SPARRTS

Lady Wolves set high goals for season

Morgan Quilici Staff Writer

Softball head coach Steve Ramseyer hopes for improvement as the softball team heads into the second half of their season with a record of 8-7 (2-1 CSL).

"We are just trying to put together a full game, game in and game out, with good pitching, good hitting and good defense," Ramseyer said.

The team has had strong defense in their last few games but needs to work on getting players around the bases. In the game against New Trier, the Lady Wolves battled out in a 13-inning game. The girls needed to stop playing the game because it had become to dark. It will be continued on another day to determine a winner.

Strong plays in the game were made by each team member, especially a clutch pitching performance by junior captain Julie Schwenk and senior outfielder Michelle Bucior who had a diving catch, and a rapid throw home to junior catcher Lauren Shimanovsky who blocked the plate stopping a winning run.

Schwenk agrees that these are the central components of success.

"Whenever we put all the aspects of the game together, we are successful," Schwenk said.

Ramseyer hopes that the team's chemistry supportive energy will help them in the long run.

"I am very optimistic. Our goal is to finish in the top three in conference and as always our goal is to win regionals. We hope that the games that we have played up till now have prepared us for the second part of our schedule," Ramseyer added.

With a month left in the season, Ramseyer knows the time has come to make its move in the Central Suburban League South



Lauren Shimanovsky strokes a single to pad lead against St. Ignatius. Photo by Naomi Prale

"I think our team is very capable of getting top three in conference," he said. "We are very close and if we keep playing how we have been recently playing I think we can definitely do

The team's next game is Monday at Glenbrook South at 4:45 p.m.



pagefourteen



Fitness tests fight obesity MAdriana Zalloni Sports Editor

RTS

As a gym leader, I wish that I had a dollar for every student in my class who complains about fitness testing. Either they cannot/will not do a push-up or are too tired/too lazy to run a mile (which, for the vast majority of the students, takes about 10 minutes to run a total of four laps). Half the kids do not participate, at least to their full potential, stopping at 13 sit-ups to make life easier for themselves by not setting the bar too high for when they are forced to beat their score in the years to come. So, if the students do not take the tests seriously, what is the point of having the fitness tests? The answer is simple: we need them. These tests serve to show the school and the state how physically fit the student population is. More important, the tests show us

These tests serve to show the school and the state how physically fit the student

how unfit we might be.

According to www.overweightteen.com, teenage obesity has skyrocketed in recent years, reaching a disturbing 15.5 percent of American teens. That is triple the teen obesity level of kids in 1980, only 29 years ago.

Why are adolescents becoming obese so quickly? According to www.obesity.ygoy.com, it is because of overeating and less activity. Adolescents eat more food than the body needs to feel full but fail to work off that excess food, so the energy is stored in the body in the form of body fat. Obesity is a serious problem, potentially causing diabetes, heart problems, high blood pressure and even cancer. We need to do something about this before it is too late.

What is the solution to the problem of teenage obesity? I wish it were as simple as telling teens to eat less junk and to exert something other than their texting and video game-playing fingers. (Those are in tiptop shape, no doubt.) It is not. However, maybe through a little bit of information and a slight push, we can work to battle teenage obesity.

This past weekend, I attended a 5K walk/run at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The purpose was not to race and see who was the fastest. Instead, the people in charge urged participants to go at their own pace, encouraging them to enjoy the benefits of the exercise. They provided a healthy lunch of sandwiches and fruit. Other exercise activities were offered, such as a moon bounce and a mechanical bull, to encourage those not participating in the walk to at least get some exercise. The afternoon served to inform the students of UIC of the benefits of a little bit of exercise, and it worked. I am not one for running a marathon, but I can promise that I'll be first in line signing up next year.

Teenage obesity is a serious problem that we have to fix before it becomes too late. So, to all the students who complain about touching your toes in the sit and reach test: stop complaining. Fitness testing is the state's and the school's way of at least doing a little to combat the horrors of teenage obesity. The least we could do is to cooperate.

Victories help coach reach milestone

Adriana Zalloni Sports Editor

With over 300 wins under his belt, head baseball coach Gary Gustafson said that he expects more wins from the 2009 Niles West boys' baseball team.

