

VHS Winter Sports Preview

Boys Basketball—New head coach David Weller inherits a team that went to the state tournament last year. That roster included four key seniors who graduated that contributed heavily to last year's success, but Weller enters this season with a strong senior contingent and high expectations for his team.

This year's Logger team entered the season ranked third in the state in the 2A preseason poll. That gives you a hint of what was expected from this year's team and the Loggers have not disappointed in early non-league competition, going 5-1.

With several key returning players who saw significant playing time, Coach Weller has a veteran squad that has been entertaining to watch and should make some noise come playoff time. Weller's seven seniors, including three foreign exchange students, gives him veteran leadership, experience, and loads of talent.

Weller says he will use his teams quickness to run an up-tempo offense that will provide scoring opportunities for several different players. Weller also intends to use a pressing defense.

Center Austin Edgar, at 6'6" gives the Loggers a formidable presence in the middle. Power forward Austin Cutright, at 6'4" provides another big body and scoring threat on the front line. Point guard Craig Weller brings speed and tenacious defense and is an offensive scoring threat. Exchange student Paul Jiranek provides quickness, runs the offense from the point guard position and can score as well, and Alex Lembke, another exchange student, has offered an

offensive spark off the bench.

Seniors Byron Weller will start at guard and provide strong defense, Jerrid Johnston is a defensive specialist who will also see significant playing time. Junior Jesse Edgar is the backup center and Kendrick Leverton could play some guard for the varsity. Exchange student Finn Hoeck, senior Josh Butcher and junior Jake Titus round out the varsity squad.

The Loggers lost a heartbreaker at 3A Warrenton to open the season on November 30. Warrenton made a last second three point shot to defeat the Loggers 54-53. The Loggers then hosted Lowell, Toledo and Banks in a two-day home tournament on December 2 and 3, defeating Lowell 99-26 in the opener, before pulling out a tough win 52-49 against Banks in the final.

On December 6 the Loggers defeated Oregon Episcopal 48-28. The Loggers finished their non-league schedule at home on December 8 against Portland Adventist with a 76-69 victory and then defeated Clatskanie 69-59 on December 9.

The Loggers open league play with a five game win streak against Gaston on Tuesday December 13, travel to Knappa on December 16 and return home against Gervais on December 20.

Wrestling—The Vernonia Loggers return this season with a deep and experienced core group of wrestlers and head coach Chris Wolfe had high hopes heading into the season. Those hopes were fulfilled when the Loggers brought home the first place trophy from the



Jake Barnes finished second at 170 at the Harrisburg Tournament.

twelve-team Harrisburg Eagle Classic Tournament on December 2 to open their season.

This season sees a change in the weight classifications—the new weights are: 106, 113, 120, 126, 132, 138, 145, 152, 160, 170, 182, 195, 220, and 285.

The Loggers have a roster packed with talent in the middle weight classes but have a few holes at the lower and upper weights. Returning seniors

Joe Benes, Shylo Dooley, Quinn Johansen, Dillon Dethlefs, Jake Barnes, Jake Stevens and Brett Benes will lead the team. Underclassmen Damian Young, Ethan Johnston, and Dawson Shay also figure to play key roles. Foreign exchange students

Amir Habibuloev, Ty Talantov, and Kristian Wredstroem are all learning quickly. Matt and Jake Bringman, Bill Organ, Dylan Taylor, Mikol Pihl, Sammy Morgan and Jacob Levenseller will all compete for mat time. This looks to be a very deep and talented squad that should

perform well as a team, especially at tournaments. As Assistant coach, Chris Barnes, says, "Wrestling Tournaments are won by the points earned by the unknown soldiers."

Last year, Dooley won his second district championship and qualified for the state tournament; Benes and Barnes also both qualified for state with

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Jake Stevens took first place at the Harrisburg Tournament at 182.

The Christmas Tree...

A lasting tradition and part of the warmth and joy of the holiday season for all of us.



*Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year from
Senator Betsy Johnson*

Reward \$500

The Northwest Trail Alliance is offering a reward of up to \$500 for information leading to an arrest and the recovery of their ST240 trail construction machine and trailer.

Oregon State Police (OSP) is investigating the case.



Between 4:30 PM on November 29, and 7:00 AM, November 30, unknown suspect(s) forced entry into an enclosed maintenance compound at "Stub" Stewart State Park and stole NWT's utility trailer containing the ST240 and various tools.

The enclosed utility trailer is 18' gray Xtera dual axle with "Northwest Trail Alliance" black logo with IMBA logo on both sides of trailer. The ST240 with various tools and accessories are inside the trailer. Trailer most likely has had logos removed or covered. Distinctive feature of trailer is right rear fender is dented and slightly bent, and the rear door has custom heavy duty hinge.

License plate: U449427 (may have changed plates)

Call hotline at 800-452-7888 immediately if you see the trailer or have information.