

**EHS Track**

continued from page 9

the sprints after a pair of third-place finishes in league. Her best 100m dash time of 12.87s was No. 11 in 2A last year, and her best 200m dash time of 27.11 was No. 13 in the class. State champion of both events, Brook Brownlee of Maranatha Academy, is gone to graduation but those two events remain tough in 2018.

Coming off a second-place finish at the Class 2A State Cross Country championships, Cherry will return a wealth of talent in the distance events.

"Sarah Hammeke, Courtney Cook, Ashtin Klepper, Erin Hammeke are ready to go for the track season after a runner-up finish at the state cross-country meet," he said. "They will all be very busy in each track meet trying to earn as many points as they can. We are very excited about getting them running again. We think they will help increase our point production on our girls' side."

**Blake, Joslin return for boys**  
 Cherry has back his



With some big losses to graduation in the 2A sprints, returning state medalist Drew Blake (center) returns as a medal favorite in 2018.

(photo by Mike Courson)

entire boys squad from a year ago, and he adds a few freshmen who could make an impact in their first varsity seasons. "I think our boys have a chance to score a lot of points at meets and be competing for the top-3 teams in each of the meets we go to," Cherry said. "I think our boys will just continue to get better each meet and it will give us a chance to compete the best in the meets that mean the most."

Senior Drew Blake had some tough competition

in the sprints at the league meet, finishing third and fourth, respectively, in the 100m and 200m dashes. At 11.01 and 23.40, he had top-10 2A times in both events. He ran an 11.37 in the 100m dash at state to finish sixth in a tough field. Three of the top-four finishers have graduated leaving the door wide open for a move up the ranks.

Junior Peter Joslin placed fifth in the league in the 800m run and mile. The 400m dash proved to be his moneymaker at the end of the season as he

went on to place 16th at state in that event.

Joslin is joined by fellow cross country runners Jon Whisnant, Jacob Cole, Seth Winget, and Wyatt Standlee. "They'll also be back to their running ways after a successful cross-country season," Cherry said. "They will be doing a lot of different things in the meets that will allow us to score points. These boys are tough and are willing to do whatever they can to help our team get into position to win meets."

The practices are in the books and Cherry is ready to see how the work translates to success at meets.

"We have really been working hard and are ready to compete and see where we are at," he said. "We are excited about our kids and how they are willing to listen and learn. I think both teams will just keep getting better all the way through the season and be ready to compete at our highest ability when League-Regional-State meets come around."

**Macksville bringing numbers to oval in 2018**

**By MIKE GILMORE**  
 Macksville coach Jennifer Gillespie knows she has solid state contenders returning to the track in 2018.

What she is excited about is that she has numbers to back them up at regular season meets.

"We currently have 44 out," Gillespie said. "Twenty-four boys and 20 girls. I am excited that we do have solid numbers on both the girls' and boys' squads, which will allow us to contend as a team at several meets."

"Our primary challenge will be lack of a facility to train, which makes it difficult to be competitive in the relays, hurdles and jumps that have been strengths of our teams in the past."

"I am pleased thus far with this group's willingness to be coached and look forward to what the year has to bring."

**Boys' outlook** – Among the senior boys is Jacob Rein, who is used to scoring most of Macksville's points in May. As a sophomore, Rein capped his debut in a Mustang uniform scoring 15 of the team's 17 points at state: his third-place finish in the 400m of 51.23 set a school record. He also was third in the triple jump at 42 feet, 1.5 inches.

Last year, Rein finished third in the 200 (22.80); third again in the triple jump (43-1) and fifth in the long jump (20-8.25). "Jacob will be one of the top returners in each of those events and will be looking to add a fourth

event to his slate at state," Gillespie said.

Other senior boys include: Trevor Freeman; Willie Penner, Alex Freeman, Chris McMullen and Juan Sandoval. Juniors rostered include Jacob Suiter, Trey Britton, Andrew Cross, Darien Miller, Karson Waters, Gerardo Fuentes and Parker Rodriguez.

Sophomore boys include: Gabe Wolff, Harley Blaske, Zane Johnson, Skyler Evans, Jesus Ibarra, Tyler Bissell and Simon Acosta.

Freshmen include: Jonny Threlkeld, Camron Torrez, Alex Rodriguez and Kyler Evans.

Girls' outlook – The Lady Mustangs return two members of their state-qualifying 4x800 in juniors Jennifer Ortiz and Itzel Garcia. Gillespie hopes to fill out the quartet from juniors BrayLynn Anshutz, Lexi Wright and sophomore Elena Kuckelman.