"Everything has gone well so far this season," Gustafson said. "We are off to a good start. Things are about as good as they can get right now. I know we will continue on this way."

Currently, the Wolves are 16-5. The team continued its winning streak, beating Highland Park on April 14 with a final score of 11-2. The Wolves also beat Rolling Meadows on March 27 with a final score of 6-0.

However, the Wolves have had a few setbacks.

"We have shown flashes of greatness on the field," senior pitcher Alex Gould said. "However, there have been a few games where we came out flat."

Gustafson agrees. "We lost two games by a total of two runs," he said. "Both of those were games we could have won."

Gustafson said that he knows what the team has to do to continue its success.

"It is all about swinging bats and playing good defense," Gustafson said. "If we add in good pitching, we are going to be fine."

Both Gustafson and Gould are confident in the team's ability to go far in Central Suburban League South games.

"As long as we keep playing the way we have been playing,

I know we will do well [in conference]", Gould said. "We are going to play [many] good teams, but if we play as a team, we will come out with a conference championship."

After a disappointing loss in the 2008 tournament, teammates agree that it is finally time to win conference.

"Last year was a disappointment," senior outfielder Dan Duran said. "We have been waiting for this for a long time."



Senior pitcher John Nasshan winds up a pitch. Photo by Adriana Zalloni

Boys' tennis team steps up to ensure success

Mary Basic Staff Writer

The boys' tennis team is off to what head coach Brad Wilson calls "a lucky start—because we have no injuries."

Nevertheless, with the team currently sporting a 2-2 record, Wilson said he hopes to see more improvement as the season continues.

"We always want to start off being competitive in all of our meets, and I hope we finish with .500 record," Wilson said.

Although the team has battled the cold and rainy weather, "We are starting off great and I hope we keep it up," junior second singles Daniel Langer said.

Wilson says that the second doubles "gave us the key into winning the match 3-2" at Notre Dame.

"Having watched these guys progress over the years I now have an understanding of what they can and can't do, and we build on that," Wilson said.

At the Niles West Invitational, the team took fifth place, but Wilson says he thought that they would finish in the top three. Junior Vova Zverkoski took second place in #1 singles, and sophomore Daniel Langer took third place in #2 singles, while the #1 doubles team of senior Aaron Davis and junior Avi Schneider took sixth place and #2 doubles junior Vikas Auluck and sophomore Edmund Phan fifth place.

"The guys have risen to the occasion in terms of winning

matches," head coach Brad Wilson said.

Wilson said that he expected the team to struggle early because graduation left of dearth of experienced players. Nevertheless, he expressed optimism.

"I hope that the team continues to want to improve as we are playing other schools and as the season continues," Wilson said.

Performances have been admirable, Wilson added, but he said that the players need to develop a "competitive fire" when they are on the court.

"Every point should be a battle," Wilson said.

As for the remainder of the season, Wilson said that the team has to raise its level of effort to compete with Central Suburban League South rivals and out-of-conference foes alike.

"We try to progress by competing with schools on our level, such as Evanston, Maine South, Loyola and Niles North," Wilson said.

While Wilson said that he hopes to do well in the upcoming tournaments and dual matches, he is not so sure about the championships coming up.

"Individually, [the players] can get their own ribbons, but if they get first, second or third, then we have a good chance of getting as a team first place," Wilson said. "Like most teams, we want to bring home the trophies."

Langer said his goal for the season is to make it state in either singles or doubles, to do well as a team in sectionals and to see his teammates make it to state.

The Wolves' next match is tomorrow at Glenbrook South's Glenview campus at 8 am.

Wave of injuries forces promotion of underclassmen to varsity squad



Sophomore Nicole Moy steals the ball. Photo by Rexly Penaflorida

Staff Writer

The Niles West girls' soccer team began the season slowly but is now back on track, according to head coach Brett Clish.

This past weekend the team pulled through, coming in second in the Niles West Tournament. The girls currently hold a record of 5-3-4 (1-1 Central Suburban League South) after splitting two games in last weekend's Niles West tournament.

