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# Nuggets Build On Success From Last Season

Kelsey Buchholz  
Sports Writer

Ten. Two full hands worth. That's how many boys return to the Hawley Nuggets Cross Country team for the 2019 season. It is a great mix of senior experience and youthful energy. Then add that to another four eager newcomers. It is a recipe for a good fall for the Nugget

harriers.

Leading the way is five-year head coach Nathan Stoa. He has been a constant in the program for almost as many years as his senior runners and continued to develop strong, competitive athletes, finding and focusing on each individual runner's strengths. Stoa will once again be assisted by Chris Baxter.

Hawley is returning to the course after a strong finish to last season when six of the seven runners set personal records at the section meet. But the Nuggets

aren't just satisfied with that. They have put in many miles during the off-season and are looking to improve on their final standings in both the conference and the section.

It'll be tough as Hawley continually battles the Perham Yellowjackets, who have had a stronghold atop the standings for quite a few years.

But the Hawley Nuggets may be finding their stride, with multiple miles already under their feet due to dedication and perseverance this summer, the boys are looking stronger than

they ever have before at the start of a season. This all comes with a simple goal, "Work hard. Day in and day out," said Coach Stoa.

The Hawley harriers return four seniors, who continue to lead by example: Masyn Johnson, Kelso Anderson, Will Daggett, and Isaac Ames.

"Our upperclassmen do a great job of organizing and leading our young runners throughout practice," said Stoa. "These seniors will be looked to as we continue to cultivate our younger runners."

That will be a key for Hawley's

success, as those younger runners really stepped up last season and found ways to compete with older, more experienced runners.

"Our top runners last season were middle schoolers," said Stoa. "As they continue to grow stronger through their mileage and workouts, I am excited to see the growth they show as we get towards the championship portion of the schedule."

But that leadership from the juniors and seniors will be key in keeping those younger runners motivated and on pace during the season. In addition to Johnson,

Anderson, Ames, and Daggett, the Nuggets return junior Billy Renner; freshmen Steven Sellin, Ian Kronbeck, and Kris Rasmussen; and eighth graders Brevin Stoa and Mike Robertson.

New to Hawley's cross country team this year are freshmen Billy Gunning, Tyler Hogenson, and Gage Fossen, along with seventh grader Bridger Larson.

The Nuggets open up their 2019 campaign at Breckenridge before turning around to Detroit Lakes and Ada-Borup, each meet one week apart.

## Nuggets Look For Off-Season Work To Translate To In-Season Success

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"Our girls ran more miles combined than any team in my time as a coach this summer," said Lady Nuggets head coach Nathan Stoa. "I am excited to see how that pays off once we get into meet season."

Regardless, all the miles that were put on their shoes this summer, show that Hawley means business.

The Lady Nuggets run in a very tough conference and section.

Stoa noted, "It's Perham's conference until someone knocks them off."

The perennial state qualifiers put up a battle at every meet regardless if it is a regular season meet or the section meet. But Hawley has the talent to earn one of those coveted state qualifying spots right along with the Yellowjackets.

In order to do so, the Lady Nuggets need to continue to push themselves and work as vigorously in season as they did out of season. Luckily they are bringing back experience to help lead the charge during this year's campaign.

"We finished last season strong with five of our six runners setting personal records at the section meet and placing sixth," said Stoa.

That is a great place to start for the Hawley Lady Nuggets. They return all but one of their scorers from the section meet.

Also, Lily Peterson rejoins the Nugget squad at full strength this season. Peterson battled injury coming into last season and was able to run for part of the season but never to her full potential.

Peterson was an all-conference runner her seventh and eighth grade seasons and has state meet experience. Having her back on the squad will just add to the competitiveness of Hawley's harrier program.

Stoa said, "Lily is a very talented runner that has had quite a bit of success. Our less experienced runners look to her as a leader and she is a perfect role model for the job."

Between the returning and experience and the summer mileage these ladies have accrued, Stoa has high hopes for the Lady Nuggets.

"This group could challenge for a top four spot in the section meet."

Despite being only a sophomore, Peterson is one of the most experienced runners on the squad. She is joined by fellow sophomore Kira Thompson, returning for another season. Also back this year is senior Alisha Robertson and junior Mia Tickel.

Tickel is another runner who has experienced many different courses and conditions over the seasons and has been a steadfast leader of the Lady Nugget crew.

Coming back to the team after a successful inaugural campaign are eighth graders Piper Myran and Ivy

Tickel.

But just because they have ran before doesn't mean that spots are guaranteed or they will automatically win a meet. There is tough competition from other schools as well as healthy competition within

the Hawley cross country program.

Looking to gain experience in their first season of cross country are junior Haley Reading, eighth grader Trista Baer, and seventh graders Lily Olson and Dru Dauner.

At the helm of the Lady Nuggets cross country team is five-year head coach Nathan Stoa, who has continued to grow the program both in participation and competitiveness. Assisting Stoa once again this year is Chris Baxter.

Stoa noted, "This team is more prepared than our teams in the past and has had a great start to the season's workouts."

With the Hawley Lady Nuggets

putting in the work when no one was looking, they are hoping for it to pay dividends. It will be put to the test at the end of the month as the Nuggets travel to Breckenridge. Then after the Labor Day break, Hawley will run again at Detroit Lakes.



The Hawley Nuggets Cross Country team members are, left to right, front row-Lily Olson, Mia Tickel, Haley Reading, Lily Peterson, Dru Dauner, Trista Baer, Bridger Larson; middle row-Alisha Robertson, Kira Thompson, Piper Myran, Ivy Tickel, Steve Sellin, Gage Fossen, Tyler Hogenson, Kristopher Rasmussen; back row-Michael Robertson, Isaac Ames, Masyn Johnson, Billy Gunning, Will Daggett, Kelso Anderson, Brevin Stoa and Ian Kronbeck.

## Good Luck Teams!

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