

Fishermen taller, more physical and ready to battle

By GARY HENLEY
The Astorian

The road traveled by Astoria boys basketball over the last three years has been a rough and rocky one.

Following their fourth place finish in the 2015-16 state tournament, the decline started with a 1-9 league record in 2016-17, 0-10 the following year, and improved to 2-6 last season.

Hopefully, the Fishermen have put that three-year, 3-25 league record behind them.

The comeback will continue this season, and if all goes right, Astoria is ready to jump back into the upper half of the Cowapa League.

The loss of nine seniors off last year's team will be tough to overcome, but head coach Kevin Goin is optimistic of a turnaround.

"I feel more confident with us competing, with better numbers and physicality," he said. "We'll have more competitive bodies. Last year, we struggled at times with numbers and injuries."

"I've got a lot of juniors on the JV, which is usually a good sign of kids being competitive. We'll have three full teams, and we're pretty heavy at the upper end, with lots of juniors and seniors. And we have a pretty good freshman class coming in."

The Cowapa

The 2018-19 season was just another average year in Cowapa League boys basketball.

For the third year in a row, the top two teams in the state were from the Cowapa, with second-place Banks knocking off two-time defending champion Seaside in the 4A state title game.

For the record, that makes three straight seasons of an all-Cowapa League final, and eight appearances by Cowapa teams in the state championship game over the



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Astoria players grab balls to start another drill.

last five years (and Valley Catholic was the 3A champion in 2014).

"I think we'll be in that same boat again," Goin said. "We've got the three at the top which have obviously been very good the last four or five years. Banks, Seaside and Valley should be at the top end again. Seaside and Banks lost some go-to players, but they've both got kids back."

The Fishermen

On the downside, Goin must replace nine players lost to graduation off last year's team, including 6-foot-6 all-league post Ian Hunt and 6-5 post Joshua Olson.

On the other hand, the numbers are still healthy, and "We're probably taller overall, and more physical," Goin said. "We've got a couple kids who are pushing

6-4 or 6-5, then a plethora of kids who are 6-2 and 6-3. That's some better size than we've had in the past, and a lot more depth. I feel like we've got some kids who are going to push each other and make us more competitive."

Ryan Stenblom, a 6-foot-1 senior "combo guard," as Goin calls him, has "healed a lot better from his leg injury and is a more athletic kid than he was at the end of his sophomore year."

Senior all-league player Isaac Brockman is "probably our best pure shooter. This will be his third year starting. He'll be in the backcourt with Ryan."

Senior Dylan Altheide-Nielson "will help us in the back court, giving us more depth," Goin said. "Up front, we'll have a kid who's come on for us named Presley Beck (Jr.), who's a pretty good track athlete,

6-2, and jumps real well."

Also in the backcourt will be junior Michael Moore, while junior Bo Williams is a 6-2 wing.

Senior Dylan Rush will miss the season after a leg surgery, but the Fishermen return juniors Dylan Junes (6-4) and Xander Marinovich (6-3), with senior Leo Matthews, junior Zach Schauer-mann (6-5) and sophomore Colton McMaster (6-2) stepping up from the JV and JV II levels.

The Fishermen may also have a couple transfers in the mix, according to Goin.

"I feel good about where we're at," he said. "We have enough at the guard and post levels who will push each other, making us more competitive."

Goin's assistants are junior varsity coach Josh Funk and Joshua Fisher, the JV II coach.



ASTORIA BOYS BASKETBALL

Coach: Kevin Goin, 6th year

2018-19: 8-16 (2-6 Cowapa)

All-League loss: Ian Hunt

All-League returner: Isaac Brockman, Sr.

SCHEDULE

Dec. 6-7 at Knappa Tip-Off

Dec. 10 Cascade 6:30 p.m.

Dec. 13 Scappoose 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 19-21 at Seaside Holiday Tournament

Dec. 26-28 Dulcich Tournament

Jan. 3 at Central 5 p.m.

Jan. 4 at Warrenton 6 p.m.

Jan. 10 at Molalla 7 p.m.

Jan. 11 Corbett 4:30 p.m.

Jan. 14 at Estacada 5:30 p.m.

Jan. 17 Gladstone TBA

Jan. 21 Seaside 6 p.m.

Jan. 24 Banks 6 p.m.

Jan. 28 at Tillamook 6 p.m.

Jan. 31 at Valley Catholic 6 p.m.

Feb. 7 at Seaside 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 11 at Banks 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 14 Tillamook 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 18 Valley Catholic 7:30 p.m.