

Sports

IVHS readies to make history

Judy Hoyle
IVN Contributing Writer

Calling all track and field fans, May 6 marks the first official meet at the new all-weather track at I.V. High School. Coach Paul Jackson is looking for about 60 volunteers to help with the inaugural event.

"There's a lot going on all at the same time during a track meet," Jackson said in a telephone interview, "You can turn your head in any direction and see events taking place. A track meet takes a tremendous amount of volunteers to help with anything from raking sand between jumpers or measuring distances to just sitting in the shade as a timer or back up timer. Even kids can help by carrying information to the announcers or handing out bottles of water. It's a fun activity for the whole family."

For example, with only six lanes on the track, running events will require many heats, one right after another, starting with the slowest competitors and ending with the fastest.

"I'd love for this track meet to be an annual event that the community can become a part of," Jackson said. "Who knows how far this can go? If we have donations come in annually, we can hire more coaches and this program could become a better program."

"Right now, we only have two coaches, but we really need more specialized coaches for events, nutrition and body mechanics. We want to get these athletes in the training room, but they have to be supervised."

Jackson asked that those interested in volunteering for the meet or donating toward expenses call athletic secretary Heather Merrill at 541-592-2116. The meet starts at 4:30 p.m. Volunteers will need to be there half an hour to an hour early.

Since the new facility was officially opened June 4, 2014, this is only the second season I.V. athletes have been able to use the improved track.

Jackson thanked the community for investing in the facility and praised former coach Todd Kaberline. "He was

instrumental in raising funds and very active in letting people know what our needs were," Jackson said. "Everything is finally complete and that's pretty exciting."

Cave Junction city recorder and IVHS Alumni board member Ryan Nolan shares Jackson's enthusiasm and gratitude. In an email to *Illinois Valley News* he stated, "After five years of fundraising and help from many people, including those in the Illinois Valley, the entire area of Josephine County, and many from far away, we look forward to the first track meet held at this great new track."

"The Illinois Valley Booster Club, all of the Josephine County Rotary Clubs, and the Josephine County Educational Fund (JCEF) were key players in getting this project completed. Thanks are due to the whole community for helping provide an even playing field for our local kids. This is a great example of how people across our county worked together to accomplish a great thing."

Multiple building and renovation projects over the past 10 years include a press box, new sound system, and the all-weather track. The total cost of these projects was about \$200,000.

Until a few years ago, the track was only dirt, later upgraded to asphalt. The rubberized surface was a recent addition and team members helped pour the pads for discus and shot put.

"Track and field is expensive," Jackson said. "We just had to spend \$3,200 on hurdles. Each year we'll make some purchases. For example, the pads the athletes fall on in the pole vault have to be replaced after 10 years, max. We need donations for supplies."

"We live in the poorest part of the poorest county in Oregon and I just spent \$3,700 for warm-ups. We've got 45 athletes who all want to come out and have fun, but we've only got 40 uniforms, so some of them will have to wear old uniforms."

Jackson is hoping to recoup some of the expenses by selling ads in the meet programs and also selling refreshments. As of press time, he was looking for donations and volunteers

to cook and sell barbeque. He's also planning for an awards celebration at the end of the year and is seeking donations for those expenses as well.

"These are great opportunities for community involvement and to help boost Cougar Pride," he said.



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, *Illinois Valley News*)

Members of the IVHS track team goof-off after team photos Thursday, March 31.

Cougar track heats up classic

Ray Brown
Contributing Writer

The IVHS Cougar track team arrived at the Crater Classic April 16 ready to compete. The distance duo of Evan Vallot and Tyler Blind eclipsed their personal records again in the 3,000 meter run and Vallot bested again in the 1,500 meter run. Halona Jackson ran her best time in awhile in the 100 meter dash to take third place in a very strong field.

Other good showings were by Jacob

Bafia in sprints; Roza Jonas, 800 meters; and Austin Young who made the finals in discus.

According to head coach Paul Jackson the Crater Classic is a high level competition where just placing high in the event is an accomplishment.

April 19 the JV team went to Douglas. Cullen Beery set the tone with a personal record and good showing in the 100 meter dash. The 4x100 relay team of Cynthia Burns, Lilly Pyle, Taylor Hammers and Tessa Turner ran a great race and placed second among

many teams. Turner added to her great day with a fantastic run in the 100 meter hurdles and a nice long jump. Also competing in the long jump were Meron Jonas and Hammers, both setting personal records. Alyssa Lewin tossed the javelin well for ninth place out of 30 throwers. Dean Hearn had very good results in both the long jump and triple jump. Pepe Mendoza threw the javelin 134 feet-3 inches for fifth place out of 51 throwers.

After a long dry spell, Rowdy Bates got that monkey off his back and threw the shot

nearly 32 feet for a personal best. Rumor has it that the heat had something to do with the throw.

The team travelled to Klamath Falls April 23 to the prestigious Lithia Invitational where teams from three states gathered and the results will be in next week's paper. (Here's a clue: who do you think won the girls' 100 meter dash out of 50 high level competitors and what small southwestern Oregon town does she represent every time she steps onto the track? The answer will be in detail next week.)

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