

Logger Pride Shines: A Winter Sports Recap

The winter high school sports season can be summed up in a few words: trying times, frustration, learning experiences, and success. The participants, coaches and athletes competed very well given the unfortunate circumstances we dealt with resulting from the flood and high snow levels. The Vernonia Loggers did not have a home court or mat to compete on for most of the season. We had to travel forty minutes one way to practice. In spite of all the roadblocks set up in the way of our student athletes, the coaching staff and their quest for success overcame the adversity and frustrations, and we competed extremely well. These young people represented the community, our school and themselves at a very high level and with pride. Each team, whether it was wrestling or basketball, gave its all to show Logger pride still existed in Vernonia and our teams never gave up in spite of what Mother Nature dealt them.

Girls Basketball

The girls were competitive in almost every game they played. They adjusted well to a new coach, a new system and to a new venue as a home court, Scappoose High School. The JV girls won three ballgames this year, and the Varsity girls won one. The success they experienced came not from wins and losses but from the improvement they made throughout the year. They developed as basketball players and as competitors and look forward to the upcoming year. Leading the team was Junior Trisha Levenseller. Trisha brought the ball up the court and led the team in points scored. She was the player that put the offense in motion, and we will be counting on her next year to be a big part of Lady Logger Basketball. Other Lady Loggers that played a big part in the season were Seniors Heather Bassett, Jennifer Castro, Shandee Cota, and Ashton Yountz. These girls were instrumental in the development of the girls' program this year. With the return of several younger players such as Megan Rock, Ivory Garrymore, Samantha Lee, and Katie Wilson, the girls' program looks to be on the upswing for the next few years.

Boys Basketball

The boys' teams were competitive from the start. The JV team came up one game short of having a winning record while the Varsity team made the league play-offs and beat schools that ended up finishing higher than the Loggers. The team was led by outstanding Junior Byron Schorzman. Byron is not only a great leader but an excellent athlete. His athleticism allows him to score from the outside as well as drive to the basket for easy lay-ups. He is an outstanding re-bouncer and began most games at center court to start things off. Byron had several players helping out as outstanding contributors to the overall success of the program. They were led by two Senior Foreign Exchange Students: Benny Scheytt from Germany and Leo Sousa from Portugal: these two young men dazzled the fans with their three point shots and ball handling skills. Josh Tong was another senior whose defensive skills were very important to the team's winning ways. Juniors that will be back to lead the Loggers for next year's team are Jason Weller, an outstanding point guard and excellent outside shooter, and Blake Moellar who was back this year and immediately made an impact on the team with his defensive play and ability to hit the three point shot. The Junior Varsity team was led by two outstanding players, junior point guard Nick Young and outstanding three point shooter Brandon Gilbertson. Teams had a difficult time defending against these two players all year. With the addition of the rest of the JV squad and the graduation of just a few varsity players the Loggers look like serious contenders to make the league play-offs again next year.

Wrestling

This year's wrestling team started off the season with over thirty wrestlers and a big win at the Banks Invitational. The move to Scappoose did not slow the team down, and they continued to show improvement all season. The wrestlers were third in District 1-3A dual meets losing only to Rainier and Clatskanie and defeating Warrenton, Neah-Kah-Nie, Gervais, Colton and Chemawa. At the district tournament the team showed its overall strength and placed second to Rainier while qualifying seven individual competitors to the state meet. The Loggers were led all year by senior Tyler Bernardi who went undefeated all season until the district finals where he was beaten by a returning state place winner from Colton. Other seniors that were essential in the Loggers success this year were Jake Thompson, Kodiack Stone, Jeramey Lende, Tommy Carr, Kevin Cook, Bryan Benes, and John Dotter. Returning underclassmen that will lead a strong contingency of next year's team are Trever Gwin, Tylor Owen, and Dalton Rumbolz. The Loggers qualified seven athletes to state from the team that finished second. These wrestlers were: Kodi Dyer at 112 lbs, Tommy Carr at 119 lbs and seeded 4th at state, Tylor Bernardi at 125 lbs and seeded 4th, Dalton Rumbolz at 130 lbs, Tylor Owen at 152 lbs, Kodiack Stone at 160 lbs and Trever Gwin at 171 lbs and seeded third at state.

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A Time for Decision: Join us on March 3

By Dr. Kenneth Cox, Superintendent, Vernonia School District

Every day, we face choices, big and small -- when to get up, how fast to drive, what clothes to wear . . . whether we should close school because of the weather -- or where to build new schools.

I spoke on the topic of personal choices last month at a recognition luncheon for the inmates who served Vernonia after the flood. I've also emphasized this theme with staff, noting that we take personal responsibility for the students we teach. I also spoke on making correct choices to students at the beginning of the year as I explained our policy on how we enforce drugs, alcohol, and tobacco at school.

At 4:45 a.m. on December 3, 2007, I made one of those "big" decisions. After talking for twenty minutes with our bus manager, I decided to close school that day. He told me the roads were flooded in three bus routes. Thankfully, I made the right choice and our students were home when flood waters inundated our schools.

Now, our entire community is faced with a series of even bigger choices. Do we want new schools? If so, where should they be? Do we build them up where they are or move them elsewhere? We also must ask ourselves, what do we want our community to look like in ten years?

So why focus on schools? I believe that new schools will bring new people into the community, and more people in the community will bring new businesses that will benefit everyone. In a very real sense, the future of our schools has a huge impact on the future of our community.

I also believe that our students deserve the best possible schools we can provide. We must prepare our students for the future THEY will inherit, not the world we grew up in. As a community, we need to discuss not just our schools but all issues we face because together, with common goals and a clear sense of purpose, we can accomplish far more than we can if we are divided.

Common sense tells me that because of our geographic location, Vernonia will never get "too big." Together we can maintain a small town feeling and continue to foster the camaraderie that has sustained us these past few months -- and earned us the reputation for perseverance, optimism and hard work.

As an individual, you can decide to join the process or just sit back and watch. As a school district, we need and value your opinions! To join the process, please share your ideas with us. The first of a series of community meetings will be on Monday, March 3, at 6 p.m. at the Vernonia Community Church. Please feel free to contact the district office to find out more information.

More importantly, help us make the many decisions that we face as a community. Help us make a stronger Vernonia for everyone.

Big Dreams We're all about that.

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gets pushed in
because it's not
running and then
I work on it
and drive it out -
that's exciting!
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**Spring term
starts March 31!**



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