



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Warrenton's Gavon McFadden, No. 13, avoids a tackle by an Ilwaco, Wash., player during the Football Jamboree at CMH Field.

Freeman era begins

Warriors could be frontrunner in football league

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

It feels like we were just here, not long ago — Warrenton football having to replace a coach and rebuild.

That's where the Warriors are again as they enter the 2015 season. Ian O'Brien has moved on, while Warrenton looks to bounce back after its first winless league season in the modern era of Warrior football.

(Although you can put an asterisk by "winless," since there were only three teams in the league, and the 0-2 Warriors lost to the other two).

Travis Freeman is the new Warrenton coach, replacing O'Brien, who left to become the athletic director at Lakeridge High School.

"We're filling some gaps in some pretty big ways," Freeman said. "It's tough when you lose a two-year starter at quarterback (Brock Johnson). But we've got a lot of senior talent returning. The leadership has been phenomenal. I have no complaints or worries in that department."

Freeman is only the third coach of Warrenton football since 1974 (John Mattila coached from 1974 to 2011).

THE WARRIORS

On the plus side, the Warriors are back with six all-league returners (another asterisk — with only three teams in the league, most starters made all-league).

The all-leaguers include running back Justice Watson and receiver Gavon McFadden; linebacker/running back Eli Petersen and lineman Anthony Cochran (all seniors); and junior offensive linemen Devon Bowser and Jared Middleton.

"Gavon is a three-year starter, and every year he's gotten better and better," Freeman said. "He's every bit as good, if not better, than he was last year."

McFadden will also carry the ball for the Warriors, along with Watson. Petersen ran the ball last season, and was the leading tackler on defense.

On last year's roster, Jesse Salcedo was listed as a wide receiver, and wore No. 85.

Salcedo is back for his senior season, and could be Warrenton's starting quarterback for the season opener.

"We're giving him a shot (at quarterback)," Freeman said. "He gives us an athletic look back there. We'll try and run the read-option a little, and he gives us a good look."

The Warriors have a couple other candidates at QB.

"It's been a good battle in camp so far, and we'll see how it comes out," Freeman said. "There's no clear winner yet. You might see a rotation."

On the offensive line, Cochran



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian
Warrenton's Jesse Salcedo, No. 7, tries to break a tackle by Seaside's Gage Cain, No. 63, during the Football Jamboree.

has moved to center, while Bowser and Middleton will help anchor what could be the league's best line.

THE LEAGUE

The league added a fourth team (Portland Christian), which means it may take two league wins to make the state playoffs this year.

Rainier made the final 16 last season with a 1-1 league record (2-7 overall), while the Warriors began 2014 with a 6-0 record, but lost both league games and finished out of the playoffs.

The Columbians — for years the league powerhouse — are no longer the threat they once were (Rainier was blown out in its playoff game vs. Harrisburg, 35-0); Clatskanie lost a

ton of starters to graduation, and the Tigers only had 21 players suited up for last week's jamboree at Astoria; and new arrival Portland Christian has not fielded a varsity football team in two years.

All of which should put the Warriors back in the state playoffs for the first time since 2012.

"The league is always tough," Freeman said. "We don't know what Portland Christian is going to look like."

"And we have yet to beat Rainier and Clatskanie in a very long time. We got close last year, but we have a long ways to go. They're both phenomenal programs. I expect Rainier to rebound. Clatskanie is just going to reload."

"Every game is critical, especially with four teams. You lose one, and you're probably not going to get in. It's important to win all three, and just solidify it. I like that we have a lot of seniors this year. But we're no world-ender. We have a long way to go."

Freeman's coaching staff includes Jason Edwards, Mike Larsen and Jake Mullins.

WARRENTON FOOTBALL

Coach: Travis Freeman, 1st year
2014: 6-2 (0-2 league)
All-League Losses: Brock Johnson, Bryton Kyme, Chris Ocana, Juan Salcedo
All-League Returners: Devon Bowser (OL, Jr.); Anthony Cochran (DE, Sr.); Gavon McFadden (WR, Sr.); Jared Middleton (OL, Jr.); Eli Petersen (LB, Sr.); Justice Watson (RB, Sr.)

Talented front line trio leads Warriors

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

No promises or guarantees, but the 2015 Warrenton volleyball season sure looks a lot more promising than it did midway through the 2014 campaign.

A bright start to last year's league season — which included back-to-back wins over Riverdale and Clatskanie — was followed by a five-match losing streak for the Warriors, who dropped in the league standings and finished 4-6 in league play.

From all appearances, Warrenton will knocking on the door to the state playoffs this season.

THE WARRIORS

Coach Jenny Forney Smith and the Warriors head into a new season with a balanced roster: Five seniors, four juniors, two sophomores and a freshman.

All-league returner Libby Biel enters her senior season as one of the team's outstanding hitters, along with junior middle blocker/outside hitter Landree Mieth.

Another player to watch will be senior hitter Ally Bentley, who transferred to Astoria two years, but has returned to Warrenton for her senior year. Bentley was a Cowapa All-League selection last year with the Lady Fishermen.

Other seniors are Lexie Lumberg, Amanda Spencer and Sophia Thomas.

Besides Mieth, the junior class includes Katelynn Blodgett, Asia Lambert and Sierra Lyons; and a few underclassmen who may see action include sophomore setter Leah Durham and sophomore Michelle Arney, while freshman Claire Bussert started in last week's season opener.

