

Tennis teams avoid shanks, find "sweetspot"

After losing many seniors, Boys' Tennis Team looks to rebuild

MARY EARP

With a record of 3-1 to begin the season, the Boys' Tennis Team started out with high-quality play. Their main problem, Ward Lewis, head coach, said has been the weather.

"Now the big obstacle to overcome is the weather, and how that's going to affect us. I think whoever can adapt to the conditions will be the winner," Lewis said.

This year's team is very young. Having graduated nine seniors last year, the team faces a major barrier in its playing and leadership. They need to work on consistency as well, which will come with more practice time, according to Lewis, but this has been hard to come by because of the weather.

"I think everyone should be more consistent. Everyone is good; but overall we could get a lot better," Ian Risenhoover, sophomore, said. "The conditions were pretty off; it was tough to play in the wind."

Their first game against Lake Oswego was close, but the Lions were defeated 3-5. Though their first game was lost, they pushed through to win their next three games, beating Oregon City 6-2, Clackamas 6-2 and Putnam 7-1. The team's only loss came against Lakeridge, where a 4-4 game resulted in a loss after a tiebreaker.

The team has already had three matches cancelled due to weather. The core goal this season is for the team to "win it all," Lewis said, referring to the Three Rivers League.

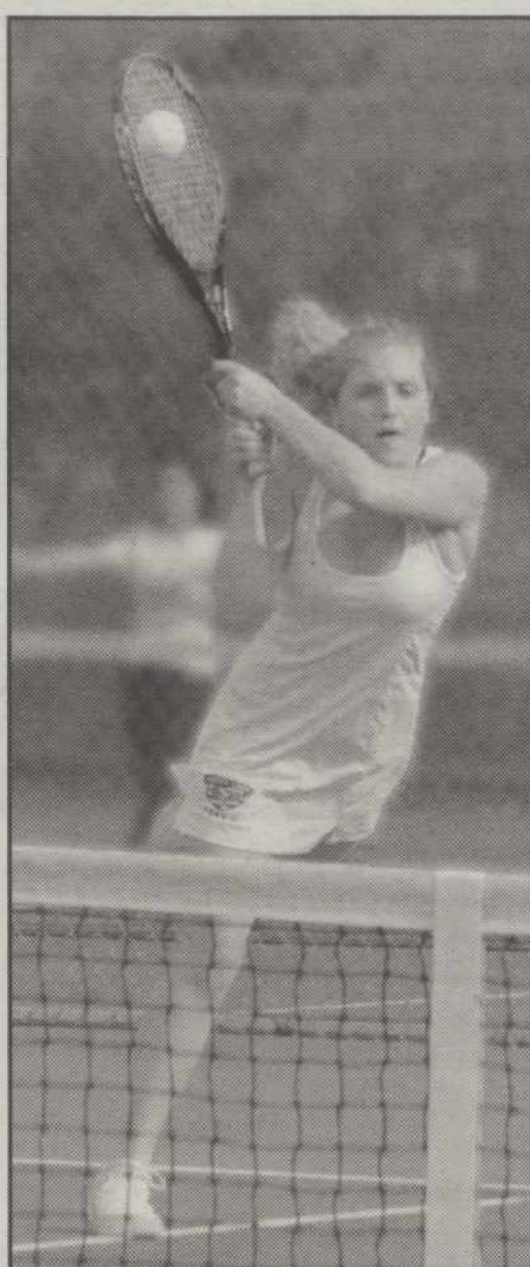


Photo by Libby Kara
Lisa Kirkemo, senior, hits a shot in a recent match. The Girls' Tennis Team has struggled this season, but made a run in its recent game against Milwaukie, winning 8-0.

Girls' Tennis Team finds tough match-ups in league competition

TY CLARKE

The Girls' Tennis Team is struggling in and out of league. Samantha Ing, junior, said the season "has been rough trying to get all the players to practice." Ing and Lisa Kirkemo, seniors, are the team captains. Ke Ounaphom, head coach, is in the midst of his second year coaching at West Linn after previously coaching at Clackamas.

On April 14, the Lions beat Milwaukie 8-0 for an impressive league win. Unfortunately, a string of losses preceded this win. Before the Milwaukie match, the Lions fell to Lakeridge, 1-7, Clackamas, 1-7, and Lake Oswego, 1-7. However,

the team found a win over Rex Putnam during the middle of this streak.

"It's been tough this year all the teams have improved," Ing said. "It also works the other way, though. Our team has improved as well."

