

SPORTS



Photo by Ben Murphy

OSCODA FOOTBALL – Members of the 2025 Oscoda varsity football team are, from left, back row: Cohen Gies, Aiden Hutchings, Gene Smith, Ezekiel Sutton, head coach Mark Whitley, Hunter Vincenty-Cole, Cole Gerow, Garrett Smith, Brett Travis, and defensive coordinator Tucker Whitley; front row: head JV Coach Nate Vincenty Cole, Randy Eschenburg, Logan Griggs, Seth Gutierrez, Crue Weisenstein, Casey Nelson, Preston Nash, and Keegan Harper. Missing from photo are Dustin Filipiak, David Dion, Leim Flannery, and offensive coordinator Dean Caldwell.

Hard working Oscoda football team ready to make things happen for 2025 gridiron season

by Ben Murphy

OSCODA – A hard working group of athletes. Good numbers program-wide. Things feel like they're going pretty well around the Oscoda football team so far this fall.

"I think things are going really, really good at this point," head coach Mark Whitley said. "Practices have been fast, physical and we have really been working hard. Right now, at this point we have 38 kids playing football

from ninth to 12th grade. We are looking forward to the season."

The Owls went 5-4 overall last year; including their series record eighth straight win over Tawas Area. They also went 3-1 in the Northern Michigan Football Conference Leaders Division, with their lone loss coming to Charlevoix.

"I think this is a great league, it is definitely no cake-walk," Whitley said. "Our eyes are set on game one, a non-

conference game against Roscommon, who beat us 17-14 last year. We really need to prepare for that first week, have no mistakes. That is what our vision is right now."

Members of the team this year include Hunter Vincenty-Cole (quarterback, defensive back, first team all-conference), Brett Travis (offensive line, linebacker, first team all-

See Oscoda, Page 3



Photo by Ben Murphy

TAWAS FOOTBALL – Members of the 2025 Tawas Area varsity football team are, from left, Carter Graham, Jeffery Roulo, Nate Shaver, Quinton Tipton, James Forbush, Aiden Smith, Braiden Curry, Levi Lossing, Kenaldo Williams, Tyler Pace, Malcom Davis, Carson Selman, Andy Oliver, Briggs Baker, Mike Marzec, Robert Aldridge, Sean Donaghy, Steven Yarema, Jay Challenger, Truman Busch, Alex Bell, and Gavin Caldwell. Missing from photo are Owen Warner, Dom Harrison-Knox and Jasmine Voss.

Strong offseason leaves Tawas football hopeful

by Ben Murphy

TAWAS CITY – When it comes to high school football, a strong offseason can make all the difference. That's what Tawas Area is banking on at least, as they look to cash in on what they've done in the months leading up to August.

"We are really excited to start the season," second year head coach Will Luzar said. "We had a much better offseason than last year and I am very hopeful that we will be better this year

across the board."

The Braves finished 1-8 overall last year; but were competitive in many of their losses, especially in the first half of games.

On the team this year will be seniors Malcom Davis (offensive line), Braiden Curry (offensive line), Andy Oliver (inside linebacker), Mike Marzec (inside linebacker), Kenaldo Williams, juniors Aiden Smith (quarterback), Carson Selman (wide receiver), Steven Yarema (defensive back), Cart-

er Graham (offensive line), Truman Busch (wide receiver), Owen Warner (running back), Sean Donaghy, Alex Bell, Dom Harrison-Knox, Quinton Tipton, Bob Aldridge, Briggs Baker, Gaven Caldwell, Tyler Pace, Nate Shaver, Jasmine Voss, sophomores Jay Challenger, James Forbush, Levi Lossing and freshman Jeffrey Roulo.

"We have been getting a little better each day, we are focusing on the basics

See Tawas, Page 5

Strong offseason to propel W-P football team

by Ben Murphy

WHITTEMORE – Hard work in the off-season typically leads to promising things when things officially get going. At least, that's the plan for the Whittemore-Prescott football team; as they believe what they did in the months leading up to August should pay off.

