

SPORTS

Girls soccer strives to work together in upcoming Moline Tournament

W Rexly Penaflorida II
Editor in Chief

After its seventh place finish at last weekend's Niles West Tournament, the girls soccer team heads into the latter half of the regular season with a 6-9 record (1-2 in the Central Suburban League South). According to head coach Brett Clish, the main reason for the losing record is multiple injuries.

"[Because of the injuries] I am juggling the lineup," he said. "I have to figure out which player is best at a position."

Players on the shelf include junior defender Nicole Poskrobko (foot), junior forward Cheyenne Farrell (foot), sophomore midfielder Nicole Ostro (back) and freshman forward Molly Kleppin (concussion).

Led by their co-captains—senior F Danya Snowsky, senior M Allie Guiang, junior goalie Arlene Bueno and junior D Nicole Moy—the remaining players have scrambled to compensate for the losses.

Snowsky said that the most severe is Poskrobko's injury because she will be on the sidelines for a while.

Bueno agrees.

"We really need her," she said. "She is the best at her position, and her loss is a big blow to the team."

Despite the numerous injuries and record below .500, the team has had its moments. At one point, the team had a three-win streak with victories over Maine West (1-0), Niles North (1-0) and Waukegan (7-0). At the Niles West Tournament, the squad beat Regina Dominican 5-1 on the strength of three goals by freshman F Michelle Karp.

With his team at less than full strength, Clish admitted that some upcoming games will be a challenge.

"We have a tough schedule coming up in terms of conference

games [against] Maine South, Glenbrook South and Evanston," he said. "Also, we want to compete well at the Moline Tournament."

According to both Masterton and Bueno, the Moline Tournament is one of the most anticipated tournaments of the year.

"We finished in fourth place last year, and I think we have the potential to finish in first place," Bueno said.

Masterton concurred with Bueno's assessment, adding that the tournament will allow the team to bond as well.

For the postseason, Clish said that the goal for the team is to reach the Illinois High School Association regional championship. For the past two years, the Wolves have reached the championship, losing both times to New Trier.

Bueno believes that working together is the key to winning soccer.

"If we play as a team and not as individuals, we can succeed."

The Wolves' next game is today in the Moline Tournament.

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SPORTS



Sports camp policies present problems

w Naomi Prale
Sports Editor

As the days get longer and the weather gets warmer, students look forward to summer. For most that means freedom from responsibility and a much needed vacation.

However, for athletes, summer means that mandatory sports camps are starting for runners on the outdoor track, football players on the field, basketball players in the gyms and myriad other participants in a variety of sports. For many high school athletes, summer means practice for the fall season of sports.

However, some high schoolers use the summer for other diversions. Does attending sports camp need to be mandatory to have a spot on a varsity team?

Many students look forward all year long to travel or camp. Some need or want to work. If an athlete wants to travel or work during the summer, that should be fine as long as that athlete trains sufficiently to be effective in the fall

In the case of summer school, school certainly takes preference over camp. If a person needs to take courses during the summer whether for personal choice or requirement for graduation, sports camp should not jeopardize that person's spot on the team during the school year.

If another alternative can be worked out to resolve schedule conflicts, such an alternative should be allowed.

In fact, one athlete confided, "It was easier for me to work out on my own time, and I could get more of a workout."

Many students also travel during the summer or go to camp. This should be the student's prerogative. Many students look forward all year long to travel or camp. Some need or want to work. If an athlete wants to travel or work during the summer, that should be fine as long as that athlete trains sufficiently to be effective in the fall.

Furthermore, when that student comes back for the school year, (s)he deserves the same opportunity to try out for a position as anyone else. If someone who did not participate in sports camp is just as capable as those who did participate in camp, that person should be allowed part of the varsity team or to secure a starting position.

I am not saying that people should be allowed to sit around all summer and do nothing and then expect to make the team. If someone is not doing anything in the summer, (s)he should go to sports camp. Doing the workouts and practice will put him/her in better shape for the season.

