

Boys' Lacrosse cracks top ten, girls fall short of playoffs

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Staff Reporter

The Boys' Lacrosse Team faced a rough non-league schedule to open the season. They fought hard in contests with two of the toughest teams in the state, but in both scenarios came up short, falling to Oregon Episcopal, 9-4, and Lincoln High School, 12-8. The Lions posted a deceiving record of 11-6 (9-3) in league, with four of those losses coming against opponents ranked in the top five in State.

"We were pretty pleased with the efforts. For the most part, we played right with the best teams in the state. We had our chances," Mark Flood, head coach, said.

Having climbed to the number seven ranking in

the Class 6A Coaches' Poll, the Lions are a stronger post season threat than their record may indicate. They

finished third in the Three Rivers League capping the regular season with a commanding 13-2 victory over



Callen Gray, junior, goes on the attack in a game versus Riverdale. The Lions beat the Mavericks 16-5 and finished the season with a record of 4-6 in league play.

Photo by Zack Mueller

Equestrian Team works to compete at high level

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Staff Reporter

While most school equestrian teams have 15-16 girls, West Linn has only eight: Betsy Luehrs, Samantha Roberts, Karleigh Vroman, seniors, Sydney MacNaughton, junior, Lyndsey Austin, Carly Strasshofer, sophomores, MacKenzie Johnson and Nicole Paulson, freshmen. It is the smallest team in the entire Tri-River Valley District.

Although some people think that Equestrian should not be considered a sport, riders know the amount of time needed to train the horse and prepare for the events is tremendous. Usually the horses need to be taken out at least three times a week for three hours, when team members spend time grooming, walking, training and caring for the horses.

"You're working all the time with your horse, and it's not easy," Leuhrs said. It's kind of disappointing that it's not recognized more because of how the hard the athletes work."

Some people think that the horses do all the work and the rider just sits there, but the riders think differently. When a rider is on the horse they have to keep their backs straight, muscles tight and be extremely calm because the horse tunes into how its rider is feeling. If the rider is anxious or gets scared the horse will respond accordingly and be spooked.

"Running comes naturally to people; riding a horse doesn't. Some people don't understand that running barrels or any other event doesn't exactly

come naturally to horses either, so you have to train them and teach them to do these things, while you train yourself at the same time. It's a lot of work," Strasshofer said.

The Equestrian Team is not considered a sport because the school does not pay for anything. All of the money has to be raised by the team members. They ask companies and to sponsor them. One of the reasons that there are only four meets a year (in February, March, April and one for State in May) is due to the amount of money that it costs to hold a meet.

"We have to get sponsorships for posters, events and for every time we meet. At the beginning of the year the cost was around \$400," Austin said.

It takes a lot of time to find a company that will sponsor them especially when there is a real possibility that they won't even make it to State. Even so, they are dedicated to what they do and are willing to do whatever it takes to at least have the chance to participate. Half of the team includes first year members who continue to improve at every competition.

"Our team is doing great. It doesn't really matter whether or not we win or lose or go to State," Austin said. "We are a good team together and that's what counts."

State competition is a four day event that allows only the top three riders per event to compete from each district. Competitions were held May 17-19 at Central Point in Medford. Results were not available as of press time.

Clackamas. They also made the breakthrough they had been waiting for all season when they defeated first place Lake Oswego 8-7 on May 18.

The team played West Salem in the first round of State and won easily by a score of 18-2. After the Lions big

Girls rugby's five year reign comes to an end; boys fall to Cinderella story

CALLEY LATHROP
Staff Reporter

Both rugby teams were confident as the end of regular season drew near in April. The boys finished the regular season undefeated in league for the first time in the team's history and the girls tried to regroup after a slew of injuries and losses for the first time in three years.

In the State quarterfinals, the girls faced Reynolds, after a slow start, the team eventually dominated in a 58-5 victory, earning them a spot in the semi-final round against Canby.

The team fell to Canby in February for the first time in the team's history. According to Ernest Espinoza, head coach, a factor in the game was the level of experience of a very young West Linn team.

