

# VHS Winter Sports Preview *continued from page 14*

a chance to win as a team, not just the occasional individual. With better wrestlers at the top of the program, it just makes the younger wrestlers better, too."

Barnes is getting some help this season from assistant coach Jake Harbour who went to the state tournament last year as a senior and is providing some good guidance and insight for the squad.

With wrestlers covering almost every weight class, Barnes expects his squad to compete for the District title this year. "We have a really good chance to do well at the District Tournament," he says.

Team captains Storm Henson at 152 and Nick Bennett at 145 are both experienced wrestlers who Barnes says are ready to take it to the next level this season. "They've both been wrestling through the off season now for two years and are really coming around," says Barnes.

"I don't care about winning and losing," says Barnes. "It's exciting to win, sure. But I want to see creativity and see kids trying to score points this year. We need creativity. Storm is trying new things and Nick is starting to. I'm trying to move the team to a more creative style with a little higher risk. It will make it more interesting for the kids, for the fans, and the kids will learn more."

The squad looks especially strong through the middle weights. Freshmen Josh Rice at 132 or 145 and James Watson at 170 are both eighth grade regional champions and should be strong additions to the squad. Mekhi Williams is another returning wrestler with good experience who should have a break out year at either 126 or 132. Jacob Pasko returns and will wrestle at 106. Jake Patton should also provide some depth in the middle weights.

Barnes has seven girls out for the squad after a successful year last season that featured all girls brackets at several tournaments for the first time. This year's squad has four all-girl tournaments on their schedule including the state qualifying meet on February 3-4. The girls can also wrestle in any of the boys tournaments if they chose to do so. Captains Amanda Rose Sicard and Keilia Jackson, along with Katie Goodman will lead the girls squad that includes several exchange students; Barnes mentioned Lene Jacobsen from Norway, who he thinks has real potential. "Amanda is kind of a wildcard wrestler, she's really unpredictable," says Barnes. "Keilia is also really tough and looks ready to pick up where she left off last year. Lene looks like she is going to be a real powerhouse."

Barnes has several other

wrestlers that look like they are coachable and are learning the sport and should contribute to the squad, including Noah Rylands, and brothers Elijah and Isaiah Bozied, along with Ukrainian exchange student Serhiy Bauer.

Barnes says he is trying a few other new ideas this season. He said the team really bonded and had fun during their 24 Hour Workout over the summer. The team is also holding a raffle to raise money for equipment. Tickets are available for \$5 each with prizes that include a Traeger Grill and cash cards for \$400, \$250, \$150, and \$100. The drawing will be held on December 17.

The Loggers will host four

home meets this season, starting with a Columbia County match up with Rainier and Clatskanie on December 6. Other home meets will feature District rival Knappa on January 18, Yamhill/Carlton on January 28, and Warrenton on February 7. The team kicks off their season at the Harrisburg Tournament on December 2 and will also compete in the Warrenton Tournament on December 10, the Banks Tournament on December 15 and the Clatskanie Tournament on December 29 as well as the Bill Haggerty Tournament in Nestucca on December 17, the Pac Rim Tournament on January 6-7 and the Oregon Classic on January 13-14.

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