



2021 FALL SPORTS PREVIEW

A special publication of *Sidney Daily News*



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SIDNEY FOOTBALL: OFFENSE



Bryant Billing | Sidney Daily News

The 2021 Sidney football squad will try to keep up its improvement from last season's campaign, in which the squad finished 5-4 following a 3-7 record in 2019. The Yellow Jackets managed to post an improved record despite their schedule frequently being disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The squad's offensive improvement was a key to the better record. The team averaged 291 yards and 23.4 points per game after averaging 252 yards and 17.8 points in 2019.

Yellow Jackets hope to keep improving

Sidney has 5 returning starters on offense and hopes to build off shortened 2020

By Bryant Billing
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SIDNEY — The COVID-19 pandemic made for an unusual fall sports season last year, but Sidney's football squad dealt with more abnormality than most teams.

Several games were canceled days before their scheduled start times. Replacement opponents were hastily added. Normal opponents like Troy and Bellefontaine weren't played for

the first time in decades, yet the squad faced Stebbins and West Carrollton twice in nine games.

Those factors combined with injuries, illness and a new offensive scheme, offensive coordinator and quarterback would have made it difficult for most squads to have success. But Sidney fought through and finished 5-4, making it the fourth time in six seasons the squad has won at least five games.

With five returning starters and an offseason that was close to normal, the Yellow Jackets are hoping for continued improvement this season.

No scrimmages were allowed by the Ohio High School Athletic Association last season as the organization tried to figure out how (and if) fall sports would work amidst the pandemic. Offseason training last summer was different as well, as teams tried to limit contact between players.

Offseason and preseason activities returned to normal this year. The Yellow Jackets had a busy summer with

weight training and conditioning, summer practice days and 7-on-7's before beginning preseason practice on Aug. 1. The squad scrimmaged Toledo St. Francis on Aug. 6 and Dayton Chaminate-Julienne on Aug. 12.

That more normal practice regimen was welcomed by Sidney coach Adam Doenges, since the Yellow Jackets will have a new quarterback for the second consecutive year.

Cedric Johnson led Sidney at QB last year in his lone year as a starter and amassed 1,499 passing yards and 10 touchdowns with five interceptions

in addition to rushing for 488 yards and seven TDs on 127 carries.

Donavin Johnson takes over at quarterback this season. He's been a junior varsity and backup QB in the program since his freshman year and has played on varsity as a defensive back since his sophomore season.

"He's kind of like Ced, and maybe even a little more physical at the run game," Doenges, who is entering his 11th season, said of Donavin Johnson.

His throwing ability will be a big piece of the offensive puzzle

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SIDNEY FOOTBALL: DEFENSE

Seniors to play big role on Yellow Jackets' 'D'

Sidney returns 4 defensive starters, including top tackler

By Bryant Billing
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SIDNEY — Sidney's defense showed marked improvement last season and is hoping to do the same this year. But to do so, the squad will have to replace five of its top six tacklers — and deal with its top returning tackler not rejoining the squad until later this season.

Sidney had a large group of seniors that helped the squad improve from a 3-7 campaign in 2019 to a 5-4 campaign in 2020 that included two losses to Stebbins by a combined three points.

The group also helped lead defensive improvement. Sidney gave up 19.1 points and 291 yards per game last year after allowing an average of 21.9 points and 309.4 yards per game in 2019. The team also forced 22 turnovers in nine games after having forced 12 in 10 games in 2019.

The Yellow Jackets have an even larger group this year with 23 seniors, several of which are expected to be key defensive players.

"It's a really good group that had a lot of success in seventh and eighth grade and moving up, not just in football, but in other sports," Doenges said. "It's nice to see the progression, maturity and growth as those guys move up."

Junior Hayden Cotrell (6-foot-1, 297 pounds) will start at nose guard for the Yellow Jackets. Senior Zane Cline (6-4, 202) and junior Thomas Sibert (6-6, 271) are also expected to start on the defensive line.

"Hayden is a wrestler and does a really nice job for us as far as his physicality," Doenges said. "We'll rotate a lot of guys at the nose spot, but we're looking for some good things from Hayden."

Seniors Evan Kennedy, Jaden Swiger, Carson Roesser and Jayden Bishop are expected to see time on the defensive line, in addition to Brennan Barnes.

Sidney will continue its 3-4 defensive scheme.

"It's something we

switched up a couple of years ago," Doenges said. "We realized we have to stop the inside run game, and the 3-4 has been better for us, and I think we feel really good about being able to stop the inside run game and push everything to the outside."

"... We feel really good about the physicality of our scrimmages so far. It was some of our best as far as being physical on the line and overall tackling from all 11 guys."

Senior middle line-backer Devin Taborn returns after leading the squad with 57.5 tackles last year. Unfortunately for the Yellow Jackets, Taborn suffered a knee injury during AAU basketball in the summer and

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Bryant Billing | Sidney Daily News

Sidney's Conley New, top, works to bring down West Carrollton's Dajuan Howard during the first half of a Division II playoff game on Oct. 9, 2020 at Sidney Memorial Stadium. New is one of four returning defensive starters for the Yellow Jackets.



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SIDNEY FALL SPORTS



Luke Gronneberg | Sidney Daily News

Sidney forward Graham Van Tilburgh keeps ahead of a Beavercreek player during a Division I sectional final on Oct. 22, 2020 at Frank Zink Field in Beavercreek. The Yellow Jackets have seven returning letterwinners and are looking to compete for the MVL Valley Division title and to make a deep tournament run.



Lee Woolery | AIM Media Midwest

Sidney midfielder Jadah McMillen battles for the ball with a Troy player during a Miami Valley League crossover game on Oct. 12, 2020 at Troy Memorial Stadium. McMillen is the lone returning senior letterwinner and will look to lead a young squad that lost eight players off last season's team to graduation.

Yellow Jackets aim for more divisional titles

Sidney boys, girls soccer and boys cross country look to repeat as MVL Valley champs

By Bryant Billing
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SIDNEY — Sidney's boys soccer program has been on the upswing the last couple of years. The Yellow Jackets have captured Miami Valley League Valley Division titles the last two seasons and have won one tournament game each year.

With seven returning letterwinners this year, the squad is looking to repeat as Valley Division champs, challenge for the overall MVL title and make a deeper postseason run.

"I think if we play our game, then we should be competitive with all our opponents," fifth-year coach Jamie Fridley said. "If the young players can adjust to the speed, we will be fine."

"Our strength again will be our backline and midfield. We really rely on them to hold down the middle of the field. Our attack should be pretty strong this season and we feel we should improve on our goal production."

The seven returning letterwinners from last year's 9-5-4 squad are senior midfielder Carson Taylor, senior defender Landon Davis, senior attacker Michael Koester, senior defender Ben Savage, junior midfielder Connor Simpson, junior defender Owen Karn and sophomore attacker Graham Van Tilburgh.

Taylor scored eight goals and had seven assists last year while Koester scored eight goals and had five assists.

Fridley touted that most players are multiple-sport athletes and said Koester and Simpson are high-level club soccer players.

Senior Jack Davidson joins the team as its goalkeeper this year.

"This is Jack's first year playing with us, but he is catching on well," Fridley said. "Jack is a good-size kid at 6-foot-0 and about 170 pounds. He plays baseball and is a very athletic player. He really reminds me of Clay Boberg, our keeper from last season."

Other key newcomers include sophomore attacker Nick Fenton, freshman

midfielder Ashton Macy and freshman defender Gilbert Pelealu.

"Gilbert is a quality club player that (assistant coach) George (Miu) and myself have coached for a few years, so Gilbert also brings experience and IQ," Fridley said. "Ashton is a former club player. Ashton also brings us IQ, but he also has size."

"Our supporting players will also play a big role this season. They are getting better with each training session. The supporting players are led by seniors Nathan Gailey and Kaehlo Bonnette, junior Cruz Hernandez, sophomore Brady Hagan and freshman Carter Wooddell."

Girls soccer

Sidney is looking to replace eight players who graduated off last year's 13-2-2 squad, five of which were starters.

"We are returning six letterwinners with only one of them being a senior," sixth-year coach Kevin Veroneau said. "We will have a very young team with some experienced players."

Senior midfielder Jadah McMillen and junior defenders Lainie Fair and Lexee Brewer are the only experienced upperclassmen. McMillen scored four goals and had seven assists a year ago while Fair scored five goals and had four assists and Brewer scored four goals and had two assists.

Sophomore defender Kimora Johnson scored two goals and had 13 assists last year while sophomore forward Kyleigh Spade scored 10 goals and had six assists. Sophomore midfielder Olivia Barga scored three goals and had one assist.

Veroneau identified freshman forward Larkin Vordemark and freshman defender Kendall Dickman as key newcomers.

Volleyball

The Yellow Jackets struggled to a 4-17 record in Megan Verhoff's first year as coach, but with six returning letterwinners, they're hoping for improved results this year.

"This season, we are heavy with upperclassmen, and they have more expe-



Luke Gronneberg | Sidney Daily News

Sidney defensive specialist Sydni Boshears hits during a Miami Valley League crossover match against Tippecanoe on Oct. 1, 2020 at Sidney High School. Boshears is one of six returning letterwinners for the squad, which is looking to improve on last season's 4-17 record.

rience," Verhoff said. "All the girls have been striving to better themselves for their team. They challenge each other day-in and day-out because they have the same end goal."

Senior right side hitter Cassidy Truesdale is one of the leading returnees in the front row. She had 88 kills, 18 blocks and 76 digs a year ago.

"Cassidy is returning from a shoulder injury," Verhoff said. "She is working hard and coming back

stronger."

Junior middle blocker Anna Brady and junior outside hitter/right side hitter Kearstyn Maxon-Honaker also return. Brady had 78 kills and a team-high 43 blocks while Maxon-Honaker had 37 kills.

"Anna has a strong arm swing and is able to control where she hits," Verhoff said. "She also has brought the jump serve. Kearstyn has become a stronger hitter and is able

to place the ball when hitting. She is also bringing a wicked jump serve."

Also returning are senior setter Avery Griffis and sophomore setter/outside hitter Madelyn Bockrath. Bockrath had a team-high 226 assists last year while Griffis had 157.

"Avery is bringing her senior leadership and passion," Verhoff said. "She is coming back stronger. Madelyn is coming back with more court awareness and drive to better the ball for each of her hitters."

Senior defensive specialist Sydni Boshears also returns. She ranked second on the team with 165 digs a year ago.

"Sydni is bringing the senior leadership and desire to fly all over the floor to pick up any ball sent her way," Verhoff said.

Key newcomers include sophomore outside hitters Aliyah Taborn and Kyla Rush, junior defensive specialist Kennah Herrick, junior middle blocker Shelbie Miller and senior defensive specialist Sophia Brunner, who is a foreign-exchange student from Germany.

"Sophia is going to bring energy and work ethic to our team," Verhoff said. "Aliyah is a strong blocker and has court awareness. Kyla is aggressive and determined. Kennah is all over the court and a vocal leader. Shelbie is a strong middle that is good at placing the ball."

Sidney finished fourth out of five teams in the MVL Valley Division last year, and Verhoff said the squad is hoping for a better finish this year.

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ANNA



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The 2021 Anna football squad will look for improvement from 2020's 4-6 campaign with seven starters returning on both sides of the ball. The Rockets, which won the Division VI state championship in 2019, struggled early last year in a Midwest Athletic Conference schedule that was reshuffled due to the OHSAA reorganizing the season format due to COVID-19. But the squad played better late and won three of its last four games.

Rockets return most starters

Anna looking to improve on 4-6 season with 7 starters back on both sides

By Bryant Billing
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ANNA — After losing nearly every starter to graduation from its 2019 Division VI state championship squad, Anna went through a rebuilding effort last year. But the Rockets improved late and won three of their last four games and are hoping to keep the momentum going this year.

Anna has seven starters back on both sides of the ball from last year's squad, which finished 4-6. After dropping to 1-5 in a loss to Midwest Athletic Conference foe Coldwater, the squad pounded Miami East in a Div. VI playoff game, then played to a 36-35 loss at West Jefferson in Week 8.

The team added regular season games against Indian Lake and Covington in Weeks 9 and 10 to complete a 10-game schedule during the odd COVID-19 influenced season. The Rockets beat the Lakers 27-0 and Covington 21-13.

"We're a more experienced team," Anna coach Nick Marino said. "We picked up some good experience last year."

Among the returnees is senior Kohlten Carey, who threw for 808 yards and nine touchdowns with seven interceptions last season as the squad's starting quarterback. He also ran for a team-high 530 yards and seven touchdowns with five fumbles on 145 carries.

A key newcomer for the squad's spread formation according to Marino is senior

quarterback Carter Seigle. Marino said Seigle is a good decision maker.

Senior receivers Zach Ambos and Brandon Axe also return. Ambos caught 15 passes for 188 yards and three touchdowns while Axe caught nine passes for 64 yards and one touchdown. Axe also ran for 432 yards and six touchdowns on 81 carries.

Two other key offensive weapons are back in senior running back Hunter Schmidt and senior receiver/RB Justin Richards. Schmidt ran for 382 yards and two touchdowns on 91 carries while Richards caught 18 passes for 243 yards and four TDs. Richards also returned 23 kickoffs for 484 yards and one TD.

Key returning offensive and defensive lineman include seniors Grant Albers and Landon Howell and junior Thaine Hamilton.

Albers had 23 tackles on the defensive line while Howell

had 17. Junior Landon Blankenship also returns on the defensive line.

Schmidt returns to lead the linebacking corps. He ranked fourth on the squad last year with 68 tackles, seven of which were for loss. He also recovered three fumbles.

Axe and Ambos both return as safeties on the squad's 3-4 defense. Axe had a team-high 88 tackles last year, 11 of which were for loss. He also had one interception and two fumble recoveries. Ambos had 58 tackles.

Richards returns as a cornerback. He had 34 tackles last year.

Anna's coaching staff is mostly the same, but one notable new addition is Tyler Wright, who takes over as the program's offensive coordinator and quarterbacks and safeties coach. Wright, a Troy grad, served as the Trojans' offensive coordinator under Matt Burgbacher for several years before

working as Vandalia-Butler's offensive coordinator the last two seasons.

The team's schedule returns to normal after COVID-19 wreaked havoc with schedules last year. The Rockets opened with Indian Lake, which was also supposed to be their opening opponent last year before the OHSAA reshuffled its season format.

Longstanding Week 2 nonconference opponent Brookville returns this year after the teams didn't play a year ago. Anna opens MAC play at Parkway in Week 3 and hosts Fort Recovery in Week 4 before finishing the first half of the season at New Bremen on Sept. 17.

Anna hosts Coldwater, St. Henry and Marion Local in the second half of the season and travels to Versailles and Minster.

Reach Bryant Billing at 937-538-4818, or follow @SidneyOHSports on Twitter and @BryantBillingSDN on Facebook.