After an impressive first round, 2-1 victory over Willowbrook, the team fell to Glenbard West in the finals by a 3-0 count.

The Wolves' slow start is attributable to the fact that the team lost nine key players from last year's team due to graduation and two key returnees because of injuries. Junior defender Dunya Youkhana tore her anterior cruciate ligament for the second time and center midfielder Allie Guiang, a junior captain, sprained her ankle. Because of the injuries some younger players have needed to step up, including sophomores Alex Knorr (forward), Arlene Bueno (goalie) and Becky Hawk (defender).

The missing players are conspicuous in their absence. "I miss all the girls so much; they always played hard and were

a huge asset to our team," senior forward Bobbie Dawod said.

"Dawod is a returning varsity player and is a huge asset to the team," Clish said. "She has a great attitude and always pulls up the team when they are down," he added.

Guiang expressed excitement about returning to the field.

"As a captain, it is hard for me to sit on the bench and watch the team play," Guiang said. "I cannot wait to get back on my feet and join my team. I missed six games already and I do not plan on missing any more."

The injuries have forced Clish to shake up the roster, putting new players in veterans' positions and moving the veterans around. Junior Carolyn Masterton is now a sweeper and Bueno is the new goalie.

"I trust Bueno in goal. She has the drive to be the best she can be," Clish said.

Knorr said that she feels that the team is starting to really click on the field, working well together now that the players are adjusting to their new positions. "We really work hard at practice to better ourselves, especially the new girls; we want to make sure we are proving that we can handle the heat of varsity."

The Wolves' next game is Tuesday, May 5, at Maine South's Park Ridge campus at 4:45 p.m.

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Boys vault to victory

Daniel Blazek Staff Writer

The boys' gymnastics team has followed its fast start with a solid second half of the season, continuing to finish strong in every meet.

With wins against. Evanston, Maine South and Glenbrook North on Mar. 5, Apr. 7 and Apr. 16, respectively, and a second place finish at the John Burkel Invitational on Apr. 4, the team has proven that they are a force with which to be reckoned in the Central Suburban League South. They also defeated out-ofconference foes Niles North and Maine East on Mar. 17.

Led by head coach Steve Foerch, the Wolves are "probably one of the best gymnastics teams Niles West has seen since 1993," their coach said. "They are competitive, focused, tough and hungry for victory.'

Such accolades do not come without the pressure of being able to keep up the pace of being successful and showing just how tough, mentally and physically, the team can be. However, time and time again, the Wolves have shown that they compete in their meets with hard work and tenacity.

"I think our varsity team has done a great job this year," senior gymnast Chris Deamont said. "We work [hard] for this."

Heading into the postseason, with conference, sectional and state competitions coming around the corner, Deamont summed up the team's expectations.

"I expect us to place first in sectionals and, hopefully, for six guys to make it down to state," Deamont said.

Improvement brings success to boys' volleyball team

Helen Salamanca Staff Writer

With a month left in the season, the boys' varsity volleyball team currently stands with an overall record of 9-7.

Although the team has faced some highs and lows, head coach Jenifer Sinnick expressed confidence that the team will improved and will "learn to play with each other" as the season progresses

Sinnick lamented that one of the team's "best hitters," senior Kevin Czajkowski has been injured this season, which leaves the team at a disadvantage. However, Sinnick said that the team is working hard to overcome the loss. The team showed it mettle with its win over Niles North on April 7 by scores of 25-14 and 25-13.

In the tough Central Suburban League South, the team has battled local rivals New Trier, Maine South, Glenbrook South and Evanston and, according to Sinnick, has comported itself admirably. "If we can compete with them, we can compete with anyone," Sinnick said.

Sinnick lauded seniors Ben Pintilei, a three-year starter and Dan Aler as standouts, with Pintilei's 96 kills and Aler's 67 kills and 22 aces leading the squad. She also mentioned that middle hitters seniors Calvin Klint and Luke Ostrowski have been "starting to make a difference." As for the rest of the team, she added that all continue to make daily improvements to their game.

