

Winter Sports Preview

GSL boys basketball: undefeated Ferris returns, but it's anyone's game

CODY DELISTRATY
Staff Reporter
LEWIS AND CLARK

32 wins, 0 losses. That's what the rest of the Greater Spokane League (GSL) is up against in boy's basketball this winter season. The Ferris Saxons achieved a state title last year capping off thirty-two straight wins.

With their entire starting line-up having graduated, the Saxons are going to be facing an uphill battle to doubtfully maintain their winning streak.

The Lewis and Clark Tigers are known more for their football when it comes to sports (winning a state championship in the '07-'08 season) but their school athletic director and varsity men's basketball coach Jeff Norton feels this may be their year in basketball to shine.

"We have a chance to be competitive this season and be suc-

cessful... if we can stay healthy," he said.

Coming off of season plagued with injuries, and pulling off only five, unconvincing wins the Tigers look to rebound and make football, women's basketball, volleyball and men's basketball sports they excel in.

There were even sadder teams last year like East Valley, who accomplished only one win, rounding off the bottom of the GSL. The Knights are a team that don't quite have as good of an outlook as the Tigers, as their top three scorers are all graduated and many juniors are going to have to try and step up to do a much better job than last year's players.

Levi Taylor, varsity football halfback and returning varsity basketball player, says that success in the GSL is simply about

"defense."

It's a word that should resonate with all the teams, as it separates the top of the table from the cellar.

This winter season will be a very tight race as there's not too many stairs between the basement and the top. Really, all the teams are of high quality and making the playoffs this year

will really be a toss-up and all the schools are involved.

With now-healthy and more experienced players from schools that were in the middle and bottom of the bracket last year, and top teams that are having some problems, it's anyone's game.

Although Ferris' thirty-two straight wins might make them look to be the favorite this really isn't the case. While leaning over to organize some files in his office that looks onto the freeway and a

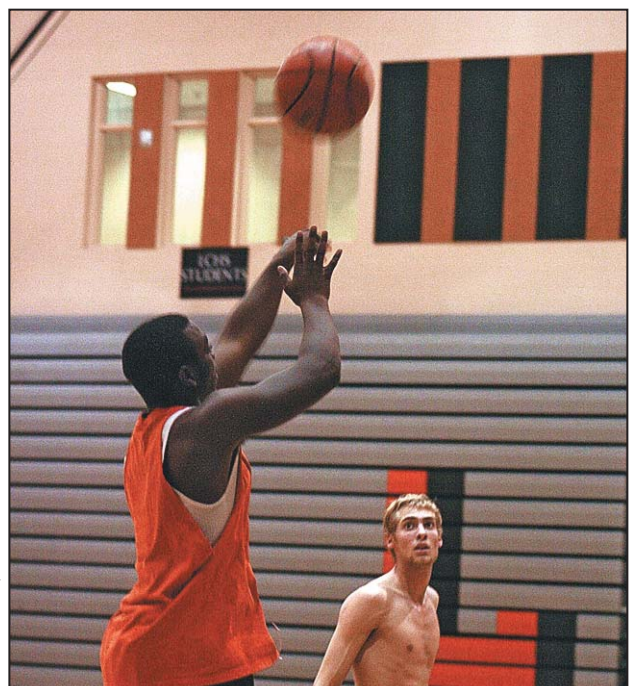
red, autumn-touched tree, Norton confidently said, "The favorite is Gonzaga Prep, and Shadle Park will also be very good."

Shadle Park and Gonzaga Prep followed in second and third place in the '07-'08 season and now are expected by many to be at the top of the table come the end of this season. But, like any sport, things can change quickly. Athletically solid teams like Mead and Central Valley could be the dark horses and take out Prep and Park.

Norton's statement that "it's going to be a very competitive season in the GSL... and we have a chance to be very competitive this season" rings true for nearly all the teams.

It's not going to be easy for any teams, but the only thing that's certain is that nothing is certain and the Greater Spokane League has just been tossed up in the air.

And the clock is running.



Blair Kelly / Staff photographer / Lewis and Clark

Lewis and Clark player Kenyatta Davenport shoots for the goal during a practice.

Expect competitive wrestling from GSL, GNL this year

SYDNEY WEBER
Staff Reporter
GONZAGA PREP



Rilee Yandt / Photo Editor / Central Valley

Sophomore Jared Maynes gives opponent Tyler Ames, junior, the throwdown. Both boys attend Central Valley High School.

The Spokane County area, as always, proves their competition and success in sports through high school wrestling.

There is always a strong competition between the well-developed wrestling teams in the GSL.