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Anna girls soccer aiming for tourney run



Bryant Billing | Sidney Daily News

Anna's Carissa Edwards dribbles ahead of a Lehman Catholic player during a Western Ohio Soccer League game on Oct. 17, 2021 at Sidney Memorial Stadium. Edwards is one of eight returning starters for the Rockets, which advanced to a district final game for the fourth consecutive season last year.

Boys, girls cross country squads have high expectations after state berths

By Bryant Billing
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ANNA — Anna's girls soccer team has become a perennial district contender. With eight returning starters this year, the Rockets are looking to make a deeper postseason run.

Anna returns 14 total varsity players and eight letterwinners from last season's 15-4-0 group, which lost to Cincinnati Madeira in a Division III district final. It was the fourth straight season the Rockets advanced to a district final.

"We are a very fast team with a lot of experience," Mike Noll, who's entering his fifth year as coach, said. "We have a deep bench, too. It will be hard to slow us down. With all the experience, we will go deep in the playoffs."

Leading the returnees is senior forward Tanner Spangler, who scored 44 goals last season. Spangler has 72 career goals, and Noll expects she'll surpass 100 career goals this year.

Also back are senior Chloe Baughman and

sophomore Jenna Wolters. "Chloe Baughman is an explosive outside back," Noll said. "When she comes out of the back, you won't catch her. Jenna Wolters plays center back extremely well. I believe very few players will get past her."

Other returning starters include seniors Ashley Bertke, Carissa Edwards and Laney Reiss, junior Taylor Poepelman and sophomore London Reiss.

Key newcomers include freshmen forward Iris Canan, goalie Abby Stroh and midfielder Regan Schloss.

"Iris Canan has varsity-level talent," Noll said. "She can play several positions on the field. She will have several goals this season. Abby Stroh is a goalie with several years of training. She will be a large asset to the team. Regan Schloss is a midfielder with experience knowing where to be on the field."

The Rockets won Western Ohio Soccer League titles for three

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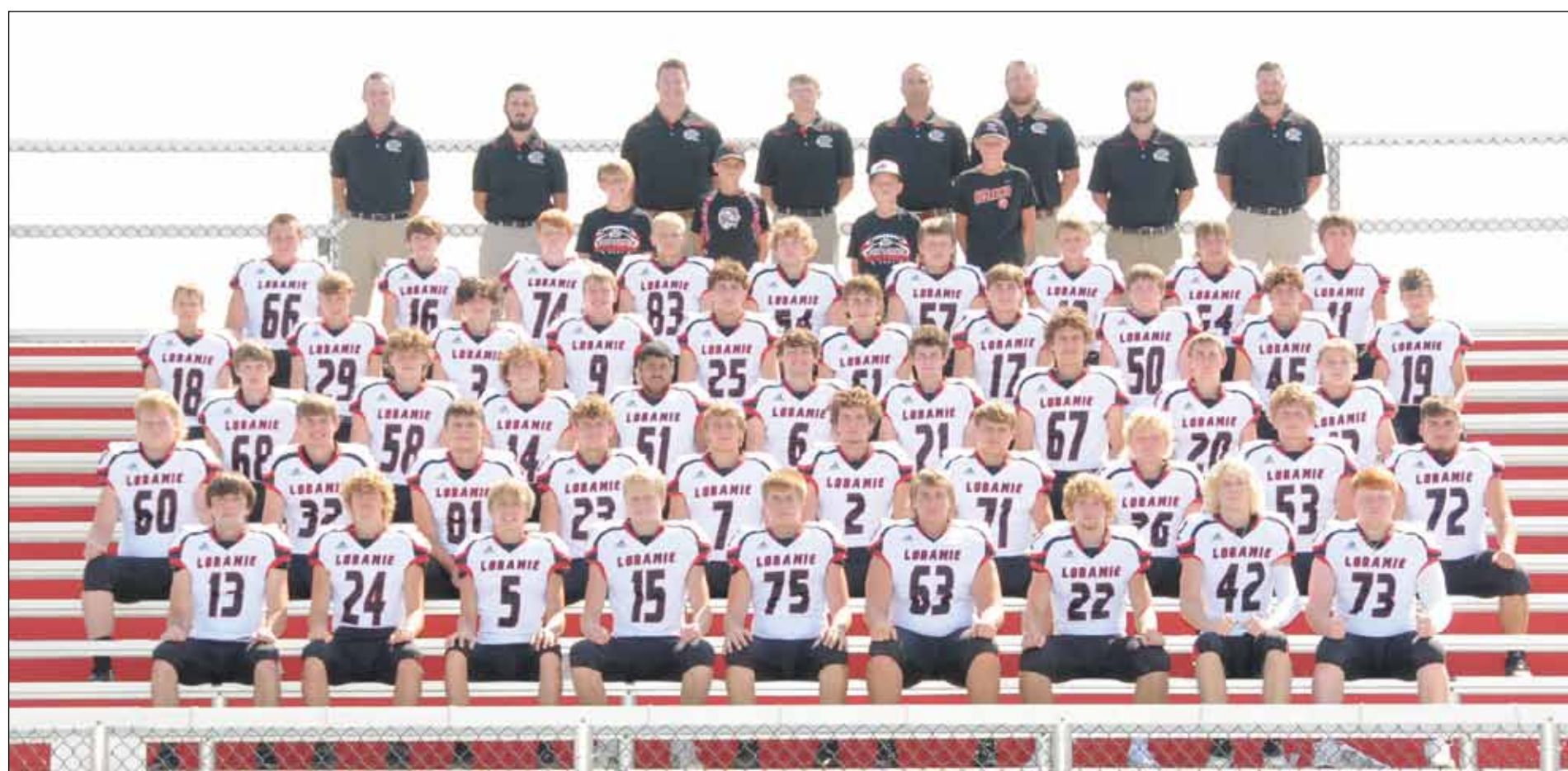
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FORT LORAMIE



Courtesy photo

The 2021 Fort Loramie football team will look to keep up the program's strong performance in the last five years. The Redskins haven't lost more than three games in a season since 2016 and finished 7-2 last year. Things will look different on and off the field, though. Fort Loramie will play independent of league affiliation for the first time in a decade after the breakup of the Cross County Conference. Many new players will be on the field this fall for the squad; only three starters return from last season.

Redskins prepping for independent schedule

Fort Loramie has 3 starters back from 2020 squad, will play independent after CCC breakup

By Bryant Billing
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FORT LORAMIE — Things didn't go totally to plan for any football team across Ohio last season due to COVID-19 wreaking havoc with the Ohio High School Athletic Association's season format, which in turn changed every team's schedules last August weeks before the season was set to start.

For Fort Loramie, it was the first of two seasons in which schedules look wildly different.

A normal 10 week regular-season format is back this year. But Fort Loramie's schedule still

looks vastly different from previous seasons, as the program is playing independent of league affiliation for the first time in a decade.

With only three starters back from last season's squad, things will look different on the field, too. But fourth-year coach Spencer Wells says he's optimistic recent success will continue.

"Our players have displayed the necessary commitment and hard work throughout the off-season in order to achieve our goals as a program," Wells said. "... We have a ton of competition going on at multiple positions. As a coach, I always look for-

ward to seeing who steps up and takes advantage of an opportunity to compete."

Fort Loramie finished 7-2 last year and hasn't lost more than three games in a season since 2016.

The squad has scored a lot of points in those successful seasons, with Collin Moore having led a high-powered offense the last three years.

Moore has graduated, and junior Caleb Maurer is taking over as starter. He has one big weapon back in junior receiver Logan Eilerman, who caught 50 passes for 729 yards last year with eight receiving touchdowns.

Senior running back Jacob Sherman looks to have a bigger role as an offensive playmaker this year. Sherman gained 413

rushing yards on 49 carries and scored 4 TDs and caught 11 passes for 122 yards with 1 receiving TD.

The squad also looks to be boosted by the return of senior running back Damon Mescher, who suffered a season-ending shoulder injury in Week 1 last year. He had 358 receiving yards and three receiving touchdowns in 2019 and ran for 224 yards and five TDs. He was also a big return threat for the Redskins, as he averaged 25.2 yards per punt return and scored 4 TDs.

Senior receiver Elliott Davis also returns after playing sparingly last year. Key newcomers who could see time as offensive playmakers include junior running backs Darren Eilerman and Ethan Keiser.

Senior Karson Tennery and

Calvin Hoying return on the offensive line and will be joined by newcomers in Tristan Fleckenstein (senior), Jacob Pleiman (senior) and Wes Gehret (senior).

Most will see time on the defensive line, as will seniors Gabe Meyer, Isaac Raterman and Lane Frilling, who play tight end and defensive end. Raterman made 15 tackles last year and Tennery made 10.5.

Of all the positions Fort Loramie was hit hard by, it was especially hit hard at linebacker and defensive back.

Darren Eilerman is the team's top returning tackler. He gathered 15.5 tackles last year as a linebacker.

Davis will play at linebacker,

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Bryant Billing | Sidney Daily News

Fort Loramie outside hitter Ava Sholtis serves during the Division IV state championship match on Nov. 9, 2019 at Wright State University's Nutter Center. Sholtis looks to be among the leaders on the Redskins' front line this season after missing almost all of 2020 due to tearing an ACL in the squad's first match of the season.

Fort Loramie volleyball looks to reload

Boys, girls cross country squads have state aspirations, as does boys golf

By Bryant Billing
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FORT LORAMIE — Fort Loramie is aiming to have the same success it has enjoyed in recent seasons with a lot of new varsity players this season.

The Redskins lost nine seniors off last year's squad, which finished 23-4, tied for a Shelby County Athletic League title and earned the program's 13th consecutive

district title.

"This team will have a different look, and we are excited about that," 15th-year coach John Rodgers said. "It's one of the best parts about coaching, new challenges and new players."

Five letterwinners return, and one key piece of the squad's 2019 Division IV state runner-up campaign is also back.

Senior outside hitter Ava Sholtis returns after suffering a season-ending

knee injury in the Redskins' first match last season. She ranked second on the 2019 squad with 255 kills and had 38 aces and 201 digs.

Other returnees include senior defensive specialist Quinn Sholtis, senior right side hitter Jada Drees, sophomore outside hitter Summer Hoying and senior defensive specialist Riley Heitkamp.

Drees ranked second on last year's squad with 187 kills while Hoying was third with 135. Drees ranked fifth with 35 aces and fourth with 33 blocks. Heitkamp led the squad with 284 digs while

Quinn Sholtis was sixth with 100.

"They have been in some big games throughout their careers, and I am excited to see them lead the team this year," Rodgers said.

Senior setter Colleen Brandewie, senior right side/outside hitter Dani Barhorst and senior defensive specialists Brooke Holthaus and Lauren Bergman are key newcomers, as are junior middle hitter Katrina Berneing and sophomore middle hitter Skyler Albers.

"Our newcomers bring

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LEHMAN CATHOLIC



Courtesy photo

The 2021 Lehman Catholic football team has 35 players on the roster this season and is hoping the improved numbers and depth will help with improvement on the field following last season's 3-3 campaign. Lehman has eight offensive starters and seven defensive starters returning for the squad's first season as a member of the newly-reformed Three Rivers Conference. Among the returning starters is John Edwards, a two-time all-Ohio selection in Division VII as a linebacker.

Cavaliers look to improve in TRC

Cavs hoping for better results after 3-3 record in last season in NWCC

By Bryant Billing
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SIDNEY — Lehman Catholic was hit the hardest of any area squad by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Cavaliers played only six games due to two separate outbreaks at the school resulting in a total of three games getting canceled, including a season-ending matchup with Waynesfield-Goshen.

The Cavaliers struggled when they were on the field and finished 3-3 in their final year as a member of the Northwest Central Conference, with two losses coming by six points

or less.

But with a large group of returnees and the most players on the roster in several years, the Cavaliers are hoping for improvement in their first season in the recently-revived Three Rivers Conference.

Lehman has eight starters back on offense, including sophomore quarterback Donovan O'Leary. He completed 5-of-21 pass attempts for 72 yards with four interceptions last year and ran for 118 yards and one touchdown on 22 carries.

O'Leary will be joined in the backfield by returning starter Nathan Sollmann, who rushed for a team-high 700 yards and six TDs on 93 carries a year ago.

Dylan Karns, who started on the defensive line last year, will also play more at running back

after gaining 240 yards on 35 carries a year ago.

Sophomore Seth Kennedy (5-foot-10, 245 pounds) returns to the offensive line as a guard, as does senior John Edwards.

Senior Anthony Stumpo (5-8, 230) is also a returning starter on the line, as is senior Matt Denise (6-4, 250). Sophomores JD Barhorst (5-8, 200) and Will Ford (6-0, 215) will also play on the line.

Junior tight end AJ Newson (5-10, 185) will have passes thrown his way, as will junior receiver Evan Trevino. Both are returning starters. Newson led the squad with six receptions for 206 yards and two TDs a year ago.

Sophomore Seth Knapke, a returning letterwinner, will also play at receiver. Senior Michael McFarland, who was a defen-

sive starter last year, will also play at tight end.

"Our biggest question is the offensive line," Lehman coach Dick Roll, who is entering his 15th season, said. "Edwards and Kennedy are entrenched as starters. If the line comes together, we should be solid."

"We will look to establish the run with Sollmann and Karns leading the way. We will look to get the ball to our talented tight ends in McFarland and Newson."

Seven starters are back on defense, including four-year starter Karns (5-7, 160) and McFarland (6-2, 220) on the defensive line. They'll be aided by junior returning letterwinner Wyatt Earhart (6-2, 170).

Edwards, who was a Division VII all-Ohio selection as a freshman and sophomore, returns

at inside linebacker, as does Newson.

Sollmann, O'Leary and junior Hayden Sever return as defensive backs. Knapke will also play at defensive back in the squad's 4-2-5 scheme.

Edwards made a team-high 44.5 tackles last season and recovered one fumble. Roll said he has a chance to break the program's record for most tackles.

Sollmann and O'Leary each intercepted two passes while Newson recovered two fumbles. Sever made 25 tackles while McFarland made 20, Sollmann made 18.5 and Newson made 17.

"We feel like we can do more things on defense because of our experience," Roll said.

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Lehman girls soccer wants another district berth

Boys soccer, volleyball squads looking for improvement

By Bryant Billing
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SIDNEY — Lehman Catholic's girls soccer team lost four key seniors off last year's squad but has plenty of talent and experience back as it aims to advance to a district final for the ninth consecutive season.

Seven starters and 15 total letterwinners return for the Cavaliers, which finished 15-2-1 overall last year and won the Western Ohio Soccer League girls title with an unblemished 15-2-1 record in their

final season as a member. Lehman has joined the Three Rivers Conference in all sports expect girls tennis this fall.

Though the Cavaliers have plenty of experience, they don't have as deep a roster as second-year coach Josh Duncan would like. There are 17 players on the roster.