Strong roster keeps track team on its feet

W Zoe Ljubic Editor in Chief

The boys' varsity track and field team is off to a solid start this season, according to head coach Chris Vivone, who explained that the team has worked hard and improved "very much" this season

Led by senior distance runners Joel Cohen and Alex Zasso and sprinters Chris Wright and Jack Chen, augmented by discus thrower junior Dimitri Tripkos, the team has experienced earlyseason success.

"The kids are great, and their work ethic is great. They like to have fun, but they know when it is time to get to work," Vivone said.

On April 11, the Wolves faced stiff competition at the Gans-Zeedyk Invitational, but the team responded with what Vivone termed "a stunning victory" to take first place in the meet.

"We have already won our first two meets by over 100 points at the varsity level, and continue to set personal best times every week," Cohen said. "We are a much improved team."

The team's accomplishments are the result of diligence, Vivone said. The team "told me they wanted to work hard, they have worked hard, and it has shown," he added.

This hard work has resulted in school and personal records.

"[Junior high jumper and hurdler] Danny Lohan tied [the school's] high jump record, and Wright tied his own 50 m record that he broke a year ago," Vivone said.

As for the rest of the season. Vivone expressed hope to see Wright break his 200 m dash record and to celebrate Lohan's personal best in the high jump.

Senior distance runner Bobby Fahey anticipates such milestones.

"The ones who stand out for breaking records would be Wright, Lohan, Cohen in the 400 m and [junior jumper] Rodney Metellus," Fahey added.

This year, the Wolves are hoping to win Central Suburban League Conference and sectional titles.

"Every year we go into [the season] wanting to win conference and sectionals," Vivone said. "Conference is going to be tough because Evanston beat us indoors; we took second place, but we are going to do some things to give a us better chance come outdoor," he added.

There is precedent for such achievements.

"Our goal is always to win conference," Vivone said. "The past five or six years, we have won conference twice. Our goal is to always be up there battling for the conference championship.'

Junior hurdler Kimo Bajamunde cited these same goals. "I hope we can go out with a bang by winning conference this season, and send a lot of guys to the state [competition]," Bajamunde said. "I believe in this track team 100 percent because I know that we have a lot of talent on our hands.

Cohen said he expects to return the conference title to West. "[The team] won conference two years ago, and this year's team is shaping up to do the same while sending more guys downstate," Cohen said. "We looked forward to a top finish at the sectional meet as well."

Vivone echoes Cohen's sentiments.

"I don't want to put added pressure on them, but we should get some individuals and maybe one or two relays to the state meet," he said.



Junior distance runner Daniel Friedman races to the finish line. Photo by Zoe Ljubic

work that we do in practice and really strive for the best possible work. We are really going hard as we can but with plenty of rest," Vivone said.

Vivone explained that when he started as head coach, the team was doing many reps, but this presented many problems. He said that the team would continuously show poor progress, because they did not have enough time to rest.

"Now, our emphasis is on skill. Instead of running eight reps with only two good reps, now we run three reps in which all are really good," Vivone said.

Vivone credited weight training as a major element of improvement.

"The weight room is the greatest equalizer and talent there is. If you are going against a guy who is really good, but if that kid doesn't lift and you do, eventually you are going to catch up to him," Vivone added.

Tripkos said that he enjoys being captain and hopes to bring the team success this season and next year.

"Being granted the honor of a captain as a junior really pushed me to get even closer to everyone on the team. I have no doubt in my mind that we will do the best of our ability, perform at our best always, and ultimately excel in everything we do," Tripkos said. "Our team has chemistry: everyone is friends with everyone. We are a team. We are brothers, and brothers don't give up on each other."

Team chemistry plays a major role in facing the challenges ahead, Vivone said.

"I think this is easily one of my best teams. The problem is that

The team will next be in action today at 5 p.m. and tomorrow at 8 p.m. at the Downers Grove South Invite.

Fahey agrees. "We have possibly the best track team to ever come out of West this year and look to make an impact at the state meet in May," Fahey said.

Vivone said the key to the team's success is maximizing practice time.

"What we have done is that we have toned down the amount of

we have a lot of talent around us, such as North and Evanston. Everyone is good around us, and this is going to be a good year for track."

