

Cowapa All-League football team announced

The Daily Astorian

It was a senior-heavy all-league team this year in Cowapa League football.

Of the 37 members who made the first team, 31 were seniors. The all-league team was voted on by the league's coaches, with players from Banks and Scappoose taking up most of the selections.

Donny McClean of Banks and Braden Clark of Scappoose shared the Offensive Player of the Year award, while Twister McComas of the Braves was the Defensive Player of the Year.

Coaches of the Year were Ben Buchanan of Banks and Sean McNabb of Scappoose.

The Braves (eight) and In-

dians (11) also combined for 19 first team selections.

Astoria and Seaside also had first team players.

Astoria senior running back Carter Wallace and senior center Clay Williams made the first team offense; seniors Wyatt Dietrich and Clay Englund were first team linebackers; and senior Ryker Helmersen and junior Kyle Strange were selected as first team defensive backs.

Wallace was also the first team punter.

The Gulls had two first team offensive players (senior tight end Zach Marston and senior tackle Austin Eagon); and two first team defenders (senior linebackers Alex Barker and Nathanael Ward).



Astoria's Carter Wallace, No. 21, was a two-time selection to the Cowapa All-League team, as a first team running back and first team punter.

Daily Astorian File Photo

SCOREBOARD

FOOTBALL

Cowapa All-League

Offensive Players of the Year: Donny McClean, Banks; Braden Clark, Scappoose

Defensive Player of the Year: Twister McComas, Banks

Coaches of the Year: Ben Buchanan, Banks; Sean McNabb, Scappoose

First Team Offense

WR: Brennen McNabb, Sr., Scappoose

WR: Jaron Malcom, Sr., Banks

WR: Jaxsen Johnson, Jr., Tillamook

WR: Riley Maloney, Sr., Tillamook

C: Clay Williams, Sr., Astoria

C: Matt Bennett, Sr., Scappoose

G: Twister McComas, Sr., Banks

G: Jeremy Schriber, Sr., Tillamook

T: Joel Smith, Sr., Scappoose

T: Austin Eagon, Sr., Seaside

TE: Zach Marston, Sr., Seaside

RB: Donny McClean, Sr., Banks

RB: Braden Clark, Sr., Scappoose

RB: Carter Wallace, Sr., Astoria

RB: Kaler Moore, Sr., Tillamook

QB: Robert Lohman, Sr., Scappoose

K: Eleanor Jones, Sr., Scappoose

First Team Defense

DL: Boogie Davis, Jr., Scappoose

DL: Dylan Shafer, Sr., Banks

DL: Hunter Copley, Sr., Banks

DL: Jakob Pruitt, Sr., Valley C.

DL: Twister McComas, Sr., Banks

LB: Trevor Thiessen, Jr., Banks

LB: Donny McClean, Sr., Banks

LB: Avery Jones, Sr., Valley C.

LB: Colton Bird, Sr., Scappoose

LB: Cody Erhardt, Sr., Scappoose

LB: Alex Barker, Sr., Seaside

LB: Nathanael Ward, Sr., Seaside

LB: Wyatt Dietrich, Sr., Astoria

LB: Clay Englund, Sr., Astoria

DB: Owen Parsons, Sr., Scappoose

DB: Michael Gift, Jr., Scappoose

DB: Kyle Strange, Jr., Astoria

DB: Ryker Helmersen, Sr., Astoria

DB: Calder Pruhliere, Jr., Tillamook

P: Carter Wallace, Sr., Astoria

Honorable Mention

WR: Milo Applebee, Sr., Banks

WR: Alex Hyland, Sr., Valley C.

WR: Mason Reardon, Sr., Scappoose

C: Skylor Africa-Barnes, Sr., Banks

T: Noah Jenck, Sr., Tillamook

QB: Fridtjof Fremstad, Jr., Astoria

QB: Tilor Hurliman, Jr., Tillamook

DL: Michael Bailey, So., Seaside

DL: Ian Birrell, Jr., Valley Catholic

LB: Samboy Tuimato, Jr., Astoria

DB: Jaxson Smith, Sr., Seaside

DB: J.D. Wack, Sr., Scappoose



PATRICK WEBB/EO Media Group

Comets can fly! Coaches Kim Eaton, left, and Marie Green display the District IV Championship trophy in the gym at Black Hills School in Tumwater as the volleyball team celebrates two wins Saturday night that secured a place in the WIAA state tournament and won their 1B district. Left to right are Taylor Gudmundsen, Raja Estes, Kelly Langston, Amelia Tutu'u, Ashley Muessig, Kendra Leeland, Haley Footh, Taylor Eaton, Ellie Chapman and Lily Harman.

Naselle: Volleyball makes return trip to state

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For Head Coach Kim Eaton, selecting them as captains was a slam-dunk. But, in part because she is Taylor's mother, she still went through a preseason process charting all her players' positive attributes.

It produced the same top girls the last two years.