"The overall roster this year is the lightest it has been," Duncan said. "But we are excited to be a part of the Three Rivers Conference. We understand that this will be a much more difficult

conference, but our goal remains the same: to finish first in conference at the end of the season.

"As we move towards the postseason, our goal is to be playing our best by tournament time. If we are clicking in early October, other teams should watch out."

The squad lost its top scorer from last year in Lindsey Magoteaux to graduation but returns sophomore forward Eva Dexter, who scored 12 goals and had eight assists. Also back is junior forward Ella Black, who scored six goals and had seven assists. Both are returning starters.

"With Ella Black and Eva Dexter combining up top, people will be surprised what those two can accomplish," Duncan said.

Returning letterwinners in senior forwards Molly Greene and Colleen O'Leary and sophomore forward Mara O'Leary and Aubri Karn will add depth.

Several midfielders return, including junior Tori Lachey, who scored four goals and had five assists. She is a returning starter, as is sophomore Tanner Black and senior Ella Monnin. Sophomore Emilee VanSkiver will add depth.

Junior defender Kailey Higgins is a returning starter at defender. She'll be joined by returning letterwinners in junior Lucy Ritze, senior Agnes Schmiesing and sophomore Maggie Schmiesing.



Bryant Billing | Sidney Daily News

Lehman Catholic defender Tanner Black fights for ball control with an Anna player during a Western Ohio Soccer League game on Oct. 17, 2020 at Sidney Memorial Stadium. The Cavaliers secured the WOSL title that night to cap off their final year of membership in the league. The program, along with all sports programs at Lehman except for tennis, will be a part of the newly reformed Three Rivers Conference.

"The back line adds new two players with Agnes Schmiesing taking over at left back, while Lucy Ritze and Ella Monnin will be at the heart of the defense and Kailey Higgins maintains her

place on the right," Duncan said.

Senior Heidi Toner returns as goalkeeper. She set a program record with 77 saves last season. She'll be backed by freshman Callie Giguere.

"Callie Giguere brings a wealth of experience at the goalkeeping position," Duncan said. "We have lacked competition in that area for a few years, but

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RUSSIA

Raiders volleyball has big goals

By Bryant Billing
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RUSSIA — Russia's volleyball program has reached new heights since 2017. The program earned regional berths each of the last four years and advanced to regional final matches in 2019 and 2020.

The Raiders have almost all of their 2020 squad back and with the addition of a few key newcomers will try to earn a regional title and state berth this season, in addition to a Shelby County Athletic League title.

"We did lose (hitter Ashley Scott and libero Kendall Monnin), who had played all four years in high school, and they will be hard to replace in several aspects," sixth-year Russia coach Aaron Watkins said. "But we have had several girls step up (in summer play).

"We'll look to compete for an SCAL title again and make it back to the regional round of the tournament and possibly beyond. We will be very athletic."

Leading that athleticism on the front line is junior outside hitter Kate Sherman. Sherman, who is 6-foot-1, had a team-high 327 kills and 65 blocks last year for Russia, which finished 22-5 overall and tied with Fort Loramie for the SCAL title.

Also back are junior middle hitter Cece Borchers, sophomore outside hitter Carley Scott and senior right side Bailey Pohlman. Borchers had 158 kills and 54 blocks last year while Pohlman had 85 kills and 53 blocks. Scott ranked fourth on the squad with 100 kills.

Watkins said Pohlman, who is a captain and one of three seniors, sets the tone for the squad. He said Scott is among the most improved and has a better vertical than last year.

Other returning starters include junior setter Miah Monnin, junior defensive specialist Jillian Chapman and junior libero Simone Puthoff. Monnin had 857 assists last year and 163 digs while Chapman had 150 digs. Puthoff was third on the squad with 240 serve receptions and had a team-high 39 aces.

Also back is junior outside hitter/defensive specialist Kelby Doseck.

"Most of these girls are entering their third year of varsity and are now being looked at for leadership both on and off the court," Watkins said.

Key newcomers include senior defensive specialists Lucy Tumbusch and Leanne York and sophomore middle hitter Roni Poling.

"Leanne and Lucy are both seniors that will add a needed spark off the bench with



Russia's Kate Sherman spikes during a Division IV sectional tournament match against Springfield Catholic Central on Oct. 24, 2020 at Covington High School. Sherman is one of several returning starters for the Raiders, which earned their fourth consecutive district title and regional berth last year and advanced to a regional final for the second straight year. Sherman had a team-high 327 kills and 65 blocks last season.

Luke Gronneberg | Sidney Daily News



Russia's Ross Fiessinger swings during the Shelby County Athletic League boys golf tournament on Sept. 17, 2020 at Shelby Oaks Golf Club. Fiessinger is one of five returning boys golfers.

Luke Gronneberg | Sidney Daily News



Russia's Ella Hoehne runs during the Division III district meet on Oct. 24, 2020 at Cedarville University. Hoehne is one of seven returning girls cross country runners.

Greg Billing | Sidney Daily News

aggressive serving and passing," Watkins said. "Roni Poling will start and will be a presence at the net. She blocks well and can put a ball away."

Russia has tied for

the SCAL title twice since 2017 and finished second the other two seasons. Watkins said the squad should be in the title race again this season, along with Fort Loramie and Fairlawn.

"We always see a lot of great competition in the SCAL and look to see a lot of local talent again this season and be competitive against these area schools."

Girls cross country

Brad Heaton will guide the team this season, which has seven letterwinners returning from last season.

Senior Ella Hoehne, juniors Anna Meyer, Grace Holscher and Kayli McClenen and sophomores Jaela Shappie, Saige Hoying and Eva Goubeaux all return from last year's squad, which finished fourth in a Division III district meet and seventh in the Southwest regional meet.

"The returning runners should be strong," Heaton said. "The girls are working hard and if they can stay injury free they should be competitive in the league."

Hoehne is the squad's top returning runner. She finished 21st in the SCAL meet last year by finishing in 21:43.

"She is the only senior girl and demonstrates excellent leadership for the team," Heaton said. "The three juniors had injuries last year but are running well."

Heaton said freshmen Emma Caldwell, Addison Shappie, Mackenzie Rose, Sayer Magoto and Hannah Schneible are key newcomers.

"Addison Shappie and Mackenzie Rose are running well and look to be in the team's top seven," Heaton said.

Boys golf

The Raiders are looking to compete in a stacked Shelby County Athletic League this season.

Five golfers return from last year, including junior Ross Fiessinger, who shot a 79 in the Shelby County Athletic League Preview at Shelby Oaks Golf Club in early August. Other returnees include Xavier Phlipot, Felix Francis, Jude Counts and Jordan Meyer.

"Of the five returning lettermen, four are underclassmen," Paul Bremigan, who takes over as the program's coach, said. "Ross and Xavier will probably be No. 1 and 2, but the other four spots are up for grabs between the other eight players in our program."

Aside from the five returnees, the rest of the program is made of seniors Grant Saunders and Patrick Bohman and freshmen Braylon Cordonnier, Dom Francis and Vince Borchers.

"We are every balanced player No. 1 through No. 9 and this should help us get better with the competitiveness within our team," Bremigan said.

Bremigan said Botkins is the SCAL favorite, but other squads have good players, which will make the league race and meet competitive.

Girls golf

Russia is looking for improvement this year after fielding a full team last year for the first time since 2016.

Maddie Borchers takes over as coach and is assisted by Doug Borchers. They together oversee the squad, which is led by senior Makenna Borchers.

Makenna Borchers earned a district berth a year ago and set the program's record of low 18-hole score with an 84. She already has bested that mark early this season by hitting an 82 in Covington's Lady Bucc Invitational in early August at Echo Hills Golf Course in Piqua.

"Last season, she was only one stroke away from qualifying for the state tournament, finishing third at districts," coach Maddie Borchers said. "I'm counting on Makenna to share her experience with the younger players which will lift the level of our entire team's play."

Junior Makenna Hoying returns, as does junior Eliza Gariety.

Hoying, a third-year player, hit a personal record of 96 last year. Gariety, a second-year player, hit a personal record of 104.

"They both contributed greatly to last year's team," Borchers said.

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FAIRLAWN

Jets volleyball returns 6 starters

Fairlawn boys golf squad looking to keep up last season's success

By Bryant Billing
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SIDNEY — Fairlawn's volleyball squad is looking for a breakthrough season with six returning starters and eight letterwinners coming back from last season.

The Jets finished 14-13 in 2019 and earned the program's first district title in 13 years. The squad couldn't quite match that success last year, as it finished 10-10 and lost to Tri-Village in a second-round tournament match.

"I have very high expectations for this group of girls," Fairlawn coach Ashley Miller said. "We have a very strong group of seniors who for the most part have been playing varsity since they were sophomores. Our underclassmen are very reliable and knowledgeable."

Senior outside hitters Jessie Abke and Lonna Heath return to lead the squad in the front row. Abke had a team-high 198 kills last season while Heath had 137. Abke ranked second with 32 blocks while Heath ranked second with 161 digs.

"Jessie Abke is a four-year starter and is our go-to player to get a kill," Miller said. "Lonna is a



Fairlawn's Jocelyn McDonald runs during the Division III girls race in the district meet on Oct. 24, 2020 at Cedarville University. She's one of two returning runners for the Jets.

three-year starter and is also a go-to player to put the ball away and do what needs to be done on defense."

Sophomore middle hitter/defensive specialist Addison Swearingen returns, as does sophomore middle hitter Ellie Henman. Both were starters last year and will be joined by senior right side hitters Vaegus Gallimore and Claire Henman. Gallimore was a starter last year.

Swearingen had 127 kills and a team-high 194 blocks last season while Henman had 60 kills and 22 blocks.

"Ellie brings a nice presence at the net," Miller said.

Also back is senior setter Taylor Lessing, who had 491 assists and 119 digs last year.

"Taylor is a four-year starter and she runs the offense and gets the ball where it needs to be," Miller said.

Also returning is senior middle hitter Belle Brautigam. Junior defensive specialist Emily Lessing is a key newcomer.

The Jets tied with Anna for fourth place in the Shelby County Athletic League last year. Miller said the squad is hoping

to be more competitive this season and finish in the top three.

Boys cross country

Three returnees and one freshman newcomer will make up the Jets' squad this season.

Senior Dominic Davis and junior Levi Barthauer both return after standout seasons. Davis posted a top time of 18:18 last year while Barthauer's best time with 18:45.

They'll be joined by sophomore returnee Anthony Schmiesing and freshman Dalton Davis.

"The kids have worked very hard this summer,"



Fairlawn's Addison Swearingen tries to block a spike from a Tri-Village player during a Division IV sectional tournament match on Oct. 24, 2020 at Covington High School. Swearingen is one of six returning starters for the Jets, which finished 10-10 overall and tied for fourth place in the Shelby County Athletic League last season.

second-year coach Aaron Cox said. "Most of them have put in more time than they have in past summers."

Girls cross country

Two returnees and two freshmen make up the squad this season.

Senior Myla Cox posted a top time of 21:17 last year while junior Jocelyn McDonald posted a top time of 21:28. Freshmen Martha Christman and Riley Longmire join the team this year.

"Dominic and Myla have both run since seventh grade," Cox said. "They are very excited

and seem very committed to have the best season of their careers this year. I'm excited about the new junior high runners; they have worked extremely hard and are anxious to get the season underway."

Boys golf

Fairlawn is looking to stay successful in a stacked SCAL with one of the league's top golfers returning.

Senior Matt Mullen is one of two returning letterwinners. He won the SCAL tournament last season by shooting a 70.

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HOUSTON

Wildcats boys golf looks to break records

Volleyball squad looks to improve, cross country squads have many returnees

By Bryant Billing
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HOUSTON — Houston's boys golf squad is looking for a record-breaking season and has already started the season off on the right track.

The Wildcats have four returning letterwinners off of last season's quad, which tied for fifth in the Shelby County Athletic League.

The team finished fifth in the SCAL preview on Aug. 9 at Shelby Oaks Golf Club with a 340, seven strokes lower than its previous 18-hole team score record.

"We are going to continue to work hard to break other school records during this season," sixth-year coach Nate Fridley said. "This year is off to a great start for the team. Our goal is to obtain our second season in a row with a winning record and to continue to lower our stroke average each year."

"So far, we are averaging 34 strokes lower per nine holes as a team than

our average in 2016 when I started. Our kids have worked really hard to obtain this and take great pride in this stat."

Sophomore Ethan Lukey, junior Parker Herrick and seniors Ethan Funk and Tanner Cooper are key returnees.

Lukey shot a 34 in a tri-match earlier this season to set a program record for low nine-hole score. The score was two strokes better than the previous record, which had been in place in 1989.

"Ethan is one of the hardest working golfers in the county," Fridley said of Lukey. "He is a pleasure to work with and is a great example for all young golfers in the county. I look forward to seeing him play hard all season long."

Fridley said Funk is the most vocal leader on the squad and guides the program's newest golfers during matches. He said Herrick is an unofficial team captain and Cooper is a talented golfer.

"Parker has played the most summer rounds on



Houston's Parker Herrick putts during the Shelby County Athletic League boys golf preview on Aug. 10, 2020 at Shelby Oaks Golf Club. Herrick is one of four returning letterwinners for the Wildcats, which set a program record for low 18-hole team score in early August.

the team during the past two years and has helped me recruit several new golfers to the team," Fridley said. "He is a huge part of our success and I couldn't be more proud of him."

"Tanner is one of those kids that you wish you had 10 of. He's the most respectful kid on the team. I wish I had more years with him on the team."

Fridley said freshman Tanner Voisard is a key newcomer.

"Tanner has proven to be a huge part of our varsity team already," Fridley said. "He is a big talent and is the most coachable kid I have ever had the pleasure of coaching. I can't say enough positive things about Tanner and I think you will hear his name often during the next four years of his high school golf career."

Volleyball

The Wildcats will try to improve with four let-

terwinners back from last season, when the squad finished 3-21 overall and 0-12 in SCAL play.

Lauren Vagedes returns in her second season as coach after taking over during the season last year.

"We have a good mix of returning players and new faces," Vagedes said. "The knowledge and experience the seniors are bringing will definitely be key to our success. They are able to lead our younger players with a respectful manner that really helps the team chemistry. Our younger players are bringing a lot of talent with them; they are not only smart players but they are also bringing a fire with them to win."

Seniors Grace Slade, Bri Kemp, Rylie Voisard and Megan Maier return. Slade, a 6-foot-0 middle hitter, had 73 solo blocks last season. Kemp, a setter, led the team with 436 assists while Maier, a

outside/right side hitter Aliya Stangel, junior outside hitter Emma Kemp, sophomore middle hitter Kayla Winner and sophomore right side hitter/setter Katie Maier are key newcomers.

"Aliya was able to play in a few varsity games last year because of her ability to kill the ball," Vagedes said. "She will be a very key hitter this year."

"Emma's ability to read the court amazes me. She is one of the smartest players I've seen. Kayla is ready to prove herself and become a threat. If she continues to work hard, no doubt she will become one of the leaders in blocks and kills."

