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2023



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Published by



Spring 2023 Edition

A new face in town

Alex Weathermon takes over as Lebanon baseball coach

Alex Boyer - alex@lacederecord.com

About a year ago, former Lebanon head baseball coach Dustin Young announced he would step down at the end of the baseball season to take a role in administration at the high school.

That left a prominent Class 6 job open for the taking.

Enter Alex Weathermon.

Weathermon moved in from Marionville after capturing a pair of district championships and a Class 2 state championship during his two-year stint at his alma mater. He finished with a 55-9 record.

He believes he brings over a philosophy that Yellowjacket fans will come

to enjoy over the years.

"My coaching philosophy is play catch better than anyone else, put the ball in play, and throw strikes," he said. "If we can manage to do those three things, we have a chance to be pretty good. These kids are developing quickly, and I'm excited to be the head coach here."

In 2022, the Yellowjackets finished with a 10-16 overall record (6-4 Ozark Conference) and fell to Kickapoo in the first round of district action.

The Yellowjackets said goodbye to perhaps its most productive player in the program's history, Zack Stewart. Stewart hit .403 with five home runs and drove in 23 runs. He is currently attending Missouri State and playing

baseball, producing heavily for the Bears.

Other key losses included Justin Dameron and Ian Carr. Dameron hit .240 with 21 RBIs and was a solid catcher for Lebanon over four years. He is attending North Central Missouri College at the JUCO level, while Carr attends Ottawa University.

"Zack was well loved by the team at Lebanon, and players with his ability don't come around very often," said Weathermon. "He is going to see a lot of success at Missouri State and hopefully in professional baseball."

"Justin's value to the team will be very difficult to replace. He provided quality leadership and caught every game behind the plate while Ian was

a solid role player for the team and did a lot of things well."

However, Lebanon returns four starters to the lineup in the likes of Payton Wehner (P), Keaton Mizer (P), Hoyt Honey (IF), and Gavin Smith (C/IF).

Wehner is a senior pitcher who finished with a 3-1 record in 2022 with a 2.29 ERA and 28 strikeouts. Mizer will also be another heavily used arm after finishing with a 5-4 record and 2.92 ERA, and 41 strikeouts. Mizer was first-team All-Ozark Conference, while Wehner earned honorable mention All-OC.

"Payton provides us with a consistent strike-throwing arm on the mound," Weathermon said. "He does

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a good job keeping hitters off balance and challenging teams.

"Keaton is a competitor who had a good run through the Ozark Conference last year. We are looking for him to continue competing at a high level."

Honey was a solid shortstop for LHS and batted .298 with nine RBIs, while Smith hit .320 with 10 RBIs.

"Hoyt is a leader who our younger guys look up to," Weathermon said. "We look for Hoyt to hit at the top of the lineup and always encourage our team."

"Gavin will transition to behind the plate and is one of the most fundamental catchers I've ever coached. We are looking for him to be the captain of our defense."

Junior Cole Dustin is expected to see plenty of time on the mound as a left-handed specialist and will take over a corner outfield spot.

Other key contributors will be Ashton Coryell (Senior, P/OF), Parker Wehner (P, IF), Blake Deckard (P, IF), Josh Zeigenbein, Thomas Howe, Griffin Jones, Gunnar Grass, Austin Garrison, Braine Lamontagne, Chance, Cromer, Javen Wells, Nolan Milliken, Isaac Hillhouse, and Tony Myres.

"Ashton is a talented player who is transitioning to the outfield," said Weathermon. He is a very strong kid who I expect to hit well, throw some innings in relief, and provide good corner defense in the outfield.

"Josh is one of our best bats on the team, Griffin might be the fastest player in the Ozark Conference, Chance has a beautiful swing and is a smooth defender, and Braiden might have the most talent out of anyone I've had the chance to coach."



