

FALL SPORTS



2024



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The 2024 Estherville Lincoln Central Football Team includes, front from left, Krayton Kalous, Blaize Ahrens, Caden Sutherland, Jacob Cooklin, Keegen Lundgren, Shane Claussen, Kyle Danner, Grady Frideres, Jake Juhl, Garrett Smith, Cooper Deim, Ian Obernolte, Wyatt Petersen; second row: Jackson Struve, Beckam Welch, Will Rosfjord, Gustavo Barajas, Evan Gosch, Carson Quastad, Blake Arends, Amari Armstrong, Easton Cuthbertson, Xander Fridolfson, Breidyn Coulter, Braxton Johnson; third row: Brody Olson, Breyden Rodriguez, Warren Duitsman, Bennett Duitsman, Layton Yager, Noah Danner, Gavin Heifner, Taye Hanby, James Richard, Ezra Drahota, Bradyn Karsten, Lake Rezac; back row: Coach Ryan Rosfjord, Coach Nate Hansen, Orlando Alonso, Andy Ramirez, Kendall Molacek, Rafael Diaz, Tate White, Dylan Peta, Preston Crees, Owen Truog, Sincere McMurren, Aiden Deim, Liam Brown, Alexis Castillo, Bryan Hernandez, Head Coach Ryan Rezac and Coach Mitch Krein. Not pictured are Reilly Dickson and Kale Shatto.

Photo by David Swartz

ELC Midgets look to continue success in 2024

By DAVID SWARTZ

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Another football season means it's time for new players to step up and take their turn.

With several key seniors lost to graduation last year, the 2024 Estherville Lincoln Central team will feature several new faces this season.

On the positive side, the Midgets have 14 seniors including nine starters.

The returning starters are running back and linebacker Dylan Peta, wide receiver and defensive back Sincere McMurren, wide receiver and linebacker Tate White, running backs and linebackers Kale Shatto and Kendall Molacek, and linemen Preston Crees, Liam Brown, Aiden Deim, and Owen Truog.

Other seniors are Alexis Castillo, Orlando Alonso, Bryan Hernandez, Rafael Diaz, and Andy Ramirez.

With 52 athletes reporting for practice in grades 9-12, a junior class of 16 athletes will bolster the roster. The sophomore class is the smallest with just six athletes while the freshman class features 16.

"We have a lot of guys still competing, and I am looking forward to seeing how that all shakes out," said ELC coach Ryan Rezac.

The coach talked about the differences between last year's team that finished 5-4 overall and 4-1 in Class 2A District 1, and this year's squad.

"Last year we had a group of established leaders," said Rezac. "This year we need to find those that want to be in those roles."

Offensively, ELC will need to replace the offensive hole left by the graduation of Owen Larson, who threw for 1,333 yards and rushed for 1,259 yards. His top five receivers—Aiden Swanson, Tate Hoyer, Cale Miller, Yahir Camberos,



ELC's seniors this year are, front from left, Andy Ramirez, Tate White, Aiden Deim, Orlando Alonso, Kendall Molacek, Alexis Castillo, Bryan Hernandez; back row: Rafael Diaz, Owen Truog, Preston Crees, Sincere McMurren, Dylan Peta, and Liam Brown. Not pictured is Kale Shatto.

On the cover: This year's seniors will lead the 2024 ELC Football Team.

and Asher Molacek also all graduated.

Of the returning players, Kale Shatto is the top returning offensive player with 73 carries for 299 yards and one touchdown. He also had seven catches for 27 yards.

Defensively, ELC has two key returners in Dylan Peta and Tate White, who were second and third on the team in tackles a year ago. Peta had 52 tackles while White had 45.5.

Coach Rezac expects challenges this season.

"We have a very competitive schedule and each team we face from week to week will present different challenges," Rezac said.

Spirit Lake has been the top team on ELC's schedule the past couple years.

The Midgets opened the season against OABCIG at home against OABCIG, then travel to Emmetsburg and Algona before hosting Okoboji. ELC is on the road again against Clarion-Goldfield-Dows and Spirit Lake before ending the season with home games against Forest City and Garner-Hayfield-Ventura.

How will the coach define success this season?

