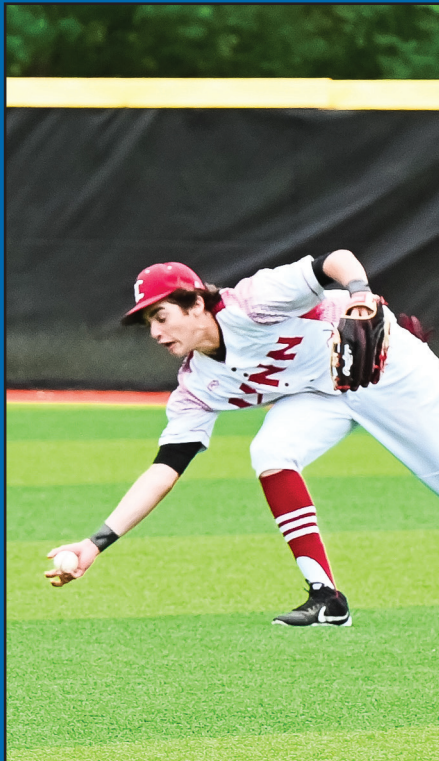
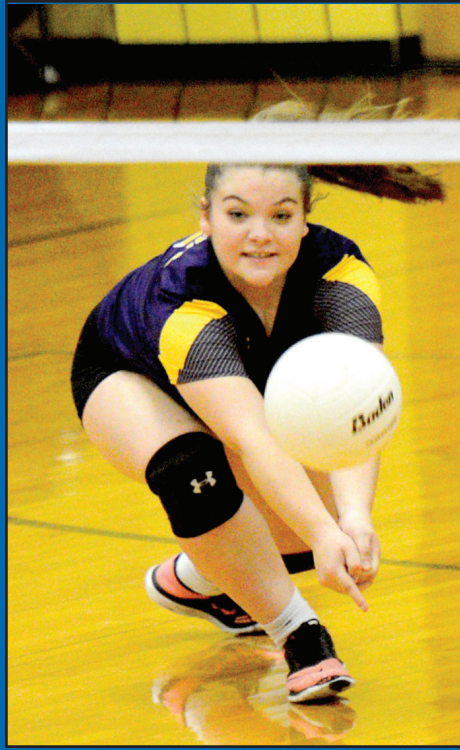


2021 UD FALL SPORTS GUIDE



AUG. 25. 2021



Perspective: Changes, Gnomes & Reading

In these uncertain times, I am certain of a few things, namely that what is good today will probably change tomorrow, that we have some great student-athletes, and Art Fick can, in fact, read.

First things first.

As the fall season gets underway, there swirls like dust on a gravel road talk about federal vaccine mandates and lockdowns. So far this year, we haven't had to worry about either in Osage County but that could change.

My aim here is not to make a political statement but rather a comment on the fragility of the system.

Seniors who got through practice in the spring of 2020 and those who supported them remember the difficulty of having the season canceled at the last minute.

We ran the spring sports guide anyway to give these kids a spotlight that unfortunately showed only what could have been.

It is my sincere hope the kids will be able to play a full fall season and that players and teams will not be sidelined by quarantine or illness. At the same time, I hope that everyone remains healthy.

The powers-that-be may decide the only way to preserve the latter is to lock us down. I hope it doesn't come to that.

As for the student-athletes who have worked very hard over the summer in preparation for the fall season, I tip my proverbial hat.

I cannot imagine running around in the heat of summer, getting muscle memory to form, and learning how to breathe properly while pushing myself to the brink of exhaustion and beyond.

Several times this summer I got overheated and dizzy walking from the truck to the house. For God's sake, I needed a nap.

Of course, I am quite a bit older than these kids you see running around. I never cared for running as you can tell by looking at me, but when I did run, it was because I was chasing someone or trying to get away from someone.

With age has come the wisdom to avoid those circumstances through communication and when necessary, compromise.

These student-athletes are amazing. They push and push, and then when they think there's nothing left, they find a way to push some more.

It's always satisfying to see the progress from one year to the next and to see how players adapt to change.

I'm sure most everyone remembers Patrick Schnieders and his siblings, all of whom were standout athletes at Fatima.

After he graduated, Patrick went off to college and played baseball, and met a young lady who eventually became his wife.

Oh, she's a teacher at Fatima and has taken the helm of the softball team. Ashlee is a bundle of energy and has been working hard to get the team ready.

I enjoyed my visit with her and look forward to watching this team progress.

She has the help of two well-known assistant coaches.

Kenny Bonnot used to be just one of the guys who gave me a hard time at games. Now he's a coach that gives me a hard time at games.

Very athletic, he joins the Lady Comets in drills and I ran a pretty good photo of him laying down a slap bunt. Of course, I heard about that when I saw him at practice later in the week. I assured him that was the last photo I'd publish of him in that kind of position.

Makayla Buscher is coaching the JV

team. She had a great career at Fatima and graduated in 2018.

These three seem to work well together and the players appear to be on the same page, so let's get going.

Linn volleyball has a new head coach in Kayla Peterson, a former player for the Lady Cats. She and her mom, Sharlet, who has worked with the team in the past, will lead this team of girls.

Kayla told me she is using positive reinforcement and wants to create an environment in which players are always looking for the good. There will be no negativity allowed on the court, she added.

I wish her well in that venture. We need all the positivity we can get.

Also at Linn, Ron Lebel has taken over the baseball program, and the fall season is a practice for the spring undertaking.

He brings more than 25 years of coaching experience to the field and though the team is young, Ron said he is pleased with the work ethic and effort.

All of our coaches work hard every day to make a difference, not just on the field of play but in life outside of athletics.

We also have two new athletic directors.

Billy Garrett takes over at Linn and Matt Verslues assumes the job at Fatima.

Both have already demonstrated a desire to make the jobs of their coaches easier and they're in it for the kids.

It's funny how you see people over the years and don't make connections. I see gobs of people every week at various games and matches, visiting coaches and those encountered on the road.

I remember them from various venues but never spent much time talking to them. It's not that I had any reason to avoid them; it's just that I had my hands full covering whatever event I was attending.

They're good guys and I hope they have a long run here in Osage County.

Now, let's talk about Art Fick.

Not since the Gnome Perspective has a column generated such a response.

For those who don't remember that particular entry, it started quite innocently as I was shooting a summer softball game many years ago.

I saw a couple of young women taking a picture of a gnome against the fence, which piqued my interest.

It turned out they had taken the gnome from the yard of a friend's house and were sending ransom notes with photos around the county.

I couldn't help but get in on that, and so many people called the office that my associates at the time called to find out what was happening.

The good old days, as it were.

In much the same way, my column entitled "The Art Fick Project" generated a lot of interest.

Even before I ran into him at the Rich Fountain picnic, I was hearing about it.

That's what happens when you write about someone who is pretty much the embodiment of all good things.

I have not found one person with anything negative to say about him, and that is unheard of in my experience.

He and his family were clustered at the picnic and as I drew near, unsure whether I would be welcomed with a handshake or a punch in the face, I heard him say, "Hey everyone! It's my friend, Neal."

That still didn't mean anything though because according to biblical teaching, Judas was also very nice to his friend Jesus, including a kiss on the cheek.

I snuck a look around me, thinking maybe he was shouting a prearranged signal for a thug waiting behind the bushes with a lead pipe.

I had a memory of Tonya Harding, whose ex-husband hired a guy to smash Nancy Kerrigan's leg in 1994 in a misguided attempt to pave Tonya's way to the

Olympics. For you young people, this was about figure skating and has nothing to do with Osage Men's League or my being in his way but I had the thought nonetheless.

Then I saw him and his smile and I felt the tension ease.

He gave me a fist bump and told me he loved it, though his family had apparently been relentlessly teasing him.

Art confirmed that he can in fact read, and even figured out the meaning of the Spanish phrase I used in the column.

Well played indeed, my friend.

I mentioned in that piece how I was on the fence about whether he could read but I guess I knew deep down that he could.

However, my understanding is that his friends at work saw it first and called it to his attention. I hope everyone there took it in the spirit of fun as intended. I'm sure he's got some things at his place of employment that require an understanding of the written word.

His only complaint was that I ran the photo of him contemplating life instead of what he called a great action shot. However, I had already published a couple of good action shots, including one in which only the top of his head appeared above a dust cloud as he scored a run.

All things considered, I would say the Art Fick Project was a success, and I wish him and his family only the best.

As we head into the fall season, it's time to get back up to speed because it will be over before you know it. This time of year is my favorite, and there's something going on every night.

Good luck to all fall teams.

See you at the game. NAJ

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guide is a
publication of
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**Wildcats, Comets
and Pirates**

Chamois volleyball season delayed by COVID

Just five practices into the fall season, the Chamois volleyball team ran into a COVID situation and was put on quarantine until Tuesday, Aug. 24. As a result, the first two matches have been pushed back so the team can complete the required practices before the start of the season.

"We were looking really strong and the girls were doing well in practice," said Coach Samantha Mitchem, who will be joined again by assistant coaches Katie Kuschel and Leshia Kempker. "We didn't have the option to do remote practices as a group, but I'm very proud of the girls for conditioning on their own when they could."

Mitchem added that practicing together is key to success. "We need to be able to work on things together at the same time as we continue to develop our skills," she said. "I'm confident that once we get back together, the girls will pick up where they left off."

This year's squad has one senior, Ariel Owens, who will be a right-side hitter. "She's a four-year starter so I expect her to be a big part of the team," said Mitchem. "She has the potential to be a great leader on the floor and she's working on it. Ariel is a good hitter and blocker and has made some great passes so far in practice. I think she's stronger than last year."

Owens earned honorable mention All-Conference last year.

Junior Alex McKague is the only player in her class and will spend time as a setter on the floor. "Her passing is much improved over last year, and I think she'll get better with more experience," said Mitchem.

The largest group is the six sophomores, most of whom return with a year of experience.



CHAMOIS HAS a small team but coaches believe this group has some talent and despite the youth of these players, they are hopeful each match will be competitive once the season gets started after a delay due to COVID. **PHOTO BY JACOB WARDEN**

Madison Gerloff will be a force in the middle hitter position. "She's a strong hitter and plays the middle very well," said Mitchem. "I think she has the potential to be very strong in that position."

Eevie Halbert is another right-side hitter. "She hustles like crazy, getting everywhere on the floor," said Mitchem. "I think she'll be a strong hitter for us."

Madison Bracken gives her best effort on every play and is working to develop into the middle hitting position. "She's progressing well," said Mitchem. "I see a lot of potential in her."