Photo by Marc Fisher (CreationServices)

Pictured is the 2023 Lebanon High School baseball team. In the front row, from left, are Chance Cromer, Aaron Graham, Eli Graham, Harrison Jay, Javon Wells, and Ashton Coryell. In the second row, from left, are Gunner Gress, Josh Zeigenbein, Nolan Fort, Jacob Cranmer, Bronson Rhoads, Parker Wehner, Mason Hendricks, and Cole Dustin. In the third row, from left, are Tony Myres, Austin Garrison, Griffin Jones, Gavin Smith, Isaac Hillhouse, Ethan Phillips, and Christopher Killburn. In the fourth row, from left, are Braiden Lamontagne, Hoyt Honey, Blake Deckard, Payton Wehner, Keaton Mizer, Thomas Howe, Austin Hendrix, and Nolan Milliken. In the back row, from left, are coach Logan Prock, head coach Alex Weathermon, and coach Tyler Staats.

"We are looking at being the best Lebanon baseball team we possibly can be. I know we have a younger team, but I love these kids and their work ethic. Lebanon develops high-quality, hard-working kids. We want to embrace that and add it to our identity this season."

Weathermon said it would be a work in progress this season early on with the new roster and coaching system but hopes to be competitive by district time.

"The entire team philosophy we have is about being unique and understanding our roles for the team," he said. "Our goal is to be playing our best baseball by the time May rolls around and give them a chance to make a run in the playoffs."

"The Ozark Conference is going to be extremely tough. Glendale, Camdenton, and Kickapoo will

produce some of the best teams in the state. Our goal is to be competitive in the conference and give teams at the

top a run for their money. We have a long way to go before we create the quality of players they have, but our kids are working just as hard as anyone else."

Lebanon was scheduled to play in the Marshfield Jamboree and will open its season on March 18 at St. Francis Borgia.

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Golf team returns young talent in 2023



LCR photo/Alex Boyer

Pictured is the 2023 Lebanon High School boys' golf team. In the front row, from left, are Levi Collins, Trustin Cox, Kieler Branch, Ryan Jensen, Kaige Gideon, Noah Thornhill, and Ethan Mustard. In the back row, from left, are Kory Hough, Titan Haney, Drew Bowling, Hayden Perkins, Riley Fisher, Carson Bugg, and Canon Roark. Not pictured are Matthew Scott, Jaden Norris, Brandon Perry, and Blake Shellhorn.

Alex Boyer - alex@laclede record.com

The Lebanon High School boys' golf team had a successful season under first-year head coach Trey Overstreet in 2022, and now the Yellowjackets are loaded with a plethora of talent that should result in more success this upcoming spring.

"We had a really solid year last year," Overstreet said. "When you consider how young we were (two freshmen, two sophomores, and one senior), I think the year went about as well as it could have. We brought home one tournament title and finished 3rd in the prestigious Missouri State Relays."

Lebanon graduated one key senior in Mason Bowman. Bowman was a four-year varsity player and an essential part of the team, and Overstreet said his character and experience will be missed.

Heading into 2023, the Yellowjackets will return four starters from last year and one from 2021. Three of the top five players in the lineup have been State qualifiers (junior Kory Hough, sophomore Ethan Mustard, and junior Canon Roark), while Mustard finished 9th in the Class 4 State Championships last year and became the first golf state medalist since 2006.

Over the two-day tournament, he carded an 82 and 71 (-1), according to Overstreet.

Sophomore Titan Haney was an All-Ozark Conference golfer as a freshman and played the No. 2 spot for the Yellowjackets last year, barely missing the State tournament cut.

"Titan has improved this offseason tremendously," said Overstreet. "He is a leader that a lot of guys look up to and is always working to perfect his craft."

Junior Drew Bowling played a majority of the season at the No. 5 spot. He will be relied upon in big tournaments along with competition from sophomores Trustin Cox

and Fisk Miller and juniors Wesley Chaffin and Riley Fisher.

"All of those guys are important to our team," Overstreet explained. "I envision all of them getting a shot at varsity time and rolling with the golfer playing the best come post-season time, but we will see how things shake out."

Overstreet said his group of players work extremely hard every day at practice.

"You would be hard-pressed to find four golfers that worked harder this offseason than our top four, especially Titan and Kory," said Overstreet. "The opening few weeks of practice have been great, and we have 20 golfers out, another record as of late, and look to continue the momentum this group built on last year."