However, if a student has a valid excuse to miss summer workouts, reconsideration should be made. Niles West is not a professional sports franchise, and players are not paid for their participation. Thus, summer workouts should be optional. Besides, if summer workouts are as necessary as coaches claim, those who attend should be have a natural, not artificially imposed, advantage.

Girls track and field suffers from injuries

w Rexly Penafiora II
Editor in Chief

The girls track and field team, led by senior co-captains Megumi Hoshi, Natalie Chavez and junior co-captain Kimberly Mercado, has exceeded expectations of head coach Mark Medland.

"We have had many meets with more than 10 teams, and some of those teams are the best in the state," Medland said. "If we put the right people in the right slots to compete, then we have a pretty good shot in beating those teams."

In one recent meet, the Niles West Invite, Chavez broke the school record for the 400 meter dash by .002. The previous record was set in 1979 in time of 59.70 seconds. Chavez now has the record time of 59.68 seconds.

The team traveled to Schaumburg for the first time to compete in Saxon Invite which had team powerhouses such as Schaumburg and Whitney Young High School.

Chavez said that the experience from that meet showed a lot about her team.

"We had a great competition at Schaumburg, but it was not our top game," she said.

Hoshi concurred and added that the experience at the Saxon Invite will "only make us work harder."

Increased success has been inhibited somewhat by nagging injuries, Medland said.



Freshman Eliana Meligas runs to the finish line. Photo by Irfan Qurashi

"Sometimes, those injuries can put an athlete out for three to four weeks," Medland said. "We just need to try and avoid these injuries so that we can perform better as a team."

Among the walking wounded, Chavez suffered an ankle injury. She said that she will miss the next few meets in preparation for the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) sectional.

According to both Medland and Hoshi, Chavez is a crucial part of the 4x400 meter relay that expected to qualify for the IHSA state meet.

"We are just trying to take care of the injury so that she can be ready for both sectionals and state," Hoshi said.

Despite the setback, Medland expressed his anticipation for the state competition.

"I would like to see one relay team and a ton of individual competitors compete," he said. "The 4x400 meter relay is the favorite, but I would also like to see some individuals head to state as well."

Chavez agreed.

"It would be nice to get the relay to state, and I am positive that we can get there," she said. "We just have to stay healthy."

The track and field team next will compete tomorrow at the New Trier Invite at New Trier's Winnetka campus at 9:30 a.m.

Tennis team prepares for tough conference

w Naomi Prale
Sports Editor

Despite a difficult loss last Thursday against Glenbrook South (0-8) the varsity boys tennis team stands 4-5 (0-2 in the Central Suburban League South) in preparation for the remainder of the season and postseason tournaments.

"We played pretty well considering the opponents," head coach Brad Wilson said, regarding last Thursday's performance. "We elevated our game to the level of our opponents. We lost, but we still played well."

According to Wilson, the team's strength is its depth.

"The team is much deeper than last year," Wilson said. "Not

only do we have strong first and second doubles spots, but we especially have strong third and fourth doubles teams."

Senior co-captain Vova Zverkovsky entered Tuesday's match against Evanston expecting "to play hard." However, he sprained his calf prior to starting the match and ended up losing 6-3 and 6-0.

Wilson recognized Zverkovsky's leadership. "[Zverkovsky's] strength at number one singles has helped raise the bar for the other players to perform just as well," Wilson said.

He said that he hopes to see Zverkovsky compete at the state meet for the third year in a row.

The Wolves will compete next tomorrow at the Glenbrook South Titan Invite at Glenbrook South High School at 8:30 a.m.

Boys gymnastics continues to shine with winning record

w Mary Basic
Staff Writer

The boys gymnastics team's dual meet record stands at 4-3 (4-2 in the Central Suburban League South).

The Wolves placed 7th out of 12 teams at the Niles North Invite with a score of 123.58 on April 23.

