seeds for playoffs."

The Lions have also suffered losses to some of the top teams in the state including Lake Oswego and Wilson, and a middle-of-the-road Oregon City team.

After dropping the series to Lake Oswego, the Lions coasted through the rest of the season, sweeping Putnam, Milwaukie and Lakeridge. In the last month of the season,