"Practices are focused and fun, with the experience at the top and a nice freshman class including Noah Thornhill, Levi Collins, and Hayden Perkins."

Before their first match at Osage National on March 20, Overstreet said the team will look to improve in every area, especially with their short game.

Home matches will be on April 20 against Rolla and April 27 against Marshfield, starting at 4:00 p.m.

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The opening few weeks of practice have been great, and we have 20 golfers out, another record as of late, and look to continue the momentum this group built on last year."

- Coach Trey Overstreet

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Jacob Woolsey takes over for Lebanon soccer

Alex Boyer - alex@laclede record.com

Jacob Woolsey has been an assistant coach in the Lebanon soccer program for ten years. Now, Woolsey will get his shot at a head coaching job as he replaces his mentor Matt Jernigan as the new Lebanon High School girls' soccer coach.

"This will be my first season as the head coach," said Woolsey. "I am very excited to build on the program that Coach Jernigan has built over the past nine years. I have learned so much over the past ten years as an assistant coach, and I am ready to apply that to the varsity."

In 2022, the Lady 'Jackets went 14-11 overall with a 4-6 Ozark Conference record. They fell in the semifinals to Catholic after defeating the Camdenton Lakers in double overtime.

After graduating key seniors in Dream Cunningham (first-team All-OC), Chloe Shivers (first-team All-OC), and Jewell Shockley (first-team All-OC), the Lady 'Jackets will look to replace some talent.

Returning to the pitch will be senior Jayden Piercy, who had 13 goals in 2022, and Sydney Wilson will return to the goal after breaking the single-season shutout record with 13 shutouts last season.

Defenders Destiny Stokes and Chloe Shearer will be returning starters that were instrumental to the defense last season, too.

Senior Jaidyn Collins was an All-OC honorable mention player last year and will return to the center midfield position, while Hannah Lane, Kaytlin Frank, Kali Williams, Brynne York, and Brooke Frank are other key returns that Woolsey will rely heavily on to have an impact at the varsity level.

Sophomore Makayla Smith finished the year with eight goals, while Addy Collins had 11 assists from the midfield position and should be an important part of the team this season.



Submitted photo

Pictured is the 2023 Lebanon High School girls' soccer team. In the front row, from left, are Emilee Malott, Josie Wadley, Inalee Row, Emma Layman, Remi Mahan, Jayden Piercy, Keelie Mahan, Zyllynn Dozier, Chloë Shearer, Addy Collins, Mickayla Light, Kali Williams, Alegria Uciada, Hannah Lane, and Shayla Mejia. In the back row, from left, are Mahayla Smith, Miah Orcutt, Addison Smith, Ellie Richards, Abby Cones, Bailey Lowrance, Destiney Stokes, Brooke Frank, Sydney Wilson, Macy Offutt, Alexis Perryman, Jenna Rosen, Celisity Passmore, Jaylin Keller, and Hope Isbell.

"Mahayla split time between JV and varsity last season," Woolsey explained. "She brings a positive attitude and is calm in stressful situations, which is needed on the field."

The team scored 60 goals total to 32 goals against, and Woolsey thinks the team has a chance to break the shutout record again.

"I think it is a real possibility to break those again this coming season," he stated. "It will take a lot of mental focus and effort, but I think the girls are up for the challenge."

Newcomers who have a chance to make an immediate impact include junior Jenna Rosen and sophomore Zyllynn Dozier.

"Jenna played mostly JV last year and made vast improvements that have led the coaching staff to believe that she will be of great help to our team this year," he said. "Zyllynn was another player that split the team between JV and varsity. She is very passionate about giving 100% of her effort to her team during a

game and challenges those around her to do the same."

Through the first few weeks of practice, Woolsey said he likes the work ethic of this group.

"The team is always willing to put in the extra effort that is required to improve," he explained. "The team's strength revolves around hard work and positive attitudes. We have ten returning seniors, several of which

are varsity starters."

Lebanon hosted its Jamboree on March 10 and will open the season on March 17 and 18 with a home tournament.

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Track team excited about upcoming season

Alex Boyer - alex@lacederecord.com

Last season was a year to remember for the Lebanon High School track and field team.

