



Norwalk seeks improvement in league

By DON HOHLER
Reflector Sportswriter

Norwalk suffered a severe setback when Megan Sellers decided on AAU basketball rather than track.

That decision meant the team lost a 200-meter dash regional qualifier and a key member of the 200 relay team.

The team does have junior Lisa Lee, who is a fine athlete to build a team around.

The 800 Northern Ohio League champion and regional qualifier, also breaking the school record, will run in the maximum four events every time out and that almost guarantees points.

Lee placed seventh in the regional meet and missed out on advancing to the state meet.

Senior Laura Jones is being groomed for middle distance events as well as the hurdles.

Lee, Jones and sophomore returner Alyssa Chase were on the 800 relay team that finished third in the NOL.

TRACK AND FIELD

Lee and sophomore returner Meagan Music comprised half of the 3200 relay that claimed fourth in the league.

Chase took eighth in both the high jump and 400.

Music is another athlete who is expected to have a good year. She will run the middle distance events.

The team also looks to have sure points in both the shot and discus with veterans, senior Liz Koba and junior Leeann Jones.

Another returner is sophomore Laryssa Smith in sprints.

The Lady Truckers have 27 listed on the roster.

"There are some events that we are going to be very competitive in and probably that many blue chip athletes," veteran coach Ron DeLuca said. "But, those girls need some help.

"Hopefully we can develop some in time to move up a couple spots in the league meet."

If that help is found, it will

come from athletes likes of freshmen Tiffany Williamson, Emma Whidden, Carrie Kinder and Sara Wood, in sprints; Amy O'Donnell, Nicole Osborn, Hilary Davenport, Sarah Woods, Emily Reitzel and Brooke LoPresto, high jump and Sara Ream, hurdles Lisa Heidelberg and shot and discus performer Susan Cooper. Junior Tricia Welfle is working in the distance events.

Sophomore Carrie Kinder and freshman Dominique Pfeiffer could also make an impact.

"I would also like to find comfortable events for a number of other girls like (freshman) Jamie Burke, Gillian Scherz, Abby Brutsche, Jessica Smith, Amanda Hayes and Ashley Alexander and (sophomore) Hope Hudson," DeLuca said. "I am sure they all have potential. We just have to find their strengths."

Last season, the Lady Truckers finished fifth in the league meet, while posting a 3-5 record in dual meets.



LOU REDA/REFLECTOR

Returning members of Norwalk's girls' track and field team include (from left): front row — Leann Jones, Laura Jones, Liz Koba and Lisa Lee; back row — Laryssa Smith, Meagan Music and Alyssa Chase.

Western seeks another FC title

COLLINS — Western Reserve is poised to do some damage this season.

The Lady Roughriders placed fourth in the state in Division III, capping off a postseason that included a second in the district, fourth in the regional and a Firelands Conference crown for the fourth straight year.

Coach Barry Pickens is back at the helm and inherits five state qualifiers.

The group includes juniors Danielle Sidell in the 800-meter run, Branigan Fannin in the discus and Stephanie Tinney in the 400 and 1600 relays and 400 and sophomores Colleen Nitchman and Tiffany Patrick on the 400 and 1600 relays.

Each gained a top-six spot in the state meet in their event, led by a second in the 1600 relay.

Nitchman, Patrick and Tinney are on the 400 and 1600 relays that hold school records in 50.1 and 3:59.1, respectively.

Tinney was also part of the winning 400 relay in 2003.

Holding school records are Tinney in the 100 at 12.6, Fannin in the discus at 142.0 and Sidell in the 800 at 2:20.18.

Senior returner Amanda



LOU REDA/REFLECTOR

Returning members of Western Reserve's girls' track and field team this season are (from left): Alyssa McPeck, Stephanie Tinney, Amanda Patrick, Danielle Sidell, Tiffany Patrick, Branigan Fannin and Julie Finley; back row — Sarah Kay, Courtney Palmer, Samantha Boyd, Ashley Palmer, Colleen Nitchman and Keely Telquist.