"Consistency," said Rezac. "Are we striving to consistently give effort to improve ourselves and our teammates on and off the field."

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The 2024 Estherville Lincoln Central Volleyball Team includes, front from left, Kaitlyn Thelen, Bridget Chrestiansen, Jasmine Hurst, Aubree Peta, Addyson Blair, Arianna Beekman, Kaci Brechwald, Gracie White, Bailey Willeford; middle row: Reagan Nelson, Myla Fisher, Hanna Paulson, Madison Hobmeier, Julissa Smith, Alexa Perez-Huerta, Mara White, Ella Regelstad, Yuri De La Rosa, Abbagail Mullaly; back row: manager Addison Hoooge, Reagan Clabaugh, Kyleigh Schneider, Grace Nath, Saharia White, Josie Danner, Haley Nissen, Kali Thiel, Taylor Kloucek, Addison Hatland, Alivia Chalsma, and Jazmin Sanchez

Photo by David Swartz

ELC expects more success

Brinkman takes reins of program

By DAVID SWARTZ

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A year ago, Estherville Lincoln Central posted one of its best records in school history with a 31-5 record.

The Midgets return several key players from that squad to try to improve on that mark.

The returning starters from last year are all seniors—Haley Nissen, Mara White, Josie Danner, Kali Thiel and Saharia White.

Nissen earned all-state honors a year ago and led ELC with 393 kills. She also was second in digs behind libero Mara White and second in blocks behind middle hitter Saharia White. Mara White had 387 digs last season while Nissen had 242. Saharia White had 99 blocks last season while Nissen had 49.

Danner also was one of the team's block leaders with 49. Thiel played in 31 of the team's 37 matches last year.

Other seniors this year are Taylor Kloucek, Alexa Perez, Julissa Smith, and Madison Hobmeier.

Molly Brinkman takes over the coaching duties this season as she works to fill up the rest of the lineup.

"There's quite a few underclassmen who have a lot of potential to step up into starting and back-up roles," said Brinkman. "I'm excited to see how they progress throughout the season and if they are put into those positions, I have no doubt they will succeed."

One of the spots to fill is at setter with the graduation of Jersie Nitchals, who had 718

set assists last season.

Junior Hanna Paulson and sophomore Arianna Beekman are among those vying for that role. Other varsity players are juniors Addyson Blair and Ella Regelstad, and sophomore Kaci Brechwald.

Brinkman talked about the differences between last year's team and this year's.

"Every year there's different strengths and weaknesses in the athletes, which brings in a whole new team," Brinkman said. "So, just testing out what works will be different this year than last year."

The first-year coach lists senior leadership as one of the team's strengths.

"We have a strong returning class this season," said Brinkman. "This preseason, the upperclassmen have done a great job leading, encouraging, and helping the underclassmen be successful and feel welcomed. The girls have also been very coachable, and accepting of things that are different this season."

Of course every team tries to improve.

"One of the things I'd love to see from these girls this year, is just putting every game away and playing at the highest level they can every game—for the whole game," said Brinkman. "I also want to see the number of unforced errors go down for games. I'd love to see us eliminate those and see what kind of difference it makes."

Another area she'd like to see the team improve is "understanding the game of volleyball at a deeper level."

The Midgets finished with a 3-1 record in the Lakes Conference a year ago behind league champion Cherokee.

Brinkman talked about some of the teams



The 2024 Estherville Lincoln Central Varsity Volleyball Team includes, front from left, Addyson Blair, Arianna Beekman, Kaci Brechwald; middle row: Hanna Paulson, Madison Hobmeier, Julissa Smith, Alexa Perez-Huerta, Mara White, Ella Regelstad; back row: Saharia White, Josie Danner, Haley Nissen, Kali Thiel, and Taylor Kloucek.

Photo by David Swartz

on the Midgets' schedule to watch this year.

"We play Jackson, Minn., this season at home, as well as go there for a tournament," the coach said. "Jackson's a great volleyball program, so it'll be a challenge, but I'm excited to see what the girls do and what we will take away from it."

"Also, Cherokee is always a decent program," she said. "Spirit Lake is always good too. And it's always a fun rival game to play."

How will the coach define success this

season?

