



Water Polo teams improving with season

With a lot of young and relatively inexperienced players, the 'Aqua Lions' water polo teams are getting better as their seasons continue



Photo by Tori Taylor

The girls' water polo team played aggressively this past week and nabbed a victory to end its tournament on Friday.

BY SAM WRIGHT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The Cottage Grove water polo teams hosted several schools this week, and the Aqua Lions are getting sharper each week despite a couple of losses being suffered.

On Oct. 6, the boys hosted Marist, losing 7-6. The Lions went down 4-2 in the first quarter, the two points coming from sophomore Nash, and the Lions attempted to mount a comeback, scoring four goals in the second quarter. Two of those goals again came from Gage Nash, and the other two from junior Seth Chambers. The Lions were able to take the lead into the second half. That is, until Marist scored

two goals in the third quarter and held off the Lions to take a one-point victory.

"We played very competitively, but we just couldn't pull it off in the end," Head Coach Tyson Pilling stated. He continued to say that for having a lot of first-year players, the team is doing a very good job.

"We'll need to work on our ball handling, but I'm impressed with our newcomers," he added.

On Friday, Oct. 9, Cottage Grove hosted a tournament, facing teams such as North Eugene and South Salem.

The girls started off with a loss to North Eugene but saw some effective scoring, with junior Tori Raade with three goals,

along with the help of Amelia Phillips with an early goal in the first quarter.

"Again, both of our teams played really competitively," Pilling said of the boys' and girls' squads. "The girls are on their second year, so they're a little more experienced than some of the boys."

The girls then played South Salem a few hours later, where they struggled defensively yet again, but this time saw four goals from Phillips, three goals from Raade, and one from Emma Meyers in the fourth quarter. Unfortunately, they were outscored by South Salem, 10-8.

The Lions bounced back, however, beating Medford 9-7

later in the afternoon. Phillips outstandingly scored another four goals, accompanied by two from Meyers, two from Raade and one from Sophia Edelbutte.

"I think we need to work on passing and shooting, but overall I'm happy with where we're at," Pilling said.

The boys losing streak ended with an 8-8 tie on Friday against Churchill/Springfield, keeping the Lions heading in the right direction.

"We'll work on ball handling with the boys, but we have a lot of first-years who will naturally improve."

Both teams host South Albany this week on Tuesday, Oct. 13 with the girls at 3:30 p.m. and the boys at 4:30 p.m.



Athlete of the Week

Amelia Phillips scores nine goals in three games



CYAN MAGENTA YELLOW BLACK

The star senior water polo player scored four times against Medford, another four times against South Salem, and once more to top it off against North Eugene.

Lions' football looks to improve after losing two weeks in a row

After a close 21-28 loss, the Lions will look to get their running game back and fix defensive holes

BY SAM WRIGHT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The Lions fought hard against a powerful Sisters team on Friday, Oct. 9, but were unable to close the gap and pull off a win. The 28-21 loss against the Outlaws brought the Lions record for the season down to 2-4.

When facing a tough team like Sisters, which rank no. 4 in the OSAA power rankings, the battle in the trenches must be won, and that starts with establishing a running game, which

the Lions struggled with.

"We didn't run the ball as well as I would have hoped," said Head Coach Gary Roberts. "We have to get more aggressive upfront."

While all of the Lions' points came from rushing the ball, the running game only racked up a total of 40 yards off of 17 carries, giving Cottage Grove a rushing average of 2.35 for the game. Brynden Howell carried the ball five times for 30 yards; running back Zane Levings had the same amount of carries but

for exactly half the yardage and two touchdowns. Quarterback Blake Sentman ran the ball in for a score as well, but he rushed the ball five times for negative yardage.

On the other hand, Sentman's passing game was far superior to his running game. He completed 29 of 46 passes for 340 yards. There were no touchdown passes for the Lions this game, and Sentman threw one interception, but that happened during a fourth down and long situation, making it effectively

better than just throwing an incomplete pass.

On the receiving end of the pass game was junior Kory Parent, who caught 12 passes for 163 yards, along with Howell, who caught nine passes for 124 yards. Both players continue to be receiving weapons for Sentman, each averaging over 13 yards a catch on Friday. You can also always trust Sentman to spread the ball around: Evan Britton, (four catches for 22 yards), Payton Presley (three catches for 12 yards), and Zane

Levings (one catch for 19 yards) all got their hands on the ball during passing plays.

Parent continues to showcase that he is a great addition for the offense. "Kory Parent is doing a great job of complimenting Brynden at wide receiver," Roberts said. "They tried to double team Brynden at times, so having Kory step up is huge."

Roberts was initially worried about the state of the Lions' defense, which has occasionally struggled throughout the season.

"Our defense played a little shaky in the first half, but really solid in the second half," Roberts noted. twenty-eight points is the least amount of points the Lions' defense has allowed all season (tying with the Elmira game), but Roberts looks ahead to tighten up the defense:

"We need to stay focused moving forward and continue to improve."

This week the Lions host Sutherlin and look to bounce back.

Girls' soccer slips in rankings after loss

After beating Sutherlin on Thursday, the Lions lost to Banks 3-1 on Saturday

BY SAM WRIGHT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The girls' soccer team has seen an impressive amount of success this season. But as they climb in the OSAA rankings, other teams set their eyes on them, and they become the team to beat.

Sutherlin tried, but was unsuccessful against the Lions, who won 2-1 in overtime, a game that Head Coach Vern Stewart isn't very pleased about.

"We didn't play well at all," Stewart said. The Lions scored early and were up 1-0 in the first half thanks to a goal by Melissa McCasline, but then they gave up a goal in the second half, and Cottage Grove was sent into overtime.

Luckily, star forward Kia Hemenway scored early in overtime, and all the Lions had to do



Melissa McCasline throws the ball inbounds to her hustling teammates.

was hold their lead.

"We probably came in thinking Sutherlin wasn't going to be very difficult for us," Stewart said. "We've learned that we cannot assume that everything is going to be easy."

Stewart stated that it each op-

ponent they face will be getting better and better, so it is crucial to play their best in each game. However, Stewart put it quaintly: "it's better to win ugly than to lose pretty."

But on Saturday the Lions got the worst of both factors in that

equation. Cottage Grove faced Banks, a game that should have taken place earlier in the season, and lost 3-1. It was the Lions first loss since Sept. 14 against North Bend.

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Faster and Faster



Connor Howard pushes to the finish line during his race.

BY JIM SETTELMAYER
For the Sentinel

"We came to eat cookies and win races..... and we are all out of cookies." was the saying on last year's cross country team shirts, but it explains the team's personal strides at meets on a golf course in Grants Pass and Mission State Park North of Salem this last week. Every one of the Cottage Grove High runners that was able to compete (33 of 34) turned in at least a season best time in one or both meets.

Improvements of more than a minute over previous times were recorded by Kevin Muntag (33:54), Anthony Trujillo (21:58), Connor Howard (19:15), Chelsea Armstrong

(26:47), Aramie Nydam (26:00), Abigail Bunce (26:48), Lilly Burleson (28:13), Carson Violette (29:45), Jenn Simons (30:07), Tesslyn Foster-Gordon (31:27), Hayle Maitia (31:44), Kate Johns (26:04), Allie Harris (23:44), Kale'a Galbreath (23:53), Savannah Davis (25:51), and Abril Leal-Coronel (22:04).

The Lion Harriers are on the grounds of Oregon Country Fair this Wednesday, Oct. 14 for their last official tune-up before the Sky Em Championship the following week. The runners hope to use this third fast course in a row to polish their race plans so they can head into the district meet with momentum and confidence.