

Cottage Grove Softball



An outfielder for the Lions pulls down a catch and throws home.



A Cottage Grove pitcher warms up during practice.

Team Rundown:

Things are looking up for the Cottage Grove softball team.

"We're absolutely moving in the right direction. I think we have a really good bond already setting in," said head coach Cheryl Frieze. "The kids all seem to mesh really well together. And those are all really good factors that we've kind of been missing, bits and pieces and different links."

In the past three seasons the Lions have won one, zero and four games respectively. But this year, with a group of veteran seniors and experienced underclassmen, there is a renewed excitement in the air about what this team can do on the field.

"They all want to work hard, they all have this love for the game and they want to do better. They want to get better, they want to keep pushing," said Frieze. "I think once they find that click

that we've been trying to kind of work on, pieces are going to start falling in and we'll start seeing some positive things happen."

Like teams across the area, the snow hit the Lions hard, the team played their first three games of the year before they were able to practice on their own field. Despite any early setbacks, the Lions are looking to work things and look at a future that includes a talented group of underclassmen.

"Seeing their skill level [compared] to a few years ago when girls were coming in and they didn't know how to play at all and now they know how to play and they're playing really well," said senior Taya Escobar-Richardson on the youth of the team. "As they grow throughout the years, we're going to be killer and I'm really excited for it and I'm really excited to come back and watch them."

One-on-one with Chelsea Davis:

What can you say about the underclassmen on the team?

A lot of these girls have been playing for a long time or playing club and they're really good players and have really positive attitudes. I'm super excited for it. I think we've been missing that excitement the last couple years and I think having these young girls that are motivated. And not even just knowing the game of softball but motivated to play and to be here, I think it will just grow our program here.

Are you reenergized by that younger group of players?

We're trying to get there. I think the underclassmen having that is pushing us to have that more as well. We're getting

there. I think our first game just from all the stress, we were a little bit slow but I think as we keep building it will grow. It gets there.

I think we've missed the energy for a long time and I think if we have the energy and come out to the games ready to go and have that mindset of can do, will do, I think we'll get there.

How does being a senior on the team impact you?

I think it motivates me more. I think having that pressure has lit a flame under me and just feel more motivated to be working hard and I guess be a good role model for them so they know what to be doing the next couple years.

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