"Things have been going good, the boys have come into the season with a good mind set and are really working hard," head coach Joe Murphy said. (Assistant coach) Chuck Gratopp did

a great job with getting these boys in condition during the off-season so we are just building on that."

The Cardinals went 4-5 last year; getting wins over Hillman, Rogers City, the Charlton Heston Academy and Brethren. Their biggest hit to graduation was leading rusher Sam Vyner; but they do return many players with varsity experience.

Returning to the team will be Blaine Zuchnik (fullback, linebacker), Brian Schliep (offensive line, defensive line), Blake Miller (quarterback,

defensive back), Austin Hickcox (offensive line, defensive line), Gavin Gratopp (offensive line, defensive line) Travis Marr (offensive line, defensive line), Aiden Bell (running back, linebacker), Bodie Lintz (wide receiver, defensive back) and Tyler Schliep (fullback, linebacker).

"We are really working on mastering the basics and proper technique," Murphy said. "Our focus is really trying to be very well disciplined in our

See W-P, Page 8

Development is the name of the game for Hale football

by Ben Murphy

HALE – With most of its roster being on the younger side, the Hale football team has opted to play a schedule consisting of mostly JV games this season. While that takes the pressure off in some ways, that doesn't mean the Eagles are just going to take things lightly.

"Our team goal this year is to work towards our future, obviously this is a JV season, no league to compete for, no playoff to compete for but you best believe we will go compete like we

have a league title to win," first year head coach Nate Barnes said. "This season is about getting us where we need to be for next season and the seasons to follow.

"If we compete like we are chasing a league title and a playoff spot it will become second nature next season and that is our ultimate goal. Being JV should not change our mindset on how we approach our competition."

The Eagles do return a good amount of players; those being juniors Jacob Shick (wide receiver, defensive

end), Preston Coleman (offensive line, defensive line), sophomores Noah Koepke (quarterback, safety), Jason Kimmerer (running back, linebacker), Kyran Johnson (wide receiver, cornerback), Connor Runyan (center, defensive tackle), Silas Patten (guard, defensive tackle), Wyatt Jaremba (guard, linebacker) and Leeland Lippert (offensive line, defensive line).

"Shick and Johnson return as receiving threats, Koepke and Kimmerer

See Hale, Page 7

SPORTS

Oscoda soccer looking to move up in conference standings

by Ben Murphy

OSCODA – Last fall was the Oscoda soccer team's first venture in the Northern Michigan Soccer League. The Owls had conference wins over Alcona and Big Rapids Crossroads last year and they hope to get a few more this season.

"Things have been a little slow to start, but our numbers grew closer to start of the season," third year head coach Josh Jackson said. "We are focusing on fundamentals and conditioning. We still have a very young team and lots to learn."

"We are overall fast, but small in size. This changes how we play the game. We are also focusing on the physicality of the game and how to stand our ground with the other teams in the league. Soccer may not be a contact sport, but you would be surprised how much contact occurs on the field. I think we are middle of the pack in our conference with a ton of potential to move up."

Returning to the team are seniors Wyatt Wasmuth (midfield), Ares Gavina (utility), Alex Clarke (defense), junior Rylan Wilkins (defense, midfield) and sophomores Landon Lueckeman (forward), Trenton Mich (defense), Keegan Kellstrom (utility), Logan Pitman (goalie) and Isaac Olvera (forward).

New to the team will be senior Myles Jackson (midfield), sophomores Reed Curley (midfield), Eduardo Gonzalez along



Photo by Ben Murphy

OSCODA SOCCER – Members of the 2025 Oscoda varsity soccer team are, from left, Isaac Olvera, Myles Jackson, Austin Kellogg, Keegan Kellstrom, Logan Pittman, Michael Peace, Wyatt Wasmuth, Alex Clarke, Reed Curley, Rylan Wilkins, Landon Lueckeman, and Ryan Opperman. Missing from photo are Trenton Mich, Ares Gavina, Eduardo Gonzalez, and Zach Martin.

with freshmen Austin Kellogg (defense, goalie) and Ryan Opperman (utility).

