

Yoncalla/Elkton Softball



Tayla Swearingen throws from third to first during a sunny practice.



Bailey Peacock fires a the ball home during a drill.

Team Rundown:

The Yoncalla/Elkton team is looking to win the small battles.

The first battle that they have already won this year was having 11 girls on the team. Last season the team had to forfeit games at the end of the year because they had just eight girls on the team.

“The fact that we have two extra, I’m actually thrilled,” said first year head coach Shawn Garrett. Garrett, an assistant coach last season, is the third head coach in the last four years.

This year’s team includes five players that have never played softball before which means realistic expectations for the team.

“I’ve been honest with them from the beginning, we’re not a state title team. But we’re going to try for .500, it’s a realistic goal.

And normally most coaches would say I want to win half my games, but let’s be realistic and not get down if a North Douglas beats us,” said Garrett.

While the team finished 15 games below .500 a year ago, Garrett believes that the key to get there is with improved pitching and an athletic infield that includes Tayla Swearingen at third, Kiernyn Carnes at shortstop and Bailey Peacock at second.

“Pitching will be better. You couldn’t get much worse than we were last year. Everyone was brand new last year,” said Garrett. “We’ll have a pretty good infield [and] I expect Bailey to be putting in a candidacy for first team all-league at second base.”

One-on-one with Bailey Peacock:

How long have you been playing softball?

I’ve been playing softball for a really long time. Since I was like four or five, I grew up around it.

How is it being one of the most experienced players when there are a lot of newcomers?

It’s advantageable sometimes so we can help the others out that are new. It’s good to help them out when they don’t know something. It’s good to be experienced and it’s good for newbies because we need them. We wouldn’t have a team without them.

It’s still nerve-wracking because if you miss the ball, it’s ‘Ah, I let the team down’ or ‘I didn’t do it right.’ But you always got think we’ll all have mistakes and we’re all going to fix them. Just like our coach says, ‘Just shake it off.’ We can’t get mad ourselves be-

cause we have a whole nother game to play or more games to play. Just shake it off, we’ve got to boost each other up.

What are the team’s goals for the season?

We’re going to try and get a lot of W’s this season. Just win a lot of games this year and try to make playoffs and if we can’t then we’ll always have next year and the year after that for some of us. We’re just going to try our hardest and play how we know how to play and just do our thing.

What do you tell girls to try to convince them to play softball?

It’s just a lot of fun. We’re basically family, all of us are family. We’re always there for each other and it’s good to have support and be out and be active. And have fun. That’s just our main goal, to have fun.

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