"Katie knows the game and will be able to step onto the court as a hitter or setter and prove to be an asset on the team."

Vagedes said the squad aims to move up one or two spots in SCAL standings.

Boys cross country

Houston returns six letterwinners from last year's squad, which earned a regional berth.

"Six of our top seven varsity runners return this year, so we expect to improve on our team finish from last year," 10th-year coach Bill McKinney said.

Among them is Hunter Mowery, who finished 13th in the SCAL meet last year in 17:26.9.

"Hunter Mowery had a very good year last season and should improve this year," McKinney said. "We have several others in juniors Ethan Davis and Lucas Langenkamp and seniors Justin Pollock and Ryan Ely who should be in our varsity as well."

Vagedes said junior

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BOTKINS

Trojans boys soccer wants another WOSL title

Boys golf eyeing state berth, as are boys, girls cross country squads

By Bryant Billing
bbilling@sidneydailynews.com

BOTKINS — Botkins' boys soccer squad is hoping for another deep postseason run after advancing to a Division III regional final for the second consecutive season last year.

The Trojans have 11 returning letterwinners from last season and lost six players to graduation, most of which were four-year starters.

"We have a team that lacks game experience," 17th-year coach Kevin Lynch said. "... It is going to depend if my prior-year role players can step up and be key contributors. It is their time to shine. How quickly can they convert from role players to main players?"

One main player returns in senior forward Xavier Monnin, who scored 26 goals and had eight assists in 2020.

"He will be relied upon to put the ball in the back of the net," Lynch said. "Our success will depend upon how he handles the role of our scorer this year."

Three other key starters return in junior midfielder/forward John Smock, senior defender Nate Guckes and junior goalkeeper Carson Motter.

Motter had 84 saves and gave up 11 goals last season.

"It's his third year between the pipes, and he will have an experienced defense in front of him," Lynch said of Motter. "Nate Guckes will move into the centerback role, so it will be important for him to step up and help organize the defense. John Smock will need to work and communicate with the inexperienced midfielders to get them organized defensively and help us create chances."

Also back are senior midfielders Adam Hall and Brendon Thompson, senior defender Devan Manger, junior defender Brant Metz and sophomore midfielders Reis Aslage, Rylyn Paul and Jack Steinke.

Key newcomers include freshmen midfielders Noah Greve, Kayden Harrison and Corey Koenig and freshmen defenders Conner Butcher, Noah Butcher, Evan Grieves and Russell Lenhart.

"I am not sure any will contribute right out of the gate with our tough opening schedule," Lynch said of the seven freshmen. "Hopefully, they will have time to sit back and take their time developing, so if they are called upon, they can contribute to the team. They are a talented group of players that have a bright future in the program."

The Trojans are aiming to capture their seventh consecutive Western Ohio Soccer League title this season.

Girls soccer

Padraig Murphy takes over as the program's coach. The squad finished 9-6-2 last season and tied for third in the WOSL.

Murphy didn't detail the team's players, saying they want to be recognized as a team rather than individuals.

"We have a decent



Botkins' Brittany Arnold runs during the Division III district meet girls race 'B' on Oct. 24, 2020 at Cedarville University. Arnold, who is one of four returning letterwinners, won an individual district title by finishing first and also won the Shelby County Athletic League girls meet last year.



Botkins' Jameson Meyer swings during the Shelby County Athletic League boys golf tournament on Sept. 17, 2020 at Shelby Oaks Golf Club. Meyer is one of five returning letterwinners for the Trojans.

amount of talent, but a lot of work to do to get the girls up to speed tactically," Murphy said. "They have progressed very well so far, but obviously when you take over a program, there is always a considerable amount of work to be done to transition between the previous playing style and the one going forward."

"I have high expectations this year so long as we can stay healthy. The girls have shown a desire to take the next step and turn the legacy of this program around. I am exceptionally proud of their hunger to improve both as individuals and as a team."

Boys golf

Botkins has big goals this season after finishing fourth in a Division III district meet, two spots short of a state berth. The Trojans earned their first state berth in 2019.

"We have several returners from last season with significant experience," 27th-year coach Brett Meyer said. "They have put in a lot of time this summer, both individually and as a team, to prepare for this season. We have six players whose score could be used on any given night."

Five letterwinners return, four of which are multiple-year letterwinners: seniors Jameson Meyer, Jack Dietz, Isaac Cisco and Jaydon Wendel and sophomore JJ Meyer.

Jameson Meyer led the squad with a 40.03 nine-hole average last year while Dietz had a 42.1 average, Wendel had a 43.2 average and Cisco had a 43.8 average. Meyer, Dietz and Cisco are three-year letterwinners while Wendel is a two-year letterwinner. JJ Meyer had a 43.9 average last year.

They're joined by freshman newcomer Ross Dietz, who has already moved into the team's No. 3 spot.

"Jameson, Isaac, Jaydon, Jack and JJ have dropped about three strokes off their average from last year," Meyer said. "Ross will give us much more depth on the season."

Botkins finished first in the SCAL preview at Shelby Oaks Golf Club in early August. After a competitive conference race last year, Meyer said he expects the



Botkins' Xavier Monnin heads down the field during a Division III district final against Cincinnati Mariemont on Nov. 7, 2020 in Cincinnati. Monnin scored 26 goals and had eight assists last year for the Trojans, which advanced to a Division III regional final for the second consecutive year.

same this year. "The league will be very exciting," Meyer said. "... You must play well every night to get a victory."

Girls golf

Senior Madelyn Koenig and junior Lydia Dietz are competing as individuals this season.

Boys cross country

The Trojans earned a state berth last season and have eight letterwinners back from a year ago. Ryan Gutman, who returns for his 14th season as coach, said the squad has high expectations.

"We are gearing up to have an exciting season," Gutman said. "Although we lost some key runners to graduation, we still have a lot of talent and experience coming back. We are looking to make our mark in the area."

Seniors Collin Watterson, Cole Steinke and Shane Weatherhead return, as do juniors Carter Pleiman, Austin Rogers and Keaton Schnippel and sophomores Grant Flora and Parker Schnippel.

Flora had the fastest time of the returnees in the Division III state meet last year, as he finished in 17:26.5, his best time of the season.

Parker Schnippel's best time last year was 17:22 while Keaton Schnippel's best time was one second slower. Pleiman's best time was 17:26 and Watterson's

best time was 17:27. "All of our guys that are returning have been running at a high level for their entire careers," Gutman said. "We expect even more from them this year."

Key newcomers include senior Dylan Topp and freshmen Carson Brown, Collin Doseck, Noah Topp, Jacob Grunden and Ethan Gillette.

"Our newcomers are only newcomers because they are first-time high school runners," Gutman said. "All of them, however, have already had success at the junior high level and with other sports. We are excited to have them."

Girls cross country

Four letterwinners return for Botkins, including sophomore Brittany Arnold, who finished first individually in the Shelby County Athletic League race last year to earn runner of the year honors. She also won an individual district title and qualified individually for the Div. III state meet.

Also back are sophomores Malanie Maurer and Ava Egbert and junior Alaina Jutte. Arnold's best time last year was 19:02, while Maurer, Egbert and Jutte all had top times around 21:45.

"We lost a lot of experience from last year's team, but this group is ready to go," Gutman said. "With no seniors on the team, this group

works together well and provides the leadership we need to be successful.

"Although they are all underclassmen, this group of returners have already experienced a lot of success and are ready to build upon our fifth-place finish at the regional meet last year."

Freshmen Alaina Mann, Grace Gutman and Alivia Free join the program this year. Mann finished first in the SCAL junior high race last year.

"The three freshmen that are a part of this team were key contributors to last year's SCAL

junior high championship team," Gutman said. "They are ready to add much needed depth and firepower to our returners."

Volleyball

Botkins is looking for improvement after finishing 7-15 overall last year and 2-10 in SCAL play, good for sixth place.

Tricia Dietz takes over as the program's coach.

"This group of girls is a hard-working group," Dietz said. "We have been working hard on serve

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JACKSON CENTER

Tigers volleyball will rely on seniors

Boys golf, soccer squads have many returning letterwinners

By Bryant Billing
bbilling@sidneydailynews.com

JACKSON CENTER — Jackson Center's volleyball squad rebounded last year after a subpar season in 2019 and is looking to keep up the improvement this year with eight letterwinners returning.

The Tigers finished 18-8 last year and 8-4 in Shelby County Athletic League play, good for third place behind co-champions Fort Loramie and Russia. The squad finished 14-11 overall and 7-5 in SCAL play in 2019.

Kim Metz, who is entering her 34th year as coach, says she's hoping a senior-laden team can do even better this year. All eight of the squad's returning letterwinners are seniors.

"Senior leadership is an asset this season," Metz said. "Additions to the roster are bring solidity to team play. Communication on each and every ball is our key. Accountability to teammates, meaning being present and engaged on and off the court, is important."

Outside hitters Shia Akers and Sarah Clark return. Akers led the squad with 250 kills last year. She had 124 digs and 13 blocks. Clark had 226 kills, 22 aces and 250 digs.

They'll be joined in the front row by middle hitter Elena Platfoot, who had 77 kills and 162 digs, as well as middle hitter Grace Woolley, who played a little off the bench. Outside hitter Kieran Yarkosky returns and looks to have more playing time.

Setters Gabrielle Woolley and Morgan Kipker return. Kipker ranked third on the team with 118 assists last season while Woolley ranked fourth with 71 and had 106 digs. Ava Winner returns and will play at libero.

"Returning athletes will contribute in all facets of our game," Metz said. "To speak of any one over any other is not the program we have. Our outside hitters are working on versatility. Middle hitters are keying on what their opportunities are to help their team offensively and defensively. Opposites and libero look to contribute when they are challenged."

Sophomore middle hitter Macy Klopfenstein and freshman middle/outside hitter McKinley Reichert are newcomers.

"The underclassmen have fit in nicely to the positivity of the team," Metz said. "They bring their own passion and work ethic to assist the entire team to get their job done."

Boys cross country

Three returning letterwinners and two newcomers will make up the Tigers' squad this season.

"We are currently struggling with numbers," 26th-year coach Steve Hoover said. "We hope to stay healthy and compete as a team."

Junior Kellen Reichert is back after a standout campaign last year. He finished in the top five in the Shelby County Athletic League meet and earned a Division III state meet berth. His top time a year ago was 16:53.

"He should have another great year," 26th-year coach Steve Hoover said. "He is beginning this season in great condition. He will be JC's number one runner and our best performer this season."

Also back is senior Ethan Pohlschneider (18:52 best time in 2020) and Xavier Esser (19:54).

Freshman Jackson Davis joins the squad. "He is showing some early promise," Hoover



Jackson Center's Gabrielle Woolley bumps during a Division IV tournament match against Springfield Emmanuel Christian Academy on Oct. 21, 2020 at the Trojan Activities Center in Troy. Woolley is one of eight returning seniors for the Tigers, who finished 18-8 last season and third in the Shelby County Athletic League.

said. "He will probably be our fourth man in the competition."

Girls cross country

The Tigers don't have any high school runners this year.

Boys soccer

The Tigers have 12 letterwinners back and will try to keep up last year's success, which included a second-place finish in the Western Ohio Soccer League and an 8-6-3 overall record.

"Our program is returning eight starters who all played a great deal of minutes last year," fourth-year coach Jason Huber said. "The upcoming freshman class is bringing in some club soccer experience."

Sophomore forward/midfielder Trever Huber returns. He scored 10 goals last year.

Other returning starters include senior wing/center back Spencer Yinger, senior forward

Ethan Pohlschneider, junior goalkeeper Candon Calhoun, junior wing/center back Bryson Roberts, junior outside/center back Jace Mullenhour and junior center back Camdyn Reese.

Calhoun made 91 saves last year and posted five shutouts.

Also back is senior center back Morgan Huber, senior forward Xavier Esser, junior wing Grant Elchert and sophomore center back Xavier Lowe.

Boys golf

Jackson Center will look to compete in the stout SCAL with five letterwinners returning from a year ago when they finished seventh.

"I would anticipate our scores will reflect a year of growth and experience," second-year coach Aaron Klopfenstein said. "The league will be extremely com-

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Jackson Center's Kellen Reichert runs during the Division III district meet boys race 'B' on Oct. 24, 2020 at Cedarville University. Reichert finished fourth in the district meet and eventually earned a state berth. He's one of three returning letterwinners.

Wildcats

From page 8

"We need to find some depth to back up our top five to seven runners and remain healthy to meet our goals for this season. With 16 guys on the team this year, we have good numbers and should be able to fill in that team depth needed. The guys have been training hard and expect to be competitive this year."

Sophomore Wes Vondenhuevel is also a

returning letterwinner. McKinney identified freshmen Dylan Shaffer, Anthony Pollock and Mason McDermit as key newcomers.

McKinney said Fort Loramie, Botkins and Anna should be strong in the SCAL this season.

"We hope to be able to get in the mix with those teams by the league meet and finish in the upper half of the league as a team," McKinney said.

Girls cross country

Five letterwinners return for the Wildcats.

That experience will be needed, as McKinney said the roster is smaller than he'd like.

"Though the numbers are a bit low, the girls are working hard and will improve throughout the year," McKinney said. "Keeping healthy will be key with just six girls on the team."

Senior Ava Knouff returns to lead the group. Knouff qualified for the Division III state meet as a freshman and sophomore.

Also returning are seniors Katrina Meiring and Kate Rockwood and sophomores Alicia Crawford and Faith McKee. Freshman Mekayla Pleiman is a key newcomer.

McKinney said Fort Loramie, Botkins and Anna should field strong teams.

"The league is once



Houston's Hunter Mowery runs during the Division III district meet boys race 'B' on Oct. 24, 2020 at Cedarville University. Mowery, who finished 13th in the Shelby County Athletic League meet last year, is one of six returning letterwinners for the Wildcats.

again one of the strongest D-III leagues in the state," McKinney said.

"We hope to be middle of the pack come the league meet."

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Jets

From page 8

His score helped the Jets earn the SCAL tournament team title and a third-place overall finish in league standings.

Junior Seth Jones also returns. Junior Ethan

Jones, sophomores Logan Francis and Aaron Maddy and freshmen Jayce Brautigam and Joe Bernardi are newcomers that will round out the varsity roster.

"After a year where we broke every school record, won the SCAL postseason meet and qualified for districts,

we are looking for some of our youngsters to step up and gain experience as the season goes along," 13th-year coach Todd Heckman said. "The kids have worked extremely hard this summer and I anticipate they will just get better and better as the season goes on."

"The league returns some outstanding players, and teams should be fun to watch."

Boys soccer

No information was submitted.

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RIVERSIDE

Pirates football hoping success continues

Volleyball, boys golf squads each have 4 returning letterwinners

By Bryant Billing
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DeGRAFF — Riverside may have lost the Ohio Division VII offensive player of the year to graduation in addition to some other key players, but the squad has plenty returning and is looking to build off last year's breakout season.

