

Macksville coach Hullman expecting a bumper crop of harriers

By MIKE GILMORE
Macksville's first year of a dual-sports policy means a boon to the Running Mustangs' cross country program in 2016. In Class 2A, where roster numbers are often a premium, already Macksville head coach Mike Hullman is expecting a bumper crop of harriers.

"We are very excited about our numbers going into the season," Hullman said. "With 29 runners, this will be the largest team that Macksville cross country has ever had."

Seven seniors, four juniors, 10 sophomores and eight freshmen have signed up for cross country this fall, with one also dual-sporting in volleyball as well as three also playing football, Hullman noted.

The girls' team has its top two runners returning, with senior Emma Stimatz and sophomore Itzel Garcia; the boys return six of their top seven, led by senior Hector Negrete and junior Brandon Ibarra.

Hullman also boasts a large group of newcomers. For the girls, new to the squad are senior Katrina Waters, who exited during last year's season with an injury; sophomore dual-sporters Christine Garza and Lexi Wright and freshmen Kiley Blevins, Caren Huguin, Kaylee Hottovy, McKinley Hottovy, Elena Kuckelman and Lydia Mendez.

"It is always nice to get a few new runners out, but I was surprised about the bigger numbers coming out this season," Hullman noted. "The freshmen even have enough to be considered a full team, which makes it nice looking toward the next four seasons. A lot of schools struggle to even fill out a whole team with all four



Stimatz

classes. It helps to push the runners knowing that they can make a difference in the team score."

For the boys, there are five newcomers. Sophomores Darien Miller and Pablo Rincan join Karson Waters, who is also a dual-sporter in football. The other two are freshmen Harley Blake and Gave Wolff. "We will look for this group to help add depth to our roster as they get more distance running experience," Hullman said.

"We have very high expectations," Hullman noted. "Our runners are very competitive and will always push each other. We will be capable of doing some amazing things throughout the season."

The Running Mustangs open the season Sept. 3 at the Josh Emerson Invitational on a flat, curvy Bicentennial Park course in Hoisington.

Macksville girls
Stimatz, a three-year letterwinner (PR 22:10), returns to the girls' squad that placed ninth as a team at Wamego at the Class 2A state 5K course. Sophomore Garcia returns as No. 2 and a lettered freshman (PR 22:32). Graduation took third- and fourth-place runners, which Hullman expects



Negrete

to fill with junior Eunice Esparza, who missed last year due to Achilles' tendon surgery and Bethany Esparza (PR 25:22) who ran in the last three meets of the 2015 season.

Senior Susana Penner, a three-year letterwinner (PR 28:40); senior MikealAnn Loiland, a three-year letterwinner (PR 26:35) and sophomore Jacquelin Galan (PR 30:15) round out Hullman's core group for the girls. "Each of these girls has qualified for the state meet during each of their seasons," Hullman said.

Macksville boys
Senior Negrete returns as a three-year letterwinner with the lowest PR on the boys' squad at 18:40. Junior Ibarra is second at 19:30. Senior Diego Delgadillo is next at 19:40, with senior Jarrod Kuckelman, a three-year letterwinner, at 19:57. Sophomore Andrew Cross comes into 2016 at 19:58; sophomore Jacob Suiter at 21:24.

"This will be a great nucleus to build around," Hullman said. "They missed out on the state meet last season after a string of qualifying several straight seasons and they want to get back there again."



2016 Pawnee Heights Lady Tiger volleyball



2016 Sterling Lady Black Bear volleyball Mantz takes over for new Sterling team facing new league

By MIKE COURSON
Last year was a historic season for the Lady Black Bear volleyball team with the first trip to state in school history. It was an expensive one. Much of that squad graduated in May, and new head coach Jennifer Mantz has just one starter and three returning varsity players back. If that's not enough, Sterling will be opening play as the newest team in the Heart of America League.

"I'm pretty sure no one expects much from us because we lost a lot," Mantz said. "I'm on the girls all the time about proving people wrong."

Mantz has been around volleyball for nearly two decades. She spent the last three years as the junior varsity coach, and she's officiated the sport for 18 years.

Raegan Mantz, libero, will be the team's only

returning starter from last season. Coach Mantz does have some athleticism on her team with several girls who competed at the state track meet last spring.

Gone for Sterling will

be a tough Central Kansas League schedule that included Hillsboro, Pratt, and Hesston. Instead, the Lady Black Bears will see teams like perennial power Moundridge.

Sterling volleyball 2016

Sept. 1	HOME
Sept. 6	@Inman
Sept. 10	@Haven Tourn.
Sept. 13	@Remington
Sept. 17	@Marion Tourn.
Sept. 20	@Berean Academy
Sept. 27	HOME
Oct. 1	@Burrton Tourn.
Oct. 4	@Marion
Oct. 11	@Sedgwick
Oct. 15	HOA @Marion
Oct. 18	HOME (Sr. Night)
Oct. 22	Sub-state
Oct. 30-31	State

Lady Mustangs look to battle back from nine-win season

By MIKE GILMORE
After several years of rallies in the sub-state tournament, the Macksville Lady Mustangs' volleyball team took a hit in their Class 2A sub-state in 2015.

The Lady Mustangs fell in the first round to host team Kiowa County in Greensburg in the first round, 25-19, 25-4 to finish 9-24 on the season; the Lady Mavericks advanced to the finals before losing to sub-state champion South Central.

The Lady Mustangs start the 2016 season with the team they left off last year. For veteran head coach Jennifer Gillespie, this means that her squad will have to hit the court hard out of the gate.

Fortunately, "this season returns six starters, including libero and 11

letterwinners," Gillespie said. "We will be deep at the setting-outside hitting positions."

Three-year starters Olivia Vosburg, a 5-4 setter-outside hitter, returns as a senior, along with all-Central Prairie League selection senior Sophie Filbert, a 5-7 S/OH. Returning at right side hitter is two-year starter, senior Taylor Gillespie, a 5-8 RH/MH. "Taylor led our team in pass average and ace percentage (from the serving line) on last year's team," Gillespie said.

Senior Deisy Carrillo, a 5-8 OH, will add depth in serving and hitting and juniors Lyset Ibarra (5-4 S/DS) and Serena Blaske (5-9 OH/MH) will provide defensive support and attacking, respectively, for the Lady 'Stangs.

Meanwhile, sophomores Braylynn Anschutz, Lexas Wright and Jenna Russell also saw extensive varsity time; Jennifer Ortiz and Secylla Blevins-Blass return from league and regional competition. Jaylynn Scott, a 5-6 sophomore OH, also served a role as a solid junior varsity starter.

Joining the Lady 'Stangs for the first time will be sophomore Ali Burns and freshmen Alicia Delgadillo, Kimber Duncan and Amber Pate.

After their opening quadrangular Aug. 30 at Greensburg with Hodge-man County and Norwich, the Lady Mustangs start the CPL slate at Otis-Bison against the Lady Cougars and 2A state qualifier La Crosse.

The CPL tournament is Oct. 15 at Kinsley.

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