On April 20 the wolves loss to Glenbrook South 138.1-120.3.

In recent, non-conference action, the Wolves placed 12th out of 13 teams on April 16 at the Conant Invite at Conant High School, with a score of 111.1.

The Wolves include senior co-captains George Deamont (all around), Brendan Melnick (parallel bars and pommel horse) and

Dimitri Ramirez (PH). Fellow seniors include Anthony Suarez (floor exercise, vaulting and PB) and Ryan Zimmer (FE and V).

Juniors team members are Hantac Chang (V, PB, and high bars), Roman Kim (PH), Zach Rothstein (HB), Elias Shiheiber (FE, V, HB) and Chris Williams (FE, V).

Sophomores David Imakarimov (HB, PB), Ari Lazar (PH, PB), Casey Mahoney-Muno (HB, V) and still rings specialist John Nicolasin round out the squad.

In other recent dual meet competition, the Wolves beat Glenbrook North 125.7-109.3 on April 15.

According to Lazar, this was his best meet. "I nailed all of my routines and had season highs on all of them."

Ramirez expressed satisfaction with the victory. "Our team was very energetic, there was a lot of support, and I competed even though I was injured," Ramirez said.

Ramirez added that the victory is evidence of the team's commitment to improve throughout the season.

"Many schools remain weak for long periods; they rarely improve," Ramirez said. "We, on the other hand, constantly improve and find new ways to teach, learn and perform gymnastics; I think that is our strength."

In early season meets the Wolves placed 11th out of 16 teams at the Mundelein Invite on April 9 with a score of 114.7; they defeated Maine South 116-87.8 on April 6; placed seventh of 12 teams at the Fourth Annual John Burkel Invitational, held at West on April 3; and lost to the Highland Park-Deerfield combined squad by a 137.7-116.8 count on March 23.

Head coach Steve Foerch said the team got off to a slow start but that [they] will be a late-blooming team, [with] the end of the season [being] a successful one."

Mahoney-Muno agrees. "We are progressing slowly every day, but we are all getting there," Mahoney-Muno said.

After participating in this week's Central Suburban League South meet at Niles North on Thursday, April 29 the Wolves will begin the Illinois High School Association sectionals at Hinsdale Central on Saturday, May 8

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WestWord

Water polo's initial season looks to end on high tide

W Sofiya Pershteyn
Staff Writer

According to head coach John Przekota, the fledgling boys water polo team accomplished its initial goals of working and training hard as well as getting better and enjoying the game. With no varsity squad in the team's first year of existence, the junior varsity and freshman/sophomore squads finished 7-6 and 1-2, respectively.

"[The] goal [was] to work hard, learn about the game and be better than we were when we started," Przekota said, "and the team has been doing that really well. We are getting to the point where we go into every game expecting to win, and that is a good thing whether we win or lose."

Przekota pointed to late season improvement as a positive sign for the future.

"It shows that we have transitioned from going out and seeing what will happen at game to knowing what we have to do and knowing if we execute we can win the game," he said.

Przekota has been involved with water polo for over 20 years. Before coming to coach at West, he coached in St. Patrick High School for 10 years.

"I like sharing the game, and I love the team atmosphere. When I heard Niles West was starting a team I felt it would be a great fit, and the rest is history," he said.

One of the challenges Przekota helped many of the players face in the beginning of the season was the unfamiliarity to the game since many of them have never played water polo before.

"A big challenge, not just for me, was that none of us had any experience playing the sport," sophomore defender Daniel Liberman said. "We had to learn all of the rules, all of the basics, and then later in the season we finally began working on actual plays."

Junior two-meter offensive specialist Eric Krikorian added that water polo players need to rely on a lot of strategy and endurance during the game.

