



Umatilla's Fabian Cardenas wraps up his 3,000 meter state championship at last year's Class 3A state championships in Eugene. Cardenas returns with a possible distance double on the line.

EO file photo

VIKING TRACK

Coach: Kaycee Ferguson, (5th year)

2014 season: The Viking boys finished fifth in districts and 16th at state; the Viking girls took third at districts and fifth at state.

Key returners: Fabian Cardenas, sr.; Andrea Lemus-Cisneros, sr.; Berenice Chavez, sr.; Amie Zitterkob, sr.



Vikings boast 'special group'

UMATILLA — In her five years as the head track and field coach at Umatilla, Kaycee Ferguson hasn't had a group like the one about to graduate.

Led by long distance state champion Fabian Cardenas and state runners-up in the 4 x 100 meter relay Andrea Lemus-Cisneros, also a state champ in the 200 meters, Berenice Chavez and Amie Zitterkob, Umatilla again is in position to send at least a handful of athletes to Eugene in May for the state championships.

"They're very driven and that's what they want to do," Ferguson said of last year's state participants. "They're going to work very hard and do everything they can to be as successful as possible or even more successful."

The Umatilla track program is on a steady upward trajectory thanks to state championships from Cardenas and Lemus-Cisneros, and the result has been newcomers and underclassmen looking up to them and wanting the same. But the state champions, placers and qualifiers aren't resting on their laurels, according to Ferguson.

"This group of older kids is really a special group," Ferguson said. "This is my fifth year with the program, they're by far the hardest working kids that I've seen. And that carries over. We all know that success builds success, and I think that also comes into play. But I think it's a unique group of kids. They work hard, they want to get better. They won't settle for just being good enough. They want to be the best. And that's really neat to see."

This year's team will be anchored by its sprinting and boasts three runners — Lemus-Cisneros, Chavez and Zitterkob — who will run at Eastern Oregon University next season. Those three placed second in the 4 x 100 meter relay at last year's state championships and Chavez also placed in the 100 meter sprint.

Umatilla also boasts one of the best long distance runners in the state in Cardenas, who won the state cross country championship this past fall. The Vikings will look to depend on their state placers while also getting valuable experience for its underclassmen.

The 2015 campaign is promising.

2015 Schedule

Thu., March 19	Buck Track Classic	Noon	Sat., April 25	Prosser Rotary Invite	10:30 a.m.
Sat., March 21	Ray Cross Invitational	11:20 a.m.	Sat., April 25	Centennial Invitational	11 a.m.
Fri., April 3	Mac-Hi HS Carnivale	11 a.m.	Sat., May 2	Lake Washington Girls Invite	9:30 a.m.
Fri., April 10	Baker Relays	2 p.m.	Thu., May 7	Umatilla Finale	3:30 p.m.
Sat., April 11	Dick Horyna Invitational	11 a.m.	Sat., May 16	Districts (@ Nyssa)	TBD
Fri., April 17	River's Edge	11 a.m.			

TIGERSCOT TRACK

Coach: Loran Monaco, 23rd year

Postseason story: With just four girls making the state field, the TigerScots finished in a three-way tie for fifth place. The boys reached 17th place with just two state qualifiers.

Key returners: (Girls) Madison Carlin, sr., sprints/jumps; Shylee Stroud, sr., vault; (Boys) Ian Speed, jr., sprints/distance

2015 Schedule

Thu., March 19	at Pendleton	Noon
Fri., April 3	at Mac-Hi	11 a.m.
Sat., April 4	at Sherman	11 a.m.
Sat., April 11	at Stanfield	11 a.m.
Fri., April 17	at Umatilla	11 a.m.
Sat., April 18	at Riverside	11 a.m.
Thu., April 23	at Heppner	3 p.m.
Sat. April 25	at Union	11 a.m.
Tue., April 28	Weston-McEwen Invite	3:30 p.m.
Sat., May 2	at Joseph	1 p.m.
Sat., May 9	Weston-McEwen CBC Meet	11 a.m.
Fri., May 15	Districts (@ Stanfield)	10 a.m.

TigerScots pick up the pieces

ATHENA — The TigerScots will hope to make quick strides as they take on a shrunken district field with a large group of freshmen this season.

The successful baseball and softball programs managed to lure a couple of coach Loran Monaco's top performers away from the track, but he returns at least one girl and boy with state experience.

Around them are an athletic but young group that fared well at the middle school level.

"I have an abundance of ninth-grade kids," Monaco said. "They're good kids to work with but it's too early to tell where they'll be."

"We're young but we're excited with a coachable group of kids."



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