Elsy Wuelling, meanwhile, will attack from the outside. "She's small but mighty," Mitchem said. "Her serves have been solid, and her hits are amazing for a girl her size."

Devin Slusser will be the team's liber and right-side hitter. "She's a very versatile player who reads the ball well," said Mitchem. "I expect her to be very involved in our success."

See Chamois VB
Page 5B

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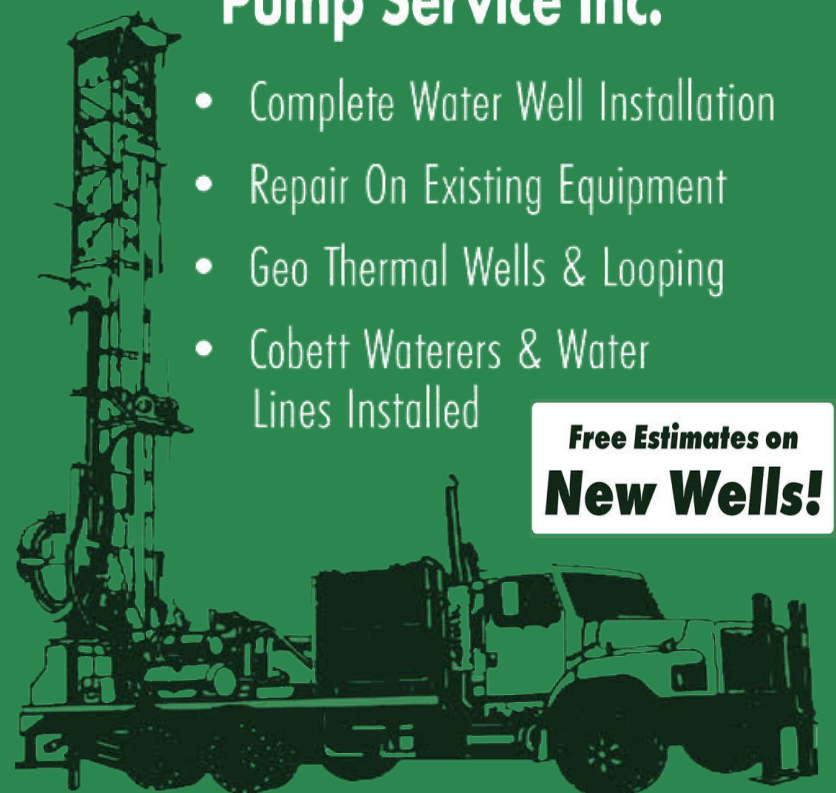
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PHOTO BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

DEVIN SLUSSER returns to the Chamois lineup this fall.

Chamois cross country to field with 5 high school, 5 junior high runners

Chamois cross country team returns with five high school and five JH runners, under the direction of Coach John Leach.

While there aren't enough for a team score but with the changes in the district meet, Leach said a few runners may advance to state.

"If their times get there, they have a good chance, and I think they will," said Leach. "We've seen some improvements in our times during practice. Our basic techniques are getting better and we're running farther, so they're starting to get in pretty good shape."

Leach said there is a lot of work yet to be done before the first meet at New Haven but he's confident runners will be ready.

The team has three sophomores in Madeline Gerloff, Eevie Halbert, and Elsey Wuelling.

"Madeline is a very talented runner," said Leach. "I think she'll be the top runner and will do much better than she did last year. My goal for her is to get to the state meet."

Halbert has the talent to succeed. "We're working with her to develop the understanding that she can be a fast runner," said Leach. "She has a chance of finishing in the top 30 and competing at state."

Wuelling is determined to make a splash. "She's quiet but really wants to do well, and has a real opportunity to put up times close to Madeline's, and she could possibly get to state as well."

Freshman Rylee Davis rounds out the

Date	Sport	Opponent	Level	H/A	Location	Time(s)
09/04/21	Cross Country	New Haven High School	7-12	A	Osage Co. R-I High School	8:30 am
09/08/21	Cross Country	Vienna High School	7-12	A	Osage Co. R-I High School	3:45 pm
09/11/21	Cross Country	Linn R-II High School	7-12	A	Osage Co. R-I High School	9:00 am
09/23/21	Cross Country	Belle High School	7-12	A	Osage Co. R-I High School	4:00 pm
09/25/21	Cross Country	Columbia	V	A	Osage Co. R-I High School	
09/28/21	Cross Country	Conference CC	7-12	A	Osage Co. R-I High School	4:00 pm
10/02/21	Cross Country	Calvary Lutheran High School	7-12	A	Osage Co. R-I High School	9:30 am
10/05/21	Cross Country	Hermann High School	7-12	A	Osage Co. R-I High School	4:00 pm
10/12/21	Cross Country	Owensville High School	7-12	A	Osage Co. R-I High School	4:00 pm
10/18/21	Cross Country	Vienna High School	VG/VB	A	Osage Co. R-I High School	4:00 pm
10/30/21	Cross Country	Districts	VG/VB	A	Osage Co. R-I High School	
11/06/21-11/06/21	Cross Country	State	VG/VB	A	Osage Co. R-I High School	

squad.

"Rylee has done very well in practice," said Leach. "She'll be a dark-horse runner that will come out of nowhere at the end of the year. Her form has improved and she's getting better every day. Rylee could get to state as well, depending on how the season goes."

The lone boy on the team is freshman Caleb Keilholz. "He's a joy to coach," said Leach. "He does everything possible that I ask him to do, and with the top 30 going to state, he has a chance to get there even as a freshman. He runs hard every time out and I feel he'll do very well this year."

Chamois also has four junior high boys running: Evert Mehmert, Jaxon Wuelling,

Kaden Wuelling, and Jack Schollmeyer.

These four boys were on last year's champion conference team. "I'm expecting a lot out of these guys," said Leach. "Even though we can't defend our team title, my goal is to get all of them in the top 10 individually. They're all running better than they were last year, and having them get as many medals as possible through the season is a priority."

Seventh-grader Emma Mehmert is the lone JH Lady Pirate. "She's very athletic and I think she'll improve immensely throughout the year," said Leach. "Her workouts are better every day, and I look forward to seeing her develop."

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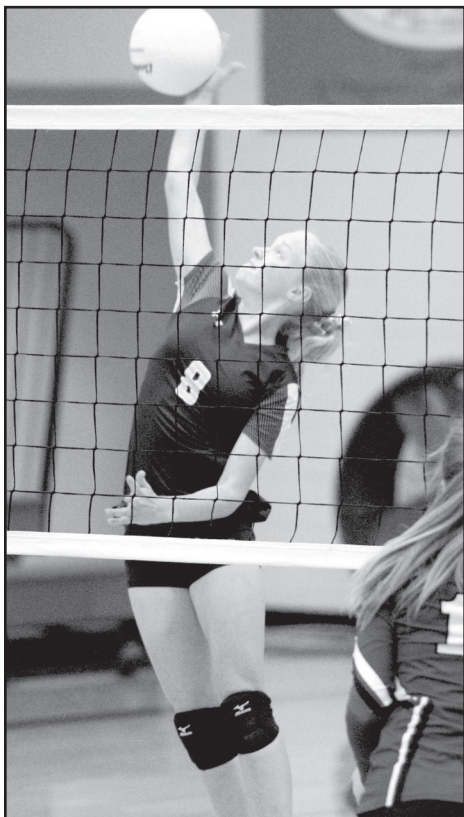
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PHOTOS BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

EEVIE HALBERT, above, and Madeline Gerloff, below, return with experience to the hardwood. Riley Davis, below right, is in good position for a serve-receive during a recent practice.



Date	Opponent	Location	Levels	Time
9/3	Belle (Belle, MO)	Away	V	5:30 PM
9/9	Russellville	Home	V, JV	6:00 PM
9/20	Linn (Linn, MO)	Away	V	6:00 PM
9/21	North Callaway (Kingdom City, MO)	Away	V	5:30 PM
9/23	Missouri School for the Deaf	Home	V	6:00 PM
9/24	Fatima (Westphalia, MO)	Away	JV	6:00 PM
9/27	Calvary Lutheran	Home	V	6:00 PM
9/30	Russellville (Russellville, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/4	Eugene (Eugene, MO)	Away	V	6:00 PM
10/8	Bunceton	Home	V	6:00 PM
10/14	North Callaway	Home	V	6:00 PM
10/18	Bunceton (Bunceton, MO)	Away	V	6:00 PM
10/19	Missouri School for the Deaf (Fulton, MO)	Away	V	6:00 PM

Chamois VB From Page 3B

The final sophomore is Becca Tharp, who just joined the team this year. "She will be a good addition to the team," said Mitchem. "Becca has a way of motivating others that impresses me."

Two freshmen, Rylee Davis and Kendall Mitchem round out the team.

Davis will spend time as a setter. "She was intimidated by it at first but she has

improved quite a bit and we're confident she will develop into a strong setter," Mitchem said.

As for Kendall Mitchem, she is described as a solid all-around player. "She can cover any position, and reads the floor very well," said Coach Mitchem. "I think she'll be a good middle hitter."

Overall, Mitchem said she believes the team has an opportunity to be competitive.

"We're not going to run away with anything but these girls are working hard and I think we'll hang with most teams," she

added. "We're very young and we'll face tough varsity teams so it's going to be a challenge but I think the girls will rise to the occasion. We have several good hitters and the underclassmen have stepped up."

Last year, the Lady Pirates finished 3-3 after forfeiting the district opener due to COVID.

"We hope that this early quarantine will be the only roadblock this year," said Mitchem. "We were just getting going last year when things got canceled, and I hope that doesn't happen again."



Sports help kids learn the value of teamwork, the importance of building good character and reaching goals.

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PHOTO BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

LINN SOPHOMORE Ramsie Tschappler got a taste of the hunt last year at the state meet and is primed for a return and a shot at All-State honors.

Baker hopes for a strong finish for Linn girls

Returning Linn cross country coach Robyn Baker said she hopes for a better district finish to get the whole team to the state meet.

"I can't do anything about COVID but last year was difficult," she said. "I'm so proud of the two ladies who made it to the state meet, and I want to build on that. We are doing everything we can to keep everyone healthy so we can avoid having to quarantine our athletes, especially as we get close to districts."

Baker added that she wants each runner to reach their potential. "These kids worked so hard last year and are back at it after summer conditioning," she said. "I want the best for them."

The Lady Cats' returners include Myra Baker, a senior, and sophomore Ramsie Tschappler, both of whom competed at the state meet last year.