Riverside returns eight starters on offense and six on defense from last year's squad, which finished 8-2 and won two playoff games.

It was a successful final campaign in the Northwest Central Conference. The school has joined the newly reformed Three Rivers Conference in all sports effective this fall.

"We lost a lot of production and leadership, but our guys have a lot of varsity experience," Riverside third-year coach Bryce Hodge said. "We're excited to see our guys step up this year as we transition to the TRC. We have a tough schedule ahead of us, and we're excited for the challenge."

Sophomore quarterback Myles Platfoot returns to guide the offense. He threw for 837 yards and eight touchdowns with 10 interceptions last year.

"He has a great arm and is athletic," Hodge said. "He has more on his plate this year being the starter at the beginning of the season. He's ready to go."

Junior Warren Shockley will take over as the squad's main running back following the graduation of Kale Long, who ran for a program-record 2,338 yards and 27 touchdowns last season.

Shockley played as a receiver last year and caught 19 passes for 287 yards and two touchdowns.

Also back are receivers

Simon Godwin, Landon Stewart and Deven Frilling and fullback Walker Whitaker.

Frilling, a senior, led the squad with 352 receiving yards on 19 catches last season and caught four TDs. Stewart, a senior, caught 14 passes for 206 yards and four TDs. Godwin and Whitaker are juniors.

"Landon, Deven, and Simon are fast, athletic receivers," Hodge said. "Our passing game has a great potential. Warren is a playmaker (at running back). ...Walker just shows up and always does a great job. We plan to get him the ball more this year."

Seniors Zach Armbruster (6-foot-2, 270 pounds) and Dylan Smith (5-9, 250) return to lead the offensive line. Smith also plays on the defensive line, along with Whitaker.

Frilling, Stewart, Shockley and Godwin also return as defensive backs.

The squad has a host of key newcomers according to Hodge: senior lineman Xavier Clerico, junior linebackers Skyler Hudson and Braden Brandyberry, junior receiver/defensive back Tyler Knight, sophomore linemen Cody Craig and Corwin Bell, sophomore RB/DB Dominic Stotler and freshmen linemen Ayden Clary and Travis Brooks.

"Our offensive line is the most important thing to figure out," Hodge said. "I'm excited to see who earns the three remaining spots."

Hodge said he's not sure what to expect in the first year of the TRC but hopes the Pirates will be ready for a challenge each week.

The Pirates opened the season by traveling to Ansonia and are scheduled to host Springfield Northeastern in Week 2. They're slat-



Riverside's Warren Shockley, left, runs from Lima Perry's Devares Glenn as Riverside's Deven Frilling tries to block during a Northwest Central Conference game on Sept. 18, 2020 at Veterans Memorial Field in De Graff. Shockley and Frilling are two of eight returning starters on offense for the Pirates, which finished 8-2 and won two playoff games last year.

ed to wrap-up nonconference play by traveling to Indian Lake in Week 3 before opening TRC play by hosting Bethel in Week 4.

Volleyball

Riverside returns four letterwinners from a 21-3 squad that went undefeated in its final season in the NWCC and is looking for success in its first year in the TRC.

"Looking forward to another good season despite losing four seniors last year," first-year coach Candice Woods said. "This year's group is all upperclassmen. Two of our returning letterwinners are playing different positions. We will be working towards building chemistry and cohesive play with new players and positions."

Senior middle blocker Jenna Woods returns. She had 344 kills last year and made a program single-season record 119 blocks.

"Jenna has made drastic improvements with each season," Candice Woods said. "We are hoping that continues into her senior year. She's got a powerful attack and did an excel-



Riverside outside hitter Alaina Heath tries to block a spike from a Botkins player during a Division IV tournament match on Oct. 24, 2020 at Covington High School. Heath is one of four returning letterwinners for the Pirates.

lent job blocking last season."

Senior outside hitter Alaina Heath returns. She had 82 assists last year as a right-side hit-

ter with 35 kills and 23 blocks.

"She is looking much stronger," Woods said. "She did a lot of work in the offseason and we

are looking forward to seeing how that boosts her performance in her senior year."

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Improving

From page 2

under second-year offensive coordinator Britton Devier.

"We were more throw-oriented last year (with Devier calling plays) than we had been in previous years," Doenges said. "Without any scrimmages, it took Ced three or four weeks to get a grasp of the offense. We've got another senior quarterback who'll only be quarterback for one year, so we're kind of going through the same thing with Donavin."

"We're happy with his progression right now. He's got to continue to get better, but you don't have to be playing your best football in Week 1. It's a long season."

Julius Spradling, a freshman, will be the squad's backup QB and will also play at receiver.

"He did some nice things in a couple of our scrimmages to the point where we've got to get him on the field a little bit more," Doenges said.

Four Sidney receivers had 17 or more receptions last year, and two return this season: Sam

Reynolds and Izayah Clarke.

Reynolds, a junior, caught 21 passes for 270 yards and one TD. Clarke caught 17 passes for 317 yards and two TDs.

Also playing at receiver will be sophomore Mitchell Davis and junior Jy Wheeler. Moving to receiver from running back is senior E.J. Davis, who has been the team's workhorse runner the last two seasons.

Davis ran for 1,329 yards his sophomore season and 541 yards on 104 carries last year when the squad went more pass-heavy.

"That does a couple of different things for us," Doenges said. "He's really, really good at wide receiver, and we can still move him in the backfield and get him some carries. With him not being the full-time running back, it takes a lot of abuse off his body, and that allows us to use him on defense more. He's a really good outside linebacker."

Junior Martez Harris will be the squad's starting running back.

The offensive line will be led by senior tackles Evan Kennedy (6-foot-1, 301 pounds) and Jaden Swiger (6-3, 222).

Kennedy is a four-year starter and Swiger is a three-year varsity player that moved to the line full-time last year.

"Kennedy is the stalwart down there," Doenges said. "Jaden has been strong. We're really going to rely on those two guys down there."

Junior Brennan Barnes (6-1, 220) will start at center while seniors Jayden Bishop (5-11, 243) and Carson Roesser (6-0, 221) will start as guards.

"It's a heavy senior group, and every one of those guys will rotate on defense, too," Doenges said.

Senior Carson Taylor returns as the team's kicker. Taylor, also a standout soccer player, joined the football squad last year and did well in his first year as a kicker.

Taylor was 3 for 4 on field-goal attempts and 20 for 24 on extra-point attempts. He also averaged 51.2 yards per kickoff.

"He's gotten really better over the summer," Doenges said. "He probably went to 10 kicking camps and took a lot of private lessons, so he's really worked on his craft to make sure he can be the best possible

kicker for us.

"We feel pretty good about him on kickoffs now. ...Punt-wise, Carson's not as good, but he's our best option as a punter. We hope we don't have to use him a whole lot."

The season will be the first time Sidney has played a full nine-game Miami Valley League slate.

The MVL reformed in 2019 and had limited crossover play between teams in the Miami and Valley Divisions due to squads having nonconference game contracts to finish. Sidney played a seven-game MVL slate and went 2-5.

The OHSAA reworked and shortened the season format last August due to COVID-19, which resulted in the MVL redoing teams' schedules. Sidney ultimately played six MVL games last year and went 4-2.

"We're kind of looking forward to playing a regular schedule and finally playing our nine league games," Doenges said.

The Yellow Jackets opened the season by traveling to rival Bellefontaine and are set to begin MVL play by traveling to Tippecanoe in Week 2.

The squad is set to host rival Greenville in Week 3 before hosting Vandalia-Butler in Week 4 and archrival Piqua in Week 5.

The Greenville matchup moves to Week 3 after having been a Week 10 contest for several years. MVL athletic directors decided to move Week 10 rivalry matchups to Labor Day weekend in hopes of boosting attendance.

"I think what they found out is even if it's a rival, people still don't want to show up when it's rainy and cold, especially if you're not in the hunt for the playoffs," Doenges said. "They kind of shook things up. It's kind of neat getting to play for the Little Brown Jug in Week 3."

The Yellow Jackets will hit the road again in Week 6 and travel to Troy for a Thursday Night Lights game that will be broadcast by Fox 45. Sidney hosted Thursday games from 2016-2019; this will be the first time the squad has traveled on a Thursday night.

"We like the Thursday games, but I like them more at home," Doenges said. "Being on the road on a Thursday, it's tough

for that next day at school on a Friday. But being in Troy, we're not that far away, so hopefully we'll be back quick and our kids can get to bed at a decent time."

Sidney is scheduled to travel to West Carrollton in Week 7, host Fairborn in Week 8 and Stebbins in Week 9 and travel to Xenia in Week 10.

The Yellow Jackets are hoping the OHSAA's recent decision to expand playoff eligibility will help in earning a postseason berth this year.

The OHSAA announced earlier this year 16 teams per region will be eligible for the playoffs, up from eight. There are 25 teams in Division II, Region 8, which Sidney plays in.

All teams were eligible for postseason play last year. It was the third time in program history Sidney participated in the playoffs.

"I think it helps you not freak out as much with Week 1, Week 2, Week 3 losses," Doenges said. "You still have an opportunity to put yourself in the playoffs now."

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MINSTER

'Cats football has 11 returning starters

Boys cross country squad looking for higher finish in state meet

By Bryant Billing
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MINSTER — Minster's football squad will try to return to its normal habits of competing for the Midwest Athletic Conference title and making a deep postseason run after a subpar year in 2020.

The Wildcats finished 5-6 in Geron Stokes' final year as coach, their worst finish since a 6-4 record in Stokes' first season in 2013. The team had lost most of its starters from 2019 and lost four of its first five games but won three of its last four.

Stokes resigned last spring to become Dublin Coffman's coach, and Seth Whiting has taken over Minster's program. Whiting coached Springfield Northwestern from 2012 to 2015 before leaving to coach Alliance, which he led from 2016 to 2020.

The Wildcats will try to keep up the late-season momentum from last year in Whiting's first season. Seven offensive starters and four defensive starters return to help the effort.

Senior quarterback Johnny Nixon returns to lead the squad. He completed 98-of-170 passes for 1,167 yards last year with 11 touchdowns and 10 interceptions and ran for 481 yards and seven TDs on 104 carries.

Senior running back Austin Wellman also returns in the backfield. He ran for 433 yards and one TD on 83 carries a year ago and was second on the team with 22 receptions for 257 yards and one TD.

Senior receiver Jack Kohne and Devan Wuebker also return. Kohne caught 13 passes for 243 yards and two touchdowns while Wuebker caught 10 passes for 98 yards and one TD.

Senior offensive linemen Alex Frimel, Tristen McDaniel and Nick Winner also return. Frimel and McDaniel also return on the defensive line to help lead the squad's 3-4 scheme. Frimel had 21 tackles and one sack last year.

Wellman and Wuebker also return at defensive back. Wellman had a team-high 52.5 tackles last year while Wuebker had 21 tackles and two interceptions.

Minster hosted neighboring rival Fort Loramie in Week 1 and is set to travel to Otterbein University on Saturday, Aug.



Minster quarterback Johnny Nixon runs during a Division VI playoff game against Allen East on Oct. 17, 2020 in Harod. Nixon is one of seven returning starters on offense for the Wildcats, which are under the guidance of first-year coach Seth Whiting. Whiting left Alliance to take over the program last spring after former coach Geron Stokes resigned to become Dublin Coffman's coach. Nixon threw for 1,167 yards and 11 touchdowns last season.

28 to take on the Crusaders, a club program that isn't an Ohio High School Athletic Association member.

The squad is scheduled to begin MAC play by hosting St. Henry on Sept. 3 before traveling to Delphos St. John's in Week 4 and Marion Local in Week 5. Minster is scheduled to host Parkway, New Bremen and Anna and travel to Coldwater and Versailles in the last five weeks of regular season.

Volleyball

The Wildcats finished 16-8 last year and are looking for continued improvement with five returning starters.

Senior middle blocker Ella Mescher and senior outside hitter Alyssa Niemeyer are two of the squad's returnees. Niemeyer led the squad with 188 kills while Mescher had 152 kills and 60 total blocks.

Key newcomer Lilly Barhorst will look to help the squad in the front row, especially since Mescher is battling back from an injury and won't play until later in the season.

"We are going to be really looking for Alyssa and Lilly to handle much of the offensive load to start this season," 11th-year coach Cami Garman said.

Senior setter Jayden Clune is also a returning starter. She had 709 assists last year as well as 196 digs and 47 aces.

"Jayden has worked a great amount on the pace of her sets and consistently to allow our attackers to be more successful," Garman said.

The rest of the squad's returning starters are senior defensive specialist Ava Grieshop and senior defensive specialist Savannah Bergman. Grieshop had 33 aces and 160 digs last year.

Other key newcomers are sophomore outside hitter Megan Fortman, senior outside hitter Maura Baumer and sophomore middle blocker Kayla Lamm.

"Due to Ella's injury there is a great opportunity for some of our younger players to see some time on the court and possibly earn a spot in the starting lineup," Garman said. "Maura Baumer, Megan Fortman and Kayla Lamm all will be looking to solidify a spot in the lineup over the next couple of weeks."

"In our back row, we will be adding some more ball control with Lyndi Hemmelgarn and Macy Prenger. Our seniors last year carried a lot of the reception load so we are putting a major emphasis on our serve and serve receive in practice."

"We know that we have strength in our front row's height and athleticism, so being able to run that first tempo offense on our first opportunity is going to be important for our success. We are focusing on what we can do to earn points versus hoping for points."

The Wildcats finished 3-6 in Midwest Athletic Conference play last season and lost to conference rival New Knoxville in a district semifinal.

"We have already gotten to preview each other fortunately through competition these last few weeks (in summer league



Minster's Alex Albers runs during the Division III boys race in the state cross country meet on Nov. 7, 2020 at Fortress Obetz. Albers, who won the Midwest Athletic Conference boys race last year, finished 13th in the Division III state boys race. He's looking for a higher finish this season, as are the Wildcats, which finished 11th as a team.

play) and it doesn't look like the MAC is going to be any different this year than it has in the years past," Garman said. "New Bremen, New Knoxville and Fort Recovery return a vast number of strong players from last year, so they are the ones, I think, with the biggest targets on their backs."

"But you can't count anyone else out. Every other school in the conference has girls coming up eager to fill in those open roles and contribute. Each year, we continue to battle with the best in the state. We know that they aren't wasting any time in improving their game, so we can't either. The girls

come into the gym hungry and ready to compete every day."

Boys cross country

Minster advanced to the Division III state meet and finished 11th last season and is looking to return and finish better this year

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Schedule

From page 5

while senior Owen Pleiman, Sherman and Keiser will play at defen-

sive back.

The program will be independent following the breakup of the Cross County Conference. Fort Loramie joined the conference for football and girls golf in 2017, but

half the CCC's schools announced in 2019 they were leaving to form a new conference of their own starting this fall.

