

SEASIDE SEAGULLS

BASKETBALL

Seaside boys seek a 3-peat

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

Seaside athletes have been making a lot of history over the last four years, in many sports.

The Gulls are on the verge of making some huge history this winter. If Seaside can win its third straight boys basketball state championship (and the Gulls are heavy favorites), they will be the first 4A team to do so (West Linn won four straight 6A titles, from 2013-16).

Seaside has been to the state championship game in each of the last three years, won the last two, and their four all-league players are all back.

With their lineup of all-state players, led by their state Coach of the Year, the Gulls will be everyone's favorite this season.

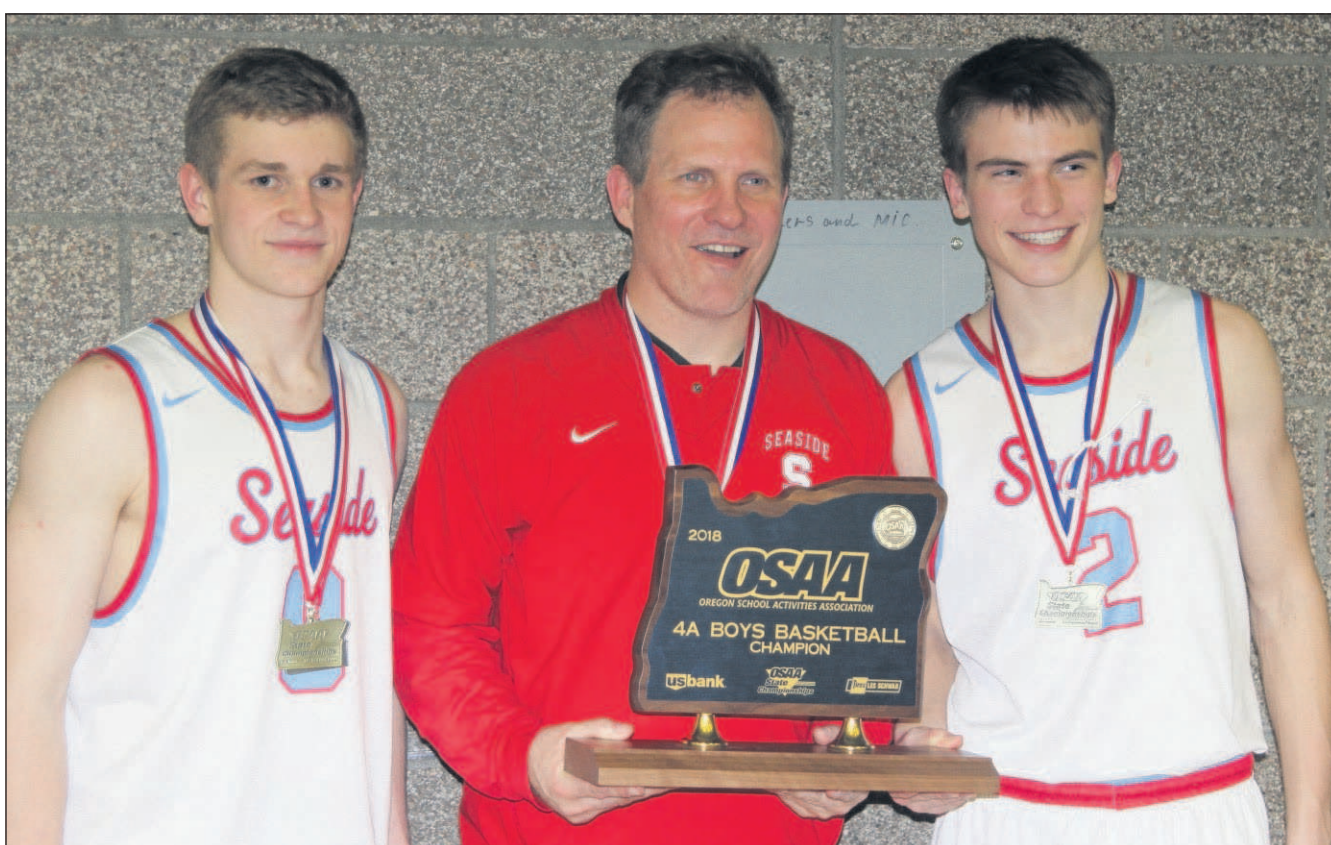
The coaches agree, since Seaside was the only team in the state to be a unanimous No. 1-ranked team in the pre-season coaches poll.

