

Cottage Grove Baseball



Koltin Britton makes a diving catch during practice.



Wyatt Sayles practices turning two.

Team Rundown:

The Lions are hoping that the combination of 15 upperclassmen and some grit will result in some wins this season.

"We don't have a ridiculous amount of talent. We've got great kids that work really hard. But we don't have kids that can just step out and just play the game really well," said head coach Dan Geiszler. "We just don't have that, which is ok. We do have a lot of kids that are going to work hard and I just think that over time they'll learn and adapt and adjust. It's just going to take a little bit."

While the team may not be full of talent from top to bottom, the Lions do have Wyatt Sayles who was named as a second team all-league pitcher a season ago. Sayles is one of five seniors on the roster that also includes 10 juniors. Geiszler is looking for the high school baseball experience of these players to allow them to be competitive through-

out the season.

"Every practice, every game. I expect with the amount of older kids that we have that we're going to compete. And so I don't feel like there's a game that we're going to go into that we shouldn't compete," said Geiszler. "Whether that happens or not, that's why you play. I really feel like that and that's our expectation and, hopefully, their expectation as well."

A season ago the Lions finished fifth out of six teams in the Sky-Em and lost the last six games of the season. This season, the team has echoed a sense of being able to fight through adversity and turn some of those losses into wins.

"I just don't want to see any quit out of anybody. Even if we're down, I want to see the battle," said senior Jayden Lydick.

One-on-one with Wyatt Sayles:

Does your role on the team change now that you are a senior?

Last year, not that our seniors were bad and stuff like that, but we just didn't perform at all last year and a lot of it was we just had a lot of quit in us. So one thing that I've been emphasizing this year is just not quitting. Even though we know we're not the most skilled team in the league, I mean, that's obvious, but we just have a lot of young guys and first time guys so it's just going to take not quitting when we get down. *How do you do that?*

A lot of it is just being positive. Because we have a lot of kids that make a ton of mistakes during practice and if we beat our teammates up on every single mistake, they're just going to quit on

us. So a lot of it is just positive even if they're making mistakes. Make sure the game is fun for them.

We don't want everyone playing under, if I make a mistake I'm going to get in trouble for something. I remember freshman year being a freshman on varsity and that's what it all was. If I make a mistake then the whole team is on me so I just wanted to make sure these kids don't have that.

What are you looking forward to for this season?

Well I'm hoping that everyone works hard. If everyone is working hard then we're having fun. I don't know how I would put it. But if people are slacking off then it ain't going to be a fun year.

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