"Success can have many different meanings," Brinkman said. "I think we will define it as how well the girls worked together as a team on and off the court. It will also be defined by how well we handle challenges and adversity throughout the season. I also hope that each athlete will see improvement in their skills."

"Overall, sports are supposed to be fun, and I hope this will be an enjoyable season for all the girls."



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The 2024 Estherville Lincoln Central Girls and Boys Cross Country teams include, front from left, Addison Cornwall, Rylee Yager, Conner Matheson, Zoey DeRuyter, Brynlee Peta; middle row: Samson Mittrucker, Morgan Clabaugh, Kylie Olson, Garrett Smith, Wyatt Martin, Helen Lavender, Kierson Blair, Zeke Funston; back row: Gustavo Chitic Aguilar, Jackson Struve, Blaize Ahrens, Jayden Pollock, Matthew DeWitt, Dalton Lutat, Warren Duitsman, Beckham Welch and Jose Aguilar Gonzalez.

Photo by David Swartz

Influx of runners bolster ELC Cross Country program

By DAVID SWARTZ

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The Estherville Lincoln Central Girls and Boys Cross Country teams have an influx of freshmen to bolster their lineup this year.

ELC coach Megan Anderson talked about the differences this year.

“The biggest difference will be losing three leaders from last year’s team: Parker Duitsman, Jasey Anderson and Tatum Dunlavy,” said Coach Anderson. “Those three athletes were the leaders of the cross country team so now it is on the members this year to step up and become the leaders.”

On the boys’ side last year, Duitsman was a four-time state qualifier. Jasey Anderson qualified twice for the girls during her career and Dunlavy also qualified for the girls last season.

For the ELC boys, the Midgets do return seven runners with varsity experience. They are juniors Warren Duitsman, Conner Matheson, and Jayden Pollock and sophomores Dalton lute, Zeke Funston and Gustavo Chilic Aguilar.

For the girls’ squad, returning varsity runners are seniors Rylee Yager, Addison Cornwall and junior Kylie Olson. Coach Anderson said sophomore Helen Lavender also may join the varsity ranks.

Freshmen who could make an immediate impact for the teams this season are Jackson Struve and Garrett Smith for the boys, and Kierson Blair and Brynlee Peta for the girls.

“All these runners ran really competitively in their past two seasons at the middle school level,” said Coach Anderson. “They all will have challenges—both Jackson and Garrett are playing football as well as running cross country. Brynlee is still recovering from an injury to her hip that occurred this past track season. All these runners will also be running three miles instead of two. But all these runners have shown

mental toughness and the desire to compete at a high level. It will be exciting to see how this season goes for them.”

The coach talked about this years expectations and goals.

“The goals would be to put together a full boys and girls cross country team and to compete at the meets,” Anderson said. “We expect some younger kids to try to earn some spots at the varsity level. We also want the kids to get stronger and better as the season progresses.”

The coach also talked about the Lakes Conference race.

“We know that on the girls’ side, Spencer is consistently tough and we expect them to be again this year,” Anderson said. “Cherokee lost some of their top runners but returned some talented runners. Those would be the top two teams.

“On the boys’ side, Spencer and Spirit Lake will both be tough. Spencer is traditionally tough but Spirit Lake has some younger runners who have shown that they can compete.”

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2024 Warriors looking to return to the playoffs

By DAVID SWARTZ

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ARMSTRONG — Coming off a playoff season, the North Union Football Team will look to return to the playoffs with several key components returning in the 2024 season.

Led by nine seniors, the Warriors will look to improve on last year’s 5-4 record, which ended with a 51-13 loss to Class A state runner-up Woodbury Central.

Seven of the returning seniors started at least some point last season including wide receiver and linebacker Nick Hanson, quarterback and linebacker Grady Madden, wide receiver and linebacker Eli Oleson, wide receiver and defensive back Caden Walders, and linemen Carter Martens, Brennan Bollinger and Lucas Dreyer. Other returning seniors are wide receiver and defensive back Ethan Preston and lineman Josh Harman.

Other returning starters from last year are junior defensive back Drew Henderson, and junior linemen John Waller and Cole Nicoson.

Newcomers that will step in to starting or back-up roles are junior running back and linebacker Draven Keeler, junior wide receiver and defensive back Khael Jones, sophomore quarterback and defensive back Greyson Colegrove, and sophomore lineman Max Merrill.