Baker, who earned 35th in 22:55, just 10 spots away from All-State, brings a lot of running experience to the table. "She has a lot of grit and determination," said Coach Baker. "She got a taste and wants to get back to state, and the fact is, she just loves to run, so I expect her to do well."

Tschappler entered last year's season as a freshman with a good foundation from her time at St. George. "She was solid from the start and adjusted to the pace of high school pretty well," said Baker. "She figured out what it took to get to state and

made the most of it. I think she'll be highly competitive again this year."

Tschappler finished 62nd in 23:37 last season at the state meet.

Another senior, Ellie Monnette, is a vocal part of the team and shares leadership qualities with Myra Baker. "If Ellie wanted to be a coach, she could do it easily," said Coach Baker. "She's a good leader and she works hard at everything she does. Ellie knows what it takes to be strong and help the team, and I'm excited to see how well she does."

See Linn Girls XC
Page 8B

Linn Cross Country Schedule

DAY	DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION	LEVEL
Tuesday	8/31/2021	5:00	Watermelon Run	Linn	JH/HS
Saturday	9/4/2021	8:30	New Haven Invitational	New Haven	JH/HS
Saturday	9/11/2021	9:00	Linn Invitational	Linn	JH/HS
Saturday	9/18/2021	9:00	South Callaway Invitational	Mokae	JH/HS
Thursday	9/23/2021	4:00	Belle Invitational	Belle	JH/HS
Saturday	9/25/2021	9:00	Gans Creek Classic	Columbia	HS
Tuesday	9/28/2021	4:00	Show-Me Conference	Linn	JH/HS
Tuesday	10/5/2021	9:00	Hermann Invitational	Hermann	JH/HS
Monday	10/18/2021	4:00	Vienna Invitational	Vienna	HS
Saturday	10/23/2021	9:00	Fatima Invitational	Fatima	HS
Saturday	10/30/2021	9:00	Districts	TBA	HS
Saturday	11/6/2021	9:00	State Championship	Gans Creek	HS



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Linn boys' cross country team returns with experience

Linn cross country coach Robyn Baker said she is excited to see how well the boys can do this year, hoping that as November approaches, everyone is healthy and COVID does not prevent competition.

"One of my runners was quarantined the day before districts and that was really difficult," said Baker, who had just three runners suit up for districts due to COVID. "We have a lot of potential and experience on this team, and I want them to go as far as possible."

Two seniors return to lead the team: Bryer Baker and Gibson Tschappler.

"Bryer is quiet but he's a solid runner

and a good leader," said Coach Baker. "He didn't have as many summer miles as some of the other runners but he's getting it figured out."

Tschappler, meanwhile, hit the streets hard over the summer. "He impressed me with his workouts and runs," said Baker. "His goal is to get to state, and I believe he's quite capable of doing it. I think it hit him that this is it, his last opportunity to do it, and I expect him to push every time out."

Juniors are John Schmidt, Jason Powers, Trenton Burnett, and Rhett Robinson, all of whom have shown growth.

"John pushes Jason and both have done a good job in the off-season," said Baker. "They are pushing themselves to be in the best possible cross country shape."

Robinson is proving himself as a leader. "He's a strong runner and I hope he's a big part of our success this year," said Baker.

Burnett didn't run varsity last year but his hard work has put him in a great position to break through this year. "He's a very good distance runner," said Baker. "I expect he'll meet his goals and be a big part of the varsity squad."

Sophomore Hank Klouzek returns

after a strong freshman season. "He entered last year with a lot of middle school experience and got his high school pace figured out pretty quickly," said Baker. "He's going to continue to improve and be a successful runner."

Freshmen are Zachary Thiel-Henson and Bobby Winkelman.

After running his seventh-grade year, Thiel-Henson did not run last year but is in good shape coming into this season.

See Linn Boys XC
Page 8B

Rost contemplates a complete softball season for Linn

Linn softball coach Ryan Rost, entering his second year at the helm, said his major contemplation is whether the team will be able to finish the season since last year, the 5-11 Lady Wildcats had to forfeit their first-round district game due to quarantine.

"Hopefully, we'll get the hardships out of the way early," said Rost. "We're a young team but I think our talent and potential will make us competitive every time out. Last year was tough because I didn't think we played to our full potential. We were getting close when COVID forced us to end the season. I don't want that to happen again."

A year removed from a senior-laden team, the Lady Wildcats have no seniors

taking the field, and only 13 players are suiting up.

"My players will have to move around some," said Rost. "They will all be competing for the nine spots. I don't have any seniors, so someone is going to have to step up."

Thus far through practices, the juniors have assumed responsibility for helping the younger players develop. "They're working well together," said Rost. "We have a positive team environment and high expectations. We'll have some growing pains early on but these young ladies have a lot of mature characteristics, and I think

See Linn SB
Page 12B



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Good Luck Osage County
sports teams for a great year!



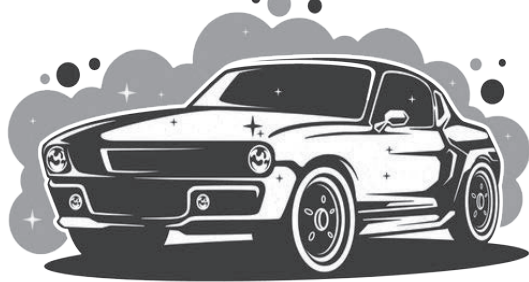
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*Good luck on this year's
sports season*



PHOTOS BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

RETURNERS OLIVIA Helmig and Gibson Tschappler hope to make their way out of districts to the state meet.

Linn Girls XC From Page 6B

Juniors Marissa Gehlert, Olivia Helmig, Erika Platt, and Annaliese Bowser, along with sophomore Reagan Klouzek, round out the team.

Gehlert is a consistent runner. "She's finally figuring out that harder miles in the off-season will make her more competitive during the year," said Baker. "She's becoming stronger with every practice."

Helmig is working hard to get her distance legs back. "She's putting in the miles and will be a good runner for us," said Baker.

Like Gehlert, Platt is consistent and can be relied on to do anything the coaches ask of her. "Her leadership skills are coming along nicely and that's great to see in a junior," said Baker.

Bowser is splitting time between the cross country and softball teams and her commitment is impressive. "She has

become much stronger and more confident in herself," Baker noted. "That's making her a better runner."

Klouzek was the team's second runner most of last year but just missed out on the opportunity to compete at state. "She is coming back from summer with some miles and is working hard at practice," said Baker. "Reagan is driven by competition and will be ready to go by the first meet."

Overall, Coach Baker said she is confident the girls' team has the potential to earn a top spot and get to the state meet. "We don't have district assignments yet but they have the drive and determination to have a great finish come districts," she added.

Baker also praised the efforts of parents and volunteers.

"We have a great support system for the program," she said. "It takes a lot to put on our invitational, and parents and other volunteers in the community always step up to make sure it goes smoothly. I really appreciate that."

Linn Boys XC From Page 7B

"Zachary is a hard worker and he'll improve as he continues to put in the hard miles," said Baker.

Winkelman found success at St. George and hopes to make an impact this year. "He's learning the high school ropes but he's a quick study and I think he'll be a positive addition to the team," Baker noted.

Provided the team avoids COVID issues, Baker is confident the entire squad can get out of districts to compete at state.

"This is a good group of kids," said Baker. "They work hard and support each

other. I believe the sky's the limit for them."

Also returning to the team is Asst. Coach Hannah Wilbers. "I'm so glad to have her back," said Baker. "She learned a lot last year and has a good rapport with the kids. We can't wait to get the season started."

Tyler Rush, who helped coached track in the spring, has been offering pointers as well.

"Tyler has been very helpful," said Baker of the former Linn standout runner. "I had to learn to ask for help when I need it, and I'm glad I did. Everything we do is to make the kids better and to reach their full potential."



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Peterson comes home as Linn volleyball head coach

Kayla Peterson is no stranger to Linn volleyball, having played for the Lady Cats during her time at the school, and she is excited to return as the head coach.

"This is my home," she said. "This is where I want to be. My parents are here, and my friends. I was very active in high school. To come back and be part of it is exciting."

After graduating in 2012, Peterson attended Columbia College, where she earned a degree in psychology. It was while she was helping teens with addiction learn recovery life skills that she began teaching American Sign Language to disabled people.

A love of teaching was born and she returned to school to get her certification in English. She was at North Callaway for a year and Tusculumbia for three years with a temporary certificate.

Now fully certified, Peterson returns to teach English at Linn.

Her return to the volleyball court is also special because she will share the coaching responsibilities with her mother, Sharlet.

"I love working with her," said Kayla. "We have a great relationship and understand what we're trying to do."

Working together is the theme Peterson continues to develop with her players as well. "We want to win with unity," she said. "We don't use the term 'losers' because we believe you win or you learn. There will be no negativity on the court."

Peterson took training at MU on positive coaching, and central to that experience was the book, "Energy Bus," which she had every player read.

"The focus is the positive philosophy and growth mindset," Peterson said. "You have to believe in the positive and reinforce it. The girls have accepted it very well."

This year's squad includes five seniors, Macci Blauvelt (DS), Lizzie Heckman (LH), Karlee Cox (OH), Hannah Hall (DS), and Emma Schaefer (OH/S).

Blauvelt played libero last year and as part of Peterson's focus on specialty play, will spend time in the back row.

"She does a great job at getting a hand on all the hits," said Peterson. "She's had strong serves and nice passes. Macci does a great job of encouraging others, and we'll need her to be vocal on the court to make sure we're communicating."

Heckman is a leftie and her serves will continue to improve with experience, Peterson noted. "Being left-handed is a strong advantage as her serve tends to spin backward," the coach added. "Her attitude

and positivity and the court are contagious. She makes the sport fun to be on your team and we love to see the encouragement that you give players."

Cox brings great energy to the court. "She brings the team together with her positivity and easy-go-lucky personality," said Peterson. "She makes sure that the whole team is having fun and tries hard to include everybody."

Schaefer has delivered great sets that make it easy for other players to hit. She's also an effective leader.

"Emma is a servant leader," Peterson said. "She tends to pick everyone up and lead from behind everyone. This is a unique and effective leadership style."

Hall earned JV MVP honors last year and returns with accurate placement on her serves. "She will be a solid spot server with some fine-tuning," said Peterson. "Hannah also has great set placement and good passes."

Also expected to play varsity are juniors Rylie Jaegers (S) and Marly Houston (libero), sophomores Kendyl Peters (OH) and Saylie Schaefer (MH), and freshman Vivien Baker (MH).

