

Post-Lashley era begins in Ellinwood

By MIKE COURSON

A new era begins in Ellinwood. Lyles Lashley led the Eagle boys to three-straight cross country titles. The Lady Eagles are the reigning Class 2A state champions and winners of seven-straight regional championships. With Lashley making the move to Great Bend, Andrew Cherry is now tasked with keeping the Ellinwood cross country teams on top.

"I understand what this program has done and how great of a job that Coach Lashley did here in Ellinwood," Cherry said. "I am grateful to be the person to take the program over. I plan on bringing in a positive attitude and lots of energy to coaching this team, and I think that will reflect in how we run. I think we will be an aggressive team and that will give us a really good shot to compete every meet. I am looking forward to seeing what these kids can do."

Cherry coached the Lady Eagle basketball team last winter. He has six years of coaching experience at Wichita Southeast, and he ran track and cross country at Southwestern College in

Winfield.

His Ellinwood teams did take their lumps. The Lady Eagles will be down four runners from last year. Perennial state runner Abbie Reichuber has graduated, as has Cassidy Schlessiger, who placed 11th at league last fall. Two other top-10 runners at league did not go out for the team. On the boys' side, Avery Pike led the team at state last year but graduated in May. Two other state runners did not go out this year.

"Losing the people we did this year always alters the dynamics but we are going to continue to keep working and see if we can fill in those cracks," Cherry said.

The Lady Eagles will still be one of the premiere teams in the Central Prairie League and Class 2A. Senior Joanna Strecker is the reigning CPL champion, and she led the team at state last fall with a fourth-place finish. Senior Maddie Hayes placed fifth at league and 23rd at state.

A pair of returning sophomores will also help the squad. Sarah Hammeke ran fourth at the league meet at 13th

at state. Courtney Cook won the junior varsity league race and went on to run 38th at state.

"I know and understand that the expectations are high for the girls' team this year," said Cherry. "Coming off a state championship, these girls are hungry to go get another one. I believe that we have a chance to compete with just about anybody. I think we have tough girls and I think they will push each other and keep each other accountable to keep working hard every day. We lost a few girls from last year's team but I think that only makes the girls work that much harder."

A pair of sophomores return to lead the boys. Peter Joslin ran ninth at league and 47th at state. Jayce Christiansen ran 13th at league and finished 68th at state.

"The boys are going to be young and inexperienced," Cherry said. "We are led by two sophomores who both ran at state last year. All of them are good friends and seem to be keeping each other positive. I think we will surprise a few teams just because of our age, but we will definitely



2016 Ellinwood Eagle runners: Front row, from left: Jayden Keith, Gracie Schlessiger, Erin Hammeke, Haley Troyer, Ashtin Klepper, Kaden Baird, and Marcus Fortkamp. Middle row: Eline Hanson, Joanna Strecker, Sarah Hammeke, Courtney Cook, and Maddie Hayes. Back row: Christian Feemster, Seth Winget, Peter Joslin, Jayce Christiansen, and Jon Whisnant. (photo by Mike Courson)

nitely have to work to get any kind of recognition at every meet."

Class 2A cross country will be new to Cherry, but he's looking forward to seeing the new teams and new courses. Mostly, he's ready to see his own team's work pay off.

"I really like our team," he said. "I am looking forward to watching them race just to see where we are. I am hoping that we start off hot and we continue to improve as we go. We had a great summer and have had a great start already. I hope that we can continue it. I just want to see them all race."

Healthy number of runners back for Sterling XC team

By MIKE COURSON

The Sterling boys were once a powerhouse team. Last year, the squad made it back to state, as did individual runner Zoe Miller. This year, with several top runners back, expectations remain high for Coach Dan Whisler, back for a 26th season with the team.

"We graduated just one senior from last year's varsity teams (Jessica Ricker), so we have a good group of returning runners ready to take on the responsibility of leading the team," he said.

Kaleb Wilson was the team's leading runner last year. He is not running, but Whisler will have back will Dutton, Max Dutton, William Weiner, Moises Zimmerman, and Max Fulbright. Max Dutton has been the leader in the early weeks of practice.

The Lady Black Bears will also have back plenty of talent. Zoe Miller placed 10th at regionals last year to qualify for state.

"She will be expected to help provide leader-



2016 Sterling Runnin' Bears: Back row, from left: Will Dutton, Max Dutton, Moises Zimmerman, Anthony Karraker, Tucker Robson, Alex Brasher, Kyle Stover, and Bryson Brownlee. Front row: Jillian Millhouse, William Weiner, Maddie Wagley, Zoe Miller, Alley Rowland, Madison Morgan, Nikki Clark, and Debi Schmidt. Not pictured: Luke Harding. (courtesy photo)

ship for this year's team," Whisler said. "Sophomore Debi Schmidt is back this year after an injury and is providing strong leadership to the team, so it is great to have her back. Nikki Clark has been running well to start the season, too."

Like the other Sterling teams, the cross country runners will be facing new competition as the newest team in the Heart of America League.

"While these schools are smaller than those we were competing against in the CKL, there are a number of strong cross country programs in this

league," Whisler said. "They have traditionally done very well in regional and state competition,

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Ellinwood volleyball 2016

Aug. 30	@Wich. Indepen.
Sept. 1	@Sterling
Sept. 6	@Victoria Tri
Sept. 8	@Larned Tri
Sept. 10	@Ellsworth Tourn.
Sept. 12	HOME TRI
Sept. 17	@Hoisington Tour.
Sept. 20	@St. John Tri
Sept. 22	@Larned Tri
Sept. 24	@Lyons Tourn
Sept. 27	@LaCrosse Tri
Oct. 4	HOME TRI
Oct. 11	@Kinsley Tri
Oct. 15	CPL@Kinsley
Oct. 22	Sub-state
Oct. 28-29	State@Emporia

Ellinwood XC 2016

Sept. 1	@Lindsborg
Sept. 10	@Wamego
Sept. 15	@Stafford
Sept. 24	@Rim Rock
Oct. 6	@Sterling
Oct. 13	@Coldwater
Oct. 22	Regional
Oct. 29	State @Wamego

2016 Fall Sports Preview



A NEW ERA
Reigning champion Ellinwood looks to repeat under a new coach

This year's back-up cover featured the Lady Eagle cross country team. Senior Joanna Strecker would have been our first-time two-time cover person!

(photo by Mike Courson)

Have a Great Season!



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