Seniors on the roster include Serena Blaske and Joanne Taylor. Juniors include Jacquelin Galan. Sophomores include Kiley Blevins, Alicia Delgadillo, Kaylee Hottovy, Caren Holguin, Kyra Kriewald, and Lydia Mendez.

Freshmen are: Emma Sanders, Bri Cleveland, Yuli Triana, Anna Suiter and Jesse Coyle.

The Macksville underclassmen opened the season Tuesday in Larned at the Indian Freshman-Sophomore invitational. The varsity opened the season Thursday at the Kinsley meet.

**Ellinwood track 2018**

March 29	@Cimarron
April 6	@Lyons
April 10	@Ellsworth
April 12-13	@Wichita State
April 20	@St. John
April 27	@Kiowa County
May 4	HOME
May 10	CPL @St. John
May 18	Regional TBA
May 25-26	State @Wich. State

**Macksville track 2018**

March 27	@Larned (F/S)
March 29	@Kinsley
April 6	@Lyons
April 13	@Spearville
April 20	@St. John
April 27	@Kiowa County
May 1	@Jetmore
May 10	CPL @St. John
May 18	Regional TBA
May 25-26	State @Wich. State

**WE PROUDLY SUPPORT SPRING SPORTS!**

**Progressive**  
 THERAPY & SPORTS MEDICINE

**117 West 6th • Larned**  
**620-285-6011**  
[www.ptkansas.com](http://www.ptkansas.com)

**WE PROMISE AND ALWAYS OVER-DELIVER.**

Our service teams are trained to keep your operation up and running. It's our everyday promise to troubleshoot and resolve all your irrigation problems quickly and efficiently.

We're experienced and ready to get it done.

[valleyirrigation.com](http://valleyirrigation.com)

**VALLEY**

**Ag Systems, Inc.**  
 810 E. 14th St., Larned • 620-285-2111

**Eagles**

continued from page 9

year's squad include: senior Jacob Herrman, sophomores Kyler Doll, Luke Wondra, and Ryan Niles, and freshman Gage Hosman.

"We'd elected some in preseason and, depending on how they work, they either got to keep it or got stripped," Bender said. "Those are the five we have right now. I think those five will hold on to it."

Pitching is always important in prep baseball and Bender thinks at least eight players will see time on the mound this season. Returning pitchers include: Doll, Wondra, sophomores Tyler Knop and David Hammeke, junior Kodie McFarren, and senior Todd Hamby. Freshmen Hosman, Lane Klepper, and Brad Shumate could also pitch. Shumate has exhib-

ited the best speed among the freshmen, and Hosman has the best control.

The state implemented new pitch-count rules in 2017. The counts were not an issue, per se, in Ellinwood, but Bender expects better efficiency from his hurlers in 2018.

"When you walk 105 hitters, we hit 110 batters, and we averaged eight errors a game," he said. "Do the math. That's more than 300 base runners who didn't need to get on. This year the pitching has been far better."

Around the rest of the diamond, Hosman and sophomores Woodson Corbett and Adam Mannie will split time at first base. Hamby, McFarren, and Herrman are likely starters in the outfield. Sophomore Cole Kubick returns after picking up varsity minutes at second and in the outfield.

"We anticipate (freshman) Eli Hernandez - he's probably our fastest runner - to work his way in there," Bender said. "He's still learning his angles in the outfield."

The team is hitting the defensive drills hard this spring. Bender estimates assistant coach Trevor Bieberle has hit at least 6,000 fly balls to the outfielders.

Down the batting order, Doll and Niles will swap

out at the No. 1 and No. 9 spots. Hammeke, Knop, and Herrman will likely occupy the middle of the order.

With no significant power threats through the first two weeks of practice, Bender knows his team will need to rely on small ball to produce runs.

"It's something they have to learn," he said. "I broadcast the juco games and you can predict when they're going to lay it down. That's what I've told these guys: everyone in the stands knows you're going to bunt. Everyone on the field knows you're going to bunt. It's a matter of executing. If we execute our end of it, they have to execute defensively. That means we still advance the runner. It's a hard concept. They want to get on base."

Away from the diamond, the players attend a mandatory study hall each Monday evening at Annie Maes. The study hall has benefits in and out of the classroom.

"Our team philosophy is we need to do things as a team outside of baseball," said Bender. "Grades are obviously important. The idea is the guys who do not excel at math can get help from those who do. We're proud of that. Attendance has been very good."

**Ellinwood baseball 2018**

March 27	@Lincoln
April 3	MINNEOLA
April 6	ELLIS
April 10	@Russell
April 12	ULYSSES
April 20	@Little River
April 24	@Canton-Galva
April 27	ELLSWORTH
May 3	LINCOLN (Sr. Night)
May 7	@Ellis
May 14-18	Regional
May 24-25	State