

VHS Winter Sports Preview *continued from front page*

In the middle weights, sophomore Cannon McLeod is a returning wrestler at 145 who shows promise. Senior Hunter Buehrer hasn't wrestled since he was a youth, but is looking strong at 160. Freshman Jack Mandes brings past wrestling experience to 170.

In the top weights, Rogers again notes a group of first year wrestlers who are learning the sport and will contribute, including freshman Brock Johnson, sophomore Austin Hardin at 183, and sophomore Hansom Forster at 195; Rogers expects Forster to be strong presence in the Logger lineup. Sophomore Joey Ellis and junior Isiah Naeve, who took 4th last year at State will be at 220 and 285.

"Everyone in this room can contribute to our team scoring," says Rogers, which is something he keeps stressing in practice. "I'm all about taking the beginning of the year and teaching and learning, and wrestling hard. I don't worry about wins and losses and team scores until we get to the big meets at the end of the year. Because that mentality of wrestling hard and learning as much as you can – that pays off at the end of the year."

Rogers points to his team's work to win matches with pins. It was a strategy that worked at last years State Championship when the team earned 28 of their 80 points with 14 wins by fall. "We're pinners," says Rogers. "We took 3rd at State with just seven wrestlers last year because we wrestle to pin."

Mark your calendars Logger fans, you're going to want to come out and see this team this season when Vernonia will host two home meets on Friday, December 9 and Thursday, January 12. The squad will also wrestle close to home at the Rainier Tournament on December 3, the Hank Schmidlin Invitational in Banks on December 7, the Clatskanie Tournament on December 29, and at Clatskanie for a



league meet on January 19. The District Meet is scheduled at Knappa on February 11, and the State Championships return to Portland's Memorial Coliseum this year on February 25-26.

"I'm just really excited," says Rogers. "The first day of practice with 24 kids was exciting. We have really good commitment from everybody and they want to be here."

Boys Basketball – The Loggers boys basketball team will be centered around senior Dave McCallum this season.

Head coach David Weller will once again have one of the top players in the league at his disposal, after McCallum had a break out season last year and became the focal point of the Logger's offense.



Left: Dave McCallum will lead the Logger offense this season. Above: Seniors Garrett Jones (left) and Peter Hahn (right) give the Loggers good court and game experience.

McCallum mixes good height, strong ball handling skills and an excellent outside shot, along with some solid defense, and will be a fun player for Logger fans to watch during his senior season.

"Dave really has the potential to be Player of the Year in our league," says Weller. "But a lot of the teams know him from last year, so it isn't going to be easy because a lot of defenses are going to be focused on how to stop him."

Weller has 16 players out this year, which allows Vernonia to field both a varsity and junior varsity squad, with several players swinging and playing minutes on both teams.

Weller has a core group of seniors to build around this season, which gives him good experience playing in his system, as well as a good understanding of game situations, both which should make the team

competitive in league play.

"We're returning a lot of players, and their knowledge of our system and the sport will go a long way toward building around a player like Dave," says Weller. "We lost a lot of close games last year because of a lack of court experience and knowing what to do in those situations. We'll be more mature and we'll be stronger this year."

Seniors Garrett Jones, Peter Hahn, Lyness Ota, and Cameron Terry, along with junior Logan Wolf, will likely see the bulk of the varsity minutes. Ota will run the offense as the point guard. Sophomores Gage Erhardt and James

Busch, junior Justin Tong, and freshman Jessie Ashley will be looking to earn varsity minutes and could also swing down to JV.

Weller has assistant coach Matt Blair back this season helping out with the varsity, and former player on the 2016 Logger State Championship team, and older brother of Dave, Luke McCallum, is stepping in as the JV coach. "Luke really wants to see these players succeed, so he'll be really good for our young players," says Weller. "The kids really respect him and I think we're going to see some real improvement on our JV squad."

"The experience we're bringing back is very valuable," says Weller. "We have guys who know, and can lead our drills. So we're not spending as much time teaching, instead we're working on playing better. They're

continued on page 10



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