

Sterling loses state champ, returns several potential qualifiers in 2017

**By MIKE COURSON**  
It's tough losing a state champion. Last spring, Sterling's Sydney Wilson won a state hurdle title and won silvers in the short hurdles and high jump. Wilson has moved on to Wichita State and Black Bear coach Keith Patterson is dealing with other absences and injuries, but his girls' team still returns plenty of fire power.  
Junior Taya Wilson returns in several events. Wilson has had some hard luck in her first two seasons, posting some of the top marks in 3A but running into tough competition in regionals. Last year, she finished 10th at state in the javelin with a throw of 111-2.  
Last spring, Wilson had top-11 marks in both hurdle events, the triple jump, and the javelin. She's expected to return to many of those events along with the pole vault.  
"She's pretty multi," Patterson said. "She can do lots of them. She's got that Wilson blood in her."  
Junior Lexi Edwards made an impact in various events last year. She finished seventh in the 100m hurdles, and five of the top-six finishers last year have graduated. If Edwards can return to full strength, Chaparral's Taylor Bergman will likely be her best competition in 3A this spring.  
Sophomore Ashlyn Kelley showed off her wheels in her first var-

sity season. Kelley was ranked No. 6 in the 100m dash, No. 5 in the 200m dash, and No. 14 in the 400. Patterson expects her to again be strong in the 200 and 400m dashes.  
Last year, the Lady Black Bears had one of the top 4x100 relays in 3A. The girls were ranked No. 6 in the class but ran into some of the best teams in regional competition. Patterson will be without Edwards and Aniston Ramsey, who will play for the Sterling softball team this year. Sophomore Grace Rowland will move into that event to join Kelley.  
"We had a very good 4x1 last year," Patterson said. "We're missing a couple key components so hopefully some of these younger ones can step up."  
Rowland also made a mark in her first season last year. She was ranked in the long jump and triple jump, and was just out of the 100m rankings. She will move into some hurdle events this spring and returns to the 100m dash.  
Patterson said sophomore Eryn Spangenburg could also make an impact in the sprints and be a pleasant surprise for his squad this year.  
**New lineup for Black Bear boys**  
Last year, Sterling qualified Joel White to state in the long jump. With four of the top-sev-



photo by Mike Courson

2017 Sterling Black Bear track team

en jumpers in that class graduating, expectations could have been high, but White is still battling injuries from other sports.  
Patterson is looking for qualifiers elsewhere. Senior Brett Oden returns in the throws. A little improvement could get him to Wichita later this spring. "Hopefully we can get him qualified," said Patterson. "He was pretty close last year."  
Patterson said if senior Ethan Proffitt continues to train hard in the 400m dash, he could make it to state. Senior Brandon Frederick is out for the first time in three years. "Hopefully he can pick up the throws," Patterson said. "We're looking for good things from him out of the shot put."  
Track success is still in the works for a young squad, but Patterson said the group of senior Will Dutton, junior Hans Anderson, sophomore Max Dutton, and freshman Kaleb Fenwich has the potential to qualify for state as a 4x8 team.  
Patterson is still looking for sprinters. His best bet may be in the form of junior Nelson Bartsch, a German exchange student.  
"We're still pretty young with our boys," said Patterson. "There's not a lot of speed in these classes. Nelson has shown a lot of promise in the sprints. He's been a pleasant surprise from Germany."  
As members of a new league this spring, Sterling will see some new competition. Moundridge and Berean Academy have been tough track teams in recent years. The Black Bears will host the Heart of America League championships on May 12.

Sterling track 2017

April 4	HOME
April 11	@Lyons
April 13-14	@Wichita State
April 18	@Marion
April 20	HOME
April 25	@Moundridge
May 2	@Moundridge
May 5	@Ellinwood
May 12	HOA@ HOME
May 19	Regional TBA
May 26-27	State @Wich. State



The 2017 Sterling golf team is, back row from left: James McNutt, Zach Schissler, Lucas Briar, and Peter Settle. Front row: Jake Schroder, Lucas Weigel, Dallas Lackey, Kinzie Comley, and coach Dale Rose. (photo by Mike Courson)

New faces highlight Sterling golf squad

**By MIKE COURSON**  
Sterling golf coach Dale Rose has had various individual and team state contenders in recent years. Last year, his Black Bears just missed a state trophy by three strokes with a fourth-place finish. Even with some tough losses, expectations remain high for the Black Bear golfers.



The big absence is that of Nick Schissler, Sterling's No. 1 golfer from a year ago who finished eighth at state. Back in action is junior Zach Schissler a top-20 golfer at state last year. Nine of the top-20 3A golfers have either graduated or changed classifications, so the door is wide open for Zach to make a move.  
"I look for Zach to be near the top in every tournament," Rose said. "The rest of the varsity are starting to turn in some good scores. I won't know a lot until our first tournament, then I will have a better idea of what we can do."  
Joining Schissler, Lucas Briar and Peter Settle will play a full slate of varsity golf for the first time. After that, Rose will have to do some digging to round out his varsity roster.  
"Numbers are down this year with only eight golfers, and two are freshmen (Kinze Comley and Jake Schroeder)," Rose said. "So we have a lot of work to do to keep the top six shooting low scores."  
As with other coaches at Sterling, Rose will see new competition in the Heart of America league. "We are in a different league this year so I really don't know what to expect for the league tournament, but the rest of the schedule is always tough," said Rose.

Sterling golf 2017

April 3	@Nickerson
April 6	@McPherson
April 18	HOME
April 27	@Hesston
May 2	@Cheney
May 5	@Marion
May 9	HOA @Hesston
May 15	Regional TBA
May 22	State

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