

SPORTS

Football team struggles on offense

by Daniel Friedman
Staff Writer

Going into this evening's tilt vs. top-ranked Maine South, the Wolves football team stands at 1-3 record (0-0 CSL South) and looks to rebound from last Thursday's disappointing 6-0 loss to Glenbrook North (GBN).

Under the direction of new head coach Scott Baum, the Wolves headed into the season with high expectations, but the hard work that the team displayed during the preseason has not translated to a winning record. Early losses to Vernon Hills (42-12), district rival Niles North (25-15) and GBN (6-0) have set Baum's inaugural campaign off to a rocky start.

The Wolves appeared to turn their season around on Sept. 11 against the Demons of Maine East, which had napped a 39-game losing steak in their opener. The game looked to be a hotly contested battle between two schools trying to rejuvenate their football programs. However, the Wolves ended up blowing out the Demon 36-6. Senior quarterback Tyler Rosell put on a dazzling performance, throwing for two touchdowns, passing for almost 150 yards and gaining another 50 yards on the ground.

The optimism elicited by the Maine East game was short lived, and the Wolves could not string together consecutive victories. Despite a second straight solid outing by the defense, which kept the GBN Spartans off the scoreboard until more than halfway into the fourth quarter, the Wolves fell as the offense was stymied, gaining a scant 76 yards and crossing midfield only once in 48 minutes.

Besides having a new head coach, the Wolves' starting lineup features several new faces. After last season, the team bade farewell to its starting quarterback, top running back and #1 wide receiver as well as other key players on defense and special teams. However Rosell isn't buying that excuse. "Last year, we had [future] college athletes at every position on offense," he said. "This year's team is a different kind of team; although [we are] not as athletic overall, we are very solid and still have three or four [Bowl Championship Series Division] athletes on the offensive and defensive line," Rosell added.

The team's slow start aside, the season has not been without its highlights.

During Sept. 4's the Skokie Skirmish vs. Niles North, junior running back Seve Loubriel's kickoff return for a touchdown put Niles West on the board. Later, senior corner back Deondre Watkins recovered a fumble and returned it 98 yards for a touchdown.

The team is undaunted by its lackluster performance thus far. Rosell expressed optimism, saying that the team is "thinking playoffs this year. It is been our goal since this winter."



West's defensive line gets ready after a huddle. Photo by Rexly Penaflorida II

Senior linebacker Jimmy Xamplas concurs.

"I have hopes for the remainder of the season. I feel like we have been practicing really well and we can turn it around and bring ourselves back to winning ways," he said.

Baum's goals are a bit more modest. "Every week we want to get better. We want to improve, want to play hard and get to the point where other teams have to prepare to play us," he said.

Tonight's game against the undefeated Hawks will begin at 7:30 p.m. on Basrak Field.

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WestWord

Varsity golf team starts season under par

w Daniel Friedman
Staff Writer

After strong performances in early season matches, head golf coach Mitch Stern believes his team is "right where it needs to be" for the 2009 season.

Despite losing seven seniors from what Stern describes as "the deepest team that we ever had," the 2009 team is still looking to bring home some hardware from the Central Suburban League (CSL) South meet and from regional matches later in the season.

So far, early season results are showing that this year's group is up to the challenge. At the CSL's Ryder Cup Invitational, West golfers won all six matches against their opponents from the CSL North and contributed to a victory for the CSL South for the second year in a row.

The senior-laden group is strengthened by the addition of sophomore Nick Hester to the varsity squad. In the match against New Trier, Hester shot 41 for his round to tie with the top group of Kim, Yoo and Curran, and against Deerfield, Hester shot an impressive +2, keeping pace with some of the top players in the

state.

"I think he [Hester] will be leading next year, and I am looking for him to qualify for [the state tournament] in a year or two," Yoo said.

Two juniors—Jason Katz and Claudia Mak—round out the squad.