As head coach Shane Rebmann enters his 23rd year of coaching track and field at LHS, 2023 will be a year of excitement in the program.

The team had 29 Academic All-State student-athletes, 38 All-Ozark Conference performers, 35 All-District performances, seven State qualifiers, and three state medalists in Jocce Pettyjohn (300m hurdles), Triston Wilson (shot put), and Kally Mack (2nd place, Discus). Mack set the school record in the Discus with a mark of 138' 5", and Brooklyn O'Cain set the javelin record with a throw of 119' 11".

Other key losses include Petty-

john, Mack, Myah Hough, Skyla Sien, Destiny Zimdars, Karagan Bean, Kori Cromer, Selena Smith, Wilson, Trey Alley, Ayden Carr, Isaiah Waterman, Jamarr Rogers, and Logan Lybarger.

"Those girls were absolute cornerstones of our girls' team who had been with us since 7th grade," said Rebmann. "The boys' leadership and passion will be tough to replace. It was a fun group of guys to coach."

Returning to the squad this year on the girls' side will include names like Raylee Quick (junior), Brooklyn O'Cain (junior), Ciaria Keeney (junior), Halea Bartel (junior), Liz Miller (senior), Ella Johnson (junior) Morgan Durbin (sophomore), Saylor Helton (sophomore), Rilee Jackson (sophomore), Taylor Nail (sophomore), Addy Rebmann, Elsie Shadel (sophomore), and Nicole Winfrey

(sophomore).

"Brooklyn came out last season, threw the Javelin for the first time, and smashed our school record. She's spent a lot of her time since then studying the event and understanding that there is more to it than just going out and throwing hard," Rebmann said. "Raylee will be in her second year as a High Jumper. She improved so much from the start of last season to the end. She is very explosive and has great spring off the ground. After a year of experience, she is ready to compete at a high level this year.

"Ciaria is going to be our top Discus thrower this year on the girls side. She is a really good athlete who could also jump and probably run on a couple of relays for us. Halea is super fast. We believe she can be one

of our best from 100 to 400 meters. Liz has been one of the most versatile runners we've had in a long time. She has run everything from the 100m Hurdles to the 800. Saylor is one of those kids that can really do any event well. We expect her to be a part of anything from a 4x1 up to a 4x8 relay. Morgan has made great strides athletically over the past year. She had great volleyball and basketball seasons, which will also translate to success on the track. Elsie looks like she is ready to step into that top role in the Shot Put this year. Elsie had a great mentor last year with Destiny, so she knows what it takes to be great in that event. Taylor is a great teammate. She loves her team and has worked hard at all of our off-season workouts. Addy is coming off an exceptional freshman year while

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only competing for about half-time for us due to some injuries. She was a sectional qualifier in the High Jump and won the SBU meet last year, so competing at a high level is nothing new for her."

The boys' side will return key runners/throwers/jumpers in Danen Conrad (junior), Chris Wadley (senior), Reese Klemin (senior), Jacoby Fultz (senior), Cade Muscia (senior), Kaleb Nail (senior), Dakota Windsor (senior), Evan Webb (senior), Peter Stunja (junior), Kelby Conner (junior), Jax Glendenning (sophomore), Bodee O'Neil (sophomore), and Jr. Zevallos (sophomore).

"Danen has some big shoes to fill in the Shot Put, but his speed and explosiveness are real strengths in that event. Danen had an All-State football season, so he knows what it's like to compete at a high level," Rebmann explained. "Chris not only helps our team GPA, but he's also one of our top distance runners. Chris is a kid who just gets better the farther he runs. The 1600 and 3200 are two races that we expect Chris to succeed in.