Coach Matt Ernster talked about the differences between last year’s team and this year’s team.

“We have more skill guys on the roster and will need to air it our more,” Ernster said.



The 2024 North Union Football Team includes, front from left, Ethan Preston, Lucas Dreyer, Brennen Bollinger, Carter Martens, Grady Madden, Eli Oleson, Caden Walders, Josh Harmon, Nick Hanson; second row: Khael Jones, Jeffery Walker, Cole Nicoson, John Waller, Hudson Tirevold, Lane Bruhn, Draven Keeler, Drew Henderson, Jayden Hagedorn; third row: Jackson Hutchinson, Kael Vaske, Cooper Hoyer, Wiley Stevens, Gabe Whaley, Dyson Wikert, Max Merrill, Greyson Colegrove, Caden Zotz; fourth row: Kaden Grimm, Carter Brown, Noah Hersleff, Kyan Walters, Hunter Clendenen, Michael Tobin, Zane Vaske, Caster Kollasch, Hunter Geitzenauer; back row: Colin Kruse, Drake Nelson, Donnie Stevens, Carson Crouch, Liam Eischen, Wyatt Leninger and Sam Kirkegaard. Missing from photo are Casey Rezac and Christian Reyes.

Photo by Kim Meyer, Swea City Herald/Bancroft Register

“Depth is a big change from last year.”

Besides the nine seniors, North Union’s roster has nine juniors, 12 sophomores and 14 freshmen.

The last couple years, the Warriors have relied heavily on the run game. As a senior last year, Landon Hagedorn amassed 937 yards and 11 touchdowns on 150 carries. Someone else will have to take on that role this season.

Returning quarterback Grady Madden posted good numbers, completing 84-of-135 passes for 1,088 yards with 14 touchdowns and five interceptions.

However, his top three receivers from a year ago—Preston Guerdet, Kaden Laabs, and Talan Priestler—all graduated.

Hanson is the top returning receiver with six catches for 76 yards and one score.

Despite the changes in the backfield and in his receivers, Ernster is looking to diversify his offense this year.

“There’s not one guy to stop—many can make plays,” he said, citing this year’s team strengths. “Again, we also have depth.”

With that said, the coach said the team will need to work on its run game as well as “physicality.”

A year ago, North Union finished 3-3 in Class A District 2. That district featured eventual state champion West Hancock and a very tough St. Ansgar team—both finished 2023 with one loss.

Ernster said those teams are again the teams to keep an eye on this year. Other teams on the schedule to watch include the season opener with Okoboji and district rival Lake Mills.

“We should be competing for the playoffs again and have winning record,” said Ernster.

Young Warrior team will seek to make its own mark

By DAVID SWARTZ

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ARMSTRONG — With five players returning that started at least a few matches last season and played in most, the North Union Volleyball Team will try to improve on its record of a year ago after finishing 15-12 overall and 3-5 in the Top of Iowa West Conference.

Starters returning this season are seniors Ava Steinberger and Aliyah Jones, junior Brylie Deim and sophomores Cloey Anderson and Ainsley Ulrich.

The Warriors will need a few players to fill key roles after losing setter Libby Stevens and leading hitter Olivia Merrill to graduation.

Coach Cortney Stevens, now in her second season at the helm, talked about the differences between last year’s squad and this year’s.

“Experience is the big kicker for this year’s team,” Stevens said. “We are young.. We have several girls stepping up to fill positions and several of those girls are stepping into positions they have never played before.”

Of those who are returning, Deim was second in kills last

season with 144 while Steinberger was third 90. Both will likely be outside hitters this year with Steinberger possibly seeing some time as a middle hitter.

Jones will be asked to take over the setter role and Ulrich also may handle some setting duties.

Anderson will be the team’s libero.

Newcomers that will get a chance for some time on the court include senior Lainey Shannon, junior Macy Colegrove sophomores Maisey Bierstedt, Shallie Walders, and freshman Samantha Hoyer.

Shannon, Bierstedt, and Walders all could see time as a middle or outside hitter with Colegrove on the right side while Hoyer may see time at setter.

Coach Stevens talked about her team’s strengths.

