

Sports

Lorna Byrne track is on its mark

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IVN Contributing Writer

The Lorna Byrne Middle School girls' track and field team is gearing up for their first event Wednesday, April 5. Their new head coach, Savannah Baez, is leading the charge. Baez graduated from the Illinois Valley High School last year and has competed in track and field events for a considerable amount of time but this will be her very first season as a coach.

Unfortunately, the season has

gotten off to a problematic start because the nonstop rain has made it difficult for the girls to hone their skills outdoors. With only a handful of outdoor practices so far this season Baez said that they did their best to stay busy with indoor conditioning during the last couple of weeks. However, and on the bright side, the girls will have had an additional two days, after spring break, to get practice outside before the event.

"I think we've got a good team for the practice that we've had," Bob Clarke, assistant coach,

said before continuing, "Hopefully, going forward, the weather will cooperate with us."

According to Clarke, the field events like shot put and discus scheduled for Wednesday are not yet confirmed to be taking place. Reportedly, it will depend on whether the field is repaired by then. "It was screwed up last season pretty bad during the football season," Clarke, said, summarizing the problem.

The track and field team had an unusually large turnout for the season with over 30 girls

competing. It will be the biggest track team that Clarke has coached in his three years of experience. In addition to track, Clarke is also one of the coaches for the basketball team and in the past has coached football as well.

"We've got some great newcomers that will probably set some records here at Lorna Byrne," Clarke said.

Over the course of the season Clarke will be drilling "handoffs" for relay runners more vigorously than previous years because of their importance for victory in that event.


"Winning or losing is done on the handoffs," Clarke said, "If you have speed, you have speed, but handoffs are really what counts. We need to work on cleaner handoffs."

Although the majority of the team has little to no experience with track and field events they are reportedly in high spirits and eager to show the community what they can do. "I'm super excited about it," Baez concluded, "Over half of our team hasn't really done track before so seeing where they shine is really cool!"


The IVHS softball JV team hosted Brookings Harbor Saturday, April 1. Final scores were not available at press time.

Varsity traveled to Brookings and split the series with a 1-12 loss and a 6-5 win. The ladies took on Klamath Union in Klamath Falls Tuesday, April 4.

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

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Jennifer Kowalczyk, WHNP

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