"Reese has taken it upon himself to become a great Pole Vaulter. He spent time this summer in Waynesville working with some other vaulters, and that type of dedication will lead to success. We were so glad to get Jacoby back for the last half of our season after his knee injury last year. He really has his eyes set on running the 4x4 relay this year, so that will be a step up for him. Caden is a returning state qualifier in the triple jump and has set new goals to achieve an All-State performance. Cade is a three-sport athlete who understands

what it takes to get to the next level. Kaleb is a great kid who has signed to run for SBU, so he has big goals for the season. Dakota has dedicated his spring efforts towards doing great things in the Discus. Evan came out for us last season and was one of our most coachable kids. His focus is on the High Jump, and I know that he has worked hard since last spring to get stronger and faster. Kelby is poised to have a breakout season. I'm not sure if anyone has put in more miles this offseason in all of southwest Missouri. Peter had a great XC season and just carried on from there and put in a ton of miles over the winter. Jax is simply a great athlete. Whatever Jax wants to do, he can do. It's a joy to have the chance to coach an athlete like that."

Some newcomers to the program that Rebmann will be looking to rely on include a list of Abe Allen (sophomore), Braydon Mann (sophomore), Brock Piercy (sophomore), Eli Jackson (freshman), Ethan Jones (junior), Jake Rebmann (freshman), JJ Hutson (freshman), Josiah Simmonds (freshman), Rhett Rhoades (freshman), Liam Allen (freshman), Kaden Hyatt (senior), Kameron Myers (sophomore), Abigail Tague (freshman), Addison Dent (freshman), Ashlynn Gray (freshman), Bailey Cromer (freshman), Cammie Fowler (senior), Faith Coffman (sophomore), Lily Waterman (freshman), and Samantha Richardson (freshman).

Heading into the season, Rebmann said the distance squad would be good this spring and be heavily relied upon to compete well.

"They have put a lot of work in



Submitted photos

Pictured is the Lebanon High School track and field team. The Yellowjackets are coached by Shane Rebmann, and expectations are high for them this spring.

and are very supportive of each other and are learning to compete," he stated. "We are very young, and our freshman and sophomores will end up being a big part of our varsity lineup. The great thing is that they have shown that they are ready during the first two weeks of practice.

"My favorite part of this team is watching how they compete with each other every day at practice. They push each other to be the best they can be. This competitiveness at practice makes meets seem really easy. We still need to improve some of the technical aspects of our events. The weather has not really cooperated to work on our jumping

events, hurdles, and relay handoffs. We have done as much as we can, but we need to be safe and keep our athletes healthy, so some of that will just have to wait a little. Once we start meets, things go really quick, so we are going to have to get moving on these details."

With over 120 kids in the program, Rebmann gave a shoutout to his staff, including Garrett Wade, Nathaniel Rogers, Lesley Hough, Ben Nail, and Josh Smith.

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Tennis team returns plenty of depth in 2023

Alex Boyer - alex@laclede record.com

Lebanon tennis coach Ron Crowell is entering his 19th season with the Yellowjackets and has a career record of 318-290 as the boys' and girls' coach.

With spring here, he is excited about the upcoming boys' season.

"I believe we have some players that are doing a great job of thinking the game," said Crowell. "They have a good grasp on the mental aspect of the game, and they are constantly looking for weaknesses in their opponent that they can take advantage of. They set their points up well, and that is something we didn't do a great job of last year.

"We are way ahead of where we were a season ago with the experience we have back, and we are hoping to surprise some teams this

We are way ahead of where we were a season ago with the experience we have back, and we are hoping to surprise some teams this season."

- Coach Ron Crowell

season. The work ethic of this team has been outstanding, and this is a fun group to coach."

After going 6-16 in 2022, the team brings back some experience after being considered a young team.

Lebanon did record wins over Camdenton and West Plains, but Crowell is hoping to get back to a winning season this year.

After playing there as a freshman, Ethan Fisher will likely play in the No. 1 spot this spring.

"He is an outstanding player, and he is only a sophomore," Crowell said. "He has a chance to have a fantastic career, and he is super talented."

Senior Case Warson and freshman Conor McGruder are two other players Crowell mentioned as key players.

"Warson is a senior and led us in wins last year in his first year playing tennis," he stated. "McGruder is a freshman that will have a huge impact on this team. He has worked extremely hard, and he has put a ton of time into tennis, and he has a great future ahead of him."

Tomasso Sernia, Kasey Hicks, Dathon Durbin, and Kaden Roberts are other players who should be in a position to compete in a spot at the varsity level.