"As a swimmer, it was somewhat easy being able to swim up and down the pool countless numbers of times, but it is

difficult in the sense that you are treading water the whole time even as you are trying to defend someone and shoot goals," he said. "Water polo works your muscles in a totally different way than swimming does. Needless to say our muscles are aching after a long practice."

Junior central defender Elliot Kerbal agrees that practice and experience build the team's success.

"I am proud of our ability to learn quick and pick up on other teams plays and communicate with each other to form a very strong defense. I would say this was a huge challenge for us, and now we can safely defend and guard during a game," he said.

Team members stressed that the inaugural season featured many high points as well as team and individual successes.

"Our team as whole has become more unified with every practice. Being a member of this team allowed me and others to meet and work with different people each contributing their own special skill to the game," junior two-meter defender Andrew Roberts said.

Along with many of his fellow team members, junior outside defender Joel Santelli recalls his first goal as one of his personal highlights of the season.

"My greatest achievement was definitely scoring my first goal and I got another goal soon after the first," Santelli said.

For the rest of the season, Przekota expects the players of both teams to continue improving and growing as a team. He



Senior Andrew Roberts passes over a Maine South player. Photo by Irfan Qurashi

hopes that some scheduled rematches will give the team a second chance to prove themselves.

"We have rematches against some of our first opponents and I want to see closer scores if not victories," Przekota said. "The rematches will be good measuring sticks for our progress, and the end of the year tournaments will be nice ends to our season, get the guys a lot of experience and play in some competitive games."

Junior 2-meter set Sam Stein looks forward to gain more victories before the season's end.

"Our goal as a team is to win the rest of the regular games and go as far in our conference tournament as possible."

The freshman/sophomore team will play today in the Central Suburban League Tournament at Highland Park.

Baseball team remains optimistic about winning record

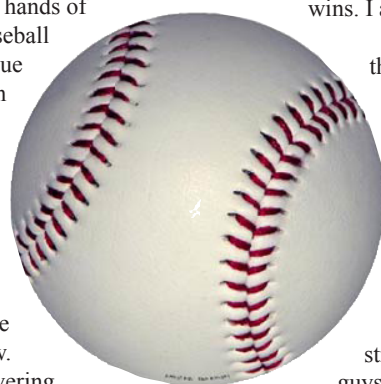
W Adriana Zalloni
World Editor

Despite April 22's loss of 14-0 drubbing at the hands of Evanston Township, a loss that left the varsity baseball team at 9-5 (0-2 in the Central Suburban League South), varsity head coach Garry Gustafson expressed optimism regarding the remainder of the season.

Last Tuesday, the team lost to New Trier 10-6. According to senior co-captain and pitcher Tyler Pazik, "I pitched a good first half."

During the second half of Tuesday's game, Pazik was hit on his backside, but he continued pitching. According to Pazik, the team made some errors but are hoping to step up its game tomorrow.

Senior co-captain and infielder Dylan Lovering agrees.



"We started off rough and fell behind early," he said. "However, a few clutch hits put us back into the competition. In the end, we fell just short and we will be ready for [New Trier] again this Thursday."*

Despite the team's loss, Gustafson is proud of the boys.

"We have been playing very good, consistent baseball up to this point," Gustafson said. "We have had some big wins. I am very pleased."

Lovering is also pleased with the team's current record for the season.

"Everything seems to be coming into place," Lovering said. "Our bats are live, our defense is solid and our pitching is consistently getting the job done."

Gustafson agrees.

"Pitching is definitely one of our strengths," Gustafson said. "Many of our guys have come out of the bullpen to contribute something on the mound and done good things for

us."

The team was on the other end of a 14-0 score on April 15, trouncing Maine East.

"Beating Maine East 14-0 just reinforced our confidence," senior pitcher Tyler Rosell said. "It is always nice to have a big win like that."

On Monday, April 12, the Wolves defeated ninth-ranked Barrington 2-0, a game Gustafson cites as the team's best so far.

Gustafson offered his blueprint for a successful season.