Although the team suffered early dual match losses to Addison Trail and Maine West, Stern still sees them headed in the right direction.

"Our goal is always to be playing our best golf at the end of the season," he said. "It seems to be going in that trend right now. We seem to be getting better and better each week."

The team currently is focused on preparing for the upcoming Bruce Slovitt Invitational at New Trier, a tournament which typically features the best teams in the state.

Stern expressed his satisfaction with the way the team looks and is optimistic about what the postseason will bring.

"We have a good group of golfers," he said. "They seem to be pretty hungry about playing good golf. As long as they keep on working at it, we just want to get better every week and get ready for the end of the season."



John Kim takes a swing on his tee shot.
Photo by Rexly Penafloida II

Lady Wolves hope to produce positive results at state competition

w Naomi Prale
Sports Editor

The Niles West girls' varsity tennis team started off the season with a winning record of 11-6-1 (0-2 Central Suburban League South). According to head coach George Bravos, the Wolves have worked hard to compete against many of the best teams in Illinois.

Glenbrook South, Evanston, New Trier, Waukegan and Maine South are the Wolves' competition in the Central Suburban League South, which Bravos said is the "toughest conference in the state."

Bravos went on to describe the best players in the conference as "athletes that have been playing since the age of two; their parents stick a tennis racket their crib," he joked.

According to assistant coach Brad Wilson, the team has proven itself since the beginning of the season to work hard and continue

to improve.

"We are winning [the] matches against the teams in our conference that we should be winning [against]," Wilson said. "The girls are playing a lot better. We are obviously going in the right direction."

This year's team is led by a nucleus athletes who have experience at the higher level of competition, including senior co-captain Uzma Ahmad and sophomore Jewell Loyd, both of whom competed at the state tournament last year as a doubles team.

"Loyd and Ahmad are [two] of the bright spots on the team," Bravos said. "Both girls are back, playing better than last year. They are more focused and goal oriented."

Team members senior Danya Snowsky and senior co-captain Medha Patel both predicted that Ahmad and Loyd would return together to the state tournament.

"I expect them to go to state as a doubles pair," Snowsky said.

said.

Other team members include senior co-captain Zoe Ljubic and senior Michelle Lisica; junior Kara Mui; sophomores Lexi Leftakes, Ricki Esses and Vicki Georgevich and freshman Alexa Bits. Bravos said that the girls rotate their positions around during each match.

Bravos also recognizes new junior varsity coach Andrew Suarez.

The highlight of the season thus far was the trouncing of Waukegan 7-0 earlier this season, with most girls winning their matches 6-0 or 6-1.

"The girls are just tremendous," Bravos said. "One notable match was against Wheeling earlier this season, with Lisica and Mui. The girls came back and won a tie breaker."

The team is not all work and no play, however, "The girls like to have fun," Wilson said. "They hang out and bond as a team."

Patel believes the girls are "all really close. I am going to miss the team next year."

Girls' volleyball set themselves for victory in Central Suburban League South

w Mary Basic
Staff Writer

Having burst from the starting gate quickly—with impressive, straight set dual match wins over non-conference foes—the girls' varsity volleyball team has come back to earth somewhat as the Central Suburban League South season gets into full swing.

At press time, the team stood at .500 for the season (8-8), with a conference dual match record of 1-2 after back-to-back losses to Glenbrook South (GBS) and Waukegan and in advance of Tuesday's match vs. Evanston Township and yesterday's tilt vs. Maine South.

"We came out strong in our first game—and you never know because it the first game—but we took it to [Lane Tech] and won," head coach Stacy Metoyer said.

Following a victory vs. Maine East, the team went 3-2 in the New Trier Invitational, finishing sixth of 16 teams in the event. The Wolves racked up victories against Highland Park, Warren and Waukegan, while dropping matches to Evanston and Loyola Academy.