The Lions won the match over the Kingsmen 8-0. On April 7, the team beat Oregon City in impressive fashion, winning 7-1. This was a rebound match for the Lions after they fell to Lake Oswego, 1-7. For the upcoming stretch of matches, Ing said that the team should work on "communication between players," which would help solve what she called the biggest obstacle; "time management with the team."

FROM THE VAULT

Located in the basement, through a series of storage rooms and locked doors lies the Vault. The Vault holds school records going back decades, including Amplifiers from as far back as 1921. Our editors have sorted through the papers to reprint past articles, bringing you an interesting view of life from students of another generation.

"From the Vault" articles will appear in the corresponding section in which they were originally printed. Check each issue of the Amplifier to find more treasures from the Vault.

X-country runners find adventure in China

KIM BARKER

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On December 25, four West Linn cross-country runners boarded the plane for China to participate in an international race on New Year's Day.

Junior Scott Spear (next season's boys' captain), senior Mike Cobb (last season's boys' co-captain), senior Donald Sugden (last season's girls' captain), and junior Nicole Woodward were invited to attend the race by the Amateur Sports Development Program (a non-profit organization). Four other WLHS cross-country team members (senior Jeff Day, junior Kevin Buse, junior Denny Baldrey, and junior Pat Bassett) were also asked to participate but couldn't because of finances and other obligations.

There were five other runners and four tennis players from Oregon attending this international event. (Besides the cross-country race, there was

an international tennis tournament held.) Oregon was the only state from the United States attending the competition.

Sugden and Woodward fared well in their 9K run, which took place on the Kowloon peninsula. Woodward placed sixth and Sugden finished tenth in an international field of 60 runners, who were made up of mostly high school and college athletes. Sugden stated, "I didn't expect to place as high as I did." The women's race began five minutes after the men's, and Sugden and Woodward found themselves catching many of the men who had fallen behind. According to Sugden, the race began on a dirt road and was compromised of many hills. Eventually, the course led through a cobblestoned area where traffic wasn't cooperating. Sugden said, "You had to weave your way through the cars and people; no one would move out of your way." (She admitted to knocking over a lady in a tight situation.)

Spear and Cobb didn't place near as well as the girls did on the New

Year's Day race; in fact, they couldn't even find it. When the girls took one taxi to the event, the boys took another whose driver falsely claimed that he knew where the race began. After a half-hour of futilely searching at a fitness center for the race and three more taxi rides, Spear, Cobb, and two other Oregon runners gave up.

However, their trip to China was not for nothing. Beaverton cross-country coach Bill White (an amateur Sports Development Program representative) entered the boys in a 17.5k road race scheduled for January 3; the day the team returned to America. Cobb commented, "It turned out for the better of me. It was a really punishing race, but it was more rewarding, because the tougher competition was more worthwhile. It was my kind of race." Cobb placed seventh in the event, while Spear brought home a trophy with a fifth place finish. Four minutes separated the two competitors.

Both Cobb and Sugden felt the race was only of

secondary importance; they felt the culture was the biggest benefit of their trip. Other than shopping, which, according to Cobb the team did for 70% of the time; the runners toured the area, spending time and money in the Hong Kong, Macau, the "new" territories, and communist China. (Hong Kong remains under British control until 1997). They visited Sin Yat Sen high school in "Red" China, and toured through Dr. Sin Yat Sen's house. Cobb stated, "The students were extremely disciplined. We were in the library, snapping pictures, and none of them would ever look up."

In general, Cobb felt the Chinese were very friendly, content, and interested in their visitors. Sugden thought that the American visitors were regarded as "rich, American snots" by many Chinese; they were even thrown out of a store.

Cobb felt another interesting place they visited was the People's Market. Animals were

slaughtered right in front of the customers. Cobb stated, "People bought anything -- livers, badgers, house cats, goat's heads -- to eat right after they were killed."

Cobb didn't try the goat's head, but did eat some dried squid, which was a "cross between smoked salmon and beef jerky." Main courses were served with the head still attached.

An interesting sidenote about Chinese culture is that there are no copyright laws, and therefore fake "FILA" and "Adidas" apparel was everywhere. Cobb was "suckered in" on buying a David Bowie tape for \$1.25, but ended up listening to "David Bowrie", a Bowie imitator.

For Cobb, the only bad part of the trip was the flight home. "After running in a 17.5K race, being cramped up on a 22 hour flight was painful." Sugden liked everything, and stated, "I learned about the Chinese culture, and competed with the Chinese. It was an experience I'll never forget."