"We need to have consistent offense throughout each game," Gustafson said. "We need to get more runs, and do the little things it takes to win. Our offense has been really good at times, but at other times, we have been a little lackluster. We just need consistency. Baseball is a simple game. Throw strikes and play defense."

After this week's Tuesday/Thursday home-and-home series with conference foe New Trier, the Wolves take on cross-town rival Niles North at home in a doubleheader beginning at 10:30 a.m tomorrow morning.

*Due to time constraints, results from yesterday's game are unavailable.

Boys track and field team works to improve on skill and performance at meets

W Daniel Friedman
Staff Writer

Finishing a scant 8.5 points behind champion Thornwood, the boys track and field team finished second at the Homewood-Flossmoor Invitational on April 17.

The Wolves were led by several impressive individual efforts. Senior co-captain George Davros placed second in the 3200 meter run (9:47) and third in the 1600 meter run (4:32). Junior Santiago Ochoa was second in both the 100 and 200 meter dashes (10.9 and 21.9 respectively). Senior co-captain Danny Lohan took second in high jump with a leap of 6'2". Senior Gabe Nash also placed.

In the relays, sophomore runners Greg Aubain, Marc-Daniel Julien, Blake Helton and Neal Omar won the freshman/sophomore 3200 meter relay, and sophomore runners Tommy Garza, Aubain, Julien and Omar took the frosh/soph 1600 meter

relay. The 4X200 meter relay also took first place.

Even with the second place finish, head coach Chris Vivone is not satisfied.

"The season so far is going okay. We [must] make sure that we keep working and keep getting better. With our talent we can do big things this year," Vivone said. "The team is good, but we can get a lot better."

Distance coach Mike Grossman echoes Vivone's sentiments.

"In order to be successful as a team, we are going to need to keep working hard every day in practice, and we must be prepared to race against some of the best competition in the state, if not the country."

Senior captain and hurdler Kimo Bajamunde feels that the team is reaching success, but still has higher personal expectations.

"Honestly, as an individual, I should be doing better, but as a team we are placing where we should be, and that is without some of our top guys. I am looking forward to see how we do against Evanston and the other teams next week," Bajamunde said, referring to this weekend's meet at Glenbard West, which will feature some of the top teams in the state.

According to Grossman, "Glenbard West is a great meet. The weather is always nice and the competition will be tough, especially in the distance events. It is a fast track and we are hoping to see some personal records set."

Davros also commented on the team's potential, especially with the upcoming Illinois High School Association (IHSA) sectionals meet in mind.

"I think we are showing improvement with each successive meet. The times are starting to drop, and I am very excited for sectionals. This could be the best we ever do at Sectionals. If all works out, it should work out that three relays and individuals qualify," Davros said.

According to Vivone, the 4X100 meter relay, 4X200 meter relay and 4X800 meter relay all have the potential to qualify for the IHSA state meet at Eastern Illinois University. In addition, Vivone also expects Lohan, senior triple jumper Rodney Metellus, Ochoa, Davros, Omar and Nash to make it to state as individuals.

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

SPORTS

Spring Spotlight

w Daniel Friedman
Staff Writer

Great athletes do not emerge overnight. They are the product of hours of hard work during the season and the off season, whether it is in the weight room, on the field or in the gym.

This spring, two athletes have distinguished themselves not only with their accomplishments, but also with their positive attitudes and dedication to their respective sports: softball player Kelly Kleppin and tennis player Vova Zverkovsky. To honor their hard work and leadership, *West Word* puts Kleppin and Zverkovsky in its Spring Spotlight.

Kleppin leads team with determination

When it comes to intensity, few people can match female athlete of the season Kelly Kleppin when she walks onto the softball field. While stationed at shortstop, she anticipates how every pitch is going to play out and then positions her accordingly.

At the plate, she is focused on getting on base so that her teammates can send her home, although she admits hitting a home run is nice too.