THE LEAGUE

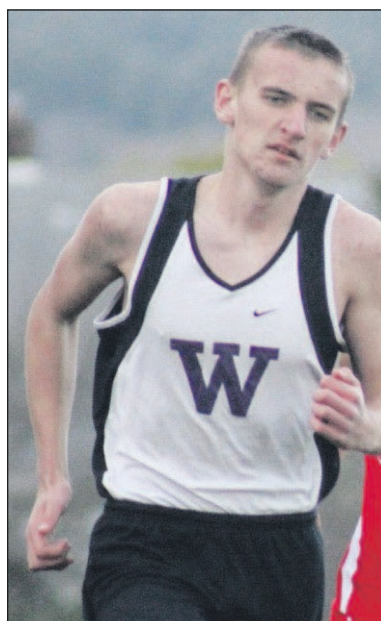
Defending Lewis & Clark League champion Oregon Episcopal lost a pair of first-team all-league players, but the Aardvarks return first-team player Grace Magee and junior second-team all-leaguer Belle Scott. As league coach of the year, Jennifer Homann, looks to lead OES to another league championship.

Rainier finished just a half-game behind OES in the standings a year ago, and the Columbians return sophomore Breana Edwards, but lost Player of the Year Mikala Edwards to graduation.

Catlin Gabel, Portland Adventist and Warrenton will all battle for a state playoff spot, as the Warriors went 1-1 in last year's league playoffs.

WARRENTON VOLLEYBALL

Coach: Jenny Forney Smith, 2nd year
2014: 4-6 Lewis & Clark
All-League Loss: Bri Marsch
All-League Returners: Libby Biel, Sr.; Ally Bentley, Sr. (Cowapa All-League with Astoria)



Daily Astorian File

Warrenton runner Jerdy Lew is tries to set the pace ahead of Seaside's Rafi Sibony in a track meet last spring.

Warrenton has list of young runners

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

A new cast and crew — with a few returners tossed in — are waiting at the starting line for the 2015 Warrenton cross country team.

Head coach Hayley Espelund Rogers has some varsity experienced runners returning, but the Warriors will also be counting on a lot of new, first-year runners, as well.

The Lady Warriors have a good mix of experience and youth.

A talented junior class includes Cheyenne Harrison, Krista Morrill (recovering from a back injury), Saran Pottschmidt and Elle Schenbeck.

Sophomore Ivy McCargish ran track last spring and is coming off a hip injury; and the Warriors have

added freshman Madison Kadera.

"If all these girls stick around, we will have the biggest girls team we've seen so far," Rogers said.

The only returning senior for the Warrenton boys is Charlie Burrows.

Rogers is "super excited to see how he does. He has made huge improvements from cross country last year to track season. Last year was his first year running, ever."

Other runners with varsity experience include juniors Jerdy Lewis and Luke Liljenwall, and sophomore Austin Stein.

Freshman Andrew Stafford "looks very promising," Rogers said.

The Warriors will be hosting a meet later in the season, the second annual Wreck Race (at the Peter Iredale) Oct. 13.

SCOREBOARD

PREP SCHEDULE

TODAY

Volleyball — Astoria at Estacada, 6 p.m.; Seaside at Warrenton, 6:30 p.m.
Boys Soccer — Catlin Gabel at Astoria, 5 p.m.

THURSDAY

Volleyball — Seaside at Yamhill-Carlton, 6:30 p.m.; Warrenton at Portland Adventist, 6:30 p.m.; Knappa at Clatskanie, 6 p.m.
Girls Soccer — Seaside at Yamhill-Carlton, 4:15 p.m.
Boys Soccer — Yamhill-Carlton at Seaside, 7 p.m.

Cross Country — Warrenton at Bill Chapman Invitational, 4:30 p.m.

FRIDAY

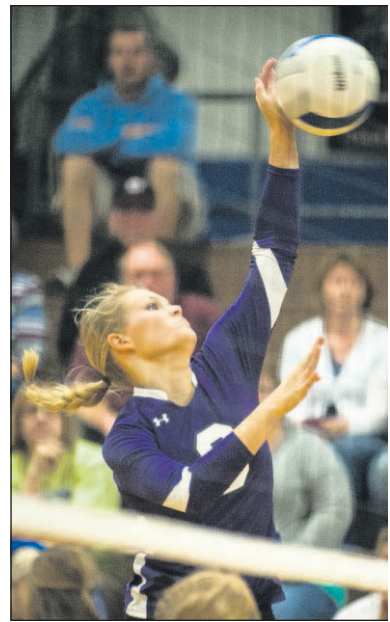
Football — Taft at Astoria, 7 p.m.; Yamhill-Carlton at Seaside, 7 p.m.; Warrenton at Vernonia, 7 p.m.; Knappa at Regis, 7 p.m.; Ilwaco at North Beach, 7 p.m.

SATURDAY

Volleyball — Astoria at Southridge Tournament, 8 a.m.; Neah-Kah-Nie Tournament, 9 a.m.

Girls Soccer — Astoria vs. North Bend, at Newport, 1 p.m.

Boys Soccer — Astoria vs. North Bend, at Newport, 3 p.m.



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian
No. 9, Sophia Thomas of Warrenton makes the hit during a game against Knappa at Warrenton High School.



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