When asked for words to describe them, their coach comes up with "consistency," "mellowness" and "quiet confidence." Her tears spell pride.

Role models

The pair's leadership traits go back ages. Eaton and Leeland's mother, Kristi Leeland, have coached and supported their girls in sports and activities from kindergarten up. In turn, the girls have helped others.

"I saw that in them from a very young age," said Eaton. "If I need a role model, they're the girls that the rest of the team will look to. They have always been competitive with each other — in a positive way — on the volleyball and basketball courts and on the softball field. They're competitive, based on the knowledge that pushing each other makes them better."

But their style is positive. "They are always going out of their way to encourage the younger players, their peers and team members," said the coach. "They both lead by example. They are not overzealous, 'in your face,' at all. They are not obnoxious or anything like that.

They are slow and steady, with consistency in their emotions and leadership. The other girls will look to them — "How do I need to act?"

For Kendra Leeland, that's crucial. She and Taylor Eaton have played alongside the other girls even before they became teenagers; they know their strengths and weaknesses.

"I like to give constructive criticism," Leeland said. "If people are just bossy and arrogant ... well, I don't like to be that kind of person. That's my philosophy of life — being positive."

Taylor Eaton agrees. Help teammates, but set an example with your own performance.

"Whatever attitude we walk onto the court with, it stays with us," she said. "If we make mistakes during the warm-ups, then that's very negative. Our job as captains is to keep everybody in a positive mindset. 'It's OK to mess up. You can get the next point back.'"

Excelled

Volleyball coaches like Eaton and her accomplished assistant, Marie Green, keep statistics to assess player performance, including kills, blocks, aces, digs and assists. Week after week, Taylor Eaton and Leeland have excelled in most categories. Leeland said she doesn't care about her stats, because it's all about the team, but she nods as Taylor Eaton highlights a viewpoint they obviously share. "If I can't do it myself, then I



Patrick Webb/For EO Media Group

Naselle High School volleyball senior co-captains Kendra Leeland, left, and Taylor Eaton share a fun moment with junior Ellie Chapman, right, during a break in the action Saturday at the Black Hills High School gym in Tumwater, Wash. The two leaders stress teamwork above all else as the reason for their success this year.

'Our job as captains is to keep everybody in a positive mindset.'

—Taylor Eaton
NHS volleyball co-captain

shouldn't really be put in that leadership position," Eaton said. "I make a 100-percent effort, so if I have to give some correction I feel confident."

Junior Ellie Chapman's own stats are commendable; in the Comets' last game she made 11 kills. She is inspired by her captains, praising their constant positive reinforcement, even when facing adversity. "They are very important," she said. "They are like the backbone of the team."

At Black Hills High School

championship bracket so she could research Naselle's first opponent and focus her team's remaining practices.

While delighted about advancing to state after the spectacular wins, she still wanted to stress the team aspect — minutes after she had made a season-high 28 assists in the championship game. "We just had an 'on' night," Taylor Eaton said. "We were 'on' all evening ... We've won this trophy working for a common goal."

Last time

At the Sun Dome, 223 miles from their Pacific County home, the Comets will begin their state journey against nine Eastern Washington girls wearing the silver and blue of Oakesdale. Their school did not qualify last year, but was state 1B champions in 2011, 2012 and 2013. In their 12 matches at state, only one, a semifinal, went to five sets; most wins were accomplished in three. This year's lone senior is a survivor from those winning Nighthawks squads.

Last year, Naselle's trip to state had no fairytale ending. On the first morning, the Comets came up against Almira Coulee Hartline and only scored five points in the first set, losing the match in three. The next encounter, against Riverside Christian of Yakima, also ended in three sets. For Naselle, state 2014 was over rather too swiftly.

One consolation was that Almira Coulee Hartline's girls reached the championship

NASELLE VOLLEYBALL

Head Coach Kim Eaton

Asst. coach Marie Green

Varsity squad

2. Taylor Gudmundsen (F)

3. Taylor Eaton (S) *

7. Kendra Leeland (S) *

10. Ellie Chapman (J)

12. Tayler Ford (J)

14. Ashley Muessig (J)

17. Amelia Tutu'u (J)

18. Lily Harman (F)

22. Kyrin Jacot (J)

23. Haley Footh (S)

24. Raja Estes (J)

25. Kelly Langston (J)

26. Hailey Weston (F)

28. Emma Fauver (S)

F=freshman; J=junior;

S=senior

* captains

game, though they lost to Pomeroy. Both schools are drawn in the opposite half of the bracket this year; Oakesdale just lost to Pomeroy in their district finals in five sets.

Eaton, Leeland and fellow seniors Haley Footh and Emma Fauver have been playing together since seventh grade. They will walk into the Yakima stadium this weekend wearing their blue and gold uniforms for the last time.

All four were beaming Saturday night; Friday morning, it will be all business.

"I'm proud of us for making it to state. That's a huge accomplishment," said Leeland, not even considering where her team might place. "I just want us to play 100 percent. If we play our hardest ..."