The target on their backs "will be there," said Seaside coach Bill Westerholm. "Everybody knows we're unanimous in the coaches poll, and rightfully so. We have everybody coming back."

Or, as Chase Januik put it after last year's state championship game: "We're going to be better than ever next year. We'll be looking for a three-peat."

THE COWAPA

While it's no secret that the Gulls are the best team at



Left to right: Chase Januik, coach Bill Westerholm, Payton Westerholm.

the 4A level, the Cowapa is clearly the best league.

A Cowapa League team has been in each of the last four state championship games (2015 champion Scappoose is no longer a part of the league). Last year's state title game was expected to be Seaside and Banks, and when the Braves didn't make it, Valley Catholic took their place in the championship game, won by the Gulls, 48-44.

In fact, the toughest part of any season for Seaside is the league schedule, in which three different teams (Banks,

Scappoose and Tillamook) managed to beat the Gulls last year.

Scappoose has moved to Class 5A, Banks lost three all-league players (including league MVP Dalton Renne), and the Valiants lost two all-leaguers.

"Banks is going to be very good," Westerholm said. "(Jacob) Slika is the same type of player that Renne was. He will be a junior, and will have a great opportunity.

"Valley Catholic beat Scappoose by 45 (Wednesday)," he said. "Coach (Joel) Sobotka

will try to speed things up and put points on the board, and press more. And he's got some players who can do that."

Astoria is "going to be senior-dominated this year," he said. "If Ryan Stenblom gets his knee back in shape completely, he will give them some strength at point guard.

"Josh (Olson) and Ian (Hunt) have improved tremendously on the offensive end and they've got some height, so they're going to give teams problems. You can never look by anybody in our league."

THE GULLS

The familiar names are all back: seniors Chase Januik, Dylan Meyer, Duncan Thompson and Payton Westerholm, and juniors Ryan Hague, Beau Johnson and Brayden Johnson. All have state championship rings, and most have two.

"For the most part, we have our pieces back," coach Westerholm said. "We just have to find two or three kids to fit some roles. That will be anyone from Brayden to Dylan Meyer. Stephen Snyder had a good summer, and Gavin Rich shoots the ball really well."

SEASIDE BOYS

Coach: Bill Westerholm, 21st year
2017-18: 22-5 (7-3 Cowapa)
Playoffs: Defeated Valley Catholic in 4A state championship.
All-league losses: None
All-league returners: Ryan Hague, Jr., Chase Januik, Sr., Duncan Thompson, Sr., Payton Westerholm, Sr.

"Ledger Pugh and Samson Sibony will have opportunities to play varsity. We have five returning starters, so its going to be hard to find playing time," he said. "Guys who would start at a lot of schools are going to be playing JV and swinging to varsity."

The problem will be getting in basketball shape. Half of the team played football up until last week, following Seaside's run to the state championship game.

"It will take us a while to get our legs underneath us," said Westerholm, who will face one of his toughest preseason schedules in years.

"Stayton is a top five team, and we have Marshfield, Marist and Dayton, which will be in the running for a 3A state championship," he said. "We'll play Ridgeview in a tournament, and if we win that game we'll play Pendleton or Bend, and if we win those, we would probably play Thurston (the defending 5A state champion). Hopefully we'll be .500 by the time we get to league."

Prediction: The Gulls get their three-peat. State champs.

A new 'old' look for Seaside girls

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

The first year of the post-Maddi Utti era was a tough one for Seaside girls basketball.

The Lady Gulls went from a 20-5 overall record and a third-place finish at state in 2016-17, to 8-17 overall and fourth place in the league standings last year.