The rest of the CCC's members formed their own new league in the

Three Rivers Conference, along with other schools like Lehman Catholic and Riverside, which left the Northwest Central Conference to join in all sports. The Redskins didn't join the new

league, as they want to keep their Shelby County Athletic League affiliation for the rest of the school's sports programs. Fort Loramie — which lost to Tri-Village 60-43 in the CCC championship game last year — will be traveling all over Ohio now that it isn't playing in a conference this year.

The squad traveled to neighboring rival Minster in Week 1 and is scheduled to host another Midwest Athletic Conference squad in Versailles in Week 2 before hosting former CCC foe Covington in Week 3. The Redskins will

travel to Newark Catholic on Saturday, Sept. 11, and return home the following Friday to host Dayton Dunbar.

The team will then spend most of the second half of the season on the road. They're scheduled to travel to Edon in Week 6, travel to Columbus Academy in Week 7, host Dayton Thurgood Marshall in Week 8, travel to Lucas in Week 9 and travel to Lima Central Catholic in Week 10.

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NEW BREMEN

Cardinals football has many new players

Volleyball squad looking to keep up success with 4 returning starters

By Bryant Billing
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NEW BREMEN — After years of being the Midwest Athletic Conference's whipping boy, New Bremen's football squad became the latest conference member to win a state title last year.

The Cardinals became the ninth MAC member to win a football state championship by claiming the Division VII state title last November with a 31-0 win over Warren John F. Kennedy.

But with 17 players having graduated off that squad, sixth-year coach Chris Schmidt said the focus is on this year's group being the best it can be.

New Bremen isn't starting from scratch, though. Twelve letterwinners return, all of which are upperclassmen and eight of which were starters.

"We lost some really good football players from last year," Schmidt said. "We also lost some kids, from that same senior class, that did a great job performing various complementary roles to help us be successful."

"We will have an older team, with sixteen seniors and sixteen juniors, albeit a little inexperienced on the varsity level. How quickly those kids adjust to playing expanded roles on the varsity level will go a long way in how our season plays out overall."

Junior David Homan, who was a defensive starter last year, takes over at quarterback.

Senior receiver Nick Alig and senior tight end Branxton Krauss return as passing targets, though neither had more than three receptions last year. Krauss was a starter while Alig was a second-string offensive player.

Senior starting offensive linemen Mason Kuck and Evan Eyink return. Both were starters last year.

Other offensive letterwinners return in senior receiver Nathan Rindler, senior receiver Trevor Bergman, junior running back Hunter Schaefer, senior receiver Braden Suchland, senior RB Colten Muether and senior tight end Kyle Leichter.

Kuck and Krauss started on the defensive line last year. Krauss had 39

tackles a year ago, 12.5 of which were for loss. Kuck made 16 tackles.

Alig and Homan started at defensive back. Alig made 32 tackles and four interceptions while Homan made 39 tackles and three interceptions.

Eyink, Schaefer and Rindler are expected to play at linebacker and Bergman is expected to play at defensive back. Leichter is expected to play on the defensive line.

Senior place kicker Owen Gabel returns, as does Muether, who handles punting duties. Schaefer handles kickoffs. Gabel made 38-of-43 extra-point attempts last season and 7-of-10 field-goal attempts.

Schmidt said senior lineman/linebacker Grant Wilker, junior tight end/linebacker Ben Sailer, junior tight end/linebacker Dylan Bambauer, junior RB/DB Wokelle Googeg and sophomore WR/DB Aaron Thiemann are promising newcomers.

The Cardinals opened the season by traveling to Marion, Indiana and are scheduled to host Lehman Catholic in Week 2. They're slated to begin MAC play in Week 3 by hosting Delphos St. John's.

Volleyball

New Bremen has advanced to the Division IV state championship match each season since 2017 and has won the title twice in that time, losing the other two times to Tiffin Calvert.

The Cardinals are looking for another state berth this year with four returning starters and a host of other players looking to take over on varsity.

"With many new faces on the court because of graduation, we are looking to become more consistent," sixth-year coach Diana Kramer said. "With that being said, expectations are not changing. Our goal is to win our last game of the season."

Senior outside hitter Ellie Tangeman, senior middle hitter Kaylee Freund, senior defensive specialist/setter Chloe Bornhorst and senior middle hitter Olivia Heitkamp are the squad's returning starters.

Tangeman made 175 kills a year ago while Freund made 192 kills



Bryant Billing | Sidney Daily News
New Bremen running back Hunter Schaefer runs during a 39-yard touchdown run in the second quarter of the Division VII state championship game on Nov. 20, 2020 at Paul Brown Tiger Stadium in Massillon. Schaefer is one of eight returning starters for the Cardinals, which won the D-VII title.



Luke Gronneberg | Sidney Daily News
New Bremen's Kaylee Freund spikes as Tiffin Calvert's Camryn Shook tries to block during the Division IV state championship match on Nov. 15, 2020 at Vandalia-Butler's Student Activity Center. Freund is one of four returning starters for the Cardinals, which have appeared in four consecutive D-IV state titles.

and 65 blocks. Heitkamp led the team with 85 blocks and had 92 kills. Bornhorst ranked fourth on the squad with 48 aces and Tangeman ranked fourth with 102 digs.

Kramer said freshman setter/right-side hitter Melina Schrader is a key newcomer, as are juniors Mia Schmitmeyer (right-side) and Abi Powers (defensive specialist/libero), sophomore Amelia Dammeyer (outside hitter) and freshman Keira Steininger (defensive

specialist/libero).

"One of our strengths this year is our depth," Kramer said. "Practices are incredibly competitive. Each girl is pushing to make themselves and their teammates better. They have all shown great growth and have accepted their role. We look forward to a great season."

Boys cross country

Six letterwinners return for New Bremen, which will be led by second-year coach Jason Barhorst.

Senior Zach Ashman, juniors Patrick Bernhold, Jonathan Zimpher, Cole Power and Gavin Spragg return, as does sophomore Zach Wiedeman.

Barhorst said four to five newcomers could make an impact.

"We enter the season with goals that build off our success from last season," Barhorst said. "Our focus has been to work hard and continue to improve by controlling what we can control. "With our top six run-

ners back from last year and several newcomers, we want to be in contention for the (Midwest Athletic Conference) championship and to qualify for state."

Girls cross country

Barhorst said several newcomers will join three to four returning runners this year.

Three letterwinners return in sophomore Chloe Homan and juniors Lily Rindler and Caroline Whitlatch.

"We have our top two and three out of our top five returning from last year's eighth-place regional team," Barhorst said. "Our goal is to get top three at MAC and to qualify for state this year. We have several other returning runners that have made great improvements from last season plus several newcomers that will make a big impact on varsity."

Boys golf

No information was submitted.

Girls golf

No information was submitted.

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Cats

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with almost all of its runners from a year ago coming back.

"The boys are looking to build on the success from last year's season," Minster coach Larry Topp said. "The team has high expectations for this season and with the hard work that they have been putting in, they just might reach their goals. There will be many obstacles in their way but we hope to see them through to the team's goals."

Eight letterwinners return from last season, including senior Alex Albers, who finished 13th individually in the state meet last year and finished first in the Midwest Athletic Conference meet.

Albers is a three-year letterwinner.

Also back are senior and three-year letterwinner Joseph Slonkosky, senior Tyler Prenger, senior Alex Westerheide, junior Noah Walter, junior Jim Trzaska, sophomore Jack Grieshop and junior Ryan Halpin.

Grieshop had the second-best time of all runners at the state meet last year by finishing in 17:04, while Slonkosky had the second-best time in the MAC meet and finished third overall in 17:19.

"The athletes are working very hard and are looking to find their spot on the team and to be ready for the first meet," Topp said. "We lost good runners to graduation from last year's team, and with them we also lost some of our leadership."

"This year's seniors and juniors are now accepting

their new rolls as leaders and the team is starting to work hard toward their team's goals. We return a great nucleus of very good runners from last year's team and are lucky enough to have several others pushing to be part of the final picture."

Among those pushing is senior Russell Heide and freshman Nick Prenger, who won the junior high MAC race last year in 11:15.

Minster won the MAC title and a district title last year, and Topp said those are among the program's goals this year. He said he expects Marion Local, New Bremen and Parkway will also compete for the MAC title.

"We will be working hard to defend our league title from last year and hope to overcome the losses to graduation to

be in the league mix this year, but I am sure it will be a dogfight again," Topp said.

Girls cross country

No information was submitted.

Boys golf

No information was submitted.

Girls golf

Five returnees will lead the Wildcats this season. Senior Layne Voisard and sophomore Ashley Meyer are serving as co-captains. Both earned district berths last season and helped the squad earn a fourth-place finish in a Division III sectional meet.

The rest of the Wildcats' roster is made of junior Katie Heitkamp, sophomore Ashlyn Homan, senior Cora Heit-

kamp, sophomore Star Weigandt, sophomore Anna Larger and sophomore Rachel Wenning.

Coach Debbie Ahrns, who is in her 18th year, said the season is dedicated to assistant coach Don Seyfried, who died unexpectedly in March. Seyfried said he had volunteered for the last 15 seasons and was already making notes for the 2021 season.

"The short game is essential to success in golf and was the cornerstone of Coach Seyfried's focus for instilling the value of learning this area of game to have consistent scores," Ahrns said. "The Wildcats will continue to value the short game and build confidence and playing techniques in this area of game."

Minster tied for third

in the Midwest Athletic Conference last season.

"This is a resilient group of young ladies that remind me of the 2016 team that went undefeated in the MAC," Ahrns said. "They have a diverse level of playing skills and are eager to get the season rolling."

"One goal this season is to encourage the Lady Wildcats and remind them that they are always playing against their last score. Also to support growing the person because if there's anything to be wildly courageous about, it is knowing that learning this game of golf is more than a sport but a foundation of skills they will use the rest of their lives."

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Lehman

From page 6

having Callie push our starter, senior captain Heidi Toner, will only be beneficial for the both of them. Callie also is a great field player. So when she is not in goal, she can be a threat in the midfield or up top as a forward."

Boys soccer

Lehman is looking for improvement from last year's 4-8-3 squad in Mark Moloney's second year as coach. The squad lost five starters from last season but has 22 players in the program this season.

Returning letterwinners include Brandon Jones, Gus Schmiesing, Joshua George, Jude Schmiesing and Mark Moloney II.

Nick Minneci, Ryan Armstrong, Sam Gilardi and Samuel LaForme will lead the forwards along with George. Minneci, Jude Schmiesing and Jeremiah LaForme will head the midfielders.

Jones, Thomas Schmiesing and Moloney II will lead the defense. Armstrong, Thomas Schmiesing and Collin Potts will compete for time as goalie.

"We have high expectations for this season as we have added seven freshman (Alex Lundy, Bennen Potts Cole



Luke Gronneberg | Sidney Daily News

Lehman Catholic's Caroline Wesner bumps during a Northwest Central Conference match against Riverside on Aug. 29, 2019 at Schlater Family Gymnasium in Sidney. The Cavaliers are hoping to be more competitive in their first season in the newly reformed Three Rivers Conference.

Bostick, Collin Potts, Daniel Carlisle, Jeremiah LaForme, Luke Courtad along with returning members (Collin Cioffi, John Moloney, Tim Schmiesing) and we will be much deeper than last year," Moloney said. "I believe this hurt us in our close loses as we were unable to rest starters."

Moloney expects the TRC to be challenging, led by Troy Christian.

Volleyball

The Cavaliers will look to be competitive in their first season as members of the Three Rivers Conference after finishing 11-12 a year ago.

Lehman has several returning players but lost two key players to graduation in Reese Geise and Pypier Sharkins, who led the squad in kills, aces, blocks, digs and serve receives.

"We would like to have a winning season with continued improvement," third-year coach Carolyn Dammeyer said. "We are young and inexperienced."

Five letterwinners return: senior outside hitter Kate Stewart, senior setter Megan Carlisle, junior setter Caroline Wesner, sophomore defensive specialist Taylor Geise and junior

outside hitter Katie Fortkamp.

Dammeyer said Taylor Geise, Fortkamp, Stewart, Kailee Rank and Marissa Corner are the team's top hitters. Taylor Geise had 61 kills last year while Stewart had 54. Fortkamp had 45 blocks while Stewart had 44.

Carlisle ranked second on the squad with 34 aces a year ago while Wesner had 29. Wesner had 364 assists while Carlisle had 319.

Taylor Geise had 183 digs while Wesner had 117.

Boys cross country
Lehman Catholic will

have a full varsity team this season in Nick Wolters' second year as coach.

Sophomore Logan Linton is the program's lone returnee. Key newcomers include freshman Brennan Potts, juniors Mark Moloney II, Hezekiah Bezy, Matthew Galbreath and Jude Schmiesing and senior Nick Minneci.

"Our newcomers had solid track seasons and many of them are picking up cross country as an additional fall sport to improve their endurance," Wolters said. "Several members of this team have put in some great summer miles, and it'll be fun to watch that hard work come to fruition."

Wolters said he expects Milton-Union and Covington to be the frontrunners in the TRC.

"We are excited to be running in the Three Rivers Conference this year," Wolters said. "Cross country is thriving in this area and it helps that our student athletes don't have to travel far for great competition."

Girls cross country

The Cavaliers do not have any varsity cross country runners this season.

Girls tennis

Tim Ungericht returns for his seventh year as Lehman's coach.

The Cavaliers have 16

girls, led by nine seniors.

Seniors Taylor Reineke and Mary Lins and junior Lilly Williams will play singles, while seniors Annie Stiver and Macie Verdier will be at first doubles and seniors Madi Gleason and Emma Covault will be at second doubles.

Junior Sarah Lins will see varsity action, and Ungericht said senior Elizabeth Jock adds depth to the program and may see some varsity playing time as well.

"We have lots of experience," Ungericht said. "Our goals are to win more matches than last year and continue to develop our JV players."

Boys golf

The Cavaliers have seven returning letterwinners this season, including 4-year letterwinner John Gagnet. Also back are Hezekiah Bezy, Noel Petersen, Nicholas Wright, Brian Bauman, Isable Flores and Cooper Steiner.

"Last year we did not win any matches or have anyone receive post-season honors. However this year we are improving fast and have already won a match in our new league," Lehman coach Eric Harlamert said.

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Tigers

From page 10

petitive this year, so those scores may result in wins some nights and may not some other nights.

"Our returning letterwinners need to be consistent on a nightly basis in order for us to compete against the quality teams in our league."

Seniors Carson Regula, Ryan Sailor and AJ Butler return, as does

junior Nolan Fark and sophomore Lucas Hartle. Regula shot an 85 in the SCAL meet last year and earned second team all-SCAL honors.

"Both Regula and Sailor have been making strides in their game, therefore we will rely on them to play well from the beginning of the season and throughout September," Klopfenstein said. "The biggest asset we are looking for from Fark, Hartle, and Butler will be consistency."