"Tawas, Roscommon and McBain Northern Michigan Christian seem to be the top of the conference from last season," Jackson said. "I always look forward to the games against Tawas for two reasons. Firstly, to see how we improve against a conference powerhouse, and secondly because I'm an alumnus from Tawas, which is always fun and competitive."

Oscoda opened its season

against Burt Lake Northern Michigan Christian Academy last week. They also hosted Tawas on Monday, they host the Charlton Heston Academy today (Wednesday) and they'll return to action at home against Roscommon on Sept. 2.

"The first few games of the season help me to know what these kids can do and who my leaders are," Jackson said. "Every year with new players, there is a learning curve to figure out how to make the team most effective. This year is no different."

Owl volleyball looks to be strong again

by Ben Murphy

OSCODA – They might have taken some big-time hits to graduation, but the Oscoda volleyball team is still pretty confident that they can remain atop the North Star League Big Dipper. The defending league champions do return five players from a year ago; many with significant varsity experience.

"It is really early, but this is a very hard working group of girls and the team camaraderie is pretty strong," head coach Melissa Curley said. "We have had some big improvements already with some of our passers, and the hitter to setter connection with Luella Whipkey and Emma Michaud is off to a great start."

The Lady Owls went 24-10-2 overall last year, winning both the regular season and tournament NSL Big Dipper titles.

"We lost several defensive specialists from last year, so we have been focusing a lot on our defense and our communication between passers," Curley said. "Our practices have been a lot of passing right now, and learning who covers what areas on certain plays."

"The girls are working hard on learning more about each other as players and trusting how much court each can cover on defense and serve receive. It is always a learning curve as these individuals start playing together, especially with several new faces, but these girls are trusting the process and working hard to make the necessary improvements."

Back to the team will be seniors Luella Whipkey (outside hitter, all-state honorable mention), Emma Michaud (setter, first team all-conference), Lilly Piotrowski (hitter), Bella Checks (opposite side hitter) and sophomore Maryna Curley (middle hitter).

"Our main goals are to im-



Photo by Ben Murphy

OSCODA VOLLEYBALL – Members of the 2025 Oscoda varsity volleyball team are, from left, back row: Isabel Checks, Luella Whipkey, Lillian Piotrowski, Maryna Curley, and Emma Michaud; front row: Hailey Wrusch, Isla Merdzinski, Lavender Duby, and Sophia Mendyk.

prove every day, communicate on the court more and stay competitive no matter what the score is," Curley said. "We have talked about how it is easy to get comfortable with a lead and then start to not play as aggressive, so we want to make sure we are staying aggressive."

"And that also goes both ways, if we are down, we know we need to stay competitive and keep fighting. Other teams make mistakes too, and the game isn't over until that final whistle."

First year varsity players this year will be juniors Hailey Wrusch (utility), Sophia Mendyk (defensive specialist), Lavender Duby (defensive specialist) and sophomore Isla Merdzinski (utility).

"I think all of the teams in the conference lost some big impact players, but we are all also returning very important players," Curley said. "I think the Big Dipper is going to show

some very competitive games this year, and I'm excited to see how everyone does."

"We are hoping we can stay tough and be at the top of the leaderboard, but it is going to be a tough battle at all of our matches."

Oscoda was in a tournament down at Cadillac on Saturday and they'll have their home opener on Sept. 3, against Oscoda in a non-league contest with John Glenn.

"Our first few dates will be very tough competition, so I am just hoping the girls come ready to compete," Curley said. "We will be putting a big focus on our communication early on. We have talked about how strong communication can lead to better passes, to better sets, to stronger hits, to more points, which means winning and having fun. But all of those things start with communication."

Zubek Motor Sales

zubekford.com
511 State St., Oscoda
989-739-3261

zubekcdjr.com
M-55, Tawas City
989-362-3791

COLE'S

APPLIANCE & HOME FURNISHINGS

SINCE 1962

215 W LAKE ST, TAWAS CITY (989) 305-6700

SAME DAY, NEXT DAY DELIVERY AVAILABLE

WWW.COLESAPPLIANCE.COM

Go Owls!