The Wolves' next competition will be the Glenbard West Invitational at the school's Glen Ellyn campus at 9 a.m tomorrow

Girls' track team's fast times bode well for conference and state meets Hoshi, Gsalter and Chavez well on their way to qualifying

Mary Basic Staff Writer

The girls' track and field team is off to a strong start in the outdoor season, says head coach Mark Medland after two girls qualified for the Top Times meet March 27 in Bloomington.

Junior Megumi Hoshi qualified in the 1600 m run and senior Molly Gstalter qualified in the 55 hurdles.

"This was a great way to end the indoor season, qualifying two girls," Medland said.

On April 11, Niles West "hosted" the Niles West invite at New Trier, a circumstance caused by ongoing construction of the West outdoor track facility. "I think we did well in the Niles West invite. A few girls placed in different events. Everyone worked hard to get where they are," senior shot putter Margaux Lim said.

Medland commented on the team's early season performance.

"We lost at New Trier because we didn't load up on events because we had [the Riverside-Brookfield] invitational two days later," Medland said.

The team placed second out of 11 teams at that meet, garnering 60 points to first-place Leyden's 83.

Gstalter placed first in the 100 m high hurdles, she finishing just .03 off the time needed to qualify for the state meet.

"For [Gstalter] to do that so early in the season is a pretty good sign," Medland said.

Senior Edelynn Cayas placed fifth in the 300 m low hurdles; Hoshi and junior Carmin Beck placed second and third, respectively, in the 3200 m run and junior Natalie Chavez placed fifth in the 100 m dash.

"Chavez has really started to come on for the outdoor season," Medland added.

Indeed, Chavez ran the opening leg of the 400 m relay in .62, which is three seconds faster than she was last year at this time, Medland said. Qualifying time for the state meet is .59. He added that a number of girls ran or threw for their personal best times/throws in the invititational.

"Hoshi, Gstalter and Chavez had a great meet at Riverside-Brookfield," Medland said.

The Wolves' next meet will be tomorrow at the New Trier Invite, beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Trevian's Winnetka campus.

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Part RTS Chicago Major League Baseball



The White Sox have had their fair share of ups and down over the last few years.

Ever since winning the World Series in 2005, they just have not managed to do well enough to go deep into the playoffs. Despite an excellent 90-72 record, they did not make it to the postseason in 2006.

They posted a 72-90 slate in 2007 (falling to a disappointing fourth place) and were 89-74 in 2008, playing determined baseball in the onegame playoff against the Minnesota Twins to make it into the postseason, only to get bounced out of the first round by the Tampa Bay Rays.

In the years since the World Championship, the Sox have suffered from the same malady, the lack of a productive leadoff hitter. Since the rapid decline of outfielder Scott Podsednik (now laboring in Triple A), no player has stepped forward to kick start the offense. This year is no exception.

Manager Ozzie Guillen initially handed the role to journeyman DeWayne Wise, along with the centerfield job, over Brian Anderson, a move that many Sox fans questioned for about a week until Wise went on the disabled list (DL). Then, the debate began anew.

Obviously, the leadoff hitter is important to any team. Most teams look for someone with a good plate presence, who has a good batting average

in leadoff spot. Getz has responded by batting .340 with 6 runs, 5 RBI and 3 stolen bases.

However, Getz is an unproven rookie with 22 Major League games to his resume, so West's Sox fans are not sold.

Fans have different opinions on the matter as to who should get the all-important position.

"[The Sox] already have a lot of home run hitters, so I think it needs to be someone who can get on base consistently and not strikeout," science teacher Chris Barnett said.

Junior Adam Provost agrees.

"As long as it is someone who can actually hit, then I don't really care who," Provost said.

Freshman Jasmin Nieves likes a swift baserunner in the spot.

"It definitely needs to be someone that can run fast but also can hit pretty well," Nieves said.

Although it appears that Sox fans have a good idea as to what type of player the leadoff hitter should be, not many can name a specific player on the White Sox roster that is good for the position.