"U-high is always tough...Mead...East Valley is always in the top," Central Valley wrestling coach Rick Giampietri said. Central Valley is included in the top; they won the GSL the past two seasons and are hoping for another win this year.

Central Valley has a great chance at claiming the GSL district title again. They have several returning state contenders, including sophomore Jarod Maynes who placed third in the 103 pound division as a freshman.

East Valley led the 3A schools, taking seventh at state. Their returning wrestlers have potential to keep up East Valley's wrestling name.

The GNL also shows tough competition this season.

"Deer Park of course will be a top team. The other team I think will be tough will be Black Hills. I have all the state vets returning," said Randy Miller, coach for Riverside. Riverside placed second in the GNL last year, behind Deer Park.

Riverside is hoping to sneak up to overtake Deer Park with seven returning State Veterans, many of whom placed very high.

However, the strong competitive spirit Spokane's schools have made this season's predictions difficult.

"North Central had a lot of young guys that I thought wrestled tough," Giampietri said.

"It will be kind of hard to tell early [who the top teams will be]," Miller said. "There's going to be a handful of teams that will sneak up in there."

Fight for top spot in GNL girl's basketball is fierce

DANY BOLEN
Staff Reporter
NORTH CENTRAL

As the weather turns cold, there is no better place to be than a warm gym watching basketball, at least for area high school girl's basketball players that is.

With the season on the way, Cheney High School girls basketball coach, Hal Sautter, has high hopes for his team.

"We have to be smarter, stronger and speedier to be a real contender," Sautter said, "Our team goals are to show improvement as the season goes along, regardless of the outcome of any one game."

Improvement is one thing Sautter looks out for. "I expect that we will improve as the season progresses. We are young, but more talented from top to bottom than we have been. Laikyn Brophy is poised to have a breakout season, as are several others. Because of our depth, I believe that we will be a stronger defensive and rebounding team than in past seasons. If our offense comes along, we will contend for the number two spot to state" Sautter said.

Sautter also added, "We are very young, but return 6 letter winners. We have a tradition of tough physical defense and will continue that and hope to build on our offense."

Last season, Pullman High School finished the season undefeated and on top with a record of 14-0.

As for this season, Pullman should set the pace.

"I expect Pullman to win the league for the 6th year in a row. They have not lost a league game in the last 5 seasons

and they are as good or better than they have been" Sautter said.

Sautter expects that Medical Lake and West Valley will fight for second depending on if Medical Lake player Hardenbrook returns to form this season.

Cheney and Clarkston should fight for 4th. "Riverside, Colville and Deer Park are the real unknowns and sleepers. Any of them could jump up and grab 4th through 6th" Sautter said.

"There are several players in the league that are very good. Obviously any of Pullman's starters, they can start 5 girls over 6 ft. if they want. 6 ft 4 in. sophomore post Shelby Chesley is the best post in the league. Clarkston's Kellie McCann-Smith is one of the best offensive players around, regardless of leagues. Shaq Nillis and Hannah Love from West Valley are very good players. Medical Lake has a real nice blend of power and outside shooting. Joni Nagy from Riverside is a very good athlete and is poised to have a very productive season. Deer Park has a lot of youth and is getting better and better so they are an unknown quantity. Colville's best player, Emily Pond, is out with ACL surgery so they will have to regroup but they have a lot of young talent and will be improved, even without Emily" Sautter said.

Ferris High School Head coach Barry Olson expects that Lewis and Clark high school will defend their title and win the GSL again this year.

Olson doesn't believe there are any dominate players to look out for on the scoring sheets, but there are definitely some talented individuals.

For his team, he hopes to have a better team defensively, and expects his team to be competitive in every game.

Title IX:

Coach pressure unfair



SARA BLAKELY
Staff Reporter
LEWIS AND CLARK

I'm not gonna lie: when I was in elementary school, I loved "ponies." Arabian's, Clydesdale's, Morgans, Mustangs; you name it, I could tell you common characteristics and average prices.

What can I say? I was a horse nerd. It wasn't until I started playing soccer in fourth grade that my priorities changed and I realized that I really enjoyed running around toe-punting an inflated leather ball.

Upon discovering this new passion for soccer, I realized that horseback riding paled in comparison and that I could only do one or the other.

For the next six years, I learned the basics of soccer: dribbling, passing, defending, shooting, heading. As I matured as a player, I began to mature as an athlete, mentally and physically.

In seventh grade I was inspired to branch out again and started learning the game of basketball (it wasn't until eighth grade that my running and shooting/hucking the ball began to translate into "playing").

Like soccer, the more I worked to improve, the better I became and the more passionate I grew. Entering high school, I had an equal love for soccer and basketball that waned and waxed as their seasons came and went.