Jaegers and Houston will also be called upon to pass the ball strongly.

"Rylie does a great job squaring up to the setter, which helps her get the ball to the setter," said Peterson. "She also has had some nice digs in practice."

Houston has a solid serve and is not afraid to go after the ball. "She is not scared to hit the floor," said Peterson. "We'll need her to be as vocal as possible and communicate so everyone knows where the ball is going on a set."

Peters has shown patience at the service line and is a good communicator. "She does a great job calling the ball," said Peterson. "Kendyl is a very solid player and very capable. She have a lot of experience to share with the other players."

Schaefer has done a good job of letting

**See Linn Volleyball
Page 10B**

Date	Opponent	Location	Levels	Time
8/30	Owensville	Home	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
9/3	Eugene (Eugene, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/6	Cuba (Cuba, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/7	Fatima (Westphalia, MO)	Away	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
9/11	Hickman Varsity Tournament (Columbia, MO)	Neutral	V	
9/13	Fulton (Fulton, MO)	Away	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
9/14	Dixon	Home	V, JV	5:30 PM
9/16	Centralia (Centralia, MO)	Away	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
9/17	Linn JV Tournament (Linn, MO)	Home	JV	
9/20	Chamois	Home	V	6:00 PM
9/21	Belle (Belle, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/24	Calvary Lutheran	Home	V	6:00 PM
9/25	Russellville Tournament (Russellville, MO)	Neutral	JV	
9/30	Southern Boone	Home	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
10/4	St. James (St James, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/7	Versailles	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/9	Belle Volleyball Tournament (Belle, MO)	Neutral	V	
10/11	New Haven	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/14	Eldon (Eldon, MO)	Away	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
10/16	Versailles Invitational (Versailles, MO)	Neutral	V	
10/19	Russellville	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM



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Linn Volleyball
From Page 9B

hitters know where the ball will be, Peterson noted. "Overall, she's making nice passes and doing a good job of squaring up," the coach added. "Her serving is coming along and we're working on taking her time to

make sure it's accurate."

Baker has demonstrated great blocking ability. "We're fine-tuning her approach so she is more effective but she's doing well," said Peterson. "I also love her jump-serve. She is putting a lot of power into her swing."

Overall, Peterson said the goal is to win a district title. "They are capable and

they are bonding," she added. "It's a mental thing to grind it out every match. I think the team has the positive mindset to go all the way."

Members of the JV A team are juniors are Natalie Morre (MH/OH), Kylie Wolfe (OH/BRS), sophomores are Faith Hines (L/OH), Katrina Mueller (L/RH), Natalie Ramsey (L/BRS), and freshmen are Alexis Cicero (LH/S), Bren Hamil (BRS/H), Harlee Klebba (OH), Lizzie Wingrath (OH/DS), Lydia Kleffner (MH/OH), and Vidella Loughridge (S/OH).

Members of the JV B team are juniors Lieghann Horan (OH), sophomores Reece Griffith (DS/OH), Shelbie Robinson (S/BRS), and Kylie Breig (OH/DS), and freshmen Lauren Jacquin (DS), Courtney Wood (B/H), Taylor Tungate (S/BRS),

Madison Mengwasser (DS/L), Gracie Schaefer (LH/DS), and Natasha Jewell (BRS/S).

"This is a good group of girls, some with club or other volleyball experience, others that are just learning the game," said Peterson. "They will do anything you ask and they want to learn. Our personalities mesh well, and I'm excited to watch them develop."

Peterson noted that the junior high volleyball program, initiated in the spring, will help every player learn the ropes before engaging in summer play. "We're going to build confidence at an early age," she said.

Peterson and her fiancé, Brett Sandbothe, have a two-month-old daughter, Scout. The couple plans to wed in 2024.



PHOTO BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

MARLY HOUSTON will be the libero for the Lady Wildcats this fall.

Good luck from UD Sports

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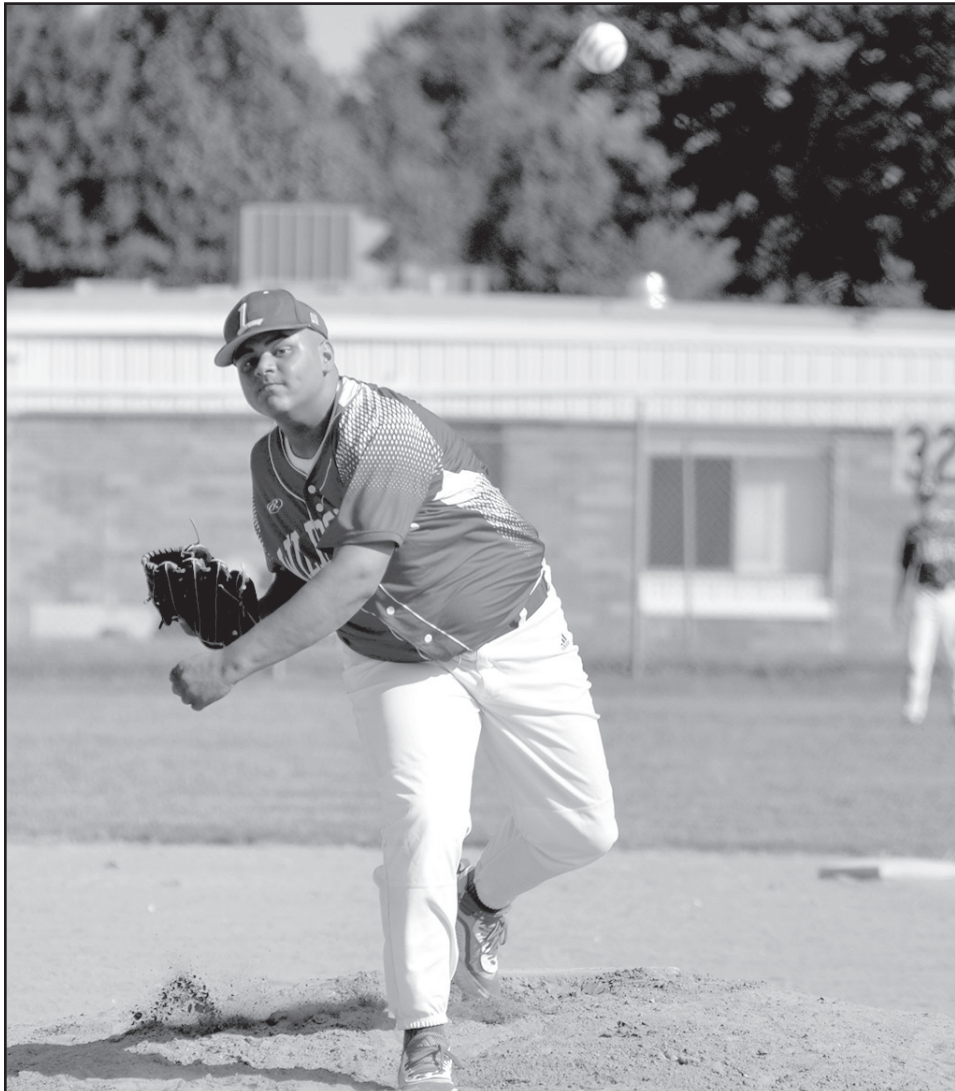


PHOTO BY WILL JOHNSON

KEAGAN HEYWOOD will be Linn's primary pitcher this fall after a solid effort in the spring.

Linn fall baseball program opens under new coach

Linn's fall baseball program has a new coach, Ron Lebel, who brings 26 years of experience to the position, including the last four at California, and four more at Montgomery County.

"I'm excited to get going with these guys," said Lebel. "We have some good leaders on this team with state experience from the spring, and they're going to help us get the younger guys up to speed."

Two seniors, Keagan Heywood and Aidan Kline, along with junior Cody

Leivian, were starters on the record-setting second-place Wildcats team in the spring.

Heywood was an instrumental part of the pitching corps and is eager to get back out there. "He's good to go on the mound," said Lebel. "All three hit well and will probably be in the top four of our lineup."

Kline will likely return to center field and play infield as needed, while Heywood

See Linn Baseball
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Linn SB
From Page 7B

they will do well.”

All six of Linn’s juniors return for the third straight year.

Aushara Hostetler was second on last year’s team with a 19-55 performance (.345) with six doubles and a home run as she drove in 19 and scored 10 to earn second-team All-District honors last year.

“I look for her to continue that hot streak at the plate,” said Rost. “She is working hard to improve her pitching as well and she’s my main thrower. We’re short-handed so Aushara will have to be the workhorse.”

Hostetler pitched in eight games, going 4-4 in seven starts over 49 innings, during which she allowed 28 earned runs on 64 hits, with 16 strikeouts and 20 walks.

When Hostetler isn’t pitching, she’ll play in the outfield or at third base.

Autumn Baker was third among batters last year, going 12-46 (.261) with a double, four RBI, and seven runs scored to earn All-Conference honorable mention.

With two full years of varsity experience, the center fielder will anchor the outfield. “She’s quick and can track the ball very well,” said Rost. “Her hitting continues to improve, and I expect her to be a big part of our lineup.”

Lily Meyer, Ali Klebba, Annaliese Bowser, and Delaney Schmidt round out the junior class.

“Lily shows up to every extra thing we do,” said Rost. “She’s been better every year, and her hitting and fielding are improving with every practice.”

Bowser, who is also running cross country, saw some time at varsity last year and made great strides over the summer. “She broadened the positions she can play and she plays them well,” said Rost. “I’m excited to see what this year has in store for her.”

Schmidt played last spring with the boys’ baseball team, which Rost said will help her as she approaches the start of the year. “She has made a lot of improvement since last fall, and she’s more versatile in the field,” Rost noted. “Her bat has gotten better, and I think she’ll be a big part of the offense.”

Sophomores Katlyn Starke and Lily Strope saw a ton of improvement over the summer, Rost said.

Starke had varsity time at the catching position last year and did a good job. “She stepped up big time behind the plate,” said Rost. “Her fielding and swing have improved greatly, and she can drive the ball. With her speed, she’s a threat.”

Strope spent a lot of time in the off-season working on her pitching because the team is short of hurlers. “She knows I need the help so I appreciate her effort. She brings great energy to every practice.”

Freshmen are Kiana Hostetler, Emma Monnette, Hannah Hackman, Kylie Peters, and Rylie Cooper.

“We have an extremely talented group of freshmen,” said Rost of Hostetler, Monnette, Hackman, and Peters. “They played at a high level in club ball and summer practice. They look strong and have some versatility in the field.”

