

Good Mix Of Youth, Experience For Tigers Track

Kelsey Buchholz
Sports Writer



After a cold, limited season in 2019 and no season in 2020, the Rothsay Tiger track team is ready to get back in action for 2021.

Coming out of a cold, restrictive winter, everyone is ready for April weather to turn the tide and let the summer rays start a little sooner, allowing people to safely gather (with appropriate social distance of course). Track season is the perfect opportunity for that to happen as well.

The Tigers' track and field athletes in 2019 were very young only having two seniors (Nicholas Kusnierek and Parker Keep) and two juniors (Noah Fiedler and Nick Wieszorek) on the squad. Those four athletes have now graduated, but in 2019 many of the younger talents were able to get valuable varsity experience, running against stronger, older runners from other teams.

Now Rothsay holds those stronger, older runners and is looking forward to see how they fare in their 2021 campaign.

After a breakout season as a seventh-grader, sophomore Logan Blumer is ready to get back on the track.

Head coach Trevor Hone said, "Blumer shows a lot of promise in being a successful long-distance runner."

He lived up to Hone's expectations and predictions, and with a little more practice, stamina, and muscle, Blumer will be looked to for setting paces in those longer distances.

Other runners returning to the Tigers that look to have strong abilities to contribute to Rothsay's track and field success

again are freshmen Matthew Danielson and Jesse Blondeau. "We have some returning veterans who have potential," stated Coach Hone. "This includes Jesse in the sprinting events and Matthew in the hurdling and jumping events."

But it isn't only veterans that are shining for the Rothsay track and field program.

Hone said, "We have a couple of newcomers to the track and field team this year who have some potential. Senior Colby Larson will be very competitive in the sprinting and jumping events for us. Junior Chris Carrillo is showing some early promise as a strong high jumper as well."

Coach Hone, back for his ninth year to lead the Tiger tracksters, brings back valuable experience, consistency, and leadership to a squad ready to make the most of this season.

All people have talked about for the past year is what needs to be done to keep people safe and get "back to normal." Well the spring sports seasons are doing their best to do both.

A benefit of the track season is the ability to space out not just at meets but at practices as well. Even though there is a team component, track workouts can be individual and open while still working toward optimum improvement and performance both in practice and later on in meets.

Under the direction of nine-year head coach Trevor Hone, the Rothsay Lady Tigers are eager to "get back to normal" by having a spring sports season and competing against conference foes.

Two years ago when this team



Members of the Rothsay Boys and Girls Track team are, left to right, front row - Chelsea Stowe, Abbi Blondeau, Mia Rivers, Lisa Kjelgaard, Brooklyn Weiers, Siri Klossner, Brennan Kort; middle row - Aubrey Vasfaret, Logan Blumer, Josh Honer, Addison Fetterer, Ethan Olson, Nathan Kroepin-Oien, Tristan Hofer; back row - Landen Kjelgaard, Jesse Blondeau, Zachary Christ, Matthew Danielson, Colby Larson, Chris Carrillo, Gavin Larson and Wylie Brenden.

last met up - they had a small squad but big talent as the athletes out for track and field had shown their prowess in other sports. The talent and growth they exhibited during their 2019 season primed the Tigers for an explosive competitiveness in 2020, but COVID-19 had other plans. Now these ladies get to return to the track, to hopefully pick up where they left off in 2019.

However they will have to do so without Rachel Brenden (2019 graduate), a consistently strong performer for the Tiger track

team, especially in the jumping events, or Jayna Gronewold (2020 graduate). But the current athletes are ready and eager to step up, particularly after having to wait an additional year for the opportunity.

But it isn't just a normal young team this year, as there are no high school runners.

"We are very young," explained Coach Hone. "We have no ninth to 12th graders, but we have several seventh and eighth grade girls who will be competing for us."

This means that the Rothsay ladies are not just young, but they have not had any varsity experience as they lost last year's opportunity to COVID-19. However, the lack of experience doesn't worry Hone.

"These girls should be able to hold their own this year and will be good down the road."

Athletes looking to contribute to the varsity squad are Addison Fetterer, Lisa Kjelgaard, Brooklyn Weiers, Siri Klossner, Aubrey Vasfaret, Abbi Blondeau, Mia Rivers, and Chelsea Stowe.

"Fetterer, Kjelgaard, Stowe,

and Rivers are all sprinters who when working together should be able to field us a pretty good 4x100 team," noted Coach Hone. "Weiers has the potential to be a competitive long-distance runner for us as well."

Having multiple athletes with multiple strengths and interests as well as a willingness to step up where needed bodes well for the Tiger Track and Field team. These girls will get invaluable experience this year, while continuing to explore different events to find their best fits.

Rothsay Softball Starts Varsity Competition This Year

Lynae Schenck
Sports Writer



The Rothsay Tigers have a new varsity sport this season. They will be coached by Anita Heier. She was the head coach for the Hawley Nuggets for 11 years. She has been working as the junior high and JV coach in Rothsay for the past five years and this is the first year they are officially a varsity team. Assisting her is Joel Meyer.

Returning for the Tigers from past years of Junior Varsity play are juniors Abby Honer, first

base; Chase Balken, pitcher/third base and Lillian Krupich, outfield. Sophomores Katie Reber, pitcher/second base; Madison Tillman, catcher; Kenadi Carlsrud, shortstop; Emma Buckingham, outfield and Adrianna Willits, outfield. Also freshman Elli Meyer, second base/outfield and Kinsey Heier, pitcher/outfield.

Team captains for this season are Chase Balken and Madison Tillman. Heier notes that Chase leads by example, is a hard worker and loves the game of softball. Madison is a natural leader and communicator and is always making life fun for everyone. Her leadership behind the plate at catcher will be important to the team's success.

The Tigers goals this season being the first, is just learning and growing as a team and as a program.

"Every game, every at-bat, every experience they have this season will be new for all of these players. They want to enjoy the process and see where it takes the team moving forward in the program," says Heier.

The team's asset this season, according to Heier, is their willingness to learn. They have grown so much already as players and are constantly getting better. They play well as a team and they trust each other on the field.

"These girls are always smiling and having fun," concludes Heier. "It makes coaching and everything else about the game so enjoyable."

The roster for the Tigers team is as follows:

- | | | |
|----|------------------|----|
| 1 | Kinsey Heier | 9 |
| 3 | Chase Balken | 11 |
| 4 | Kenadi Carlsrud | 10 |
| 7 | Elli Meyer | 9 |
| 12 | Madison Tillman | 10 |
| 13 | Lillian Krupich | 11 |
| 14 | Katie Reber | 10 |
| 15 | Adrianna Willits | 10 |
| 19 | Emma Buckingham | 10 |
| 22 | Abby Honer | 11 |



Members of the Rothsay Softball team are, left to right, front row - Chase Balken, Katie Reber, Emma Anderson Buckingham, Kinsey Heier, Elli Meyer; back row - Lillian Krupich, Kenadi Carlsrud, Adriana Willits, Abby Honer and Madison Tillman.

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