

# Haney takes over in Ellinwood

**By MIKE COURSON**  
Throw the past two seasons out the window. In each of the last two springs, the Lady Eagle softball team advanced all the way to the championship game of the Class 2-1A tournament. With the graduation of some key pieces and first-year coach Jordan Haney taking over the reins for Jason Duvall, the 2018 Ellinwood team will have a new look.

Haney is a bit of a softball lifer. She played four years of varsity softball for Great Bend High School where she earned All-Western Athletic Conference honors for three years. She played four years of college ball that included time at Barton Community College, Southwest Oklahoma State, and Tabor College.

"I love being back on the field," she said. "I love sharing my love of the game with these girls. I hope I can develop a program that brings success. This is the most girls we've had out for a while. I think it's going to be a fun year."

Haney pitched and played first base throughout college. That experience will come in handy for an Ellinwood team that graduated one of the top pitchers in Kansas in Allison Panning, who struck out 256 batters in just 151 innings of work as a senior in 2017.

The program did catch a break with sophomore Teigan Torres transferring from Great Bend. She will fill some big shoes left by Panning in the circle.

"Her ball moves pretty well, she throws hard and hits just as hard," Haney said. "I think she'll be pretty big for us this year."

Haney has some other big spots to fill. Brittney Beck was a staple on the corner at third base. Bigger than her defense was her

offense with a .575 average. She takes with her 11 doubles, eight triples, five home runs, and 40 runs driven in. She also led last year's club with 37 runs scored.

Katelyn Robinson proved to be large behind the plate and at the dish with a .413 average and 19 RBIs. Panning was no slouch at the plate with a .389 average and 23 RBIs. Jenna Oelke provided some big defensive stops at short and batted .403 with 10 RBIs.

Leading the returners will be junior Kaitlyn Pohlman in center field. Pohlman made an infamous catch attempt at state her freshman year and gained more notoriety last spring playing with a cast. She played in just 15 games but finished with 15 hits.

"She's moves well, she's a good leader," said Haney. "She's definitely helped. I have probably eight girls out here who have never played before, so she's definitely helped me try to develop some players."

Sophomore Kennedy Harrington returns but not at her usual position at first base. Harrington picked up some leadership points this winter for the Lady Eagle

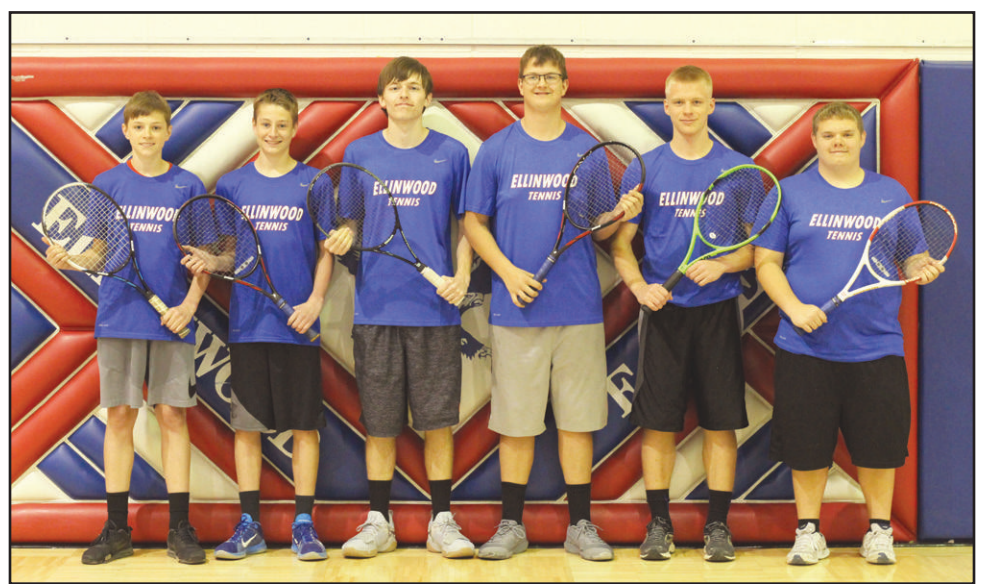
basketball team and moves to shortstop this spring. Offensively, Harrington batted .265 with 10 RBIs last season.

"She gets rid of the ball quick," Haney said. "Shortstop is a big leadership position. I think getting someone with some varsity experience really helps in that spot."

The two other returners are junior Lauren Petz at second base and sophomore Kaitlyn Panning behind the plate. Panning went 13 for 21 in an important stretch late last season. She finished the season batting .392 with 13 RBIs.

The pieces are there for Haney to be successful in her first season with Ellinwood. But the 2018 campaign will still be a rebuilding year for a team that has been one of the dominant forces in 2-1A over the past two seasons.

"It is (intimidating)," Haney said. "There are a lot of things I see we can improve on every day that can get us back. We're young. We have three seniors who are all foreign exchange students who don't even have softball in their countries. The rest of our returners are mainly juniors."



The 2018 Ellinwood tennis team is, from left: Caleb Robl, Nathan Ringwald, Keaton Robl, Brook Degenhardt, Landon Robl, and Caleb Bookout. (courtesy photo)

## Three varsity players back for Eagle netters

**By MIKE COURSON**  
Tyson Revell has realistic expectations for his Ellinwood tennis squad. With three returners and no seniors, a state championship is probably not in the cards, but the first-year coach knows hard work is the key to success.

"My expectations for these kids are to come to practice everyday, compete to become better individually and as a team," he said. "I've been installing the mindset that they need to have competitive practices in order to get better and be in the position to win matches this season."

"With that in mind, I want us to finish in the top three of meets and ultimately, earn a bid or two for state."

The 2018 Eagles will have a new look. Not only is Revell the new head coach but multi-year player Jacob Kasselmann has graduated, and Matthew and Morgan Fortkamp moved out of the district.

Senior Keaton Robl returns with two years of varsity experience, and sophomores Brook Degenhardt and Caleb Bookout saw varsity action last year. Freshmen Caleb

Robl and Nathan Ringwald join the team as does Landon Robl.

"We return three from last season and gain some experience from our three newcomers," Revell said. "Nathan and Landon are fairly raw at this point, but have a great mindset and get better everyday. Caleb brings some power and a tennis mentality that is exciting to watch as a freshman."

"As for the returners, Brook played No. 1 singles last year. I look forward to him to improve his overall game. Caleb and Keaton are two that I'm excited to watch grow. I think if they can push

themselves to a point that they aren't comfortable in practice, the matches will seem easy."

There might be a few growing pains as the season progresses, but as a veteran coach in the EHS ranks, Revell is ready to help his team succeed.

"I'm most looking forward to watching these kids grow personally and athletically," he said. "I, selfishly, as a coach, want them to succeed in my program, but I really want to help them become better athletes and leaders for other programs at Ellinwood. As a first-year head coach, I'm learning everyday just as they are."

## Ellinwood softball 2018

- March 27 @Lincoln
- April 3 @Spearville
- April 6 ELLIS
- April 12 SUBLETTE
- April 17 PLAINVILLE
- April 19 TMP
- April 27 @Russell
- May 3 LINCOLN (Sr. Night)
- May 7 @Ellis
- May 8 @Little River
- May 14-18 Regional
- May 24-25 State

## Ellinwood tennis 2018

- March 29 @Pratt
- March 31 @Great Bend
- April 3 @Ellsworth
- April 6 @Hoisington
- April 10 @Larned
- April 19 HOME INVITE
- April 24 @Larned
- April 26 @Smoky Valley
- May 4 Regional TBA
- May 11-12 State @Wichita

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