

Sports

Winter sports awards night held at IVHS



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Co-Most Valuable TJ Hughey in a late season home match against Glide. Hughey shared the honors with John Britt.

By Jenna Larkin

IVN Contributing Writer

On Thursday, March 13, IVHS held their winter sports awards ceremony. The night started with IVHS Athletic Director Eric Lathen thanking all the coaches for all their time and dedication to coaching the players. He also thanked the parents and family members for supporting each and every student and the time spent getting their kids to and from practices and attending games. Lathen also thanked the custodians for the extra cleanup work that was needed after sporting events or gatherings. In addition, he lauded the kitchen staff for getting extra lunches prepared for the students who had to leave early due to sports.

After the accolades were handed out, Lathen introduced the coaches of each sport and the coaches gave a quick re-cap of how the season went for their teams. Bobbie Loyd was the head coach for cheerleading; Jeff Winters was

head coach for the boys' basketball assisted by Matt Knight and Travis Robbins; the girls' basketball team was led by Loren King, assisted by Derek Duman and Serena Barry. The wrestling team was coached by Jay Miller with assistants Ted Hall, Matt Miller and Eric Unger.

After the coaches thanked the parents and students and summed up the season, Lathen awarded scholar athletes in cheerleading, basketball and wrestling. In order for the students to participate in sports they must take their grades seriously and keep them up. If for any reason a student falls behind, they have an opportunity to get caught up, with help if needed. If a student is unable to get caught up, they must sit out until their grades are caught up or are taken off of the team.

For cheerleading, Sean Howard held a 3.6 grade point average, Melissa Myers held a 3.8 GPA and Cassie Hornsby held a 3.6 during the winter sports season. In girls basketball Kimberly Crow held a 3.5, Alexandra LaFlamme had a 3.6, Kynan Nordal kept a 4.0 along with

Victoria Johnson, Avery Neville and Aundrea Miller. Mikael Cusumano held a 3.75 during the basketball season. Lander Nordal kept a 4.0 during the season and Elijah Chavez held a 3.8.

Parents and students then went to separate rooms for each sport and the coaches spoke about the season and handed out individual awards to athletes.

Sean Howard was awarded an appreciation award and Melissa Myers got Most Inspirational for varsity cheerleading. Saraya Smith was awarded Most Improved in junior varsity cheerleading.

For the varsity girls' basketball team, Kim Crow was most Valuable Player, Aundrea Miller was awarded Most Improved and Miliya Stewart earned Most Inspirational. For the JV girls, Alicia Warner was awarded Attitude/Effort and Savannah Baez was awarded H3.

Lander Nordal was voted Most Valuable Player, Zach Welch received Offensive Player of the Year and Kade Doyle received the Iron

Man award for the varsity boys basketball team. Nick Worley was awarded Most Valuable player and Caleb Groves received Most Improved for the JV boys.

For the wrestling team, John Britt and TJ Hughey shared Most Valuable honors, James Jarrett received Most Improved and Julian Northrup was awarded Most Inspirational.

A few basketball players were presented with SCL All Conference honors. From the girl's team, Kimberly Crow was voted second team and honorable mentions were given to Alexandra LaFlamme, Theresa Frederick and Naviya Dixon. For the boy's, Zach Welch was voted second team and honorable mention went to Lander Nordal.

With the awards handed out and the winter sports season brought to an official close, many students will go on to participate in spring sports. Watch the I.V. News for weekly updates on spring sports.

IVHS baseball, softball teams gear up for the season

By Jenna Larkin

IVN Contributing Writer

The Cougars baseball program has 19 players total on the junior varsity and varsity teams. There are a few returning players, but for the most part head coach Jesse Dugas has a young team on his hands, with some of the players being freshmen who have only played in Little League before or have not played at all.

To get the team up to speed and where Dugas feels they need to be in order to be competitive against other squads, the practices are fast paced with a majority of time spent on conditioning. During any given practice, the boys are learning to round bases, what each position is and how to properly play a certain position. Learning to bat, pitch and catch can be a grueling workout in itself. The team is also doing running drills at the end of practices, gearing up for the ever exciting moment of stealing a base.

For the last two weeks the Cougars have been practicing five days a week. With so many practices comes a special bond

between the players that is required to become a close-knit team. With this team bond comes the ability to know what a teammate's move is going to be and without thinking about it, a play is made smoothly, gaining an out. Team bonding is not possible without a few goals set, as a team and individually.

Before practices began, the players, along with Dugas, get together and set a few goals that together as a team they plan on accomplishing throughout the season. Some of those goals were team goals while others were individual goals. Some of the team goals were to be a competitive team, learn to be a team, lean on each other for support. They also want to be a positive role model for others, not only at the high school level but for younger kids, especially those involved in baseball and other sports. The Cougar baseball team plans to work on the IVHS image; to generate a following of local community members that create a strong support group for the baseball team as a whole. Along with the community support, Dugas would like to have other baseball teams see IVHS as a strong and competitive team. The last important goal is for the players to know they can win, but at the same time understand it is sometimes alright to lose.

Dugas encourages the community to come out and

watch the progression of the IVHS baseball team and cheer them on during home or away games.

Bobbie Loyd is the head coach for the Lady Cougars' softball team. The softball team also has a few returning players and a few new faces to the game. Loyd's goals for the team this season are to have the girls bond and become a strong team. As a team, Loyd would like to build a strong defense and offense, and know when to be aggressive.

As with any sport, playing softball is more than just going through the motions. One of Loyd's big goals is for the girls to be passionate. Some of the other team goals include learning from the mistakes that are made and not getting down about it. A player needs the ability to pick herself up and continue on with the game. Loyd also would like to see the girls learn new skills and be able to depend on each other.

With the coaches' expectations in place and the teams forming those bonds, the Valley can expect to have an exciting baseball and softball season. The Cougars' first games are expected to be Tuesday, March 18, beginning at 4:30 p.m. on home turf at IVHS fields.

Arts Red Garter
Where the Valley comes to play
Karaoke - Dancing Live Music

Circle of Stone
Friday, March 21 @ 5:30 p.m.
Taylor's Country Store

Wild River HANDCRAFTED FOOD & ALE
Tim Mitchell
Sat., March 22 @ 6 p.m.
Every Friday Jay Barley
Every Wed Open Mic. Night Weds From 6-8 p.m.

Saturday night Pool Tourney
@ Sportsmans Tavern

Kate's Redwood Bar and Grill
Tuesday to Sunday Noon to Close
Happy Hour 3-5
Stop in and see Kate and Mamie Today!

THE HERBAL CREW
Friday March 21 \$3 cover
@ Mc Grew's Course