Branham's Jewelry

101 Newman St.
East Tawas, MI - 989-362-3674

113 W. Houghton Ave.
West Branch, MI - 989-345-5710

NORTHEASTERN WINDOW & DOOR

LUMBER • ROOFING • SIDING • HARDWARE • RENTAL

From Footing to Finish,
From Big to Small,
Let our experts assist you with
your next project!

HARRISVILLE
U.S. 23 (1 mile north of M-72)
989-724-6393

ALPENA
M-32 (Next to Meijer)
989-356-2332

Our Harrisville Location Offers Installed Sales of Windows, Entry Doors & Garage Doors, Kitchen & Bath Showroom, and Flooring. *True Value Hardware* & JUST ASK RENTAL CENTER

Nedo's Farm Market, Inc.

Minutes North of Oscoda on F-41
YOUR FULL SERVICE MARKET
9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Daily

Convenience Foods • Fresh Produce
Beer • Wine • Liquor • Lotto
Pet Food • Pet Supplies • Wildlife Feed

Phone/Fax (989) 305-9819

SPORTS

Oscoda swim and dive team ready for new season

by Ben Murphy

OSCODA –The Oscoda swim and dive team will have head coach Ellen Doherty back for her third season leading the program. She has had her team working hard in the pool through the opening practices of the season, which obviously should lead to some good things once they get to their meets.

“We continue to work to-

wards building the program by increasing our numbers,” she said. “This year’s team is strong and determined. Our team has focused on fine tuning technique and jumped right into sets to increase speed, endurance, and recovery.”

Returning to the team with varsity swim experience are Ciara Arthur, Kylie Gallahar, Bailey McCrea, Carly Mongeau,

Isabelle Schimmer, Brooke Swales and Ana Jurgens. New to the team will be Luz Galez, Nayelie Galarza, Alexis Byrne and Lani Trummer.

“The team has determined these values to guide our daily focus, cohesion and accountability,” Doherty said. “Our team’s individual goals range from defining muscles to breaking records. Our team is in this

for the journey and personal growth. Our measure of success this year will be determined by how cohesive and accountable our team is.”

Oscoda hosted an invitation-al on Saturday and they’ll be off until Sept. 9 when they have a

home Independent Swim Conference meet against Standish-Sterling.

“We hope to set baseline times and begin to develop the strength of our relay teams,” Doherty said.

OSCODA

Continued from Page 1

conference), Randy Eschenburg (running back, wide receiver, defensive back, first team all-conference), Casey Nelson (running back, defensive back), Crue Weisenstein (wide receiver, defensive back), Cole Gerow (wide receiver, defensive back), Seth Gutierrez (offensive line, linebacker), Garrett Smith (offensive line, fullback, defensive tackle), Dustin Filipiak (wide receiver, defensive end), Zeke Sutton (offensive line, defensive line, kicker), Logan Griggs (offensive line, defensive line), and Preston Nash (wide receiver, defensive back). New to the team will be Keegan Harper (linebacker, running back), Cohen Gueiss (offensive line, defensive line), Gene Smith (offensive line, defensive line) and Aiden

Hutchings (offensive line, defensive line).

“We do feel good, we are going to miss Blake Mallak, no question, he was just an electric player for us that graduated,” Whitley said. “There’s others too that graduated that we miss, but we reload pretty well and the kids are focused.”

“We never predict how we are going to do, we practice every day like we are going to play Ohio State. Our kids were left with a bitter taste in their mouth at 5-4 last year, losing that last game of the year. We are looking for good things this year.”

Oscoda opens the season on Thursday, playing over at Roscommon.



Photo by Ben Murphy

OSCODA SWIM AND DIVE – Members of the 2025 Oscoda varsity swim and dive team are, from left, Nayelie Galarza, Alexis Byrne, Bailey McCrea, Carly Mongeau, Kylie Gallahar, and Isabelle Schimmer. Missing from photo are Ciara Arthur, Brooke Swales, Ana Jurgens, and Nathaly Seilla.