Crowell said the season is still young, but the team has a lot to



Submitted photos

Pictured is the 2021 Lebanon High School boys' tennis team. In the front row, from left, are Austin Barber, Aiden Buckley, Chance Arthur, Jayce West, Jake Henson, and Cameron Fisher. In the middle row, from left, are Easton Cromer, Hayden Starnes, Evan Rogers, Dathon Durbin, and Kyle Maynor. In the back row, from left, are coach Ron Crowell, Michael Owen, Devin Blackburn, Michael Jones, Reed Danek, and Kameron Woodcock.

work on.

"Our focus this week has been on our singles play, but in the next few days, we will focus on doubles. Our main goal is to become more consistent and continue to get better every day."

Lebanon will open its season on March 20 at home against Capital City.

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We are bringing back some experience

Beth Durreman - bethd@laclede record.com

Conway's baseball team had a rough year last year ending at 5 and 16. Coach Clay Bilyeau said "We were a pretty young team last year, and we started a lot of freshman and several sophomores on top of that."

Only three seniors graduated last year, and only one senior on the roster this year. Seven full time starters are re-



turning this year. Bilyeau said "We're still a young team but we are definitely moving in the right direction. We returned the biggest chunk of our pitching."

Coach Bilyeau has three assistant coaches, Brady Huckaby, Steve Kirkwood and Jeff Graves.

Coach Bilyeau is looking forward to getting back out on the field, "we brought back a lot of our kids, so even though were young we are bringing

back some experience now, the core of our pitching and offense is back, so I think we are trending in the right direction" said Bilyeau.

When asked about his conference Bilyeau said "Our conference is really tough, but we enjoy the challenge to come out and compete every year and having a chance to win it. We were pretty competitive in our conference in the fall, and I feel win can win a game or two this season in the conference, if we play well."

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We brought back a lot of our kids, so even though were young we are bringing back some experience now, the core of our pitching and offense is back, so I think we are trending in the right direction."

- Coach Clay Bilyeau



GO BEARS!



2022/2023 CONWAY BASEBALL

Front row left to right, Anthony Breshears, Quinton McGuire, Zayden Jacobson, Evan Peters, Tyler Vaughan. 2nd row left to right, Cade Archer, Brady Rogers, Isaac Freeman, Gentry Bilyeu, Mason Miller, Mattax Miller. 3rd row left to right, Brixon Bilyeu, Caleb Graves, Coach Clay Bilyeau, Jake Maxwell, Jackson Gunter.

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Conway Track looking for a second District Win

Beth Durreman - bethd@laclede record.com

Conway track coach Andrew Lowery and his team are starting the 2023 season with a district championship under their belt for the first time in the school's history. Coach Lowery is looking for a second win.

The team has four team Academic All-State members returning, six members returning that won sectionals, and four state qualifiers.

The team lost two seniors from the girls' side and one senior for the boys.

Returning are four seniors returning who have been involved in the program since seventh grade. Gracie Vestal, Breanna Thompson, Cooper Mullins and Ethan Eacert. Lowery feels they will all be good leaders for the team and will help lead the team to being successful.

The team has nine new members,

including Dorothea Gantert. "She had a good season for us in cross county and we are excited to see her in the high jump and running events," Lowery said. "She will be one to watch this year and could make it to state in a few events."

Coach Lowery is in his 11th year of coaching track.

"We have a few different goals as we have about a third of the team that didn't do track last year," Lowery said. "We have good numbers for the girls' side and some that will do well." On the boys side Coach Lowery said the team has a few individuals that they hope to do well and make it to state.

"We also like everyone to just improve and get better each week," he said.

There are a few meets that Lowery is looking for the girls' team to try to win as a team.



Submitted photo

Front left to right, Ethan Eacert, Breanna Thompson, Ainara Agudo, Cooper Mullins. Back left to right, Dorothea Gantert, Gibby Beckler.

Lowery coaching staff consists of assistant Christi Williams. This is her second year in this position and she mainly works with the throwers. Kent Wapelhorst is a volunteer coach who is in his second year and works with the jumpers.

"I enjoy coaching," Lowery explained. "I like working with young

athletes and showing them how to do things and it is fun to watch them improve and do really good at the end of the season."