After a dual match speed bump, an always-disheartening defeat at the hands of district rival Niles North, the team climbed back on the victory train, capturing their conference opener in straight sets against Maine West.

After a 2-3 finish in the Resurrection Tournament on Sept. 9, the spikers resumed the conference schedule vs. GBS and Waukegan.

The team's senior contingent includes outside hitter Lauren LaGioia, defensive specialist Christine Ocampo, co-captain and right side hitter Allison Guiang, DS Jennie DiJohn, DS Nicole Poskrobko, co-captain and DS Kelly Kleppin and middle hitter Jaelyn Gremley. Juniors include RSH Denise Tossi, setter Colleen Galicia, co-captain and MH Jordyn Toia, MH Nicole Moy, S Olga Kutkovska, MSH and RSH Kimberly Mercado, DS Aundrea Martinez, DS

Casey Nakawatase and S Teagan Smith.

Metoyer says she is very happy with this season's squad.

"[We are] strong in every position; [we] do not have to rely on two or three girls[like last season], [which] gives us a lot more offense to run and different plays to run," Metoyer said.

LaGioia adds that this season's team is not weak in any position.

"We have amazing potential, but we just need to know how to use it," LaGioia said.

Nevertheless, Tossi stressed that it will be hard going up against a senior-laden team when the Wolves have nine juniors, but she expressed confidence that the squad will congeal.

"When we started practicing more and started working together, I think we all started to see how much we could achieve this year," Tossi said.

Smith concurs.

"I didn't realize the potential of our team until after a few practices. I think our team can really do well this season," Smith said.

In preparation for this season, team members trained since the end of the 2008-08 campaign.

LaGioia trained three to five times a week with strength and conditioning coach Fernando Perez to build up her strength and cardiovascular stamina, while Tossi worked out in the weight room three times a week.

"The offseason is a lot of hard work," Tossi said. "I had to give up my summer just to become better and stronger. [Plus,] we had volleyball camp the last three weeks of July."

According to Metoyer, her goals for the team this season are to win at least 20 games and one tournament and "never to let their energy down."

Individual goals include LaGioia's desire "to beat Evanston and New Trier and Tossi's

commitment never to give up on herself.

As for team yardsticks, Moy said that a goal for the team would be to play better as a team and not as individuals.

Moy added that compared to junior varsity last year, the varsity level definitely is a challenge, but thinks this season can be one of the best seasons Niles West has seen in years.

"We have very good players at each spot on the court which will help tremendously," Moy said.

Toia agrees.

"We have all got the desire to win matches and if we keep our energy up on the court, I think we could be extremely successful," Toia said.

The Wolves' will take the court next tomorrow at 8 a.m. as they kick off the Northside College Prep tournament at the school's campus at 5501 N. Kedzie in Chicago.

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SPORTS

Swimmers expected to break school records

W Naomi Prale
Sports Editor

The Niles West girls' swim and dive team started out the season 1-0 by defeating district rival Niles North. Head coach Jason Macejack expressed his optimism about the rest of the season.

"Our girls swam very well at the meet," Macejack said. "We have a very good starting point from here on out."

The girls started strong by beating North's strong medley relay team by a tenth of a second.

"There are two really strong girls on the [North medley relay] team," Macejack said. "I told our girls to expect the strength of North's team, and they stepped up and beat them."

The medley relay team consists of senior captain Carolyn Masterton, junior Deann Okrzesik, junior Jaci Moy and junior Holly Norberg.

West divers dominated first, second and third place at the meet. Returning divers include senior captain Amy Heller and junior Emily Fung. Last year, Fung's performance brought her to the state diving competition.



Senior Maggie Kearns swims to the finish.
Photo by Rexly Penafiora II

"We had a handful of girls who put in time in the off season and started off [the season] with a lifetime best time," Macejack said. "It is very exciting for an athlete and a coach to see a lifetime best time at the first meet."

