

# Seaside ready to battle with Astoria, Banks

By Gary Henley  
Seaside Signal

Could we have a Banks vs. Seaside championship trifecta?

The Braves and the Gulls met for the state championship in both football and basketball. It may be a longer shot, but don't be so quick to discount a Banks vs. Seaside championship meeting in baseball.

Banks is a proven power, after finishing last season as Cowapa League co-champions with Astoria. The Gulls, meanwhile, have shown that on a good day, they can compete with anybody.

Seaside got a good start last summer, when the Gulls finished third in the Oregon Junior Baseball state tournament, behind Churchill and West Salem.

It all comes down to that senior group, which has plenty of big-game experience, in every sport.

"They're so athletic," said Seaside's first-year coach, Dan McFadden. "That's one thing about our seniors. To play in the state title game in football and basketball, I'd be crazy if I didn't think we had an opportunity to do that in baseball also."

## THE COWAPA

The Cowapa League is just as tough in baseball as it is in most sports. It's no coincidence that other sports are finishing with an all-Cowapa League championship game, and that the Cowapa's "league championship" is also becoming known as the "state championship."

Over the last 11 years, Cowapa League teams have made six appearances in the baseball state championship game. Of course, a couple of those appearances belong to Scappoose, no longer in the



Gary Henley/Seaside Signal

Seaside is strong in the middle infield with shortstop Payton Westerholm, left, and second baseman Gage McFadden.

Cowapa.

Still, there's plenty of top-notch competition left.

The race for the 2019 league title could be a three-team sprint between Astoria, Banks and Seaside.

Astoria and Banks are old hands at competing for league titles — the Gulls are the newcomers.

"The Cowapa League is wide open this year," McFadden said. "It's anybody's game."

## THE GULLS

Seaside's annual deep run into the basketball playoffs always results in a late start for baseball. But, knowing the Gulls' seniors, they're always ready for whatever



Gary Henley/Seaside Signal

Isaias Jantes has a strong arm in the outfield for the Seaside baseball team.

sport is in season.

"We rolled right into baseball games without practice," McFadden said. "It's kind of a crazy thing, getting guys back that late. We had our jamboree on Monday, and

that was two days after the championship basketball game.

"I got texts from all of (the basketball players), asking for an extra day off," he said. "And God bless 'em,

they came out and we had a great two days of practice after that."

A glance at the Seaside roster shows very few weaknesses in the field.

It will start with a deep

pitching staff.

"The one thing that I like about our pitching is that we have lots of it," McFadden said. "We have options every day. We may not have that dominant guy who can throw 85, 90 miles an hour, but we have guys who throw strikes, and our defense is fantastic. As long as they throw strikes, we're going to be in any baseball game."

"We've been doing some different things to make our outfield more athletic, and we're moving Duncan Thompson (Sr.) around a little. We're excited about this."

True, five of the league's six starting catchers made all-league last season, but the Gulls own arguably the best one, in senior Alex Teubner.

Seaside is solid up the middle, with senior all-league shortstop Payton Westerholm and second baseman Gage McFadden.

A third all-league returner is junior Brayden Johnson, who has seen action on the mound, along with senior Travis Fenton and Thompson.

Senior left fielder Isaias Jantes is also solid with the bat, and senior Dylan Meyer will be the starter at first base.

Paxson VanNortwick rounds out the senior class.

Junior Gavin Rich has seen time on the mound in the pre-season, and the two sophomores on the roster include Riley Kuhl and Justin Morris.

Seaside was 5-4 through nine games, without a single rainout in March.

"We want to get our pre-season games in, get better, and be ready for that first league game," McFadden said. "We have a lot of senior leaders on our team this year, guys who have played baseball their whole career. We're really excited about this season."

## SEASIDE BASEBALL

**Coach:** Dan McFadden, 1st year

**2018:** 10-13 (6-9 Cowapa)

**Playoffs:** none

All-league losses: Astor Landwehr

**All-league returners:** Brayden Johnson, Jr., Alex Teubner, Sr., Payton Westerholm, Sr.