Eventually, I chose basketball over soccer and began to pursue it more

strongly because I wanted it to become my primary sport.

However, although I ultimately chose to put most of my energy into basketball, I continued to play soccer and started track.

For me, the joy of being a high school athlete has been the opportunity to do multiple sports competitively while also being able to narrow my efforts to just one sport when I want to.

Unfortunately, the same cannot

"Whatever happened to being well-rounded? Save the isolation for college athletics...as for high school, let us choose"

be said for a growing number of athletes who are being put under more pressure by their coaches and hectic schedules.

With our society becoming more and more obsessive about winning and success, it seems that people are starting to lose perspective and over-emphasize the importance of selecting one sport in order to achieve the most.

At LC, we have an award that goes to seniors who have lettered in at least three sports.

This used to be more common (thus the creation of the award) but has been reduced to a meager one or two students due to the increase in one sport competitiveness. Because the desire to win and succeed has been blown out of proportion, coaches are making their athletes pick one sport to play in hopes of getting

better results and fool-proof commitment. While this sounds satisfactory to begin with, there is an underlying problem. We are high school athletes; that choice should be ours.

As maturing teenagers, we should be able to decide when we have reached our tipping point and we should be given the chance to prioritize our schedules and take responsibility for multi-tasking.

Yes, coaches should expect maximum commitment and hard work from their athletes, but they should not dictate what athletes can or cannot do, especially in the off season.

The difference between good athletes and great athletes is dedication and heart, so it should be their choice to work in the off season if they want to achieve.

But to make a high school athlete choose one sport to compete in is premature and detrimental.

Choosing at such a young age may lead to a loss of potential opportunities and experiences that would benefit an athlete regardless of their results.

These are not college sports. If an athlete wants to play club soccer and school basketball, it should be their choice to decide, or at least, to have the opportunity to try.

Whatever happened to the idea of being well-rounded? Or cross-training, for the sake of one's physical health?

Forcing us to choose between conflicting passions is a harsh and unrealistic idea.

Save the isolation for college athletics when we've been recruited and signed. As for high school, let us choose.

Local slopes prepare to open; skiers, snowboarders anxiously waiting

NICK MARQUISS
Staff Reporter
EAST VALLEY

Grab your skis and hit the slopes, because the mountains are opening up!

That's right, it's December, and the snow is falling, the hot chocolate is brewing, and other things that are associated with winter.

Though farther away than most mountains, 49 Degrees North is still worth the trip. The runs are great, as usual, and according to Matt Langford, a senior at Central Valley, "longer than most of the other places I've been to."

The terrain park has also been improved this year, featuring new rails and new boxes. Season tickets this year run from \$500 for 17-year-olds and under, to \$675 for adults.

Perhaps the greatest all-around resort in the area, Silver Mountain Resort offers a variety of winter activities.

For skiers and snowboarders, Silver Mountain offers 67 great runs and a huge, newly updated, terrain park, and be ready for new spiny features in the terrain park this season.

Craig Norman, a senior at West Valley, said of the terrain park, "the rails and jumps aren't sketchy, and the park crew actually knows what they're doing."

Sledding and snow-tubing are also offered at Silver Mountain for those who don't want to ski.

Every Saturday in January and February, night skiing is available at Silver Mountain. Snow tubing is also available at Silver. Adult season ticket pass-

es are \$600, and youth season tickets are \$280.

Schweitzer Mountain, another popular resort, has plenty of runs for skiers and snowboarders, night skiing, snow tubing, Nordic skiing, and a terrain park.

The terrain park, now dubbed Stomping Grounds, has a new entrance and plenty of new features.

Overall, many teens consider Schweitzer the best mountain in the area. As Rob Jopson, an East Valley senior on the Schweitzer ski-team said, "I love Schweitzer, we have a condo there and I'm up there skiing every weekend."

Shannon Miner, a Gonzaga Prep senior, said that Schweitzer has, "the most terrain, the best slopes, and the best snow."

Central Valley Sophomore, Allie Burdick, said that she likes to ski at Schweitzer because "she has a cabin up there, the mountain is pretty big and a lot of my friends ski there."

Adult unlimited season tickets are \$999 dollars, and youth season tickets are \$649. Other ticket options are available, with a variety of prices and accessories.

Here's a fun fact for you skiers and snowboarders out there: Mt. Spokane Ski Resort is a non-profit resort owned and operated by skiers and snowboarders.

Mt. Spokane boasts a tubing hill, plenty of runs, and a terrain park.

Night skiing at Mt. Spokane is available when conditions permit. Youth season passes are \$369 and adult passes are \$469.