“This group of girls has a great bond,” the coach said. “They get along with each other on and off the court and play well together. They aren’t intimidated by each other and that is huge. Just having that closeness is going to make a huge difference.”

Of course there’s always room to improve.

“We have to focus on our



The 2024 North Union Volleyball Team includes, front from left, Lainey Shannon, Ava Steinberger, Aliyah Jones; middle row: Taylor Parsons, Ally Bruhn, Brylie Deim, Macy Colegrove, Kyla Irmiter, Olivia Price, Adeline Kollasch, Samantha Hoyer; back row: Lucy Dreyer, Marissa Nielsen, Olivia Richardson, Cloey Anderson, Jamelee Reyes, Maisey Bierstedt, Shallie Walders, Ainsley Ulrich and Briley Henriksen. Missing from photo is Lexi Anderson

Photo by Kim Meyer, Swea City Herald/Bancroft Register

passing,” Stevens said. “A team cannot run an offense without a defense. As long as our girls continue to work hard on their passing and defense we will be all right.”

The Top of Iowa West Conference provides tough competition for North Union, but the two same teams seem to appear at the top of

the standings each year.

“As for a long time running, Forest City and Lake Mills will probably be at the top of our conference,” said Stevens. “They both have solid programs and keep building them each year. Garrigan is always a fight for us with it probably being our rivals. Eagle Grove really stepped up

their game last year, they are not a team to underestimate.

How will the coach define success this season?

“Passing and defense—always be moving and anticipate,” she said. “A team does not have time to watch the game, but be ready for the next play.”



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Nelsen begins ninth year at helm of Warriors

Two state qualifiers return to lead girls

By DAVID SWARTZ
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ARMSTRONG — With two returning state qualifiers, the North Union Girls Cross Country Team will again have two of the top runners in Northwest Iowa. A year ago Jacey Welbig finished 26th in Class 1A with teammate Alexis Cummins finishing two-tenths of a second behind, placing 27th.

Welbig, now a senior, and Cummins, a sophomore will lead the team again this year.

However with just two other runners in the program, the Warriors will not have enough to score as a team. Also returning this year are senior Jennifer Carranza and sophomore Alyssa Welbig.

Coach Brooke Nelsen returns to lead the girls for her ninth season and talked about the differences between last year’s squad and this year’s.

“I would say more experience- even with the two seniors—they have been around but another year is just another opportunity to grow,” said Nelsen.

The coach talked about the expectations and goals for the season.

“Jacey and Alexis had great season’s last year,” said Nelsen. “I know the goal is to make it to state—how great would it be if they could bring the other two with! Then when they get there—compete well. Alyssa and Jennifer—I expect to have a great season just due to the more experience and the work they have put in over the summer.”

Looking at the Top of Iowa Conference, Jacey Welbig and Alyssa Cummins both finished in the Top 10 a year ago at the conference meet.

“I expect everyone to progress as the season progresses,” said Nelsen. “It is easy to get caught up in where we are at the start of the season and then forget the fact that we got a lot of seasons and that we need to always remember where we are at and where we want to go and take all the steps to get there.”

“The conference is so tough due to the fact that it is so big and we don’t run against half of them throughout the season,” said Nelsen. “Also, with us not running as a team- that makes it difficult as well. I look to Forest City to be a top contender.”

Forest City won the Top of Iowa in 2023 by 20 points. North Butler (Greene) freshman Addison Voelker won the individual title.



The 2024 North Union Girls and Boys Cross Country teams include, front from left, Alyssa Welbig, Jacey Welbig, Jennifer Carranza and Alexis Cummins; back row: Aidan Bauer, Kade Madden and Landon Manwarren.

Photo by Kim Meyer, Swea City Herald/Bancroft Register

Three boy runners to see if summer miles paid off

By DAVID SWARTZ
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ARMSTRONG — The North Union Boys Cross Country Team will consist of three juniors this season.

Returning from last year are Aiden Bauer and Kade Madden with fellow junior Landon Manwarren joining the team.

“We lost two integral seniors in Gavyn (Morphew) and Nick (Arndorfer) and they left some big shoes to fill,” said North Union coach Brooke Nelsen. “But I feel that these boys will have a great season to feed off of their (Gavyn’s, Nick’s) leadership.”

