

Blodgett an ace in softball and school



Besides being a starting pitcher, Jewell freshman Niqui Blodgett is also a leading batter for the Warrenton softball team. Blodgett plays for the Warriors because of family connections there.

By DON ANDERSON
For The Daily Astorian

JEWELL — Niqui Blodgett has known that she wanted to play softball since she was 6 years old, but at that time she didn't know she would be as good at the game as she is. A freshman at Jewell High School, Blodgett can't play softball for the Bluejays who only offer track and field in the spring. "My family are alumni at Warrenton and I wanted to go there and become a pitcher. They have a good softball program, so that's why I chose Warrenton High School," Blodgett said. She plays softball for the Warriors, while earning a 4.0 grade point average at Jewell School. With Jewell being an hour away

from Warrenton though, this can make both practice and homework rather interesting.

"I practice six days a week, sometimes seven. I practice in Astoria in the batting cages, in Warrenton in the gym and outside and sometimes here at Jewell," Blodgett said.

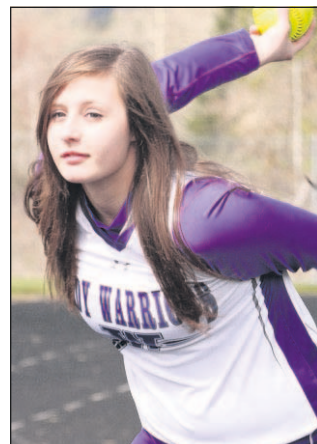
"I have to study after practice mostly and sometimes have to stay up really late studying, but our coaches provide us study halls too. It's not easy." Blodgett had to get special permission from her teachers at Jewell to be able to leave early for practice and games at Warrenton, but none of them worried about her grades.

"I wasn't too concerned, but I checked her grades and found that she was a straight-A student," said Jewell Principal

Mike Scott. "It's a great opportunity for an athlete to play her favorite sport and one at which she excels."

Blodgett started off her high school softball pitching career with a 12-0 shutout, hitting a double and scoring two runs herself. She is already one of the top pitchers on the North Coast and has lots of North to grow.

"I really want us to come together as a team," she said of her goals for the season. "I want us to grow and learn and get better and be one great solid team." Blodgett's personal goals are pretty lofty too. She wants to play softball in college and eventually get into law school. With her athletic and academic abilities, she seems to be well on her way.



Photos by DON ANDERSON — For The Daily Astorian
Jewell freshman Niqui Blodgett practices her softball pitch before a game Thursday. Blodgett plays for the Warrenton Warriors because Jewell doesn't have a softball team.

Jewell track team gets the Fix and comes out strong



By DON ANDERSON
For The Daily Astorian

David Fix has the rare combination of expertise and caring in a coach that can make his athletes do better than they ever expected. Even though the Jewell track and field team is only 13 strong, he is infusing them with an enthusiasm that is needed for the fledgling program.

"Coach has taught me a lot so far this season," said junior Trystan Silva, who is currently second in the league in javelin. "His experience as a college and university coach has helped our team a lot." Besides javelin, Silva also runs the 100- and 200-meter events. "I hope to be in the Top 10 at the district meet," he said.

Fix, who coached at the University of Oregon, Eastern Oregon University and for more than 30 years at Lewis & Clark College, now has the challenge of igniting the passion of his tiny team at Jewell. "They're a great bunch of kids, but they weren't used to running," he said. "At first, when I told them to go out and run for 30 minutes, they stared at

me. It was something they hadn't done before."

But Fix is rapidly changing attitudes and instilling the track program with an eagerness to better themselves. At practice Thursday he worked with freshman Gabi Morales on her hurdling technique. Morales currently leads the league in the 100-meter and 200-meter hurdles and hopes to go to state in the event.

Long distance runner, junior Rylan Murray is getting better day by day, even though it is sometimes painful. "My favorite event is the 4-by-400-meter relay," said Murray. "I don't have to run as much in that event!" Murray also competes in the 1500-meter and 800-meter events.

While acknowledging that his new coach makes him run more, he also realizes that he is becoming a better athlete because of it.

"Running so much makes us better athletes. I would like to get a time of 4:45 on the 1500 and place at the district meet," he said. "Mr. Fix is both demanding and enthusiastic. He makes us better ourselves."



Photos by DON ANDERSON — For The Daily Astorian
Jewell junior Trystan Silva makes a run up for a javelin throw during practice Thursday. Silva is currently second in league in the javelin.

ABOVE: Jewell track coach David Fix and freshman runner Gabi Morales set up the hurdles for practice on Thursday. Morales is first in her league in both the 100- and 300-meter hurdles.

RIGHT: New Jewell track coach David Fix gives instructions to Dallas Ritchie, Ben Stahly and Gabi Morales during practice Thursday. Fix, a former collegiate track coach has sparked interest in track at Jewell.



CAMP 18 RESTAURANT

- Serving Breakfast, Lunch, & Dinner
- Complete Facilities for Banquets, Meetings & Receptions
- Wedding Parties & Rehearsal Dinners Welcome
- Gift Shop
- Locals favorite stop on the way to Portland or on your way home

**OPEN DAILY
7 DAYS A WEEK
503.755.1818**

U.S. Highway 26 at Milepost 18, In Elsie
www.camp18restaurant.com

**Best
of luck
this season!**

COAST WEEKEND

Westerlund TRUCKING

**BEST OF LUCK THIS SEASON
BLUE JAYS!**

No. 10, Pier 1, Suite 301 • Astoria, OR 97103
503-325-9877