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Conway softball gearing up for new conference tournament

Beth Durreman - bethd@laclede record.com

Coach Ben Phillips admits last year's season was a rough one. His starting pitcher Trista Simpson got hurt early in the season, before they played any games.

"She missed a good chunk of the season and ended up getting hurt again at the end of the season, it was a rough go," Phillips said.

On the flip side though, Simpson's a junior this year and is returning as the starting pitcher for the Lady Bears.

Last season, the team relied on the number two pitcher Gibby Beckler.

"She hadn't really pitched since junior high, and we had to shake off the rust and get her straightened up to go deep into games," said Phillips.

The Bears ended the season with a district win of 5-12.

This is Phillip's fourth year as the girls' softball team coach, and he previously coached with Plato and Humansville.

The team only lost two senior players and have eight returning starters. "We have a lot of goals we hope to achieve this year," stated Phillips.

He and the team have a new assistant coach, Heather Van Winkle.

"We lost Anna Vestal last year and she had been the Junior High softball coach and with us for four years," he explained. "It is a big

loss, but we have gained Heather Van Winkle."

Probably the biggest change the team will be facing this year is the conference tournament.

"I am excited about the conference tournament mattering this year," he stated. "I think the girls have been competitive with the conference teams the past couple of years, one year we only had one or two losses in the conference. This year I feel we have a strong team that should be competitive with all of them."

When asked what he felt was the team's biggest strength going into this season he said that the defense and hitting is going to be the strong point this spring.

"Especially defense, we have worked really hard at putting girls in the right places on the diamond and with our struggles with pitching last year, defense had to really overcome a lot of things being thrown at them," Phillips said. "They had to be really strong last year."

Hopefully all the hard work the girls are putting into getting ready for this season will pay off and we will be able to accomplish some of the goals they have set for themselves."

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LCR photo/Beth Durreman

Front row left to right, Emily Twyman, Trista Simpson, Morgan Weddle, Gracie McGuire, Abbie Brahe. Back row left to right, Coach Ben Phillips, Gibby Beckler, Maddy Officer, Carlie Stark, Abby Gann, Karli Miller, Assistant Coach Heather VanWinkle. Not pictured: Faith Shifflett, Makenna Shifflett and Lilly Letterman.

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This team has great chemistry

Beth Durreman - bethd@laclede record.com

Coach Joe Nicholson is in his third year as Varsity Baseball coach of the Stoutland Tigers. The team lost some significant seniors this year. Oliver Eilenstine was a top pitcher, Ryan Gross was a four-year starting catcher, and second baseman James Justice along with third baseman Hunter Hill have left the diamond. Center-fielder Abe Stamper also graduated.

Nicolson said, "we should have a good season as our team continues to improve each year."

The returning first baseman, Jayden Pendergrass is all district and all conference. Jayden has a fantastic glove and is a legitimate power hitter."

Charlie Hill and Michael Porter will anchor the pitching staff. Nicholson said, "Both of these guys are very

high-quality pitchers."

When it comes to hitters Nicholson is looking at Brad Shaw "He is our center fielder and a key bat with a lot of speed on the bases." He added "Wes Howe is a good solid hitter and a good glove at third."

Filling out the rest of the field is Justin Crabtree at shortstop and also, another quality pitcher. Will Morrow will be taking over the catcher position. "Morrow is a solid player" said Nicholson. Isaiah Bell and Aaron Franklin round out the outfield, according to Nicholson "they are both speed guys."

We are going to try to improve our hitting and get more consistent, "This team has great chemistry, solid defense, and good pitching. I just hope we can hit enough to rack up some wins."

Nicholson thinks they will have



Submitted photo

Front row left to right, Drew Rogers, Justin Crabtree, Aaron Franklin, Brad Shaw, Isaiah Bell, Devin Barnwell. Back row, Wes Howe, Charlie Hill, Jayden Pendergrass, Michael Porter, Jake Theiman, Will Morrow, Creed Mathews, Tyler Stradt. Not pictured, Brandon Sterling and Jimmy Lewis

a big season and is looking for great senior leadership. "Each year I have been here this team keeps improving" Nicholson said.

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GO TEAM!



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