Photo by Ben Murphy

OSCODA GOLF – Members of the 2025 Oscoda girls varsity golf team are, from left: assistant coach Annette Dennis, Maci McDougall, Audrey Luttrell, Natalie Gutierrez, manager Norella Ballor, Mariana Figueroa, Addison Russo, Maya Lopez, and head coach Rob Clink. Missing from photo is Isabelle Schimmer.

Lady Owls ready for season two of golf

by Ben Murphy

OSCODA – The Oscoda girls golf program is still in its fledgling stages; just now entering year two of existence. The Lady Owls have head coach Rob Clink back from last year, as they look to tap into the growth they experienced last fall.

“Last year was a strong season for us, anchored by two senior leaders who held down our number one and number two spots,” Clink said. “They helped set the tone for the team and contributed to our competitive edge throughout the season. Losing them to graduation was significant, but their leadership helped build a solid foundation for our returning and younger players.”

On the team this year will be seniors Maya Lopez, Addison Russo, juniors Isabella Schimmer, Mariana Figueroa and freshmen Audrey Luttrell, Maci McDougall and Natalie Gutierrez.

“We’re a young team this year, with three freshmen joining the roster and only two returning seniors,” Clink said.

“That said, this group has shown great enthusiasm and a strong work ethic. They’re eager to learn and improve, which makes me very excited about their potential; not just for this season, but for the next few years as well. If they stick with it all four years, I think we’ll see some impressive development.”

As for this year, Clink is hoping to see some things as well.

“Our primary focus has been on short game and putting; two areas that can make a huge difference on the scorecard,” he said. “We’ve also been making sure everyone is comfortable with the rules of golf, especially our newer players. It’s been a lot of learning, but the team is taking it seriously and showing solid progress.”

“We want to be consistently competitive in our matches and steadily improve our team scores throughout the season. Another goal is to build team chemistry and support each other’s growth on and off the course. We’re aiming for a top finish in the conference in the coming years.”

The Owls will compete in the Mid-Michigan Golf Conference this fall; giving them plenty of chances to go after team and individual accolades.

“I’d love to see one or two of our girls compete for the conference title this year,” Clink said. “More broadly, I want each golfer to lower her score from week to week, set personal bests, and gain the confidence that comes with consistent play and understanding the game.”

“There are definitely some strong teams in our conference, and we respect the programs we compete against. With our youth, we might not be a favorite right out of the gate, but I believe we’ll be competitive and surprise a few teams as the season goes on. If our girls continue to develop, we’ll be right in the mix.”

Oscoda was at Huron Breeze Golf Course for the first MMGC meet on Monday, they head to Houghton Lake for an invite today (Wednesday) and back to Houghton Lake on Sept. 3 for a league meet.

GOOD LUCK OWLS!

bernardbuilding.com

BERNARD
BUILDING CENTER

HOBART'S
Home Furnishings & Décor

GO RANDY #7!

Quality home furnishings reasonably priced.
Serving the area's Furniture & Home Décor needs for over 40 years.

Open Wednesday - Saturday
989-739-4000 4215 US-23, Oscoda

Rogers family foods Good Luck Owls!

20 lb. Propane Refill

\$9.99

Expires 9/21/25
Must Present Coupon

ACE Hardware

5112 N. US-23, Oscoda • 989-569-6304

Good Luck Oscoda Owls

dean arbour

55 W M-55, Tawas City (989) 362-3489 deanarbourtawas.com

1859 N US-23, East Tawas (989) 362-3403 deanarbourcevy.com

Ford **CHEVROLET**

SALES. SERVICE. PARTS. BODY SHOP. DETAIL SHOP

SPORTS

Young Tawas Area soccer team ready to compete in new season

by Ben Murphy

TAWAS CITY – They may be young but they’ve proven to be ready so far. The Tawas Area soccer team lost a big chunk of its roster from last year to graduation, but they’ve gotten off to a 2-0 start with a new cast of characters leading the way.

They topped Gladwin 7-2 after just four days of practice and followed that up with a league win over Roscommon on Thursday, 3-0.