Freshmen Reed Plat-

foot and Blake Noble join the squad.

"We are excited about Platfoot and Noble, for not only providing youth to our lineup but also the potential to shoot competitive scores," Klopfenstein said. "Continuous improvement will be important as they learn to navigate through course strategy and the mental approach to the game."

Klopfenstein says the SCAL race will be heated again this year. "The league will

showcase some great area golfers," Klopfenstein said. "I believe 10 of the 12 golfers who earned first and second team accolades return to the SCAL this year, which will create some very competitive nights for medalists. Botkins, Anna and Loramie all return a good percentage of their top golfers and will look to build upon last year's successes."

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Pirates

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Junior setter/right-side hitter Alaina Snow returns. She made 63 kills and 33 blocks last year.

"She has stepped into her sister's (graduate Sierra Snow) shoes as our setter," Woods said. "She's got a great IQ for the game and is a leader on the court."

Junior outside hitter Jade Copas rounds out the returning letterwinners. She had 95 kills and 87 digs a year ago.

"She's taking on more of a defensive role this year, going from a three-rotation player to all six," Woods said. "Her back row play is impressive for never having to play there before."

Key newcomers include senior middle blocker/outside hitter Sasha Stotler, senior defensive specialists Trinity Notestine and Grace Brownlee and junior hitters Mazzy Johnson and Rachel Knight.

"Sasha Stotler is coming back to the program for her senior season," Woods said. "She is really strong and fundamentally sound. She's going to be a handful for our competition."

Boys golf

Riverside is hoping for a good year in its first season in the TRC with four returning letterwinners from last season when it finished second in the NWCC.

"We have a veteran team this year and should be in every match," 13th-year coach Andy Phelps said. "The boys have been out playing this summer and have improved a

bunch. We lost two good seniors from last year's team and will need to fill those two spots this year.

"We have eight boys on the team and all eight can contribute to the team. We still struggle with our short game and will need to improve on that this year."

Seniors Brody Rhoads, Jayden Burchett and Owen Holycross return in addition to junior Drew Jones. Jones had a 48 nine-hole average last year, Rhoads had a 49 average, Burchett had a 50 average and Holycross had a 54 average.

"Brody and Jayden will be our leaders on the course this year and we need them to be in the low 40s to compete," Phelps said. "Drew Jones and Owen Holycross will also be huge contributor to our team's success."

Key newcomers include senior Chase Davidson, sophomores Reece Jenkins and Gavin Robinson and freshman Jaxon Woods.

"Chase Davidson has been on the team for three years now and has worked really hard this summer to improve his game and I look for him to contribute," Phelps said. "Reece Jenkins was on JV last year and he also has improved greatly this summer.

Newcomer Jaxon Woods will see some time right away and sophomore Gavin Robinson has just started golf and is really improving. He might see some time in matches."

Girls golf

No information was submitted.

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Raiders

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"Having that year of experience under their belt is really going to help us this season. Makena Hoying has been putting well in early matches and Eliza has been keeping the ball in the fairway."

Sophomore Lily Fulenkamp returns for her second year of varsity play.

"She has already made great improve-

ments to her last year's scores, shooting 49 on the front nine of our first match," Borchers said. "More big things are expected out of Lily as the season progresses."

Key newcomers to the program include sophomore Tori Sherman and freshmen Grace Monnin and Grace Poeppelman.

Borchers said Sherman is playing above her experience level and shot a 110 at her first-ever invitational in early August.

"Tori has really blown us away with how quick she has learned the game and the adjustments she has made to be a powerhouse with her driver," Borchers said. "Her game resembles that of an experienced second- or third-year player. With some fine-tuning on her short game, Tori could definitely lower her score and shoot in the double digits by the time the sectional tournament rolls around."

Monnin and Poeppelman are new to golf, but Borchers said both are showing potential.

"Both are able to get the ball airborne regularly and show a lot of promise as they come along with their game," Borchers said. "With more experience on the course this season, I'm planning on these girls contributing to our team scores at upcoming matches."

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Trojans

From page 9

receive, aggressive serving and blocking. I'm very proud of the work these girls are putting in and can't wait to see it pay off this season."

Six letterwinners return from last season, five of which were starters: senior outside hitter/defensive specialist Ainsley Manger, senior

right side hitter Haley Barhorst, senior middle hitter Ivy Fogt, junior middle hitter Trayce Hendrickson, junior outside hitter Leah Steinke and sophomore setter Janel Platfoot.

"Ainsley Manger played libero last year but is such an all-around great athlete and leader on the court that I need her to play a full six rotations this year," Dietz said. "Another returning ath-

lete is Janel Platfoot. She is so dedicated to the game and works hard all year round. She is also starting to fill the leadership role."

Key newcomers include sophomore hitter Kylie Mack, junior libero Mallory Goubeaux, sophomore defensive specialist Caitlyn Barhorst and senior right side hitters Payton Zimpfer and Hollie Buehler.

"Kylie Mack is play-

ing right side this year because of her massive block, and she can also contribute good offensively," Dietz said. "I also have Mallory Goubeaux, who has played setter in the past but ran as a defensive specialist during JO this past season. She worked hard and earned the libero jersey this year."

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Titles

From page 3

“Our league is going to be strong, but we are working day-in and day-out to better ourselves for each opponent,” Verhoff said.

Boys cross country

Sidney has 12 letterwinners returning, and ninth-year coach Ken Kellner is expecting a big season for the squad.

“We are looking to make a significant improvement in team scores with a stronger performance from the top seven athletes,” Kellner said. “We plan to win our division of the MVL (for the second consecutive year) and have many individuals continually set school records.”

Junior Gavin Musser is the team’s top returning runner. His best time last season was 17:17.

“He has aspirations to go far in postseason,” Kellner said.

Also back is junior Andrew Bonifas and sophomores Keaton Fisher and Braxton Brewer, who all had best times last year slightly under 18:40.

“Andrew will be pushing Gavin as he plans to be running deep into the postseason,” Kellner said.

Senior Anthony Kellner and junior Kyle McKinney also return. They had top times under 19:20 last year. Juniors Takaho Shibahara, Caleb Luthman and Noah Balduf also return, as do sophomores Tiar Davis, Alex Lamma and Nathan Siegel.

“Several guys put in a strong offseason,” Ken Kellner said. “Based on performances so far, there are others who will be pushing the team forward as the season progresses.”

Kellner said freshmen Simon Blackford and Garrett Guinther are key newcomers.

“They both have potential to take a spot in the top seven,” Kellner said. “They display incredible work ethic and great attitudes.”

Girls cross country

Like the boys squad, Sidney’s girls squad has 12 returning letterwinners, and Kellner is expecting a good season after finishing second in the MVL Valley Division last year.

“We will definitely show improvement as we have six seniors on the team,” Kellner said. “They have a goal to win the Valley Division, so each race will be an opportunity to get ready to show their best at the league meet.”

Sophomore Emily Fleming is the squad’s top returning runner. Her best time last year was 20:34.

“She is setting her sight on going into the postseason this year,” Kellner said.

Freshmen Kara Kellner has been the squad’s second-best runner in pre-season workouts.

“She has turned into a great training partner for Emily, so Kara is looking to have a great season, as well as many others who put in a strong offseason,” Ken Kellner said.

Other key newcomers include sophomore Sophia Thompson and freshmen Mikayla Huckleby and Ainsley Wiford.

“Mikayla has come back to the team after a year off



Sidney junior Kaden Abbott lines up a putt during the Greenville Invitational on Aug. 6, 2020 at Turtle Creek Golf Course in Greenville. Abbott is one of five returning letterwinners for the Yellow Jackets, which finished third in the Miami Valley League Valley Division.

Gaylen Blosser | AIM Media Midwest



Sidney’s Kara Mays hits during the Division I sectional tournament on Oct. 7, 2020 at Troy Community Park. Mays has earned district berths each of her first three seasons and is looking to finish her career with another this season.

Josh Brown | AIM Media Midwest

and is likely going to be in the top seven,” Kellner said.

Other returnees include seniors Katie Deal, McKenna O’Donnell, Nicole Siegel, Sage Steinke, Montana Stephens and Maya Thompson, junior Desarae Miller and sophomores Hannah Carlson, Haley Fogt, Malea Hensley and Olivia Murphy.

Girls tennis

Sidney looks to improve with all its players back from last season, including senior first singles Kara Mays, who earned a district tournament berth for the third consecutive year.

Mays, who won an individual Division I sectional title in 2019, finished as sectional runner-up last year and was 13-5 overall.

“She owns the girls tennis records for most wins in a season, most singles wins in a season, and most career singles wins,” sixth-year coach Donovan Gregory said. “We are hoping she can continue her outstanding tennis career with another strong season with a district birth.”

Senior Allison Fultz (6-11) returns at second singles while Jenna Grieshop (8-8) returns at third singles.

“All three are poised to have strong seasons and have worked extremely hard to improve their



Sidney’s Madison Garber putts during a Miami Valley League match against West Carrollton on Sept. 24, 2020 at Sidney Moose Golf Course. Garber is one of six returning letterwinners to the program, which is in its third full season.

Luke Gronneberg | Sidney Daily News

games” Gregory said of Mays, Fultz and Grieshop.

Juniors Alyssa Echols (4-14), Cierra Mullennix (2-10), Breanna Mullennix (1-14) and Desarae Miller (0-13) return after all playing both first and second doubles at different times a year ago.

“Each one of these girls have greatly improved from last season,” Gregory said. “As a team, we want to continue to improve throughout the season and possibly get a couple girls out to the district tennis tournament.”

Junior Dhruvi Patel and

sophomore Cecilia Klinger will also compete for varsity doubles spots.

“We are lucky enough to have Dhruvi back,” Gregory said. “She took last season off. Both of these girls have done an outstanding job working in the offseason to get better at their games.”

Sidney finished 5-13 overall and third in the MVL Valley Division last year.

“Tippecanoe, Troy, Butler and Greenville will be fighting it out for overall MVL title,” Gregory said. “They are the most com-

plete teams, Tipp coming off of a perfect season last year.

“We are hoping to get an edge on MVL opponents Fairborn and Stebbins to capture the Valley Division championship again. We lost very close matches 2-3 in league play last year.”

Boys golf

Sidney is looking to win the MVL Valley Division with five returning golfers from last season.

Senior Kaden Abbott returns for the Yellow Jackets after posting a

nine-hole average of 40.47 last year, which ranked second in the 10-team MVL.

“Kaden has the best swing on the team, hands down,” fifth-year coach Bill Rippey said. “He has put in more the past four years than anyone else and it is going to pay dividends.”

Also back are seniors Luke Bemus and Jarred Kirk and juniors Tycen Money and Kade Schmiesing.

“Luke Bemus keeps getting better each year,” Rippey said. “He has grown so much from last year and is able to hit the ball at least 20 yards further. His scores will only get better this year.”

“Jarred Kirk has one of the better swings on the team. When he holds his follow-through, he hits great shots. If Jarred is able to keep his composure he will help this team a lot.”

“Tycen has put in so much work this off season, I really expect him to make a giant leap this year. He still needs to understand golf is played one shot at a time. Once he realizes that, his scores will be low.”

“Kade has really been hitting the ball solid lately. If he can get his short game down, we could be in great shape.”

Sophomore Ryan Bennett and freshman Carter Wooddell are newcomers.

“I am really looking forward to seeing how Ryan Bennett and Carter Wooddell do in their first year on varsity,” Rippey said. “Ryan was on the JV team last year, but his work ethic has jumped him up to varsity. He practices all the time. Carter is the first freshman I have ever coached who made varsity. He has a great swing and is really dedicated to becoming a top golfer.”

Rippey said Sidney should challenge Xenia for the MVL Valley title. He said Miami Division squads Tippecanoe and Troy should battle for the overall title.

“Five of our guys have at least one year of varsity experience,” Rippey said. “They will need to use the experience to get past Xenia.”

Girls golf

Sidney starts its third full season this year and is looking set program records with six letterwinners returning.

Seniors Evie Schwepe and Lily Blosser are returning after earning letters the previous three years, including as freshmen when the program played a partial schedule. Schwepe entered the season with the program’s low nine- and 18-hole scores.

“Evie is probably one of our most consistent golfers, averaging 47 so far this year,” coach Joe Spangler said in early August.

Seniors Cassie Trudeau and Mallory Hoskins are also three-year letterwinners. Junior Madison Garber is a second-year letterwinner, and junior Grace Steenrod earned her first letter last year.

Freshman Tatum Wernitz is a key newcomer according to Spangler.

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FL

From page 9

energy," Rodgers said. "They bring a great desire to prove themselves and to show everyone they deserve to be there."

Boys cross country

The Redskins are aiming for a state berth after falling one spot short the last two years.

Eight letterwinners return for Fort Loramie, all of which had best times under 19 minutes last year and four of which had best times under 18 minutes.

Leading the returnees are seniors Colten and Colin Gasson. Colten Gasson's best time a year ago was 16:22 while Colin Gasson's best time was 16:49.

Also back are senior Trey Ranly (17:22), senior Evan Eilerman (18:50), senior Isaiah Scheer (18:55), junior Adam Ballas (17:43), junior Frank Rethman (17:57) and junior Kam Barhorst (18:48).

The squad finished fifth in Div. III regional meets the last two years. The top four teams in each region earn state berths.

"They are motivated," 26th-year coach Dennis Prenger said. "These seniors were freshmen back in 2018 when we won our second team title, and the Gasson boys have qualified as individuals in the past."

"They know what it takes to compete at the highest level, so we aren't hiding the fact that our goal is to get back to the state meet as a team. They have put in the work in the offseason and are ready to get the season started."

Prenger said Anna, Botkins, Russia and Houston should also be strong in the SCAL this season.

"Five SCAL boys teams



Greg Billing | Sidney Daily News

Fort Loramie's Claire Rethman, left, runs ahead of a West Liberty-Salem runner during the Division III girls race in the cross country state championship meet on Nov. 7, 2020 at Fortress Obetz. The Redskins are looking to return to the state meet after finishing fourth last season.

were at the Troy regional last year, so I anticipate the 2021 season will be another competitive one," Prenger said.

Girls cross country

The Redskins lost a strong group to graduation, including three runners who raced with the team in the D-III state meet last season.

But its top two runners return, as do six other letterwinners. That makes Prenger hopeful the squad can earn a fifth consecutive state berth.

Seniors Olivia Borchers and Claire Rethman return after leading the Redskins with 18:48 and 18:56 times, respectively, in last year's state meet. They became the second and third runners in program history to post sub-19:00 times.

Also back are seniors Elise Berresik (22:50 best time in 2020), Anna Detrick (20:08) Kait Grillo (21:06) and Sarah

Thomas (21:47), junior Ava Turner (20:16) and sophomore Colleen Borchers (20:36).

"With our returning runners and several promising newcomers, our goal is to get stronger week-by-week and be running at our peak come the end of October and early November," Prenger said. "Each grade level has at least one athlete that I would consider to be one of the top runners in that class in the area."