TRACK AND FIELD

Patrick has past state experience, qualifying in the shot in both 2002 and 2003.

She qualified to the regional meet in both the shot put and discus last season.

"We're looking for return to the state meet and great leadership throughout the year," Pickens said.

Junior returners are Julie Finley in the hurdles, long jump and on relays; Alyssa McPeck, hurdles and relays; Sarah Kay, hurdles, sprints and relays; Jessica Barnes, shot and Keely Telquist, hurdles.

Sophomore returners consist of Samantha Boyd in the dis-

tance and relays; Ashley Palmer, sprints and relays and Courtney Palmer, sprints and relays.

Others in supporting roles are junior Whitney Aquino in the sprints and hurdles and sophomores Mandy Adams, sprints and Kori Roth, shot and discus.

The rest of the team includes freshman Brittany Anderson in sprints and hurdles; Danielle Gangluff, Katelynn Nichols and Lynette Tackett, distance; Lily Hansberger, sprints; Brittany Monroe, hurdles and sprints; Ciara Robson, hurdles and sprints and Angie Sterk and Brittani Sterk, distance.

"Our goals are to win the FC, we want to improve in the state

meet placing, train hard, get better, go to new levels and exceed ourselves," Pickens said. "We have a strong freshman class. If they stay healthy and work, they will contribute."

Pickens, who has taught at Western for 27 years, was head track and field coach in the 1980s for eight seasons.

He was an assistant for the past two years.

Pickens cited Crestview as the top contender in the league, with South Central, Mapleton, St. Paul and New London in the mix.

Pickens is assisted by Steve Adams, Rob Schwiefert, Jerry Beck, Rebecca Bement and Donna Slack.

St. Paul looks to get better

By DON HOHLER
Reflector Sportswriter

TRACK AND FIELD

It's going to take some doing for the St. Paul to move up much from last year.

The numbers just are not there for them to compete with teams like Western Reserve, a near write-in for another Firelands Conference championship.

"We are going to be competitive in any number of events, though in both the boys and girls meets," third-year coach Dean Shelley said. "But for me to go out and say the potential is there to go out and roll up a lot of points; well that just not going to happen."

Shelley, who is assisted by coaches Jim Bersche, Karen Welch, Dustin Beal and Aaron Kalizewski, has eight returning letter-winners.

Veronica Geretz already has three letter and is looking for a return to Columbus for another try at a podium performance.

She advanced to the state last season in the 300 hurdles.

Geretz got there in the 300 meter low hurdles in the spring, although she won the 100 hurdles in the FC meet.

Geretz was second in the 300 meter event and was also on the 1600 relay team that ran third in the FC meet.

Another senior who is expected to finish her career on top is distance runner Amanda Allard.

■ PHOTO was unavailable as of press time. One will run in a future edition

She is the defending conference champion in the 3200 and was fifth in the 1600. Allard is also going after her fourth letter.

The other three members of the 1600 relay team are also back, including junior Alicia Crum and sophomore Jennifer Bundschuh and Courtney Weisenberger.

Another athlete who scored in the league meet was sophomore Lauren Nickoli, who was sixth in the shot.

For the team to move up, it must get help from senior veteran Lindsay Bungard and Dawn Smith, junior Ashley Moffit, sophomore Laura Roberts and freshmen Caity Fitzgerald and Emily Lee.

"We graduated just six points from what we amassed in the conference meet in 2004," Shelley said.

"A little improvement in a number of area, and we'll attain our goal of moving into the top half of the conference."

Western Reserve won its fourth straight FC meet last season and finished fourth in the state in Division III.

Willard hoping for quality performances

WILLARD — Several individual athletes could have big seasons, but first-year coach John Buss acknowledges low numbers could prevent the Crimson Flashes from having a strong showing at the Northern Ohio League meet, where they finished sixth last year.

"It's hard to say where we'll be at the end of the year," Buss said.