“We have a young and small team this year, but I think we will be competitive,” 30th year head coach Ken Cook said. “We have a lot to cover in a short time before we get thrust into games.”

The Braves are coming off a solid fall last year; they went 18-3-3 overall and claimed a Northern Michigan Soccer League title along with a Division 4 district championship.

Returning to the team will be senior Jack Garner (defense), juniors Reuben Edwards (midfield, all-regional), Liam Pestrue (defense) and sophomores Teague Buchanan (midfield), Caleb Conrad (forward), Leif Guillotel (forward), Gage Ploof (forward), Gunner Sel-



TAWAS SOCCER – Members of the 2025 Tawas Area varsity soccer team are, from left, back row: Vance Spencer, Caleb Conrad, Jack Garner, Seth Dalman, Kenidigo Williams, Liam Pestrue, Lief Guillotel, Gunner Selman, Reuben Edwards, Matt Timm, and Gage Ploof; front row: Canan Woodaz, Mason Nunn, Aven King, Brennan Schalm, Aiden Towne, and Teague Buchanan.

Photo by Ben Murphy

man (defense), Aiden Towne (forward) and Kenidigo Williams (midfield).

New to the team will be sophomore Mark Fullerton and freshmen Seth Dalman, Aven King, Mason Nunn, Brennan Schalm, Vance Spencer, Matthew Timm and Canan Wood-

az. “We would like to win our conference,” Cook said. “We need to figure out where everyone can help us most on the field and without the seven seniors we graduated last year.”

Tawas was also at a tourna-

ment at Alpena on Saturday, they played at rival Oscoda on Monday, they will host Pinconning on Thursday and head to

Burt Lake Northern Michigan Christian Academy on Sept. 2.

Quick rebuild on the minds of Tawas Area volleyball team for new season

by Ben Murphy

TAWAS CITY – All things considered, last fall went pretty well for the Tawas Area volleyball team. They were one of the better teams in the North Star League Big Dipper and were able to claim an impressive 31 victories.

“We had a great season last year, we played at a high competitive level and even against teams like Roscommon we were always in the match,” 20th year head coach Carol Elowsky said. “It was really exciting to be a part of that team.”

The Lady Braves have no shortage of talent this season, but with a different looking line-up than a year ago, it might take awhile to get things ironed out the way the longtime head coach wants them to.

“We are rebuilding from last year, so it has been a week of trying to see where everyone fits in,” Elowsky said. “Everyone is working really hard and our team dynamic is already strong.”

Returning to the team will be seniors Camryn Chatt (set-

ter, all-regional), Hailey Felske (hitter), Hannah Potts (defensive specialist), Olivia White McMurray (defensive specialist), Ava Briggs (defensive specialist), Emmy Buchanan (hitter) and junior Brynn Montie (middle hitter).

“Camryn Chatt is coming off a great season last year and she has only gotten better in the off season,” Elowsky said. “Our defensive back row of Olivia White McMurray, Hannah Potts and Ava Briggs will be very tough this year. Brynn Montie will also be a threat in the middle as she is a strong blocker and her hitting has really improved over the summer.”

New to the team will be juniors Isabelle Nickell (middle hitter), Eryn Hayes (setter, defensive specialist), Teresa Dalman (setter, opposite hitter), Michaela Kulwicki (hitter), Rylee Bellinger (defensive specialist) and sophomores Rowan Davis (middle hitter, opposite hitter) and Brooke Herrick (hitter).

“We are mostly working on our basics, serve receive hitting and serving serve receive is so

important so that has been our focus these first days,” Elowsky said. “We should get our lineup established and I am hoping that everyone continues to improve. I hope our hitters are comfortable swinging hard.”

The Braves missed out on a NSL Big Dipper title last fall, but they’re hoping they can claim that hardware this go-around.

“We would like to have a league championship, we are also looking to be solid at all of our tournaments,” Elowsky said. “I think any school can win, Oscoda is the defending Big Dipper champ and they will be tough but from what I saw at summer league any team can win on any night. That’s what makes the league so fun.”