"If we can stay healthy, we are confident in our ability to compete with the deep talent in our area and across the state."

Prenger said Botkins, Anna and Russia should be strong in the SCAL this year. Those three along with Fort Loramie placed in the top seven in the Southwest regional meet last year in Troy.

"There is a lot of talent returning, so I anticipate the league being as competitive as ever," Prenger



Greg Billing | Sidney Daily News

Fort Loramie's Adam Ballas watches after swining on the fairway during a nonconference match against Milton-Union on Sept. 14, 2020 at Homestead Golf Course in Tipp City. Ballas finished 10th in the Div. III state meet last year and is looking to help the squad earn a return trip. Fort Loramie finished seventh out of 12 teams last season.

said. "Outside of the league, the perennial programs like Minster, West Liberty and Versailles will provide plenty of opportunity to compete against the state's best."

Boys golf

Fort Loramie qualified for the Div. III state meet for the third consecutive year last season and will try for another trip this season with three lettermen returning and several newcomers fighting for varsity spots.

The Redskins won the SCAL title last year and earned D-III sectional and district championships. The squad finished seventh in the state tournament.

"Based on what I've seen over the summer, I like our chances," 14th-year coach Brad Turner said. "The guys have been playing a lot on their own and are starting to mesh as a unit now that we're into the season."

Juniors Adam Ballas, Aiden Wehrman and Austin Pleiman all return.

Ballas was the SCAL player of the year last year and finished 10th individually in the state meet to earn all-Ohio honors. He had a 37.52 nine-hole average.

"Adam is the best golfer in our school's history and provides a great cornerstone for us to build around," Turner said. "He has played in some highly competitive amateur and

junior tournaments over this summer and has put in the work to have another great season this fall."

Wehrman had a 41.39 average last year, and Turner said he would be the No. 1 golfer most years at Fort Loramie and is a knowledgeable golfer.

"He will give us a great 1-2 punch at the top of our lineup and we look for him to be the steady and calm influence he has been for us over the last couple of years," Turner said.

Pleiman had a 45.91 average last year and was the varsity squad's No. 6 golfer.

"The hope and expectation is that he improves his scoring average 1.5-2 strokes this season and if he can do that, it will set us up to have some good team success," Turner said. "He's got a good understanding of the game and the experience he gained last season will hopefully serve us well this year."

Key newcomers include senior Ethan Larger, sophomore Noah Mannier and freshman Beau Schafer.

Larger has played on the program's junior varsity squad for three seasons, and Turner said he's grown a lot and has developed a consistent swing and good feel for the green. Turner said Mannier has much potential and will develop into a very good golfer and

said Schafer is showing much promise despite not having golfed much until this summer.

Turner said the SCAL will be incredibly competitive, just as it was last season.

"Botkins returns almost everyone and gets a freshman coming in that is going to make them the favorites in the league," Turner said. "But given the makeup of the SCAL last season, whoever wins the championship this year is going to have to play well each and every night out in league play."

"It is going to set up to be a very fun and interesting league tournament and the SCAL will no doubt be well-represented at the district tournament towards the end of the year."

Girls golf

The Redskins finished one spot short of a state berth in a Division III district tournament last year and will aim for one this year with four letterwinners returning.

The program is independent of league affiliation after the breakup of the Cross County Conference.

"Keeping our focus through the regular season without the motivation of conference awards will be crucial to our success," ninth-year coach Kreg Hollenbacher said.

"Our success last year allowed us to be invited to some tournaments this year that we haven't been invited to in the past, so it's nice our efforts are being recognized by our peers, and it will be nice to see how we stack up with teams across the region, including Div. I and II teams."

Back for the squad these season are seniors Eva Bolin and Rhese Voisard, junior Aubrey Turner and sophomore Morgan Pleiman.

Bolin qualified for districts individually as a sophomore. She finished first in a D-III sectional tournament by shooting an 82 a year ago and posted a 75 at Echo Hills Golf Course in Piqua earlier this year in Covington's Lady Bucc Invitational.

"So far this year we've won three tournaments, set a school record for 18-hole team score, and overcome some adversity along the way, so I'm excited to see how the rest of the season will play out for us," Hollenbacher said.

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Cavaliers

From page 6

"Dylan Karn is bigger and faster this year and Michael McFarland is big and quick at defensive end. AJ Newson combines with Edwards for a good set of linebackers."

Senior Joshua George (5-8, 151) returns at kicker and McFarland returns as punter. George averaged 43.8 yards per kickoff last season and made 12-of-17 extra-point attempts and 2-of-4 field-goal tries. McFarland averaged 39.4 yards per punt.

Key newcomers will include senior defensive backs Sam Gilardi and Karsten Franklin, junior WR/DB Dylan Geise and junior offensive lineman Thomas White (5-10, 190).

Roll said he's not sure what to expect in the first year of the TRC but hopes the Cavaliers will be competitive.

The squad has 35 players on the roster, up eight from last season.

Lehman opened the season by hosting Lima Perry and is scheduled to travel to New Bremen in Week 2 and host Waynesfield-Goshen in Week 3. The squad is slated to begin TRC

play on Saturday, Sept. 11 by hosting Milton-Union.

The Cavaliers are scheduled to travel to Miami East in Week 5 and Bethel in Week 6, host Riverside in Week 7, travel to Covington in Week 8, travel to Troy Christian in Week 9 and host Dayton Northridge on Saturday, Oct. 23.

All of Lehman's home games will be played at Sidney Memorial Stadium, with the exception of the Week 3 contest, which will be played at the school's onsite field.

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Seniors

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won't be on the field until later this season.

Juniors Griffin Moore, Wyatt Biddle and Curtis Valent will also play at inside linebacker.

Senior E.J. Davis will play at outside linebacker.

Davis has been Sidney's main running back the last two seasons and has played sparingly on defense, but he'll start at linebacker this season after moving from RB to receiver on offense.

Seniors Conley New and Chris Hudgins will also play at outside linebacker.

Junior Myles Vorde-

mark returns at free safety. He made 23.5 tackles last year. Also playing at free safety is Karter Elsner, who played a little at cornerback a year ago.

Senior Izayah Clarke and junior Jy Wheeler will start at defensive back.

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Anna

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consecutive seasons before rival Lehman Catholic knocked them off in a late-season game last year to capture the 2020 title. The Cavaliers have now joined the reformed Three Rivers Conference, leaving the Rockets the heavy favorites to win the WOSL.

“We are very strong and experienced,” Noll said. “We should do very well this season.”

Volleyball

Anna is looking to improve after struggling through a 7-14 campaign in 2020 that included a fourth-place finish in the Shelby County Athletic League and a first-round tournament exit.

The Rockets have eight returning letterwinners to help in their quest for improvement this year.

“Our squad is a young team again this year, but is primed for a brighter season,” ninth-year coach Kelli Zumberger said.

“We have more depth on our bench compared to last year and several of our players are versatile and can play multiple positions.

“I think that we have the capability to make huge strides this season compared to last season. We have more experienced players now that some of those players have a year of varsity under their belt, and our mentality is stronger and ready for anything that comes our way.”

The Rockets lose a couple key players to graduation, including Mary Landis, who led the team in kills and aces and was second in digs and assists.

But the Rockets return plenty of strong scorers and defenders from last season. Senior middle blockers Kaitlyn Harris and Molly Rioch ranked second and third in kills and blocks, respectively, and sophomore setter Brenna Cobb returns.

“We struggled greatly last year offensively, so one of our major goals is to improve our offense and for our setter to really make a connection with each hitter,” Zumberger said. “We are going to be depending on a lot of our younger players, and all of our players have to be right on every night.

“Everyone on our squad knows the demands that we have for one another and have really started to build a better trust between one another. Our offensive and defensive units push one another so that each unit is holding each other accountable to do their job. That has been something special to



Greg Billing | Sidney Daily News
Anna's Hayden Schmidt runs during the Division III district meet boys Race "B" on Oct. 24, 2020 at Cedarville University. Schmidt won an individual district title by finishing first last season and is expected to have a high finish in this year's state meet.

watch develop throughout the summer.”

Harris had 133 kills and 27 blocks last year while Rioch had 77 kills and 25 blocks. Zumberger said those two will be depended upon greatly offensively.

“They have the most experience for us on the court and are doing a better job of realizing what they can bring to the table,” Zumberger said.

Cobb had 292 assists as a freshman, and Zumberger said she's show improvement.

“She has done a nice job taking responsibility at setter for us this year and soaks in every players' needs and is starting to handle pressure real well compared to last season, where she ran a 6-2 with Mary Landis,” Zumberger said.

Sophomore outside/right-side hitter Mara Cathcart will also see playing time in the front row, as will senior Lenna Rowland. Cathcart had 55 kills last year.

“We are hoping as the summer progresses, we will have these players connect more with Brenna, and they will start making an impact offensively,” Zumberger said.

Also back are senior libero Madison Jeffries, senior defensive specialist Kaitlin Rickert and junior defensive specialist Sydney Klosterman. Jeffries led the team with 289 digs last year while Rickert had 177 digs and Klosterman had 136.

“Madison brings so much athleticism to the court and is one of the scrappiest players I know,” Zumberger said. “Along with Madison,

Sydney Klosterman will be playing a large role in the back row with her. Sydney brings a calmness on the court that the team falls back on during chaotic plays.

“Along with Sydney and Madison, Kaitlin Rickert will be adding to our back row as well. She has one of the best platforms on this team and just passes the ball with confidence.”

Key newcomers include sophomore defensive specialist Abbey George, freshman outside hitter/setter Liz Staudter and freshman outside hitter/right-side hitter Cynthia Davidson.

“We will be looking a lot at Liz and Cynthia on the outside and right side,” Zumberger said. “They both know that there is a lot of pressure on them and that teams are going to come at them specifically because of their youth, but they have been able to handle it and know that their teammates are depending on them.

“They have had a pretty good summer so far and have been really working on the mechanics of their hitting. I am excited to see how these two will grow into their positions and how they will develop throughout the season.

“Another new face this year is Abbey. Her confidence and understanding of the game has grown significantly from last season and can't wait to see how she will contribute to the team defensively.”

Zumberger said the league will be strong this year, especially with Russia and Fort Loramie returning several key



Luke Gronneberg | Sidney Daily News
Anna's Bryce Cobb swings during the SCAL boys golf tournament on Sept. 17, 2020 at Shelby Oaks Golf Club. Cobb is aiming for a state berth after qualifying last year.

players. She said she also expects Fairlawn to be strong with many returnees.

Zumberger hopes a more-experienced group will help the Rockets have success in the SCAL.

“Our culture this year is built on the idea of ‘26 vs. 6,’” Zumberger said. “All 26 players (in our program) contribute in some way to the six who are out on the court and I believe the girls have really taken that culture and idea and have dug deep to make sure we are only bettering ourselves to make those six who are out on the court better, along with the whole team.

“Our summer has been a learning experience and the players are beginning to realize they have the potential to compete with some of the best teams as long as they mentally stay focused on the task at hand. The challenge for us is to show other teams that we are capable of being contenders and that we can leave an impression on them, no matter where we finish in the league.”

Boys cross country

Anna may not be able to reach the highs it did last season with just three returning letterwinners from last year, but 36th-year coach Dean Stewart is confident it will still be a successful year — especially for Hayden Schmidt.

Schmidt finished first in the Shelby County Athletic League race last year and also was first in a Division III district race and second in the D-III Southwest regional race. He finished seventh in the D-III state race in 16:02, 18 seconds slower than his best time last year.

Senior Collin Frilling and sophomore John Young also return.

“They will benefit from having the experience of running at the state championships last year,” Stewart said. “They will be relied on more heavily this year.”

Other returnees include senior Aaron Haynes and juniors Ryan Noll and Noah Deeren.

“They all three finished last year strong and

pushed for varsity spots at the end of the season,” Stewart said.

Stewart said there are a plethora of newcomers in the program, and he isn't sure who will become dependable varsity runners as the season progresses.

Stewart said Botkins and Fort Loramie are the favorites in the SCAL this season.

“Both of them return strong teams that will be among the top five in the state,” Stewart said. “We will have a solid top three, but will have to see how our fourth through seventh runners progress during the season and hope we can make some noise at the end of the season.”

Girls cross country

The Rockets qualified for the state meet for the second time in program history last season and are looking to return and improve upon a 12th-place finish with seven returning letterwinners.

“Last year provided our girls with a lot of experience and confidence,” 37th-year coach Stewart said. “I look for them to have an outstanding season this year.”

Seniors Bethany Althaus, Kaylie Kipp, Breann Reaman, Hope Bixler and Kaylie Brewer return, as do junior Grace Bensman and sophomore Paige Steinke.

Bensman had the highest finish on the team in the state meet by finishing 63rd in 20:20. Her best race was in the Shelby County Athletic League meet, in which she finished fifth in 20:06.

“Grace Bensman, Bethany Althaus and Paige Steinke all almost broke 20 minutes last year,” Stewart said. “They should give us a top three that will be able to challenge for top 10 finishes in most meets in 2021. I also look Kaylie Kipp and Breann Reaman to close the gap on our top three, giving us a formidable top five.”

Stewart identified senior Lauryn Wolters

and freshman Serenity Williams as key newcomers. Williams finished third in the SCAL junior high race last year.

“She will make an immediate impact on the team,” Stewart said of Williams. “She will challenge for a spot among our top runners. Lauryn Wolters could be our wildcard as she is and outstanding athlete, qualifying for the state track meet in the long jump last spring, and she was an outstanding soccer player.”

Stewart said Fort Loramie is again the SCAL frontrunner and said the Rockets should challenge Russia and Botkins for a runner-up spot.

Boys golf

Anna returns five golfers and two all-league selections from last season and is hoping for success in a stacked Shelby County Athletic League.

Leading the returnees is senior Bryce Cobb, who finished first in a Division III sectional tournament last year and earned district and state berths. Cobb, who finished high enough in the SCAL meet last year to earn first team honors, finished first in the league's preview meet in early August by shooting a 71.

Also back is senior Carter Gordon, juniors Landon Cobb and Ethan Maurer and sophomore Seth Hegemier.

“We do have some experience coming back. It is just hard to see where we might finish with the league being so deep this year,” longtime coach Brandon Cobb said. “... We need a few guys to step up to help to really challenge in the league.

“Anyone can see from the Preview scoring, the league is very strong this year. We need the other four returning letterwinners to find that groove and play well all season long.”

Girls golf

The program begins its third year with seven golfers returning from last year.

Leading the returnees is sophomore Mallory Havenar, who had a 56 nine-hole average last year. Also back is sophomore Ava Pettit (65.1 average), junior Carly Rogers (66.3), senior Josie Gehret (66.6), senior Madison Prenger (66.7), senior Megan Marlow and senior Gracie Russell.

“We've had several girls put in time on the course to improve scores,” coach Tony Metzler said.

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