Last year, the team broke nine school records. "It would be nice to rearrange the record board a bit," Macejack said. He also said that junior Alexis Yusim could break the school record in the 500-yard free style and Masterton could set a record for the 50-yard freestyle.

Due to the loss of a lot of seniors last year, many of the swimmers are coming directly from last year's JV squad but the team is still optimistic.

"I expect a lot of the people who moved up from junior varsity last year to improve just because our workouts are much harder," Masterton said.

Macejack agrees. "I expect the returning athletes to step up and fill [the girls who graduated] shoes. I am expecting quite a bit out of Masterton, Norberg, Moy and Yusim."

The Wolves next meet is this Friday at home against Highland Park at 5:30 p.m.

Girls' cross country team strives to qualify for state meet

W Mary Basic
Staff Writer

If the girls' cross country team's early season performance are any indication, the Wolves are on pace to contend for conference and state tournament laurels next month.

After placing ninth of 21 teams at the Hinsdale South Invite on Sept. 5, the team vaulted to third as they hosted the Ron Campbell Two Mile Run three days later.

Head coach Anne Heselton sees great potential in what by her account is the largest group turnout of runners in the program's history.

Senior runners include co-captains Carmin Beck, Allie Coursey and Josephine Tritsch, along with Natalie Chavez, Megumi Hoshi, Asha Mannancheril and Becky Traisman. This core is augmented by juniors Jill Erickson, Lindsey Karp and Casey Plach and sophomores Rachel Prale, Jessica Sutfin and Maggie Swanson. Freshmen Rachel Bender and Michelle Karp

round out the team.

"This season our team has a lot of potential. We have a great group of girls, and the top seven varsity spots are getting pretty competitive," Hoshi said. "We worked very hard during pre-season, and I am so excited for our season. We have the potential to do great things, and our team goal is state. With this group of girls, I really think we can do it."

Mannancheril echoes Hoshi's sentiments.

"Niles West cross country has a really strong team this year. All of our girls have been working very hard, most of them since the beginning of the summer," Mannancheril said. "I think with our new workout program and the help of our two amazing coaches [Heselton and Tricia Brown], we will have an amazing, fun, and memorable season."

As Mannancheril notes, the team—almost all of whom also run track—began training at the end of last spring's track season and all summer.

"We tried to get a lot of miles in during the summer, and we are working a lot more on speed training now," Hoshi said.

Like their counterparts in other sports, several members of the

team went to cross country summer camp where Chavez said that they would run up to 40 miles a week.

"It was really intense; however, just recently, we have changed up our workouts and are now focused on times. So we are now doing more speed work outs than the 10 mile runs," Chavez said.

While the team's goal is to advance to the state finals, Heselton said that she just wants everybody to improve and for the girls to have the best season they can have as a team.

As for personal goals, Hoshi hopes to garner all-state honors (top 25 in the state), while her teammates are unanimous in their desire to reach their full potential as runners and to set personal bests.

As a senior, Coursey also hopes to end her career on a high note.

"Since this is my last season, I plan to go out and finish strong," she said. "I do not what any regrets."

The Wolves' next meet is on Tuesday, Sept. 29, at 4:30 p.m. at home vs. Central Suburban League South foes Evanston Township, Maine South and New Trier.

Wolves runners set sights on upper tier finish in upcoming conference contest

W Zoe Ljubic
Editor in Chief

Led by senior co-captains George Davros and Matt Miller, the boys' cross country team has high expectations this season, according to head coach Vanchee Loughran.

The team has hit the ground running, and Loughran's goal is to improve on last year's finish at the Central Suburban League (CSL) South meet next month.

"Last year, [the team placed] fifth at the conference [meet]," Loughran said. "We should be able to place third this year."

That will be a tall order, Davros said, but well within the team's potential.

"It is going to be a little harder this year, because our competition is really good," he said, adding that despite the challenges they face, there is no reason "we shouldn't place third."