Kleppin's affinity for softball didn't appear out of the blue.

"I have been playing softball since I was five," Kleppin said. "For the last 10 years, I have played [in a] travel league during the summer."

After graduating from Niles West, her career will continue at South Dakota State University (SDSU), where she received a scholarship to play softball. Kleppin's coaches and teammates agree that this impressive accomplishment is a direct result of her determination and willingness to work hard day in and day out.

In addition, they expect her to excel in college just as she has in high school, even though SDSU plays in Division I athletics—the most competitive level in collegiate sports.

"Not only does Kelly have great knowledge of the game, but she brings a positive, upbeat attitude to the field with her



Kleppin

every day, whether we have practice or a game," senior teammate Jennie Dijohn said.

Head coach Steve Ramseyer concurs with Dijohn's assessment.

"Kelly is a leader by example. [She] never complains and hustles on each and every play in practice and games. She has a highly competitive nature that is infectious amongst her teammates. I kiddingly call her our Energizer™ bunny."

Because of Kleppin's consistently high level of play, assistant coach Nicole Reynolds admits that she has come to expect a lot from Kleppin.

"I expect that when a ball is hit to shortstop, it will be vacuumed up by her and [that] it is a sure out. I expect that if a ball is out of her reach, she will dive and do anything that she can in her power to knock the ball down. Off the field, I expect Kelly to be a good influence to others around her and a role model for upcoming players to want to be just like her," Reynolds said.

Kleppin describes herself as "one of those people who tries to give things her best effort, 100 percent of the time."

DiJohn couldn't agree more.

"Kelly is a true leader and sets good examples for all the younger players on the team. She has a great work ethic, and I think everyone on the team looks up to her, especially because she is so easy to talk to," Dijohn said.

Zverkovsky builds on last year's success

Senior Vova Zverkovsky has already played varsity tennis for three years, but this year he began the season with two more titles: team captain and returning state qualifier. As a freshman, Zverkovsky was sheltered from the pressure of playing number one singles, which allowed him to build up his confidence and improve his skills.

Now, he is stepping fully into the spotlight and is embracing

the challenges that lie ahead of him on the road to state.

Even more impressively, Zverkovsky finds time to both focus on his individual aspirations and to assist the younger players whom he knows are the future of the team.

Head tennis coach Brad Wilson has noticed that Zverkovsky goes way beyond what is expected from a player of his caliber.

"He comes to every practice, and he really helps the guys get better. I know other players like him who play for other schools, and their coaches don't require them to come to practice, so that they get good competition every day," Wilson said.

For Zverkovsky, the formula to success is very simple.

"I just work hard in practice and give 100 percent every time," he said.

Zverkovsky began playing tennis when he was 10 years old and joined the competitive United States Tennis Association league when he was 12 years old.

Zverkovsky

He believes that over the years, he has learned to play smarter and has become more adjusted to the rigorous physical demands of the sport.

"Sometimes, after practice, he goes to practice [again] with his pro at 6-7:30, and he has never complained about it. He never said he doesn't want to come to practice. He enjoys the company of the people on the team, and he is a great leader," Wilson said.

Zverkovsky's teammate junior Ryan Marohn said that he greatly appreciates everything that Zverkovsky does for the team.

"He leads by example, and whenever we have a game, he steps up and contributes as much too the team as he can," Marohn said.

For the younger members of the team, such as Marohn, Zverkovsky offers some simple advice: play as much as possible and stay focused.

"The more you play, the more comfortable you will become with the game, and if you do not focus in practice, then you will not be able to focus during the match," Zverkovsky said.

Softball team recovers to .500 record from rocky start

w Uzma Ahmad
News/Wire Editor

The girls' varsity softball team stands at a 9-10 record (4-1 Central Suburban League South).

The team dropped both matches in a tough double header against Schaumburg 6-3 in the first game and 6-3, in the second game last weekend on April 21. However, the team came back strong against Waukegan on Monday, defeating the bulldogs 8-4.