Cooper is new to the team and hasn’t played in a while. “She has caught up with her teammates and is performing well,” said Rost.

Also returning to the team is Asst. Coach Mike Nolting, who compliments the efforts of Rost in daily practices. “We work very well together,” said Rost. “We coached basketball together for two years as well, so we know each other. We bounce stuff off each other and come up with a good plan. It’s great to have him with me on the team.”

Linn Softball Schedule

Date	Opponent	Location	Levels	Time
8/30	Vienna	Home	V, JV	
8/31	Capital City High (Jefferson City, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/2	Owensville (Owensville, MO)	Away	V, JV	4:30 PM
9/7	Cuba (Cuba, MO)	Away	V, JV	4:30 PM
9/9	Belle	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/10	Eugene	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/13	Southern Boone (Ashland, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/14	New Bloomfield (New Bloomfield, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/17	Tuscumbia	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/20	St. Elizabeth (St. Elizabeth, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/21	South Callaway	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/24	Fatima (Westphalia, MO)	Away	V, JV	
9/27	Eldon (Eldon, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/28	Russellville (Russellville, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/1-2	Linn Tournament (Linn, MO)	Home	V	
10/5	Versailles	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/11	New Haven	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM

**Here’s to a
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PHOTO BY NEAL A. JOHNSON
DELANEY SCHMIDT returns to the lineup for the Lady Wildcats.

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PHOTO BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

AFTER A strong spring season, Cody Leivian returns to play at first base this fall for the Linn Wildcats.

Linn Baseball From Page 11B

will roam right field when he's not pitching. Leivian will retain his role at first base.

"These three give us a good building block as we set the tone for next spring," said Lebel.

Austin Dudenhoeffer, Seth Wolfe, and Curtis Deeken will also see time on the

mound, Lebel noted.

Other team members are juniors Elijah Baker, Landen Bennett, Brendan Ely, and Trevor Murray, sophomores Anthony King, Tanner Hackmann, Arlyn Martin, and Lucas Collins, and freshmen Tyler Wolfe, Tryten Collins, Arturo Martinez, and Logan Martin.

"I'm impressed with some of the younger guys," said Lebel. "Everyone is working hard in practice and finding a way to contribute. We're trying different

positions and lineups to see where everyone is comfortable."

Lebel competed in four straight Final Fours while playing at Licking, the latter two ending in championships. He attended Mineral Area Community College, where he played baseball and has coached softball and baseball, volleyball, and basketball.

"I've been around sports all my life, and I hope I can share my knowledge and experience with these players," he said.

Linn Baseball Schedule

Date	Opponent	Location	Levels	Time
8/28	Vienna (Vienna, MO)	Away	V	10:00 AM
8/30	St. Elizabeth (St. Elizabeth, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/2	Belle	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/7	Sturgeon (Sturgeon, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/9	Bourbon	Home	V	5:00 PM
9/10	Eugene (Eugene, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/16	Dixon (Dixon, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/21	Calvary Lutheran	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/23-25	Vienna Fall Classic (Vienna, MO)	Neutral	V	
10/5	Iberia	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM

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fall from UD
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Fatima cross country teams loaded this fall

Fatima's high school girls' cross country team has 11 members, with seven returning from last year's squad and four new members.

Returning this season with state-level experience from last season are juniors Sarah Groene, Emma Bower, and Lauren Berhorst, all of whom qualified individually for the state meet last year. Groene (41, 21:42), Bower (55, 22:03) and Berhorst (64, 22:13) were varsity members of the 2019 state championship team.

"These four girls give our team a strong foundation of experience and talent as we head into this season," said Coach Marc Bridges.

Also returning to the team this season is junior Megan Borgmeyer, and sophomores Gracie Deeken, and Cheyenne

Hicks.

"These three returners are ready to take the next step forward and help to improve the team," Bridges said.

New team members are sophomores Addyson Wilburs and Brianna Rademan, and freshmen Regan Bock, and Lily Gregory.

"I've been impressed with the progress and dedication of these first-year girls and look forward to their contributions and progress as the season unfolds," said Bridges. "All of the girls worked hard all summer and started practice with a good base of endurance. I look forward to the possibilities that the season holds and we are eager to start racing."

Fatima's boys' team, meanwhile, features eight members of last season's

team, including three varsity runners from last year's state championship team.

"I can honestly say I've never had a group of boys put in the consistent work that this group put in this summer," said Bridges.

Seniors Gavin Satterfield (118, 19:16), Thomas Libbert (67, 18:16), Scott Sankey, and Collin Bridges will bring experience and leadership to the team, Bridges noted.

Returning sophomores, Cody Berhorst (61, 18:11), Cody Kampeter, and Tyler Kloepfel, have shown great improvement since last season. "They are poised to have a huge impact on our varsity this season,"

See Fatima XC
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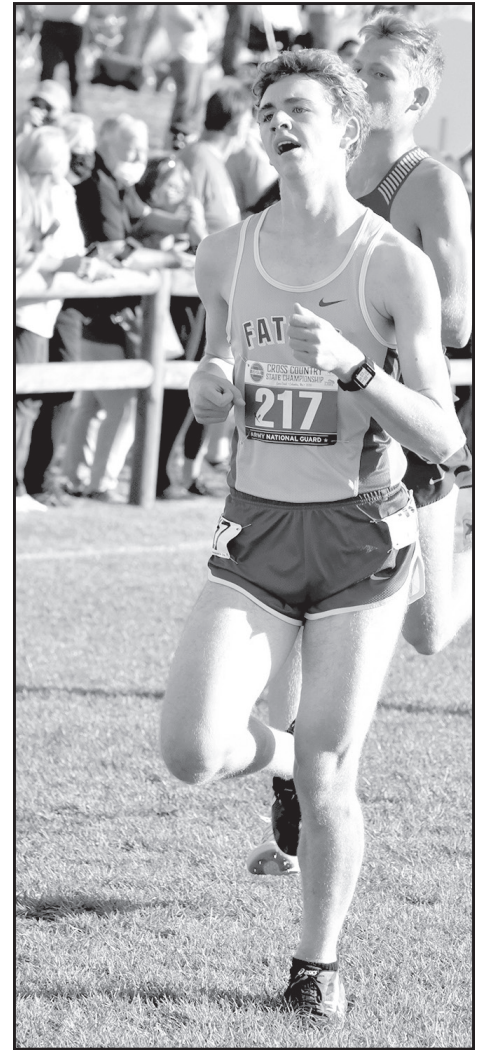


PHOTO BY NEAL A. JOHNSON
SENIOR THOMAS Libbert returns from last year's state championship team.

Date	Opponent	Location	Time
9/4	New Haven Invitational (New Haven, MO)	Neutral	
9/11	Linn (Linn, MO)	Away	
9/18	Fulton Invitational (Fulton, MO)	Neutral	
9/25	Gans Creek (Columbia, MO)	Away	
9/28	Conference Meet (TBA, MO)	Away	
10/2	Laker Invitational at Collins Farm (Camdenton, MO)	Neutral	
10/12	Owensville (Owensville, MO)	Away	
10/23	Fatima Invitational (Wardsville, MO)	Neutral	

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Fatima varsity soccer team looks to defend district title

Fatima boys soccer coach Clint Dobry said he's excited about the potential of this year's squad and expects to be competitive in every game, with an opportunity to defend its district title.

"Last year was crazy," said Dobry, who is joined again by Asst. Coach Josh Kunkelman for the fourth year. "We had nine losses in a row in the middle of the season but the kids didn't lose heart. They didn't give up. They just kept fighting and it paid off at the end of the year. We were playing our best soccer, and peaked at the right time."

In last year's district championship game, Fatima defeated Dixon 3-2 after knocking off Crocker 8-1 in the semis.

This year, Dobry hopes to avoid that losing streak, along with COVID complications, in a bid to repeat as district champions.

"If things go well, we'll be much better in the mid-season than we were last year," said Dobry. "Our defense has improved significantly, and we are very athletic. We'll be more physical than last year as well, so I'm confident we'll be competitive in every game."

Five seniors will be expected to step up to lead the team.

"This group has a lot of experience and they work well together," said Dobry.

Co-Captain Garrett Borgmeyer (MF) is probably the most natural leader on the team, Dobry noted. "His skills are substantial and he'll see a lot of playing time," he said. "His teammates respect him and he will contribute to our success."

The other captain this year is Isaac Falter, a three-year starter who will be a big

part of the defense. "He's an athletic beast," said Dobry. "He's one of the fastest kids on the team and he's very talented. I expect Isaac to anchor our defense and shut teams down."

Behind him in goal will be Drew Ocheskey and Jackson Riegel. "We're going to have a platoon approach to goal-keeping," said Dobry. "This is the first year both of them will see varsity play and they're doing pretty well."

Ocheskey has a lot of perseverance, Dobry added. "He plays hard and I look for him to be a good presence in the net," said Dobry. "Jackson continues to improve as well, and I think both will be really good in goal. They'll compete for the starting position."

Ben Gentges was injured most of last year but joined the team late. "This is his first year as a starter and I look for him to contribute," said Dobry of the midfielder. "He's greatly improved his skills."

Junior Blake Gentges returns from a season in which he earned All-State honors and looks to be a very strong forward. "He has incredible speed and plays well in the forward position," said Dobry. "I expect him to be a big part of our success."

He is joined by a plethora of fellow juniors.

Forward Ryan Kesel, who scored the game-winner in last year's district championship game, returns with All-State potential. "Ryan is bigger, faster, and stronger," said Dobry of the All-District returner. "I look for him to use his athleticism to overpower other teams and finish strong at the net."

Midfielder Patrick Holterman has a lot



PHOTO BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

PATRICK HOLTERMAN will once again work the midfield for the Comets.

of talent and returns with experience. "He has the potential to be a very solid player with continued hard work," said Dobry.

Michael Kloepfel returns as a second-year varsity player who should start a lot of games. "As a former cross country runner, he's in great shape and he has a lot of endurance," said Dobry.

Chase Kremer (MF) is similar to Holterman and Coach Dobry said he hopes

to get both of them to the next level.

Ray Laughlin will play midfield and see some action as a forward. "He has the best technical skills on the team," said Dobry. "He's focused and determined to win, and I think he has the potential to earn

**See Fatima Soccer
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PHOTO BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

FATIMA FORWARD Ryan Kesel played a big role last year and is expected to be a key to the team's success again this fall.