The top seven runners competed at the Peoria Woodruff meet on Sept. 12 against the top teams in the state. Davros finished 51 out of 256 runners with a time of 16:03. The rest of the team produced quality times as well.

Loughran said that he expects Davros to compete at the state meet.

Davros' performance on the Woodruff course might be a precursor. Davros explained that the course was rigorous, but because it is the state competition site, it prepared him well for what to expect last this fall.

"My goal is to be all-state," he said. "It is going to be really tough, but I will see what I can do."

As for the rest of the team, Loughran has brought up a few sophomores to run varsity.

"We have a better team because we have more depth, especially with all the sophomores that are coming up," he added. Miller agrees.

"Our top seven team will be very solid this year," he said.

For the Wolves to succeed collectively, the runners will need to come together to pull through this season, Davros said.

"We are really going to need to rely on our middle runners to bring the rest of the team up," he said.

Last year, two seniors competed at the state competition. Their absence has played a huge role on the team, according to Davros, but with the a strong top seven, the Wolves will "pull it together," Miller said. He added that the "sophomores have really stepped it up and filled in the missing spots."

Eventually, Loughran hopes to work with the talented group of sophomores so that "maybe, in two years, we can have a whole team go down" to the state meet.

Other top varsity runners include junior Zack Koukios and the aforementioned sophomores Mas Hoshi, Marc Julien and David Iverson.

The Wolves will run next against CSL South foes Maine South, New Trier and Evanston at home Tuesday, Sept. 29, at 4:30 p.m.

Boys' soccer team shows positive results at Rockford Hononegah tournament

W Adriana Zalloni
World Editor

Heading into tomorrow's noon contest at Conant's Hoffman Estates campus, the boys' varsity soccer team, led by head coach Scott Ackman, stands with an overall record of 8-4-2 (0-0-2 Central Suburban League South), in advance of Tuesday night's game vs. Maine South.

In last weekend's Rockford Hononegah tournament, the Wolves placed second out of 16 teams.

The Wolves looked sharp in defeating Hoffman Estates 4-0 on Sept. 16. Senior forward and co-captain Mahi Mameledzija scored three goals and senior F Anthony Tabar tallied one.

The long-anticipated Sept. 10 match with cross-town rival Niles North came to a satisfying 3-0 finish behind two goals by

Mameledzija and one by junior defender and co-captain Thomas Villamil.

According to Ackman, the North victory was expected because of the high level of play the Wolves had been showing during their practices.

In other wins, the Wolves beat Elk Grove 2-1 on Aug. 24, on goals by Mameledzija and Tabar, and Taft on Sept. 3 on the strength of Mameledzija's two goals and one each by senior D Joe Kosir and junior midfielder David Dawood.

The Wolves suffered losses to Maine West (2-0) on Sept. 8, Lake Forest on Sept. 1 by a 3-1 count and to Schaumburg on Aug. 27 by a final score of 2-0.

It has been said that a tie is like kissing your sister; however, the Wolves' 1-1 draw against perennial power New Trier on Aug. 26 was a moral victory for the team.

Ackman attributes the early success of the season to the summer season, an assessment echoed by team members. According to senior midfielder Martin Tomic, the team "beat out some of the

best teams," in the summer league.

The team is led this year by senior co-captains Kosir and Mameledzija, along with junior D and co-captain Thomas Villamil.

"Our senior players are our strengths," Ackman said.

Other seniors include: Tabar, M Roy Brines and F Alan Polous.

Kosir agrees with his coach's assessment of the team's leadership.

"We have talent at every position," he said. "We are starting to click as a team, because we are getting to know each other's strengths and weaknesses. I know we are going to continue to do better and keep winning games like we have been."

Tomic contributes the success to the level of communication the team shares.

"We know each other well enough that it becomes automatic," Tomic said. "It is going to pay off in the end."

The Wolves will play at home against Conant tomorrow at 11 a.m. at Basrak field.