

Black & Gold

Sementi honors softball team

By Daniel L. Chamness

The night started with thanks to everyone in the background, it ended with the softball players that produced on the field of play.

Ryan Hornaday, the Tuscola Athletic Director, aptly pointed out what a crazy year it had been. While the COVID-19 virus made 2020 and 2021 a chore for the Warrior athletic director, this year the weather was his main adversary. As the weather forced outright cancellations or rescheduling of conference games.

Given that, the Tuscola Lady Warriors endured and soldiered on, posting a 21-7 mark overall and a 12-3 mark in the Central Illinois Conference. They were second in the league.

Ella Boyer, a junior, earned the batting average honor. The junior hit .556. In 90 trips to the plate, she pounded out 49 hits. Of her hits, almost 50 percent, 24 in this case were for extra bases. She finished with 12 doubles, two triples and 10 homers.

Kerri Pierce earned the top award for the Warriors. The graduating senior finished with a 14-4 mark on the hill. In

150 innings of mound work, she allowed 68 earned runs on 162 hits for a 3.17 earned run average. She fanned 82 batters and walked 47.

"We had several athletes that deserved this honor," said Sementi. "However, we would not not have been the same team without Pierce on the hill.

With those hits, the junior, who is verbally committed to a NCAA Division I school to play softball, drove home 46 runs and crossed the plate 42 times. Not only did she lead the team in batting average, but rbis, doubles and homers as well. Ironically, she tied in doubles and homers with Ava Boyer, her younger sister.

"Our junior class is going to be something to watch," said Sementi. "You watch the home-runs fly next year."

Caite Gibson earned the Warrior Spirit Award.

"Caite does right all the time," said Sementi. "She always has a smile on her face and works. It was one of the easiest awards that I have ever given out. She can be a menace at times. She hit me with the ball once and I think she did it on purpose."



LEFT TO RIGHT: Allison Pettry (Most Improved), Caite Gibson (Warrior Spirit Award), Makenna Fiscus (Lunch Pail Award), Kerri Pierce (Most Valuable Player) and Ella Boyer (Batting Average Award). Photo by Daniel L. Chamness.

Allison Pettry, a Tuscola freshman, earned the Most Improved Player of the Year.

"It has been quite a while since we distributed this award to a more deserving player," said Leonard Sementi,

Tuscola's head coach, of his freshman. "We have not had a player improve this much from the beginning of the season to the end of the season."

Sementi awarded the Warrior Lunch Pail Award to

Makenna Fiscus. The award is given out to a girl that constantly approaches softball with a workmanlike attitude, both in practice and the game.

"Makenna had the best game of her life in the regional

title game," recalled Sementi. "I want all these athletes to play two and three sports and we do not want to interfere with that. This year, Makenna was called upon to catch and she was able to that."

Warrior boys track distributes awards

By Daniel L. Chamness

Watching the 2021-2022 Tuscola Warrior boys track team is like watching George Herman Ruth, better known as Babe Ruth, in his rookie season.

You are well aware you are watching greatness in the making. And in some cases, greatness might have already arrived.

The Warriors earned several trips to state this year, and to the pleasure of Ryan Hornaday, the Tuscola head coach and athletic director and the consternation of future Tuscola track opponents, most will return for next season.

The returning success starts with Chris Boyd. The hulking junior thrower finished second in the Illinois High School Association Class 1A Shot Put. He also advanced to the state finals in the discus.

Not surprisingly, he earned not only the Most Outstanding Field Performer, but the Warrior Most Valuable Player as well. He was the points leader for Tuscola and Hornaday pointed out, he doubled up everyone else on the team.

"I told the media that covers us, most schools are fortunate to have one shot putter to throw over 60 feet, we have had three," said Hornaday, turning the praise flush on his

junior. "Chris is the second best shot putter in school history and he has another year to go. He scored points for us in every meet in two events, except for one meet."

Josiah Hortin was named the Most Outstanding Track Performer. The junior, who is one of Tuscola's three sport athletes, was recognized for his versatility. He was second in points for the Warriors.

"He added the 400-meter dash to his repertoire this year," said Hornaday. "He is number five in a number of events. He is second to only Eric Ponder in the 1,600-meter run. He is also in the top five in last 10 years. He is third in the 3,200-meter run and fifth in the 800-meter run."

Hornaday pointed out that Jackson Barrett and Will Foltz were close to the number of points scored by Hortin.

Logan Wallace, who will join two other former Tuscola Warriors at Illinois Wesleyan University as a member of their track team, earned the Warrior Spirit Award. The senior was part of the state qualifying 3,200-meter relay team that advanced to the state finals and finished 12th in Class 1A.

"Logan was the fifth on the team in points scored," said Hornaday. "Even though I am a



LEFT TO RIGHT: Josiah Hortin (Most Outstanding Track Performer), Chris Boyd (MVP & Most Outstanding Field Performer) and Logan Wallace (Warrior Spirit Award). Photo by Daniel L. Chamness.

Millikin University graduate and was heated rivals with IWU, I will be rooting for them, and Logan next year. We want to see him become incredibly successful in college next year."

Of the athletes that made the finals only Wallace and Riley Nolan, another member of the 3,200-meter relay, will return as juniors. In the

800-meter relay, the Warriors will also lose two of their four members. Ben Hornaday and Hunter Branca are slated to return, while Connor Lewis and Krish Patel will graduate.

The other state qualifier, Will Foltz, who advanced to the state prelims on Thursday in pole vault is also only a sophomore and will return.

Tuscola Soccer Club presents

July 9th, 2022

Play starts @ 11am

Awards for 1st and 2nd Places

3v3 Soccer Tournament

\$50/Team

6 players max/team

Co-ed brackets, teams of any makeup

For questions, rules and registration, email tuscolasoccer@gmail.com or visit the club's Facebook page