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PHOTOS BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

SARAH GROENE, above, Emma Bower, above right, and Lauren Berhorst, below, are back to lead the Lady Comets. They qualified for last year's state cross country meet and hope to be joined by the full team in November.



Fatima XC
From Page 14B

Bridges said.

Fatima's second-year runner, sophomore Isaac Gentges and first-year runners, sophomore Harrison Stratman, and freshmen Wyatt Gabelsberger, Brady Hager, and Ben Luebbert, will be very competitive.

"Our runners have put in a lot of

quality mileage this summer and I'm looking forward to watching them compete," said Bridges. "The boys' team is determined to make a run for an 11th straight state trophy and if effort and dedication are any indication, they will have success."

Michael Gabelsberger is the lone runner representing Fatima at the junior-high level, and no one is running for the girls' team.

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Fatima varsity volleyball will be very competitive

Fatima will have a very competitive varsity team taking the court this year offering both experience and talent with defense as its strongest attribute.

"Most of our players have been starters throughout their time filling rosters these last three or four years and I have had the opportunity to be a part of their coaching staff the entire time so I am very familiar with all of them, and I'm looking forward to mixing and matching their skills and talents to combine a very strong, cohesive team that is up for the greatest challenges," said Coach Curtis Brandt.

This squad will be senior-heavy this season, with nine of the 13 players on the roster in their final year.

"I am usually not a fan of such a large number of players making up a roster for only one team of six taking the court at one time during competition but this season has shown me that each of our players offers a unique skill set which will prove beneficial as we face different opponents this season," Brandt said. "It has also allowed strong and challenging scrimmage opportunities within our team and skill level, which promotes a competitive atmosphere that requires players to continually improve and strive for their maximum potential. Sometimes this can cause resentment within the group but I am fortunate to coach such an amazing set of players that continue to use these opportunities to selflessly make each other and the team stronger."

Leadership and teamwork will be Fatima's strongest qualities, Brandt noted,

adding he will be relying heavily on several players to make sure the team is always working together while still having fun.

Team captain Jenna Bax has always been a leader and has a way of rallying teammates to perform to the best of their abilities. "She will have a huge role in this team's success this season but I am confident she is up for the challenge," said Brandt. "Jenna also offers strong back-row defense and consistency in all areas of the court."

Ava Bock will lead the back-row defense as the libero. "Her presence in the backcourt is amazing and she continues to strive for improvement reading the ball off attackers which is putting her in the best position for an effective pass," said Brandt.

Leah Markway carries a huge role in setting up the offense as the team's lead setter.

"She is one of the most aggressive and determined players I have ever seen in this sport," said Brandt. "She is always ready for new challenges as we develop offensive plays. She communicates well with our front-row attackers and is developing a great relationship with all the players on the team. Her hard work and energy inspire the other players to never give up and to keep pushing for the win regardless of the odds."

Elsie Bax, the most athletic player on the roster, will be offering a strong outside attack. "Her quickness and determination to go for every ball on defense will continue to show its value especially during strong competition," said Brandt. "Her vertical



PHOTOS BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

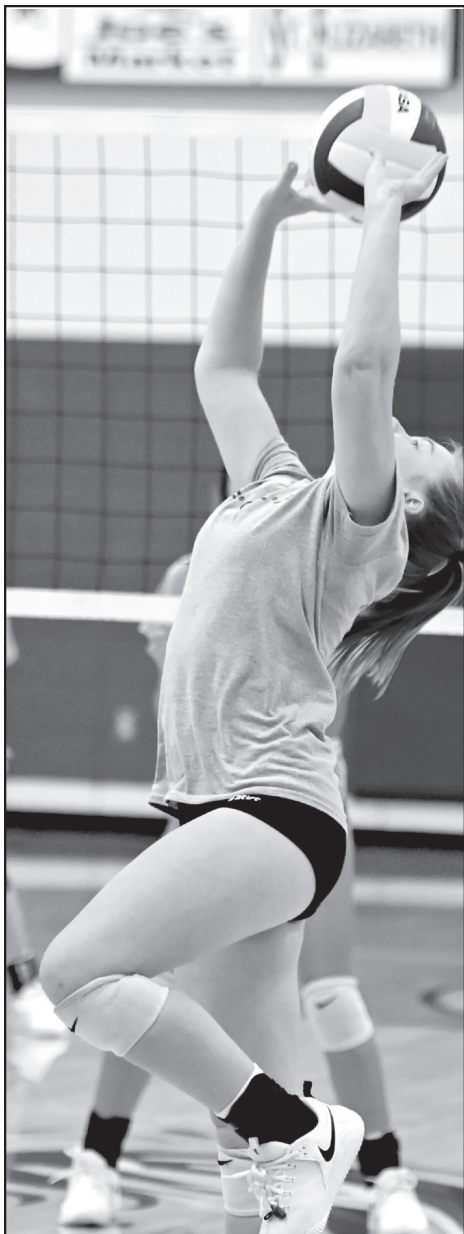
JUNIOR SAMANTHA Bax smashes the ball past JV defender Maggie Dickneite during a recent practice.

leap and ability to stay in the air during attack offers enormous possibilities from strong tips to back-row attack options."

Anna Crede and AnnaBelle Massman are two very valuable seniors that provide strong attack options in the front row this season. "Probably their greatest quality is

their positivity and kindness though," said Brandt. "They promote happiness and fun in all they do and the team responds well to

See Fatima VB
Page 23B



LEAH MARKWAY sets the ball during a recent practice.

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Fatima softball team features three seniors this fall

Fatima will enter the fall softball season with three seniors under new coaches Ashlee Schnieders (head coach), Kenny Bonnot (assistant coach), and Makayla Buscher (JV coach).

Seniors Chayce Gier, Chesney Luebbering and Anna Eichholz return to help lead the team.

Gier was named second-team All-Region last year after a stellar year on the rubber, and she will be called upon to keep things going as one of two aces.

"Chayce is a consistent player and that's really all you can ask of high school players," said Schnieders. "She has a good bat and will be a solid part of the lineup. On the mound, we'll need her to be consistent and keep batters off balance."

Gier hit .351 last year (27-77) with four doubles and 11 RBI.

When Gier is not pitching, she will play at first base. "This will be an opportunity to showcase her strengths more in the field," said Schnieders.

Luebbering, who earned second-team All-District and All-Conference honors after last year's performance, returns to the catcher's position. "She's a wall behind the plate," said Schnieders. "She knows the game and is a great teammate. She's also the voice of the team and a good leader. We need her to step up and control the game."

On the rubber, Gier handled the lion's share, with 144 innings pitched and a record of 11-11. She allowed 63 earned runs on 171 hits with 102 strikeouts and 29 walks.

Eichholz is a returning outfielder. "She

has been more consistent out there, and she has one of the top arms on the team," said Schnieders. "She brings a lot of game experience to the team and we look for her to be as strong in the box as she is in the field."

Eichholz went 10-39 (.256) with four doubles and two RBI.

This year's junior class includes Ellie Brune (OF), Caleigh Huot (OF), Allison Schwartze (3B/SS), Olivia Reichel (OF), and Rachel Woehr.

Brune is a high-energy, positive player who is consistent in the batter's box. "She also has some speed and is a leader in the outfield," said Schnieders. "Ellie is very vocal and someone the other players look up to."

Brune hit .226 a year ago, going 16-69 with two doubles and eight RBI.

Schnieders said that Huot has a ton of potential. "She's been working really hard on tracking the ball and her speed in the outfield is very good," Schnieders added. "Caleigh also has good speed on the bases, and as one of just two lefties, she'll give us a different look in the box."

Schwartze has shown consistent hitting and her defense has improved. "She's a good line-drive hitter and defensively, she'll be good on the left side of the infield," said Schnieders.

Schwartze had 16 hits in 73 at-bats (.219) with six doubles and five RBI.

Reichel is vying for a spot in the outfield and will see some time at JV to get her some extra reps.

Woehr had a pretty rough summer due



PHOTO BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

SENIOR CHESNEY Luebbering will be a solid hitter for the Lady Comets this fall.

to an illness but is making her way back into play. "She's working extremely hard to help us and wants to compete with her teammates at a high level," said Schnieders.

Sophomore Taylor Baumhoer will be a workhorse on the rubber and when she's in the field. "She's got a lot of energy both in

the field and in the dugout," said Schnieders. Sophomore Hannah Heisler (OF) is a speedy player who tracks the ball well.

See Fatima SB
Page 22B



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Fatima Soccer
From Page 15B

All-State.”

Jackson Logan is a first-year varsity player who will help shore up the defense. “He hustles well and plays with purpose,” said Dobry. “I’ve seen a lot of improvement with him.”

Jackson Schenewerk (MF) is the most improved player from last year. “He was a solid JV player for us and I expect him to step up this year,” Dobry said.

JP Schulte was a dual-roster player last year, meaning he saw time at varsity and JV. “He’s becoming more athletic, and his talent has earned him a varsity spot,” said Dobry.

Rounding out the junior class is Victor Struempfh, who was a JV player last year and will be a varsity starter this fall. “He’s the hustle king,” said Dobry. “He’s a very dangerous player.”

Sophomores include defenders Jacob Bax and Cody Koenigsfeld, and midfielders Graham Boeckmann and Chase Buddemeyer.

Bax and Koenigsfeld were starters last year on the varsity squad. “Jacob is the fastest player on this team,” said Dobry. “He’s very athletic and learning a lot. He’ll help control our defensive pressure. Cody has a lot of talent and is a quiet leader. He just takes care of business.”

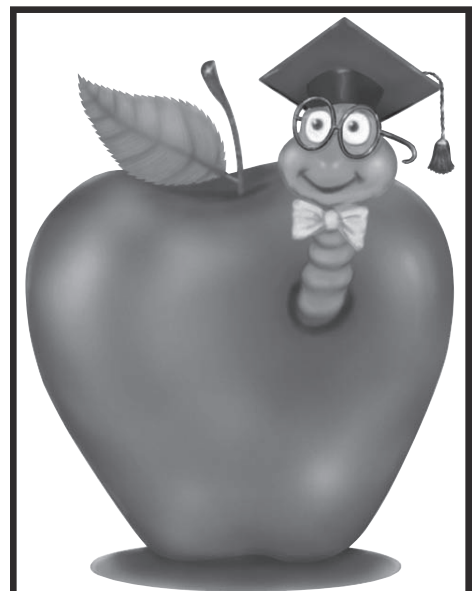
Boeckmann won a varsity slot through hard work and the improvements he’s made since playing on the JV squad, while Buddemeyer’s JV performance last year played a role in this year’s varsity selection.

