

Wrestling tradition continues at Warrenton



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Warrenton wrestling head coach Corey Conant speaks with his team as practice wraps up at the high school. For the first time, there will also be a girls team.

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

The Warrenton Warriors lost most of their state tournament points to graduation, but there's one returner that Warrenton wrestling always has: Tradition.

Warrenton's tradition was working hard last season and resulted in an individual state championship for one wrestler, and a fourth-place showing for another.

"We have an excited young team that is putting in a lot of work to get ready for the season," said Warrior coach Corey Conant.

THE DISTRICT

Last year, Warrenton had to travel 275 miles to take part in the Special District 1 tournament.

Once they got there, the Warriors and everybody else had to watch Nyssa dominate the action, as the Bulldogs scored a whopping 482 points to run away with the team championship. Vale was second with 258.5 points, followed by Riverside (175.5), Clatskanie (115) and Warrenton (88).

The good news for the Warriors: the top three teams are gone, as Nyssa, Vale and Riverside have all moved to District 3.

The bad news: Dayton and Willamina have joined District 1, and the Pirates and Bulldogs also have traditionally strong wrestling programs.

"Our 3A District 1 has been redrawn to include top 10 teams Willamina and Dayton, as well as some other quality teams with quality wrestlers in Rainier, Clatskanie and Amity," Conant said.

THE WARRIORS

Last year's seniors scored most of the points for Warrenton both at district and at state, and they will be sorely missed.

Colton Walker was the state champion at 106 pounds, and Justice Watson placed fourth at 152, after advancing to the championship semifinals.

Seniors Levi Lewis (182) and Forrest Vaughn (195) both took third at districts.

Among the returners this year are seniors Asia Lambert and Brian Sheppard; juniors Caden Hans and Brandon Williamson; and sophomore Giovanni Martinez.

"We are fielding a women's team for the first time ever," Conant said. "They are pioneers in a tough sport and have a chance to make a mark in our history books. Women's wrestling is a rapidly growing sport across the country and in Oregon."

Young Warriors set to battle on the boards

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

The Warrenton boys basketball program added numbers last season over the year before; now the Warriors are hoping to add wins in 2016-17.

After suffering through a winless 2013-14 season (0-24), head coach Nate McBride and the Warriors won eight games in 2014-15, followed by a four-win season last year.

Warrenton lost a few key seniors, but help is — slowly but surely — on the way.

"We have decent depth," McBride said. "We have more kids (22) in our program than we've had the last couple years, so we should have enough solid numbers for JV and varsity."

THE LEAGUE

Of course, it's hard to make progress when you compete in one of the strongest 3A boys basketball leagues in the state.

The private schools are a much bigger factor once the Lewis & Clark League tips off the basketball season.

The league had two teams (De La Salle and Portland Adventist) in the Final Four last year, with De La Salle falling short in the state title game against St. Mary's. The Lewis & Clark finished with six teams ranked in the top 18.

De La Salle has lost Player of the Year Javary Christmas, in addition to two additional all-league starters; while Portland Adventist graduated three all-league players.

"PAA will probably be the best team," McBride said. "They bring back pretty much their whole roster. And they're adding a senior kid who could be their best player, so they're actually adding to what they have."

"If I had to pick a favorite, it's PAA," he said. "De La Salle lost a ton of talent, but you never know. Catlin Gabel should also be pretty good. They've had the best player in the league the last couple years (Jacob Adler), then they've got a 6-8 kid who was pretty raw last year. He should be tough."

In addition, "Rainier could be tough," he said. "They graduated a few, but they play good team basketball. Clatskanie will be interesting, with a new coach Ryan (Svenson) from West Linn."

"This could also be a



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Christian Holt, senior, drives to the basket during practice at Warrenton High School.



The basketball team at practice on Nov. 15 at Warrenton High School. The team is slowly increasing its ranks.

year where Catlin does something."

THE WARRIORS

Anthony Cochran, Joe

Little and Hunter Wilson were last year's seniors, and will be missed, along with 6-foot-3 Austin Stein, who has transferred.

WARRENTON BASKETBALL

Coach: Nate McBride, 4th year

2015-16: 4-20 (1-15 L&C)

All-League Losses: None

All-League Returners: Christian Holt, Sr.

Despite the losses, there's still varsity experience returning for Warrenton in 2016-17.

Raymond Alcobendas, four-year starter Christian Holt and three-year starter Tyler Whitaker are the seniors, while Dalton Knight — who gained invaluable experience helping run the offense last year as a freshman — returns for his sophomore season.

Rounding out the seven-player rotation will be juniors Ryan Fowler and Logan Fischer, who have both seen varsity minutes; and freshman Devin Jackson.

Senior Nathan Osegura will add depth.



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Warrenton senior Landree Miethe sets up for a shot in a recent preseason practice for the Lady Warriors.

Loads of returners for Lady Warriors

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

The coach is "hopeful," so to speak, that the Warrenton girls basketball program can start making strides this season within the Lewis & Clark League.

Warrenton coach Robert Hoepfl has increased the overall wins (from 2-22 in 2014-15, to 8-16 last year), but the Warriors were unable to improve on their league record, 2-14 in each of the last two seasons.

The Warriors have a head start on the new season, with 11 of their 12 varsity players from last year returning, including two all-leaguers.

Entering his third season as coach, Hoepfl says, "hopefully the practices, the leadership and the experience we have returning translates into success on the court. We worked hard in the summer, and seven of our top eight players from a year ago are back."

THE LEAGUE

Describing the Lewis & Clark League in one word, Hoepfl said, "it's tough. Portland Christian and Portland Adventist have both been to the Final Four the last two years, and they've got everybody back."

While Portland Adventist returns all-league seniors Sarah Halversen, Tori Johnson and Kira La Sage, "PC returns the Player of the Year with their point guard (senior Demi Guild), and PAA has a lot of talent coming back," he said. "Rainier has had some changes in rotation in recent years, but they bring a good core group back."

"Those would be the top three — after that, it's wide open," Hoepfl said. "Catlin Gabel and OES both graduated some good players."

THE LADY WARRIORS

Warrenton has four seniors on the roster — Katelynn Blodgett, Landree Miethe,



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Tyla Little is one of two all-league returners for the Warrenton girls basketball team, and will help run the Lady Warriors' offense this season.

LADY WARRIORS

Coach: Robert Hoepfl, 2nd year

2015-16: 8-16 (2-14 L&C)

All-League Losses: None

All-League Returners: Tyla Little, Jr.; Landree Miethe, Sr.

Krista Morrill and Elle Schenbeck.

Rachel Dyer and Tyla Little return for their junior seasons, and the Warriors have an up and coming sophomore class, with Fernanda Alvarez, Morgan Blodgett, Claire Busser, Adriana DeJesus, Sagi Diego and Maria Heyen.

Miethe and Little were both all-league last season.

"We will have Landree's leadership level," Hoepfl said, "and obviously she's a great athlete — all-state in volleyball and softball, and all-league in basketball."

"She's got very good basketball skills, and between her and Tyla, they were our top two leading scorers last year, and our leading defenders."

The Warriors also have enough size to be competitive in league play.

"We've got Katie (Blodgett) in the low post," said the coach. "Fernanda's 5-11 — she and Maria are our two biggest players."

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