"We've played many top level teams this year, and many rookies have stepped up after starters have been injured. Canby knows what they're doing," Espinoza said.

The girls team took on the Cougars in a "clash of the titans" in the State semi-finals on May 9. For the first time in the history of Oregon rugby playoffs, the Canby Cougars beat the Renegades, 31-12, knocking them out of the running for a sixth State title.

The same day, North Clackamas, a team the Renegades beat mere weeks ago, 68-0, took on Bend, the only other team to beat West Linn in league play. However, the loss of Bend's champion scrumhalf proved fatal, as

win, they will face High Desert League champion Summit which boasts an impressive 10-2 (8-0) record. A win there would pit them against Sunset for a place in the Final Four at State. Sunset is ranked third in State and are the undefeated champs of an extremely competitive Metro League.

"It's not bad. It's certainly not a cakewalk but it could be worse," Flood said of State brackets.

The Girls' Lacrosse Team also started slow, but steadily improved throughout the season to stay in contention for a playoff spot. The Lions finished with a 6-8 (4-6) record.

"We had a pretty horrible start to league play," Karina Dewart, senior, said. "But we have some of the weaker teams coming up in our schedule. We are still in the playoff hunt, and that's all that really matters."

The girls faced challenges from the start of the season, as they went up against the league's first, second and third place teams in succession to open league play. Over this stretch, they faced Oregon City,

Lakeridge and Lake Oswego, all ranked in the state's top ten. Despite being outscored 49-7, the Lions responded from the 0-3 start with a dominating win at Riverdale, defeating the Mavericks, 16-5. The girls' schedule continued to ease as they took down the Clackamas Cavaliers, 16-10.

As the girls progressed through the second half of the season, playoffs began looking less and less of a possibility as other TRL teams continued their winning streaks. The team hung tough with Lakeridge and Oregon City, keeping the scores much closer than the first time they competed against them. Entering the final week of the regular season, the girls were eliminated from post-season play, but finished the season on a high note scoring back-to-back victories over Riverdale, 18-6, and Clackamas, 14-7.

"This season was really fun," Dewart said. "We had a lot of good times and I'm really proud of how hard our team competed this season."

the Vixens lost to North Clackamas, 31-20. The State final will feature Canby and North Clackamas, leaving a



Mikey Levinson, Lake Oswego senior, leaves a Canby player in the dust with support of teammate Katherine Linday, senior. During the State semi-final match, Canby topped the Renegades for the first time in five years, 12-31.

Photo courtesy of Zchonae Jones

sour taste for many West Linn players. "The way the divisions were set up was just kind of weird. The fact that one of the, no offense to them, weakest teams in the league placed higher in state just doesn't seem right. But, they obviously earned the right. It was very interesting," Shelby Patterson, sophomore, said.

The Renegades played Bend for third place on May 16, however, the game was forfeited as Bend did not have enough players to field a side.

The boys had, statistically, the best regular season in the history of the program, with a 6-0 record and first place in their division. On May 2, they took on powerhouse Canby. Their State dreams came to an end when the Cougars won in a landslide 68-5 victory. However, the team is still hopeful and proud of their accomplishment.

"Our goal this year was to make the State playoffs for Division I and to be in that division for next year and we did that. We knew it would be hard to be competitive once we made the jump. Our final goal is to beat Vancouver, ranked sixth in Division I, to let everyone, including ourselves, know that we belong in Div(ision) I," Tim Medearis, head coach, said.

The boys played a consolation game for fifth place in state against Vancouver on May 9. It began in a forfeit, as the Sharks could not field a side, but ended due to fights.

"Vancouver did not have the numbers to start the game so we won, then played a 'friendly game.' They had some kids who were not on their team to help out and those kids were throwing punches. After the second dust up, we called the game," Medearis said.

Although the boys' dream of a State title after a successful season were crushed, and the girls' experienced true defeat for the first time in years, both teams remain positive and are hopeful for next season.