

Spring sports preview

Inside info on all Spring Sports (cont. on p.16)

by Zach Donahue

The weather is getting warmer and that means Spring sports are starting up again. Girls soccer, boys and girls outdoor track, badminton, baseball, and softball will be the teams suiting up for their spring seasons. Here's a preview for each team competing this spring.

Girls Soccer

The girls soccer team is coming off a great season with a record of 11-7. Despite losing six of its top players to graduation, the Barbs look to improve by using experience along with the younger talent coming up this year. Junior Maddie Hill said, "I feel that we have a very solid team this year and although we are playing against bigger and better schools this year we still have a chance to win," when asked about upcoming season.

Hill also stated that "I also feel that the team has a strong bond with each other and that will help playing on the field. I believe that the coaches have a lot of new material and drills for us to do this year and they will be able to fix the little things.

Sophomore Siobhan Gallagher said "Being on varsity as a freshman and now as a sophomore had its ups and downs. Last year was difficult being a freshman. The level of skill was very high and I knew I had to work hard to earn my spot. This year being a sophomore I still do my best and try and be a leader for the incoming freshman." The Barbs first game was March 21 at DeKalb High School.

Boys Baseball

Boys baseball is starting up after rebuilding its young team after a fairly good season. The team lost six seniors to graduation, but junior Noah Valin feels, "We are looking strong with some new talent out of the junior class who can lead along with key seniors who will help the younger guys throughout the seasons."

Valin also added that "Expectations are higher for this year as we have a new coach-

ing staff that can lead this talented group of guys to a hopefully impressive season." The team will be looking to build around all the new young talent that it has and some of the returning seniors and juniors.



Noah Valin practicing his swing at batting cage. Photo by Mrs. Valin.

Girls Outdoor track

After coming off an impressive season winning the conference title and Savannah Long winning state in the 300 meter hurdles. The team has a lot of young, new talent in freshman Brianna Barwick and some returning talent in junior Cyan McGee. McGee is in the 4x800 and in the 400. "I think last year's team is about the same talent wise but of course we miss our seniors, but the team is getting stronger and faster as the season goes on."

McGee also said, "Coach Green is kicking our butts and making sure we give our all in every practice and in meets, and giving us morning practices."

Barwick added "My goals are to get better with my endurance so that later on I can succeed in my events."

The girls track team was taken over by Coach Green 2 years ago. Barwick added that, "He's very strict but that's good for the team because it helps the team stay more focused during practices and meets."

The girls are looking to continue on the momentum they have been building through the indoor track season.



Girls track team poses for team photo. Photo by Coach Green.

Boys Track

The boys track team is wrapping up the indoor season and preparing for outdoor. When asked about the new coach, senior Zuerek Day said "It was an adjustment because I was used to different practice layout and different techniques but it is nice to have a coach teach me some new things that Dylan (previous coach) didn't."

Day also said, "I expect to work hard so we can compete against good teams, and to encourage each other while winning." He also said, "We also have a lot of young talent on the team and with hard work and vision have the potential to be state qualifiers and state placers."

Junior Brian Jay Ross said, "My goals for this season is to beat my personal record 6'3 in High Jump and qualify for state. As a team our goal is to win the conference meet again and move on to the sectional meet."

The first outdoor meet will be April 4th 2017 at 4 p.m.



Zuerek Day competing in the 55m hurdle. Photo by track team.

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Rylee Levine up to bat at a home game, Photo by Cris Rojo.

Softball

The softball team is coming off an amazing season making it all the way to super sectional, a game away from state. This new season the team is looking to use some of its new young talent as the team lost 5 seniors to graduation including all conference pitcher, Morgan Newport. Junior Skylar Haring said "I still think we will be a very good team. We just have to keep working hard."

Mallory Warner, who is a sophomore, said "Being one of the young talents on the varsity team is very exciting. Getting to work with the older girls at the varsity level is really fun. I learn a lot from them and they learn a lot from me too. I'm glad I can help the team out."

Warner also said some of the expectations were "to keep working hard and stay competitive. We all have to want it, because it's not going to be handed to us. We're all very excited for the season to start!" The Barbs first home game was March, 21st at 4:30 p.m.

Boys Tennis

The tennis team is coming off a season where most of the team was seniors with six members of the team being juniors. The team was very experienced last year now that the seniors have graduated the Barbs will be looking for incoming freshman to pick up where the seniors left off.

Foods teacher Bradley Bjelk, the head coach, said "The team is looking. We have a balanced group with 7 seniors and 7 juniors. All of the guys have been working really hard in practice getting stronger, faster, and improving their tennis skills."

Bjelk also said, "Our team goals to continue to develop their tennis skills and strategy and compete in the NIB 12 conference and conference tournament. They will also be working hard to complete in the sectional tournament with hopes of qualifying for the state tournament."

Badminton

The girls badminton team has starting up its season. The team is looking to pick up right where it left off by making it to the sectional tournament like last season.

When asked about the upcoming season, Junior Holly Trapp said, "As a team, we would like to win as many tournaments as possible and just have fun together. Badminton is as much about the friendships as it is about the competition."

Trapp also said, "The team has had open gyms since the beginning of the fall and we also had a badminton camp over the summer to prepare us better for this season."

When asked how the team is preparing. "We are very young team. We have only 5 upperclassmen and about 25 underclassmen who have never played badminton competitively. It's been a challenge for some of the fresh/soph team to prove themselves to be varsity players but everyone is doing an amazing job and we will face the challenges together as a team."

When asked about how the coach is preparing them for the season Junior Helene Collin said "He's preparing us for our season by making us do these things called challenges. Challenges are when you play another girl for a rank on the team. Whoever wins is seated higher and will play in that position next match." Collin also said "I think the rest of our season will go really well. The first match is about getting the jitters out, it was most of our team first match ever. Now we can worry about doing well at tournaments and focus on badminton. We have a strong line up and I expect the team to be taking first or second at most of our tournaments."



State qualifiers of last season. Photo provided by badminton team.