With the graduation of two all-league players, it won't be any easier in 2018-19.

Seaside opened its season Wednesday with an overtime loss at Stayton — still not a bad beginning for the Gulls.

"I did not know what to expect, just because we're so new," Seaside coach Mike Hawes said. "We had a chance to win a ball game on the road against a pretty good veteran club. We told the girls that we're a work in progress. We need to be a really good team in January. We were still learning basic plays last night."

THE COWAPA

"You always start with Banks," Hawes said. "(Aspen) Slika's a senior, and they have other good players coming back. They know what they're doing."

Elsewhere, "Astoria should be right up there, in terms of talent, size and experience. And of course Valley is always tough. So you can start with the usual suspects. We were down last year and shouldn't be mentioned in the same breath with those three, but hopefully



Annaka Garhofer is back and looking to score points for the Seaside girls this season.

we can sneak in there and steal some wins."

THE LADY GULLS

Experience? Not a problem for Seaside this season.

Hawes heads into the season with seven seniors on his 12-player varsity roster, with three juniors, one sophomore and one freshman with all kinds of potential.

SEASIDE GIRLS

Coach: Mike Hawes, 3rd year
2017-18: 8-17 (4-6 league)
Playoffs: Defeated Scappoose, lost to Astoria in league playoffs.
All-league losses: Bryre Babbitt, Jetta Ideue
All-league returners: None

"We'll have nice pieces coming back, with a huge senior team, although a lot of them are new," Hawes said. "Morgan (Blodgett, transfer from Warrenton) and Sydney Van Dusen are new this year."

Meanwhile, the freshman is Lilli Taylor. She scored 14 points in the loss at Stayton, her first high school game.

"I had to throw my frosh out there, and she did pretty well," Hawes said. "She will make a difference, adding a bit of a playmaker to the lineup," although he's not ready to call her "the next Maddi Utti."

"Let's just hope she's 'Lillie the first' and makes her own name," he said. "It is nice to have a kid who sees the court like Maddi did, and has the skills to finish. That was game one for her, and we kind of joked when she came out for a couple minutes rest, and I said, 'that might be the last one you get in four years.'"

Adding varsity experience are seniors Jessica Angulo-Joli, Annaka Garhofer, Alyssa Goin, Emy Kiser and Katie Zagata. Juniors Jada Doney and Ruby Douglas, and sophomore Tristyn McFadden round out the roster.

Saints sweep Jewell teams

OREGON CITY — Jewell basketball opened the season Wednesday with a doubleheader at North Clackamas, where the Saints scored a sweep over the Blue Jays, 40-27 in the girls' game, and 63-21 in the boys' contest.

Lily Kaczenski scored 16 points for the Jewell girls, while Lillie Meier and Nedi Morales combined for 11 rebounds.

Warrenton girls win opener

SUTHERLIN — The Warrenton girls basketball team won their season opener Thursday, a 48-35 decision over South Umpqua in a first-round game of the Bill Spelgatti Invitational at Sutherlin.

Claire Bussert scored 15 points, Fernanda Alvarez added 12 and Kenzie Ramsey scored 10 for the Warriors, who led just 19-18 after one quarter.

From there, Warrenton outscored the Lancers 29-17. The Warriors will play Sutherlin today.

— The Daily Astorian

SCOREBOARD

PREP SPORTS SCHEDULE

TODAY
Girls basketball — Astoria at Madras Tournament, TBA; Cascade at Seaside, 7:30 p.m.; Warrenton vs. Sutherlin, at Sutherlin Tournament, 7:15 p.m.; Toledo at Knappa, 7:30 p.m.
Boys basketball — OES vs. Astoria, at Knappa, 5:30 p.m.;

Nestucca at Warrenton, 6 p.m.; Toledo at Knappa, 9 p.m.; Jewell at Open Door, 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY

Girls basketball — Astoria at Madras Tournament, TBA; Warrenton at Sutherlin Tournament, TBA
Boys basketball — Astoria at Knappa, 8 p.m.; Gaston at Warrenton, 5:30 p.m.

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