“All three of the boys have put in some major mileage this summer and it is showing,” the coach said. “So now we just need to add pace and speed work to them and so I expect them to improve each week. Finishing the season better place-wise at the big meets at the end of the season will put us in a great spot on the season without a team.”

With just three runners, the Warriors won’t be able to post a team

score.

“I expect everyone to progress as the season progresses,” said Nelsen in talking about the goals and expectations for the season.”it is easy to get caught up in where we are at the start of the season and then forget the fact that we have a lot of season left, We need to always remember where we are at and where we want to go and take all the steps to get there.”

While Lake Mills won the Top of Iowa Conference last year, Nelsen points to Forest City as another contender.

“Forest City always has a great program and so I expect them to be up top,” Nelsen said.

While Lake Mills senior Justin Right won the individual title last season, three runners who were juniors a year ago weren’t far behind. Finishing second through fourth at the conference meet were North Iowa’s Gavyn Grunhovd, Garner-Hayfield-Ventura’s Zach Flatebo and Lake Mills’ Kade Van Roekel.

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GRAETTINGER-TERRIL/RUTHVEN-AYRSHIRE TITANS

GT/RA Titans ready to roll for 2024-25 season

By DAVID SWARTZ

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Last year, the Graettinger-Terril/Ruthven-Ayrshire Football Team came out of the gates quickly and won its first three games. However, the Titans wouldn't get another win as they lost their final five games.

Three of those five games were close games that could've gone either way.

With senior quarterback Kasey Hough back at the helm, GT/RA will try to win some of those close games this year.

Six other seniors are on the roster with Hough including Jon Krieger, Isaiah Malm, Wyatt Haffner, Donovan Young, Gavin Dodd and Karen Pourmorad.

"We return quite a bit of experience from last year," said GT/RA coach Todd Hough. "We're expecting strong leadership from our group of seniors this year."

Last year, Kasey Hough accounted for much of the Titans' offense. He completed 112 of 177 pass attempts for 1,447 yards with 18 touchdowns to seven interceptions. He also carried the ball 11 times for 591 yards and 10 touchdowns.

His top returning receiver, Jaxson Schnell, is a junior this year. Schnell caught 29 passes for 464 yards and six touchdowns.

Kasey Hough also was the team's leading tackler a year ago with 53.5 tackles.

Of the other returning seniors, Krieger, Haffner, and Young are all linemen. Dodd is a wide receiver and linebacker, Malm is a safety and wide receiver and Pourmorad is a



The 2024 Graettinger-Terril/Ruthven-Ayrshire Football Team includes, front from left, seniors Kasey Hough, Donovan Young, Isaiah Malm, Wyatt Haffner, Jon Krieger, Karen Pourmorad and Gavin Dodd; second row: managers Blake Behrends and Cole Hough. Kinnick Peton, Wyatt Iwen, Koda Saul, Hayden Gilmore, Luke Malm, Kenny Ness, Teagan Hanson, Jaxson Schnell, Caleb Swedin, managers Brooks Hanson and Oakly Joyce; third row: managers Jace Schnell and Myles Mart. Brady Harris, Hunter Manwarren, Roger Alderson, Landon Dietrich, Callaway Kajewski, Will Darr, Zac Sorenson, Cael Currans, Riley Vanderhoff; managers Landon Pergande and Jace Hough; back row: Korbyn Dietrich, manager and Coach Lucas Hough. Abe Johnson, Jackson Utesch, Wyatt Rose, Caleb Manwarren, Braden Koenck, Gage Moore, Evan Jensen, Coach Chris Conlon and Head Coach Todd Hough.

Photo by Jay Schoning, Ruthven Zipcode

safety and wide receiver.

Some of the other returning defensive players that saw time on the field last year, include junior Caleb Swedin, who had 46.5 tackles last season and Landen Dietrich, who had 39 tackles a year ago.

Coach Hough talked about where he'd like to see improvement this season.

"We would like to see improvements in our consistency of execution this year," he said.

The coach points to Garrigan as the team to beat in Class 8-Man District 2 this year.

How will Coach Hough define success this season?

"We will define success this year by seeing improvement in our team every week," he said.

