

Close bonds, strong play aide Softball Team in accomplishing goals

MARY EARP

The Girls' Softball Team ended their season with a fourth place finish in the Three Rivers League, resulting in a record of 9-6 in their conference. The Lions faced off against the Roseburg Indians

for the first round of the State Playoffs on May 23. The team fell 6-2, finishing a season filled with challenges.

"We battled hard and played well," Aubrey Pesicka, junior pitcher, said. "We just had one rough inning, but we ended the season playing well which was

all we could ask for."

Overall, this year was much more competitive than those in the past, according to Jamie LeVeque, head coach.

"The league was very competitive this year," LeVeque said. "Every team played us close, and there were no easy

games."

That competitiveness is not the only difference this year, though, according to Pesicka.

"This team is a lot closer than it has been in the past,"

the season progressed, we have done so much better," Pesicka said.

Another problem the team faced was the skill of their competitors and the closeness

Boys' Golf takes second at Districts, fifth at State

JENNIFER SITTON

The Boys' Golf Team finished its season with a fifth place finish at the State tournament with a combined team score of 631. The Lions were led by Zach Foushee, junior, who took second overall with a score of two over par, three strokes behind the individual champion Adam Bean from Lincoln.

After the first day at State, the team found itself in 25th place, with 323 strokes. Foushee finished the first day one over par, putting him in fifth place entering day two. Connor Jetton, junior, shot an 82 while Charlie Moore, sophomore, finished with 83. Anders Otterlei and Bryant Bushnell, juniors, both contributed individual scores of 85.

The team began playoffs at the TRL District match on May

3-4, taking second place behind Lake Oswego. The Lions were led by Foushee who posted a



Photo by Janice Moore

Anders Otterlei, junior, hits his approach shot on hole 18 of at the State golf tournament. Otterlei finished with a final score of 164, helping propel the team to a fifth place finish.

score of 71 the first day and 74 the second day. Foushee finished third place overall.

"It all starts with Zach Foushee," Justin Paredes, head coach,

said. "He led the TRL in scoring with an average below 70 (during league). Every time he steps out onto the course, he is expected to win."

However, at Districts, the Lions found a new star in their team. Moore took fourth place overall with scores of 75 and 74.

"While I was proud of all our boys, Charlie blew me away. He came through big for us, shooting 75-74 for an individual tie for fourth," Paredes said. "I am hoping he can take this momentum through to State."

Regardless of how the season ended, things look bright for the team's future as it will return four seniors and many young players with great potential, according to Paredes. But first, the team reflected on this year's successful season.

"I couldn't be more proud of my guys one through 12," Paredes said.



Photo by Laurel Massaro

Caroline MacAusland, junior, swings at the ball during a 1-0 win against Lake Oswego. According to Aubrey Pesicka, junior, the team played better this year due to the closeness of the team which finished fourth in the Three Rivers League.

Pesicka said. "We all love the game and have a great time playing together."

According to Pesicka, the bonds formed have helped the team to continue through the season easier. Along with these friendships, the team has been playing its hardest and has worked through adversity.

"At the beginning of the season we had some trouble hitting and scoring runs, but as

of their records compared to other teams. This season, there was no major gap in records within the Three Rivers League, with West Linn running neck-and-neck with Canby, Lake Oswego and Clackamas.

"Pitching is a major part of softball success," LeVeque said. "Also, our team had to be playing well and avoid injuries."



Sitton's Sports Notes

SEVEN BENEFITS TO PLAYING SPORTS

At this point, high school basketball has been over for a few months, but the extra time has not made it any less difficult to accept. There is nothing worse than waking up the morning after a playoff loss and realizing that the thing that has been your entire life almost every day for the last five years is suddenly over.

Melancholy tears aside, I decided it was time to reflect on my last four years of high school basketball, because it was a huge part of what made me who I am today.