Sophomore Miranda Mehmeti is an exception. "I think [OF] Jermaine Dye would be a good pick," Mehmeti said. "He has a more solid batting average than any of the other players. Meanwhile, Sox fans hold their breath,



New leadoff man Chris Getz heads to first. Photo courtesy MCT

According to senior Chicago Cubs fan Mary Cate Curran, "Basically, Wrigley Field is the Cubs."

Fellow senior and Cubs supporter Aris Theotokatos agrees.

Sophomore Yonas Tekeste concurs. "It needs to be kept around," Tekeste said. "There are so many memories in it."

M Daniel Blazek Staff Writer

Wrigley-loving students have an ally in Cubs manager Lou Pinella, who told Yahoo!



Reaction to replacing Wrigley Field draws criticism. Photo by Adriana Zalloni

"I would refuse to go to a Cubs game for a long while if they decide to replace [Wrigley]," Theotokatos said.

The two fans' comments came in response to an April 4 report in Yahoo! sports that Cubs' ace starting pitcher, Carlos Zambrano, who had made no secret of his love for Milwaukee's Miller Park, thinks that the Cubs' new owners should follow the lead of several franchises (most recently, both New York teams) and replace Wrigley Field with a new, fresher ballpark

Wrigley Field, known as "the Friendly Confines," has been a huge part of Chicago Cubs fans' lives since it was built as Weeghman Park in 1914. From the ivy-covered walls to the statues of legendary broadcaster Harry Caray and Hall of Famer Ernie Banks, Wrigley has been praised as one of Major League Baseball's greatest ballparks.

The same could be said of the old Yankee Stadium, for it was around as a lasting monument in New York since 1923. However, this icon of American sports history was replaced after the end of the 2008 season at a cost \$1.6 billion.

West's Cubs fan beg to differ with "Big Z." They should keep it," junior Fermin Ayala

said. "You can't think Cubs without Wrigley."

Sports that he loves the fact that Wrigley has its own uniqueness. He also added that the time of year when the ivy blooms into its full green luminescence, Wrigley is a great environment to play a ball game.

For many, the park's reputation says it all.

"Everyone knows about [Wrigley] Field," freshman Kabir Wasson added. "It is legendary."

Other fans cite the stadium's historical value as a reason to preserve it.

'It reminds everyone of baseball's and the Cubs' history," junior Daniel Friedman said. "So, it should, without a doubt, be kept."

Some even suggest that the park, not the team, is the real draw.

"It is a great tradition, and no one would care or come to the games any more if [Wrigley] was gone," junior Danny Trausch said.

West's Cubs fans all seem to agree that Wrigley is a major part of what the Cubs organization truly is. People of all ages are drawn to its appealing aura of tradition and lovability, and it helps any fan that walks through its doors really enjoy the game itself.

In the words of freshman Michelle Leong, "Wrigley has been around for years and should

never be tossed aside, ever.

drive him home. It also helps if the leadoff hitter has good speed, for it would quickly put him in scoring position if he manages to get on base via a walk or hit and then steals second or third base early in the game.

This is the template which most teams follow, although some teams have leadoff hitters who can knock the ball 400 feet consistently (such as OF Alfonso Soriano of Cubs or infielder Hanley Ramirez of the Florida Marlins).

The White Sox historically have followed the traditional model, but seem to have trouble find a regular contributor who fits the bill.

Before his injury, Wise had sports radio crackling with questions such as "where did this guy come from" and "what was the Sox organization thinking?"

Hitting a minuscule .238 with no runs, no RBI and no stolen bases in the first seven games before his injury, Wise would definitely not be considered a good candidate for the position by anyone's standards, especially given that he has a career .215 batting average and not a lot of speed.

Using Wise's stint on the DL as an opportunity, Guillen apparently has decided on IF Chris Getz WOOL BODY LEATHER SLEEVES QUILT LINED Complete with all lettering and emblems Made the way you want! NYLON JACKETS CHEER UNIFORMS CUSTOM PRINTED T-SHIRTS & SWEATSHIRTS EMBLEMS AND ADDITIONS SEWN ON JACKETS VARSITY JACKET CLEANING CHICAGO KNITTING MILLS 3344 W. MONTROSE, CHICAGO (773)463-1464