“Both of them have progressed well,” said Dobry. “They’re learning a lot and should develop into contributing players quickly.”

Coach Dobry said he hopes the team will improve on the 5-14 record last year. The Comets ended the season with a 2-0 loss to New Covenant in the sectional.

Last year’s district title was the first in three years for the Comets, and Dobry said that while ending the season in sectionals was tough, there was plenty for the boys to celebrate.

“We were the underdogs in our district,” said Dobry. “We battled injuries and quarantine all year. We had a hard time getting a consistent lineup but give the kids credit. They fought through all those challenges and won another district championship.”



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Date	Opponent	Location	Levels	Time
8/30	Stover (Stover, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
8/31	Fulton	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/2	Rolla	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/7	Capital City High	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/9	Dixon	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/13	Crocker (Crocker, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/14	Sullivan (Sullivan, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/17-18	Boonville Shoot Out (Boonville, MO)	Neutral	V	
9/20	Missouri Military Academy	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/21	Camdenton (Camdenton, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/23	Boonville	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/27	Mexico HS	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/28	Osage	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/1-2	Laker Shootout (Camdenton, MO)	Neutral	V	
10/7	Southern Boone (Ashland, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/11	Laquey	Home	V	5:00 PM
10/14	Battle	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM

Fatima Sofball Schedule

Date	Opponent	Location	Levels	Time
8/27	Mexico HS	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
8/28	Blair Oaks JV Double Headers (Jefferson City, MO)	Neutral	JV	
8/30	Helias Catholic	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
8/31	Southern Boone (Ashland, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/2	Osage	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/3	Capital City High (Jefferson City, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/7	Jefferson City (Jefferson City, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/9	Battle	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/10	Camdenton (Camdenton, MO)	Away	JV	5:00 PM
9/13	Father Tolton Regional Catholic	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/14	Tuscumbia (Tuscumbia, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/16	Battle	Home	JV	5:00 PM
9/17-18	Jefferson City Varsity Tournament (Jefferson City, MO)	Neutral	V	
9/21	New Bloomfield	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/23	Centralia	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/24	Linn	Home	V, JV	
9/27	Owensville	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/28	Iberia (Iberia, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
9/30	Blair Oaks	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/1-2	Springfield Invitational (Springfield, MO)	Away	V	
10/4	Eugene (Eugene, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/7	Russellville (Russellville, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/8	South Callaway (Mokane, MO)	Away	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/11	St. Elizabeth	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/12	Hallsville (Hallsville, MO)	Away	JV	5:00 PM

Schnieders hopes to continue building Fatima softball

Fatima head coach Ashlee Schnieders in her first year with the softball team is excited to get the season started but also understands how tough it will be to follow Coach Dana Scheppers.

"She was here for a long time and left some pretty big shoes to fill," said Schnieders. "I hope to continue developing the incredible talent we have in this area."

A native of northern Illinois, Schnieders was a multiple-sport athlete at Somonauk High School, from which she graduated in 2013. "It's a very similar small-town culture to this area," said Schnieders. "My dad played Div. I baseball and my mom was a college athlete so I grew up in a sports environment. My dad coached me most of my life."

When Schnieders attended the University of Evansville, she played in the Missouri Valley Conference, which included games against former Fatima standout Sammey Bunch.

Schnieders graduated in 2017 with a degree in Special Education and elementary education.

While she never thought coaching would be in her future, she was an assistant coach at Somonauk for two years.

"I didn't think coaching would give me the same gratification I got as a player but I was wrong," she said. "It felt just as good or better to see the girls find success. To see their growth was rewarding."

While in college, Ashlee met her future husband, Patrick, a Fatima graduate. They had a lot in common, as Patrick was playing baseball. "We had a couple of classes together and we also hung out because baseball and softball players talk a lot," said Schnieders.

After graduation, each went their separate ways but maintained a long-distance relationship for two years before deciding to build a life together.

"It was hard for Patrick to leave this area because of his job and the fact is, teachers are needed everywhere," she said. "It made sense for me to come here so that's what happened."

Ashlee and Patrick, along with their

son, Tate, are happy to be in the Fatima district. "We're hoping he grows up loving competition as much as his mom and dad," said Ashlee, who began teaching at Lewis & Clark Middle School in 2019, and later was a volleyball coach at Jefferson City.

Now at Fatima, Schnieders feels good about the future.

"We have a demanding schedule and will face some tough competition but we're game-oriented," she said. "We will focus on being competitive in every game, one game at a time. The bar is always going to be high. We want a strong finish at the state tournament."

While that is the goal every year, Schnieders said the first step is to build and reinforce a winning culture. "Most talented teams have that goal and we are all on the same page," she said. "We're focused on the little things. The big picture will take care of itself."

Joining Schnieders as assistant coach is Kenny Bonnot, who has a long history with Fatima softball as his daughter played for the Lady Comets.

He also coached travel softball for six years and was an umpire for three years.

"I'm hoping my insights as an umpire will be helpful to coaching," said Bonnot. "I just want to contribute to the team's success."

Makayla Buscher will coach the JV team and serve as assistant varsity coach. She graduated from Fatima in 2018 and then attended East Central College in Union for one semester and played college softball there. Buscher transferred to State Tech to pursue my degree, and is now part of the staff at the college.

"I am very thankful to be apart of the coaching staff at Fatima," said Buscher. "I love working with my fellow coaches to provide the girls with the best training to help them be successful. It means a lot that I can coach for the high school I graduated from and the sport that has been such a huge part of my life for very many years. Once a Comet, always a Comet, and I am truly grateful to be a part of such a great school."



PHOTO BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

FATIMA COACH Ashlee Schnieders, right, talks things over with assistant coaches Makayla Buscher and Kenny Bonnot during a recent practice.

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Lady Comets JV volleyball team brings winning experience

This year's JV volleyball squad at Fatima includes six sophomores and one freshman on the roster, with two other freshmen who will be called up on a part-time basis to help fill a couple of positions.

Coach Tracy Quinn said these sophomores played for the freshman team last year and had a season filled with many wins and very few losses. That was followed by a strong summer effort in

which the Lady Comets played in some very strong tournaments, finishing in the top four of every contest they entered. Fatima pulled out a third-place finish in a varsity tournament in Stover.

place whenever she is on the court," Quinn noted. "Lydia is a strong blocker and attacker and she also has a wicked serve that will help lead her team to victory."



PHOTOS BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

NEVIN WILDE, stretches to corral the ball in a spot-serve drill at Fatima. Below, Brynn Cremer sends the ball over the net in a hitting drill.



Fatima has nine freshman volleyball players

Fatima's freshman volleyball team consists of nine players — Taylor Bax, Maggie Dickneite, Ressa Kempker, Rory MacLellan, Tessa Markway, Sydney Muenks, Anna Rakestraw, Alexis Wieberg, and Jaiden Wieberg — and is led by returning coach Haley Luebbering.

"After working with these girls this summer, I am excited to find each of these girls' place in the Fatima volleyball program," said Luebbering. "This group has a lot of potential, and I plan on having the girls play in multiple positions and maybe go out of their comfort zone to find where they prove to be most effective."

Dickneite, Markway, and Wieberg will alternate some time with the setter role for the freshman team.

Bax and MacLellan will be fulfilling the role of defensive specialist, while Fatima's hitters will be Kempker, Dickneite, Muenks, Alexis Wieberg, Jaiden Wieberg, and Rakestraw.

"Some of these players are very versatile and will be asked to fill in at different roles throughout the season," said Luebbering. "A major part of playing freshman year is getting to fully understand the game and the positions, and my intention is to move the girls around to help them grasp a deeper understanding of the game. I look forward to working with this group of girls and watching them develop their skills throughout this season."

"I am happy with these ladies' work this summer and continue to see improvements at every practice," said Quinn, who is in his second year with the Fatima program. "I have enjoyed every minute at this school. The other coaches (Curtis Brandt and Haley Luebbering) and I work well together and hope to lead the Fatima volleyball program to continued future growth and possibly a shot at the state title."

The JV team includes sophomores Lucy Crede, Jacey Hoskins, Lydia Rehagen, Nevin Wilde, Carly Mengwasser, and Brynn Cremer, and freshman Vivian Bax is also a permanent part of the squad. The team will also be utilizing the skills of freshmen Ressa Kempker and Maggie Dickneite.

Crede and Hoskins will be the team's outside hitters. "Both bring a strong attack, dynamic serve and both are outstanding defensive players," said Quinn. "With these two leading our team, I look for us to be successful in most of our contests."

Fatima's defensive specialist (libero) will be Wilde. "She is a super strong passer and covers the court well," said Quinn. "She will be running our defense and will help her team to best cover the court."

Rehagen will be filling one of the middle-blocker positions. "She will do her best to make sure we have a great block in

Fatima's main setter — or quarterback — of the team will be Mengwasser. "She is an experienced setter with a lot of club and school training at this position," said Quinn. "Carly will help her team with her normally calm nature and her ability to get great sets to her hitters no matter where the pass goes."

Cremer is one of the team's right-side hitters. "Brynn works really hard at practice and is improving every day," said Quinn.