Every student should have the opportunity to play a high school sport. The benefits and lessons that go along with sports remain a part of you for your entire life. There are other extracurriculars that can be just as beneficial, such as participating in the Mock Trial Team, Thespians, ISEF or band. However, I can't speak to those, because they are not ingrained in my soul as basketball is.

I gave so much of myself to basketball. It dominated my thoughts, actions, schedule, meals and sleep pattern. Looking back, I had to have learned something from the activity that monopolized my life for so long. So, for this column, I sat down and decided to share what I believe are the top eight benefits of playing high school sports.

1. Solid, impenetrable friendships—There is no bond stronger than that of a teammate. They are the only ones who can understand

entirely how you are feeling. The things you experience together—running excessive amounts of lines, celebrating a playoff win, mourning losses, and bonding over massive amounts of food—are events that are so unique to your team that they create an impenetrable bond that only the team can understand. The friendship between teammates is exclusive, strong as steel and something I cherish more than anything else from my last four years of basketball.

2. Organizational skills—During the season, a high school athlete would kill for a few more hours in each day. Time is a commodity that one can never truly appreciate until you spend seven hours at school, two and a half at practice and at least an hour to shower and eat dinner afterwards. I have learned that weekends were created for homework. Anything that I can possibly finish over the weekend, even if it isn't due until Friday, I will do. My advice to every freshman who enters the world of high school athletics: Obtain a planner and USE IT.

3. Sense of community—Every sport has its own community. It just so happens that the basketball community is very tight and I am ingrained in every aspect of it. I cherish the fact that I can go into a restaurant or even to the grocery store in West Linn and find people who I know or know me simply because of basketball. For some, that

sense of community can give you a purpose and make you feel as though you are a part of something bigger than just you.

4. Confidence—Confidence can either be built through athletics or torn down; usually both at some point in your four years. Every athlete has ups and downs but I truly believe



Photo by Kristin Stringer

Mikayla Kraemer, junior, and Hayley Bigoni, senior, collaborate to unravel a frozen t-shirt during a team-building activity at the Varsity Girls' Basketball Retreat. Retreats and team trips play a huge part in building lasting friendships between teammates, the number one benefit to playing high school sports.

that playing a sport builds confidence, even if it isn't found until that athlete's senior night. Everyone does something well and generally, there is someone around who cares enough about you to tell you. Sometimes, "good game" is all you need to hear to make everything okay again.

5. Communication skills—In athletics, individuals must find their own voice. Whether it is

to communicate with coaches or their fellow teammates, they must find it. We have all faced situations where we have to sit down with someone and say what needs to be said. High school athletes learn this early on in and it is a skill that will serve them well for the rest of their lives.

6. Competitive drive—To be a competitive person you don't have to be a crazed, macho athlete chanting "draw blood" in the locker room before a game. The competitive spirit is something that is ingrained in all of us; it simply must be drawn out by someone or something. The adrenaline and excitement an athlete feels before a big game is a feeling that can never be replaced or

duplicate.

7. Leadership—By the time they are a senior, everyone is a leader in their own way. Whether they lead by example on the floor, bring everyone together as a team in tough situations or quietly encourage those who are struggling, everyone has the capacity to be a leader. Sports bring out the leader in every athlete who survives to make it to their senior night.

Everyone's experiences with high school sports are different. Some are positive experiences and some are not. Some come away with lasting memories and friendships that they will keep for the rest of their lives and some do not. Regardless of how you feel about sports, it cannot be denied that there are many benefits that come from them.

I am a completely different person today than I was the day I walked into tryouts as a freshman. Whether or not that can be attributed to basketball is debatable. All I know for sure is that 40 years from now, when I look back on my four years of high school, I probably won't remember what courses I took or the person I sat next to in health class. What I will remember are the girls I spent essentially every waking moment with for four and a half months out of every year. I'll remember the laughter. The tears. The feeling that, unified together, we were a part of something so much bigger than just us. Above all, I'll remember my team.