The brightest star Willard has is Michaela Danhoff, a two-time state qualifier in the shot put.

She placed fifth last year.

"Michaela's got a chance to really do something special," Buss said. "She can definitely be back down there. She has the distance to win it on any given day."

Fellow thrower Rachel Fitzwater, a sophomore, is also showing signs of promise.

Sharon Gase is a regional qualifier in the 110 hurdles and 300 hurdles, and Buss expects the same this season "if she can get a few things clicking."

Other returners include Hilary



Buss



JERRY HARRINGTON/REFLECTOR

Returning members of Willard's girls' track and field team this season are (from left): front row — Hilary Daniel, Alicia Niedermeier, Michaela Danhoff, Brittney Coder and Stacey Massie; back row — Megan Van Pelt, Sharon Gase, Tracy Stockmaster, Rachel Fitzwater, Ashley Sexton, Sabrina Featheringill, Amber Jester, Nikki Cofer and Kim Laser.

TRACK AND FIELD

Daniel, Alicia Niedermeier, Brittney Coder, Stacey Massie, Megan Van Pelt, Tracy Stockmaster, Ashley Sexton,

Sabrina Featheringill, Amber Jester, Niki Cofer and Kim Laser.

Other members of the team are Katie Luna, Amy Newland, Becky Keefer, Mandy Reber, Shawn Abston, Toney

Predmore, Brandy Linville, Jessica Garcia, Marcia Gase, Emily Schloemer, Kelly Bogner and Stephanie Reideman.

Buss is assisted by Dom Fratta, Joe Wiles, J.D. Gibson and Matt Dominique.

14 returners for M'ville

MONROEVILLE — Coach Bernie Yoder brings 14 back to the fold this season, including six district qualifiers.

Senior Charlene Downing, juniors Val Beck and Emily Mastroianni and sophomore Lynsey Schaffer were part of the 3200-meter relay team that placed eighth, senior Renee Karnehm was part of a seventh in the 400 relay and junior Stephanie Stang grabbed eighth in the 200 and ran a leg of the 400 relay. Karnehm placed sixth in the high jump in the recent indoor state meet.

"We have some good athletes and if the younger girls come along, we may be able to contend at the (Firelands) Conference meet," Yoder said. "We also want to advance some girls to the state meet this year."

Other returners are seniors Jenna Poths and Crissy Gillespie; juniors Emily Myers and Olivia Ryan and sophomores Nikki Schaffer, Megan Schaffer, Kaylyn Eldridge and Megan Sickinger. The rest of the team includes sophomores Erica Dickman and Alysha Whitacre and freshman Stephanie Fleming, Natalie Beck, Leanna Wilhelm, Jenna Schaffer, Brittany Fritz, Kayla Beck, Bethany Bercheck, Jordan Hamons, Elizabeth Sickinger, Brittany Welch, Kaila Platte and Nicole Ryan.

Yoder picked Western Reserve as the favorite to win the FC. Yoder is

■ M'VILLE photo on Pg. A-7

TRACK AND FIELD

assisted by Brian Watt and Drew Karnehm.

■ Plymouth

PLYMOUTH — Plymouth had no seniors last season and are going to young once again in 2005.

The returners are senior Heather Stoodt, juniors Kristin Keaton and Megan Hedeon and sophomore Heather Stoller.

Stoodt is slated to compete on all the relays and long jump. Keaton was a regional qualifier in the 300 hurdles and is likely to go in the 100 hurdles and 3200 and 1600 relays. Hedeon is slated to participate in the high jump and 1600 relays. The 1600 relay took second in the FC last season. And Stoller is a shot and discus performer.

"Crestview and Western Reserve are expected to be tough," said coach Marty McKenzie, in his 17th season. "Our goals are to place in the top three of the conference and to be competitive at all meets this season."

"The girls' team has two seniors. Depth is always a concern. However, I am very excited and the prospects look good. The girls' numbers are a little slim."