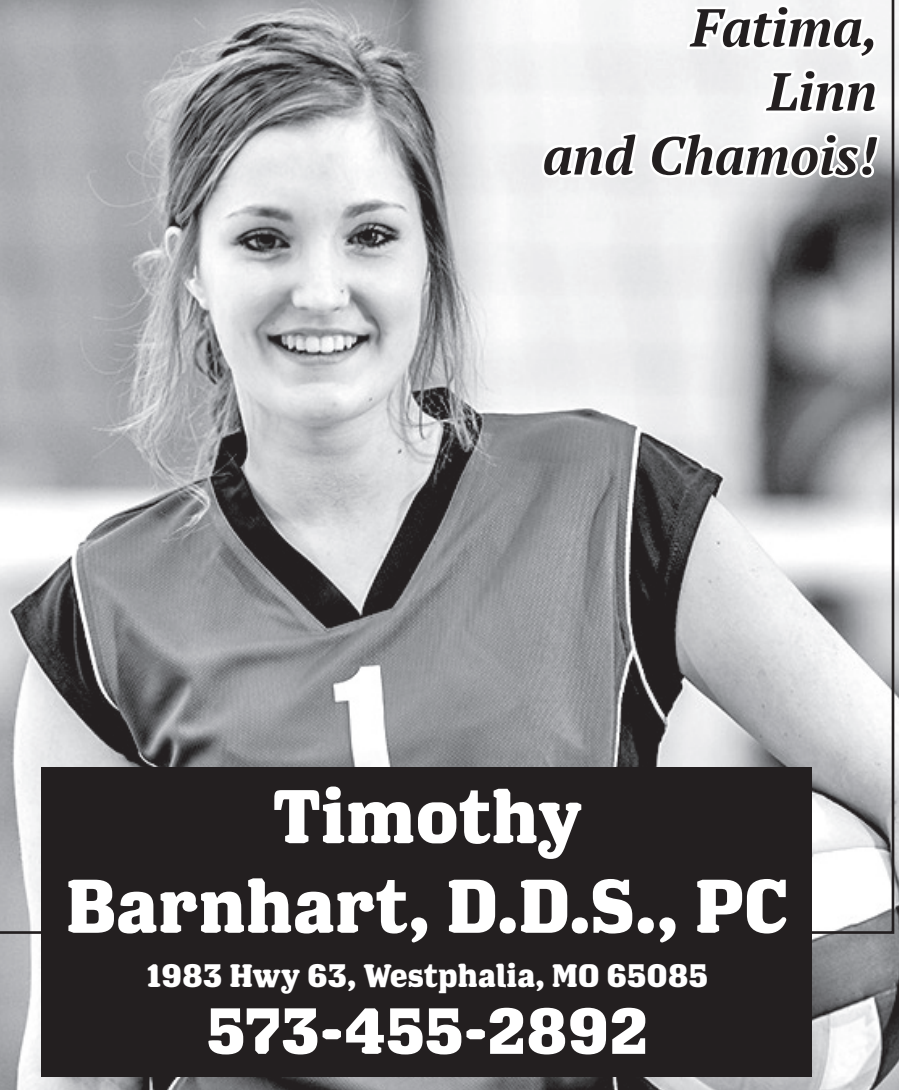
Bax was pulled from the freshman team to train as a setter for the squad and the program. "Vivian's strength is defense but her ability to read the court, her speed, and her willingness to learn is what made us decide to pull her up and train her to fill a setting position that this team and this program will need in the future," Quinn explained.

Kempker will help the team fill the other middle blocker position as needed. "Reesa has improved a ton as our summer progressed and we look for her improvement to continue as our season gets started," said Quinn.

Dickneite will round out the roster as a part-time player. "Maggie was pulled up to help fill out our middle blocker position but we soon discovered that she has some great setting skills," said Quinn.

"We are working with her to fill one of those positions as we go through the season."

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PHOTOS BY NEAL A. JOHNSON

SENIORANNA Eichholz returns to help the varsity team this year. Below, Chloe Adamson watches the ball into her glove in a fielding drill.



Fatima SB
From Page 18B

“She can get just about anywhere,” said Schnieders. “Hanna is good at understanding game situations and making tough plays. She takes charge in the outfield and we need that.”

Sophomore Faith Jaegers will play at first base and is the team’s backup catcher. “She has a great arm and a solid bat,” said Schnieders. “Faith is a strong base hitter and I expect her to be in the middle of the lineup to help us drive in runs.”

Jaegers earned second-team All-Conference honors last year after going

20-52 (.385) with five doubles, a triple, and a home run with 11 RBI.

Sophomore Kaitlyn Plassmeyer (2B/OF) is a solid position player. “She eats up the ball using her speed,” said Schnieders. “Kaitlyn also is very fast on the bases and just wreaks havoc when she’s out there.”

Plassmeyer last year hit .364 (12-33) with eight RBI.

Sophomore Emerson Williams will probably be a pinch-runner due to her speed on the bases.

Freshmen Kinzey Woody (3B/SS) and Kristen Robertson (2B/IF) join the varsity team and are expected to be impact players.

“Kinzey is powerful in the box and consistent in the field,” said Schnieders. “She stops most everything that comes her way. It’s rare to see a high school player who isn’t afraid to go after everything.”

Robertson is an extremely talented athlete who soaks in everything she hears and sees. “She’s very coachable,” said Schnieders. “She’s engaged all the time, in the field and the dugout, and she’ll be a solid batter for us.”

Sophomores Ella Massman and Avery Brandt, and freshman Mia Kliethermes will split time between varsity and JV. “We want to give them some opportunities to contribute at the varsity level,” said Schnieders.

Also on the JV team are sophomore Chloe Adamson, and freshmen Madelyn Backes, Lilly Cunningham, Megan Gabelsberger, Madison Wankum, Lilly Warren, Payton Wieberg, and Eva Wildhaber.

Coach Schnieders said she and her coaching staff are still evaluating to determine fielding positions.



ELLA MASSMAN works on her pitching delivery.

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Fatima VB
From Page 17B

the atmosphere they create. I am blessed to have such amazing individuals on our roster.”

Abby Kempker, another very valuable senior, will continue to be a strong asset to the team’s offense, not only with her smooth setting abilities but also from behind the serving line. “Abby shows lots of pride and confidence and is connecting very well with those front-row attackers that she shares rotations with,” said Brandt.

Karlee Ocheskey and Marissa Haller are the team’s final seniors. “They are two of the hardest working, most spirited players a coach could ask for,” said Brandt. “They put in the work, day in and day out, through long practices supporting the team in every way possible without a lot of praise and gratitude thrown their direction, yet they keep doing everything the team asks of them. I continue to be amazed at their improvement and they continue to challenge the other players to work hard every day. Their efforts don’t go unnoticed and I am honored to have these types of young adults filling out our team.”

This team would not be as effective without junior Samantha Bax, Brandt noted. “She is such a dynamic player, capable of being the best in every area on the court, from offense, defense, consistency, competitiveness, knowledge of the game and the list goes on and on,” he added. “Samantha can attack from anywhere with consistency and continues to build strength and power. She challenges her teammates and me for everyday improvement and her presence on and off the court is amazing.”

Remaining juniors Addisyn Peters, Olivia Kleffner, and Eliza Nilges continue to quickly show how valuable they are in the team’s offense.

“Their attacks are getting stronger

every day as is their adjustment to the fast pace of the varsity level,” said Brandt. “Each player is unique in their hitting style and I am so excited watching them grow with experience and ability. Not only do they play a huge part in this season’s success but I am equally excited for next year. Even though this group is quiet, they are a huge threat to those on the other side of the net and have a nonverbal way of communicating their dominance on the court.”

Brandt said he is excited to once again be a part of the Lady Comets volleyball program and the local communities that support this school and the sport.

“I am also extremely proud to have the opportunity to be a part of this varsity team and the future successes that they will accomplish this season,” Brandt added.

In preparation for the season along with future volleyball players with youth camps, Brandt had a very busy summer.

Throughout the summer, Fatima players participated in several camps, clinics, and tournaments, including the Paradise shootout in Stover, Licking Camp at the LINC in Jefferson City, the Helias tournament, and probably the most

beneficial, a 12-hour satellite clinic through Drury College at Fatima in which participating players received college-level instruction touching on all levels and aspects of the game.

Fatima also hosted a two-day youth camp for grades 3-5 and 6-8 in which coaches and players provided a fun yet challenging skills clinic.

“We had an extremely great turnout with eager young girls ready to learn and improve in volleyball,” said Brandt. “This was an amazing opportunity to not only impact the youth in our communities but also to promote this sport of volleyball while also enhancing the leadership skills of our high school players.”

Fatima varsity will play at teh Battle Jamboree on Thursday

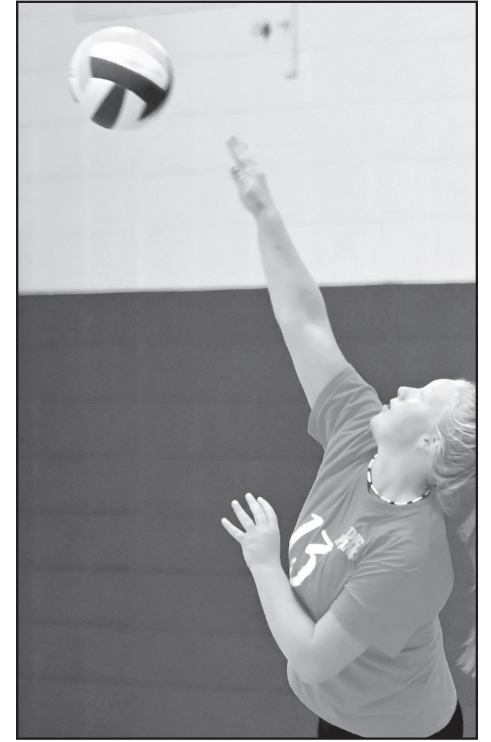


PHOTO BY NEAL A. JOHNSON
LYDIA REHAGEN serves the ball during a recent practice.

Date	Opponent	Location	Levels	Time
8/27	Hickman	Home	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
8/31	Chamois	Home	JV	
9/7	Linn	Home	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
9/9	Hermann (Hermann, MO)	Away	V, JV, Fr	
9/11	Hickman Varsity Tournament (Columbia, MO)	Neutral	V	
9/11	Helias 9th Grade VB Tourney (Jefferson City, MO)	Neutral	Fr	
9/13	Southern Boone	Home	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
9/14	Eugene	Home	V, JV	
9/16	Owensville (Owensville, MO)	Away	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
9/18	Jeff City Jv tournament (Jefferson City, MO)	Away	JV	
9/20	Rock Bridge	Home	V, JV, So, Fr	5:00 PM
9/21	Boonville (Boonville, MO)	Away	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
9/23	Jefferson City (Jefferson City, MO)	Away	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
9/27	Capital City High (Jefferson City, MO)	Away	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
9/30	Blair Oaks	Home	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
10/2	Rolla Tournament (Rolla, MO)	Away	V	
10/2	Waynesville JV Volleyball Smackdown (Waynesville, MO)	Neutral	JV	
10/4	Blair Oaks (Jefferson City, MO)	Away	Fr	5:00 PM
10/5	Osage (Osage Beach, MO)	Away	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
10/7	Battle	Home	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
10/9	Varsity Pink Fest Tournament (Lebanon, MO)	Neutral	V	
10/9	JV Pink Fest Tournament (Lebanon, MO)	Neutral	JV	
10/12	California	Home	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
10/14	Russellville	Home	V, JV	5:00 PM
10/16	Freshmen Volleyball Smackdown (Waynesville, MO)	Neutral	Fr	
10/18	New Haven	Home	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM
10/19	Helias Catholic (Jefferson City, MO)	Away	V, JV, Fr	5:00 PM

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