

Growth needed for WMHS

ATHENA — Chet Sater isn't shying away from the term "rebuilding" in his first season at the helm in Athena.

That's the only way to describe what the Tiger-Scots must go through after graduating all but two starters from their championship appearance in 2014.

Adding to the task is a shoulder injury that removed would-be returner Jimmy Patrick from the equation, and a raw group of players that has a handful of varsity innings between them.

"In terms of varsity there was three kids who got a little bit of varsity playing time last year, pinch hits, coming in late when it wasn't close," said Sater, who was an assistant on T.J. Haguewood's staff last year. "It's been wide open, we're going to be a young team all the way."

The pitching staff has none of that limited experience.

"We're going to be pitching by committee because there's not one kid on our team that threw any varsity games last year," Sater said. "We've



EO file photo

Weston-McEwen's Cedric Hall slides into home plate during Class 2A/1A state title game last year. The Tiger-Scots lost to Monroe in the championship game. Hall is the only returner from last year's team.

got a bunch of kids that can throw strikes, and I think that's what we're going to be this season — throw strikes and be solid in the field."

Sater said he isn't ruling out another playoff run, but wants his young roster focusing on more modest goals to begin with.

"Of course everybody wants to return to the state title (game), but I think our initial goal is just to make it back to the dis-

trict tournament," he said.

Weston-McEwen's league games will take on a different format this season as Special District 6 splits into two divisions, with Heppner, Pilot Rock and Irrigon joining the Tiger-Scots in the east, and Dufur, Culver, Sherman/Arlington and South Wasco in the west.

TIGERSCOT BASEBALL

Coach: Chet Sater, 1st year
2014: 22-6, 14-0 Special District 6

Postseason story: The Tiger-Scots won their district, then advanced to the state championship by beating Country Christian 4-2, Umpqua Valley Christian 3-1, and Knappa 3-2. The Tiger-Scots took second after a 2-1 loss to Monroe in the final. It was their second runner-up finish in three seasons.

Key returner: Cedric Hall, sr., C.
Coachspeak: "I think we'll be one of the most improved teams by the end of the season."



TIGERSCOTS

2015 Schedule

Thu., March 19	at Union	4 p.m.
Fri., March 20	at Mac-Hi	4 p.m.
Mon., Mar. 23	vs. Portland Christian	10 a.m.
Fri., April 3	vs Union	4 p.m.
Sat., April 4	vs Sherman (DH)	Noon
Sat., April 11	at Irrigon (DH)	11 a.m.
Tue., April 14	at Stanfield	5 p.m.
Sat., April 18	vs Heppner (DH)	11 a.m.
Sat., April 25	vs Pilot Rock (DH)	11 a.m.
Tue., April 28	vs Touchet (WA)	4:30 p.m.
Sat., May 2	vs Irrigon (DH)	11 a.m.
Thu., May 7	vs Waitsburg (WA)	4:30 p.m.
Sat., May 9	at Heppner (DH)	11 a.m.
Sat., May 16	at Pilot Rock (DH)	11 a.m.

Hurlers key to Mustang success

HEPPNER — Looking at the landscape of Special District 6, Heppner coach Jim Kindle figures 2015 could be a season dominated by pitching.

"There's some great pitchers in the league," he said of the eight-team league that underwent a minor facelift when it swapped out Horizon Christian for Culver, and saw Dufur and South Wasco strike out on their own after playing as a co-op in 2014.

Unfortunately for the Mustangs, Kindle said his own bullpen lacks an ace.

"Pitching is going to struggle for us, we're young," he said. "I lost six seniors and gained four freshmen."

To compensate, Kindle said he's leaving no stone unturned.

"They might all be pitchers this year," he said. "I told all the guys to be ready on any given day."

One player he won't have at his disposal is junior Brian Rill, who will continue to recover on the links this spring from a football injury. However, the team welcomes back former starting shortstop Zach Irons after he missed last season due to a motorcycle accident.

MUSTANG BASEBALL

Coach: Jim Kindle, 2nd year
2014: 10-11, 6-8 Special District 6

Postseason story: The last time Heppner made the state postseason was 2011's semifinal appearance.

Key returners: Zach Irons, sr., IF; Cade Arbogast, sr., OF; Weston Putman, jr., C; Patrick Collins, jr., P/IF; CJ Kindle, jr., UT; Kevin Murray, jr., OF; Jake Lindsay, soph., IF

Coachspeak: "I think most teams in our league are struggling with numbers because a lot of kids aren't playing baseball."



2015 Schedule

Thu., March 19	vs Enterprise (DH)	2/4 p.m.
Tue., March 31	vs Union	4 p.m.
Sat., April 4	at Elgin (DH)	Noon/2 p.m.
Tue. April 7	at Sherman	4:30 p.m.
Sat., April 11	vs Pilot Rock (DH)	11 a.m./1 p.m.
Mon., April 13	at Union	4 p.m.
Sat., April 18	at Weston-McEwen (DH)	11 a.m./1 p.m.
Sat., April 25	vs Irrigon (DH)	11 a.m./1 p.m.
Tue., April 28	vs Umatilla	4 p.m.
Sat., May 2	at Pilot Rock (DH)	11 a.m./1 p.m.
Tue., May 5	at Umatilla	4 p.m.
Sat., May 9	vs. Weston-McEwen (DH)	11 a.m./1 p.m.
Sat., May 16	at Irrigon (DH)	11 a.m./1 p.m.

VIKING BASEBALL

Coach: Booter Lewis, 2nd year
2014 season: 0-17, 0-12 EOL, seventh, no playoffs

Key Returners: Cory Landon, jr.; Tristen Sanguino, jr.; Gerardo Barrea, sr.; Josh Dever, jr.; Diego Soto, soph.

2015 Schedule

Fri., March 20	at Sherman County	2 p.m.
Sat., March 21	at Dufur	11 a.m.
Sat., March 21	vs. Kennedy at Dufur	1:30 p.m.
Fri., April 3	vs. Vale (DH)	2 p.m.
Tue., April 7	at Irrigon	4 p.m.
Fri., April 10	at Nyssa	2 p.m.
Tue., April 28	@ Heppner	4 p.m.
Fri., May 1	vs. Riverside	1 p.m.
Tue., May 5	vs. Heppner	4 p.m.
Fri., May 8	at Elgin (DH)	1 p.m.
Fri., May 15	vs. Stanfield (DH)	1 p.m.

Viks regain numbers

UMATILLA — Last year's Umatilla baseball team had its season ended prematurely when a number of players couldn't make grades. Second-year coach Booter Lewis is focusing on keeping his guys on the field, as he promised to come back last season and he signed a contract with his players for this season. Lewis is preaching competitiveness and responsibility, and he hopes to play every game on the schedule.

"It's a new start, a fresh start," he said. "I promised my boys I'd come back and give them a good year and that's what my plan is. We have really good numbers this

year, we have 19 kids consistently. We're gonna come out every game and battle."

It's a fresh start with a lot of fresh faces. For a varsity program, Umatilla is about as young as they come. The Vikings have eight freshman listed on their roster and seven sophomores to just four juniors and a single senior. More than anything, this has Lewis excited for what's coming, not what's gone.

"Last year's (gone)," he said. "(We just need to) worry about the future and what's happening today. Worry about today, what we can do today. Don't worry about the past."