The girls hold an impressive record in their conference, losing only to New Trier (0-2) on April 19. The team defeated Glenbrook South 5-4 on April 12 and Maine South 3-2 on April 14, in which senior catcher Lauren Shimanovsky scored the winning two runs in the bottom of the sixth inning.

"We have come out on top in our conference games...but we definitely have room for improvement," Shimanovsky said.

Senior co-captain and shortstop Kelly Kleppin expressed that the team "needs to work on keeping up the energy on the field."

Other notable games include the shutout victory against Evanston (8-0) on April 21.

Junior co-captain and third baseman Joanna LeFevre believes the team has been competing well.

"Our hitting and defense has been really solid for the past few games," LeFevre said.

Ramseyer hopes that the team can dominate in the conference and go on to win the regional competition.

"As long as we get all of our starters on the field at the same time were really going to be right up there challenging for the conference," Ramseyer said.

Kleppin agreed and expressed that the team's "goal is to win the regional champions and to be at least top two in conference."

This season will be Ramseyer's last season as head coach.

"For 24 springs, I have been coaching softball, and it is definitely going to be missed," he said. "Every year, you get a bunch of new kids, a new bunch of personalities and it is fun."

Ramseyer will miss coaching the girls.

"We are like a family," he added.

Kleppin recognizes his contributions to the program.

"[Ramseyer] has made a lot of changes to the program and it

is not going to be the same without him," she said. "Even though [the seniors] will not be here next year, his absence will greatly affect the younger players."

The Wolves' will face off Glenbrook North at home today at 4:45 p.m.



Senior pitcher and co-captain Julie Schwenk winds up at the mound. Photo by Sarah Espinosa

Boys volleyball works hard to strengthen communication on court

w Zoe Ljubic
Editor in Chief

Heading into this afternoon's action, the boys varsity volleyball team sports a 8-9 record (1-1 Central Suburban League South).

The team most recently defeated Chicago's Northside Prep on April 19. In a close home match, the Wolves tamed the Mustangs 25-19, 25-27 and 25-12.

Junior defensive specialist Mikko Jimenez said the team did "really well when we focused and played with energy."

Jimenez said that the Wolves' ability to overcome mistakes contributed to the victory.

"Most of [Northside Prep's] points were from our errors," he said. "In the last set, we really pulled together and showed what we could do when we focus, beating them by more than 10 [points]."

In earlier action, the Wolves beat district rival Niles North on April 6.

"We played a team, and we made fewer mistakes," head coach Andrew Roche said.

Roche attributes the team's success to senior outside and right side hitter Albert Kim.

"[Kim] gave us a big spark and that helped us win the [match]," he added.

According to senior co-captain and OH John Kim, the team was "a little nervous and anxious coming into the game." Despite their anxiety, the Wolves pulled through with a victory after going into a third game, winning 21-25, 25-17 and 25-17.

John Kim expressed satisfaction with the "blocking skill and agility of our team. Our defensive guys have come out very strong and have been able to dig up a lot of hard hits."

John Kim also offered his assessment of the remainder of the season.

"We have a lot to work on, but I see things slowly coming

together. Unlike many teams in our conference, we do not have an all-state player or start hitter," he said. "The way we are going to succeed is to work as one team. This will require good communication and always keeping up the high energy."

Roche agreed.

"Everyone has to bring [his] game to a whole new level," he said. "We cannot play as individuals; we need to be persistent."

Jimenez added that "we cannot underestimate any teams. We need to make sure we keep the intensity up at practice and in games."

The Wolves will play in the Downers Grove South Mustang Invite tonight at 5 p.m. While that might seem paradoxical, according to Roche, "there are 24 teams in the Invite. So there are three different sites on Friday night to host the Invite. Niles West is one of those sites."

If West advances, the invitational tournament will conclude Saturday at the host school beginning at 8 a.m.