

VHS Fall Sports Update

Volleyball-- The Lady Loggers season came to an end in the Northwest League playoffs, as the Ladies lost to Knappa 3-0 in the first round.

The Lady Loggers, competing for the first time in Division 2A, reached the playoffs with a dramatic come-from-behind victory over Gaston in a playoff game to see which team would take the third and final league playoff spot. Both Gaston and Vernonia finished the season with six wins and six losses in league play,



The Lady Loggers volleyball team celebrates with their fans after their win over Gaston H.S. which sent Vernonia into the league playoffs.

necessitating the need for the playoff, held at neutral Banks High School.

After falling behind two games to none, the Lady Loggers fought back, winning game three, 25-15, holding on to win a very competitive game four, 25-23, and then taking the fifth and final game 15-13. The ladies showed poise and composure in winning the close match and earning a trip to the playoffs.

First year Head Coach Teresa Williams was proud of her young team, which had only two returning players with varsity experience last year. "My goal was to get them to the playoff," said Williams, "and they accomplished that."

Williams says goodbye to three graduating seniors this year. "Ariel and Megan Rock were both go-getters-- giving 100% all the time," said Williams, "and Mickell Maller was an asset for us at the net."

"I think what we struggled with this year was our passing," said Williams, "and our ability to cut loose and attack like we should."

Looking towards next year, Williams only expects the team to get better. "We have young and talented players, many who got good varsity experience this year and that's going to be a huge help," said

Williams. "Now that we know what this league is about and we know who we are up against, that will be beneficial."

Williams expects a couple of JV players to make the jump to the varsity next season. The JV team, under first-year coach Brandy Everett finished their season strong, going 13-3 in all matches.

Football-- Head Coach Brad Baker's Loggers have suffered through a long tough season. The Vernonia team was winless headed into their final game of the season against the also winless Neah-Kah-Nie Pirates on November 5th.

But Baker has been proud of his team so far. "It's been a tough season but the kids have stuck with it, we haven't had anyone quit and they've fought to the end," said Baker before the Neah-Kah-Nie game. "This will kind of be like our Bowl game."

Baker says he has been especially proud of his defense, which he feels has shown great improvement through the season. "At the start of the year, teams were scoring pretty easy on us, but now they've had to earn things against us," says Baker. He noted Danielle Della Rossa, a foreign exchange student from Italy who had never played football before, as having shown great improvement, and Joe Benes at Cornerback and

Jack Titus at Safety.

Baker noted that the team has experienced a lot of injuries this year. "That has hurt us a lot." Baker said he expected the team to be at full strength against Neah-Kah-Nie for the first time since the season opener.

Baker will be saying goodbye to five seniors. Jacob Alf, Parker Roach, and Alex Barber have all been four-year players for the Loggers; Cody Cowles has been a three-year player and Jordon McMahon is finishing his first year. Baker has also had four foreign exchange students who have contributed to the team.

The Loggers lost their final game to Neah-Kah-Nie, 14-6.

Cross Country-- First-year Head Coach Byron Brown was very pleased with his cross country team this year. At the District Meet, sophomores Nathan Fleck for the boys and Rowen Cheney for the girls turned in outstanding performances. Fleck finished eighth and was named All District Second Team, and Cheney finished fourteenth and was named All District Honorable Mention. Neither qualified for the State Meet under new rules put in place this year-- both would have qualified under the old rules last year.

"We exceeded every expectation I had for the team this year," said Brown. "I was really happy about our performance." Senior Paul Whiteman, who joined the team half way through the year, finished thirty-fifth for the boys; freshman Charlotte Burghard and junior Samantha Morgan finished twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth for the girls.

Brown was pleased with the progress the team made this season. "I think a lot of them learned habits that I hope will be with them for the rest of their lives," said Brown. "I think they all had a good time this year and I think physically and mentally they got a lot out of it. And personally, I really enjoyed this season."



Brown noted that Whiteman provided senior leadership and a positive influence on the team when he joined and also noted junior Kaytee Burghard for her hard work and dedication. "Kaytee's teammates saw how hard she worked all year and I think it really inspired them. I can't say enough about Kaytee Burghard-- she always gives one hundred percent effort at everything she does. To me, that's what makes a champion, whether you have the trophies or ribbons to prove it or not. It's how you go about what you do that says what kind of person you are."

More Than a Game: Toppers Learn More Than Just Football



The Vernonia Toppers middle school football program learned a lot about leadership and football this season.

The Vernonia Middle School Toppers have completed another successful football season. Often playing against bigger regional schools with larger squads of players, the Toppers held their own this year, ending with a 3-4 record and finished their season with a real bang.

But for the Toppers, this season has been about more than their performance on the field, it's been about the lessons and their performance off the field as well.

"We're following the 'Life of an Athlete' program that John Underwood introduced to our community last year," says head coach Mike Kay.

Underwood is the founder of the American Athletic Institute, a nationally recognized program that supports drug-free sports at all levels. The

Vernonia Prevention Coalition sponsored a two-day visit by Underwood last year, where he spoke to students, athletes coaches and community members in a series of presentations.

The Toppers football program starts and ends with a Code of Conduct that all players must sign and adhere to, that sends a clear message to community, youth and adults that student athlete drug use and other out of character behavior will not be tolerated.

The team, according to Kay, has had great support from the players' parents, community members and school staff. "Athletic Director Gordon Jarman has been especially supportive of our program," said Kay.

Kay's young group of student athletes voluntarily participated in an optional summer conditioning program three days a week this past year. "The kids showed up and did plyometrics, speed and agility training, and weight training-- which is pretty impressive to see kids in a middle school program that committed," said Kay.

The students also worked during the community Fourth of July celebration, earning money that was used to upgrade their uniforms. "We did that as a team-building exercise and also as a character-building exercise," said Kay.

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Cash for Candy!

Candy collection times:
The first 2 weeks of November,
Mondays & Wednesdays, from 2pm-5pm

➔ hey all you kids!

Bring in your left over candy and we'll give you a \$1 per pound for all that sugary stuff! We'll then take that candy and send it to the troops overseas. Stop by and draw a picture or write a letter to go with the care packages to the soldiers!

Questions? Vernonia Dental 503-429-0880