



Lady Oiler senior Kassidy Pflughoeft, seen here at state against Kiowa County, returns as one of the area's top players in 2017.

(photo by Mike Courson)

Lady Oilers

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this season.

"However, led by the seniors, the team has communicated their goals to build team chemistry and to push themselves and the team to constantly improve their game and accomplish a successful season."

Crites and Kasselman will be tough to replace. Both multi-year starters and four-time state champions on the basketball court, Kasselman paced the attack last year with 427 kills. Crites was the leading passer with 686 assists. She did a little of everything with 41 aces and 31 blocks. The duo had a combined 518 digs.

But Coach Crites does return plenty of firepower. Senior Kassidy Pflughoeft earned second-team all-state honors a year ago and was a KVA academic honorable mention. She returns as a hitter after finishing last year with 191 kills and 322 digs.

Senior Taylor Oeser is a four-year player in the back row. Last season she finished with 299 digs and 103 kills. Senior Julie Donecker saw plenty of varsity experience last year, earning KVA first-team all-academic honors to go along with 112 kills. Junior Avery Hurley earned a KVA all-academic honorable mention and came up with 196 digs in the back row.

Senior Kylie Lamatsch saw extra varsity time last year when then-senior Chelsey Bieberle went down with an injury early in the season. Lamatsch proved to be one of the team's top servers with 23 aces. Senior Darian Hubbard saw limited playing time last year but will have a bigger role in 2017.

Junior Rylee Cunningham had 56 kills last year, and Crites will likely see some playing time out of her other daughter, sophomore Addison Crites, this season.

Heading into a second season, Coach Crites is pleased with what she has seen out of her athletes so far. "Time in the gym working with the players is always time well spent," she said. "To see the growth in these athletes not only in their skills and abilities, but also in their mental toughness and attitudes is tremendously rewarding."

The Central Prairie League could be a hotspot of volleyball this year with solid teams in Ellinwood and Otis-Bison to name a couple.

Central Plains volleyball 2017

Aug. 31	@ Chase
Sept. 9	@ Ellsworth Tourn.
Sept. 16	@ Russell Tourn.
Sept. 19	HOME TRI
Sept. 23	@ Hoisington Trn.
Sept. 26	@ Macksville Tri.
Oct. 3	@ Victoria Tri.
Oct. 5	@ Ellsworth Tri.
Oct. 10	HOME TRI.
Oct. 14	CPL@HOME
Oct. 17	@ Plainville Quad
Oct. 21	Sub-state
Oct. 27-28	State



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Lady Indians rebuilding for tough league slate

By MIKE GILMORE
In her second year as head coach, Larned volleyball coach Amy Wilson will be relying on a pair of senior letterwinners to move a youthful Lady Indian team up the Central Kansas League standings. The Lady Indians finished with a record of 10-25 overall and 2-8 in the CKL. Returning as seniors are Mattie Glover, setter and Alyssa Clark, MH/OH. Senior Megan Stelter returns as an OH/DS.

Three juniors will be moving into supporting roles: Katie Fischer, Baylea Perez and Alea Makings.

The rest of the 21 players on the roster are sophomores and freshmen.

"The (CKL preseason tournament) is a good measuring stick to see what we need to work on," Wilson said. "We



2017 Larned Lady Indian volleyball team

graduated a good group of seniors. Baylea and (sophomore) Lynzi Myrick have a little bit of varsity experience. I think we have a good team chemistry this year. We still lack height, which we can't do any-

thing about. We're going up against the Hesstons of the league that have 5-10 and above starting across the front and that can jump out of the gym so we have some physical limitations that we have got to make up for

on defense and picking up things that can't get blocked."

The Lady Indians went 3-5 in Saturday's tournament for sixth place and open the regular season at home Sept. 5.

Lady Mustang spikers return four starters

By MIKE GILMORE
Macksville's lone senior, 5-4 setter/DS Lyset Ibarra, will provide serving, setting, hitting support and floor leadership for four returning starters among seven letterwinners from last year's season. The 2016 season ended abruptly at sub-state for the Lady Mustangs, with a first-round loss to St. John. "We're going to have to adjust after the graduation of four quality seniors: Deisy Carrillo, Olivia Vosburgh, Taylor Gillespie and Sophie

Filbert," noted veteran Macksville coach Jennifer Gillespie. Juniors BrayLynn Anschutz, Lexus Wright and Jenna Russell saw extensive varsity time and Jennifer Ortiz, Ali Burns and Secylla Blevins-Blass return from league and regional contests. "Jalynn Scott served as a solid junior varsity starter and junior Paola Portillo will return to the squad," Gillespie said. Joining the Lady Mustangs for the first time are cross country runners McMinley Hottovy and

Jacquelin Galan. Returning sophomores include: Alicia Delgadillo, Kimber Duncan and Amber Pate, while 5-7 sophomore Mariah Dowling transfers in from St. John. Five incoming freshmen: Yuli Triana, Brianna Cleveland, Emma Sanders, Jesse Coyle and Maria Ortiz will add strong numbers to the squad this year. Macksville opens the season at home Sept. 5 against Stafford and Ness City.

Otis-Bison starts spike season with sweep

By MIKE GILMORE
The Otis-Bison Lady Cougars did something in 2016 that they hadn't done in a long, long time. Finishing with a 28-14 overall record under coach Janelle Maier, they brought a state volleyball trophy home to Otis. It was 25 years since the Lady Cougars had been to a state tournament, when O-B coach Sandy Dutt's team won it all in 1986. Last fall, the Lady Cougars placed third at Fort Hays State University's Gross Coliseum, beating Waverly 25-23, 25-20. This fall, the Lady Cougars are at it again, but without two key graduated starters. Taylor Regan, a 5-9 triple sporter, is away



The Otis-Bison volleyball squad opened the 2017 season with a win at the Healy Tournament. (courtesy photo)

at Barton Community College prepping for the basketball season. Cait-

lyn Schliowsky, another triple sporter, also graduated in May.

The prospects look see Lady Cougars, page 15

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