Brown takes reins of young Titan volleyball program

By DAVID SWARTZ

DSWARTZ@ESTHERVILLENEWS.NET

The Graettinger-Terril/Ruthven-Ayrshire Volleyball Team is under new management this season as Nikki Brown takes the reins of the program.

The Titans are led by five seniors this season with Corinne Cook, Zoey Gilmore, Lillian Vanderhoff, Kayley Ruehle and Mckenzie Ottman.

GT/RA will look to improve on its 3-24 record of last season.

Cook and Vanderhoff were part of the varsity last season and other returning varsity players are Trista Guinn, Isabelle Harris, Addison Hansen, Lindsey Conlon, Taryn Duus and Taylor Fay.

"Trista will be our team captain this year along with being our libero," said Coach Brown. "She comes everyday willing to put in the work, brings the positive energy and isn't afraid to step in and help others when needed."

GT/RA's top two returning

hitters are Cook, who had 55 last year and Hansen who had 54.

The Titans have several newcomers in the mix.

"The future of GT/RA volleyball is bright," the coach said. "We have some great girls in our freshman class. Myah Wise and Caitlin Hough will be a big threat in the front row with Kam Hough as the setter. In the back row, you will see Jadin Naig hustling after every ball."

Last year East Sac County won the Twin Lakes Conference with a 10-1 record while Alta-Aurelia and Newell-Fonda tied for second with identical 9-2 records.

Those teams look to remain at the top of the league again this season.

Coach Brown talked about what success will look like for the Titans this year.

"All that matters to me is that the girls show up every day, have fun and I see improvement throughout the year," she said.



The 2024 Graettinger-Terril/Ruthven-Ayrshire Volleyball Team includes, front from left, Olivia Moen, Jadin Naig, Trista Guinn, Grace Griffin, Kameryn Hough, and Zoey Gilmore; middle row: Lillian Vanderhoff, Terri Swedin, Jenna Conlon, Emma Bland, Mackenzie Ottman, Alonah Rosacker, Katherine Scott, Bella Rutter, Paige Clabaugh; back row: Coach Chris Olesen, Lindsey Conlon, Taryn Duus, Taylor Fay, Kayley Ruehle, Corinne Cook, Isabelle Harris, Addison Hansen, Caitlin Hough, Myah Wise, and Coach Nikki Brown. Missing from the photo is Jasmine Heisler

Photo by Jay Schoning, Ruthven Zipcode



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GRAETTINGER-TERRIL/RUTHVEN-AYRSHIRE TITANS

The 2024 Graettinger-Terril/Ruthven-Ayrshire Girls Cross Country Team includes, front from left, Elizabeth Pickar, Victoria Ellis, Eidann Squires, Liberty Ellis, Maggie Malm, and Coach Mike Nichols.

Photo by Jay Schoning, Ruthven Zipcode



The 2024 Graettinger-Terril/Ruthven-Ayrshire Boys Cross Country Team includes, from left, Kaleb Borchers, Cayden Wilson, Anthony Pickar, and Coach Mike Nichols.

Photo by Jay Schoning, Ruthven Zipcode

Small squad ready for another year of Titan X-Country

By DAVID SWARTZ

DSWARTZ@ESTHERVILLENEWS.NET

GRAETTINGER — Graettinger-Terril/Ruthven-Ayrshire begins its seventh year of cross country with five runners on the girls’ squad and three on the boys’ squad.

Nichols said this is the first year, the girls’

team has enough athletes to score as a team. Eidann Squires is the girls’ lone senior. Junior Liberty Ellis also returns the season and they will be joined by freshmen Victoria Ellis and Magnolia Malm as well as Elizabeth Pickar.

Junior Anthony Pickar is the only returning

runner for the boys’ team. He will be joined by sophomore newcomers Cayden Wilson and Kaleb Borchers. “I am looking forward to all of the athletes working hard,” said Nichols. “Liberty Ellis is a strong character leader. Cayden Wilson is coming off a shortened yet strong track

season and I hope he’ll lead the team to a strong work ethic in practice.” GT/RA competes in the Twin Lakes Conference. In 2023, Alta-Aurelia won the girls’ conference team title while East Sac County won the boys’.



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