Tawas opened the season at a quad meet at Gladwin last Wednesday, they were at a tournament at Johannesburg-Lewiston on Friday and they also competed at Midland Calvary Baptist on Tuesday. They will make the trip to Mio on Sept. 3, while on Sept. 8 they make the trip to Houghton Lake.



Photo by Ben Murphy

TAWAS VOLLEYBALL – Members of the 2025 Tawas Area varsity volleyball team are, from left, back row: Camryn Chatt, Teresa Dalman, Isabelle Nickell, Brynn Montie, Rowan Davis, Hailey Felske, Emmy Buchanan, and Michaela Kulwicki; front row: Ava Briggs, Eryn Hayes, Brooke Herrick, Olivia White McMurray, Hannah Potts, and Rylee Bellinger.

Zubek Motor Sales

Jeep

zubekford.com
511 State St., Oscoda
989-739-3261

zubekcdjr.com
M-55, Tawas City
989-362-3791

SEYMOUR'S

YOUR HOME DÉCOR HEADQUARTERS

9-5 Monday-Friday • 9-3 Saturday
(989) 362-2269

www.SeymourCarpet.com
1701 East US 23, East Tawas

624 W. LAKE STREET
TAWAS CITY
989-362-3425
WWW.MYLESAGENCYTAWAS.COM

Auto-Owners
INSURANCE

LIFE • HOME • CAR • BUSINESS

WAY TO GO
BRAVES

BERNARD

BUILDING CENTER

bernardbuilding.com

COLE'S

APPLIANCE & HOME FURNISHINGS

SINCE
1962

215 W LAKE ST, TAWAS CITY (989) 305-6700
SAME DAY, NEXT DAY DELIVERY AVAILABLE
WWW.COLESAPPLIANCE.COM

SPORTS

Tawas Area girls golf team hoping to stay hot for 2025 season

by Ben Murphy

TAWAS CITY – As the temperatures cooled off last fall, the Tawas Area girls golf team got red hot. The first year varsity program surged to the top of the Mid-Michigan Golf Conference standings to claim that championship; and now with another off-season under their belts the Lady Braves think things will only get better from here.

“The team improved dramatically and performed above all reasonable expectations for the first official year as a varsity program,” head coach Paul Vainer said of last year. “We won the conference by a narrow margin over a senior-laden, heavily favored Houghton Lake. We finished eighth in the region. Scores from the season

improved dramatically from the beginning to the end.”

They return five experienced golfers; those being seniors Mackenzie Kinney (first team all-conference), Olivia Livingston (second team all-conference) and juniors Eliza Primm (individual conference champion), Quinn Seyfried (second team all-conference) and Eryn Hayes.

“We brought back the entire regional roster from a conference champion,” Vainer said. “We have experienced, accomplished upperclassman who have been working hard since last season ended. Add to that some very promising young new players and this year looks like we will be chasing some lofty goals.”

Their newcomers include junior Tessa St. Charles, sophomores Brooklyn Reid, Giselle Selman and Johanna Pelton and freshmen Gia Lesneski, Penelope Frye and Harper Buysens.

“With all girls new and returning, we focus on the short game and our consistency,” Vainer said. “There is more time spent with the beginners on the fundamentals certainly, but all benefit from starting with the basics. We want to make sure the girls are prepared to hit any type of shot asked of them on the course.”

Tawas will compete again in the Mid-Michigan Golf Conference; which will also feature Oscoda, Houghton Lake and Roscommon.

“Anything less than a con-

ference championship would be a disappointment,” Vainer said. “We won it last year with a less experienced team against more experienced competition. We are also focused on competing at regionals.

“We have the talent on this roster to give our team a shot at qualifying for states for the first time in team history. It will take tremendous focus and dedication, but it is absolutely possible with enough determination.”

Tawas competed in three meets last week and competed in the first MMGC meet at Huron Breeze on Monday. Thursday they will head to Petoskey and they’ll head to Houghton Lake for another league meet on Sept. 3.

“We have a few players on

the team this year who are in a position to have some great individual achievements,” Vainer said. “Eliza won the conference last year and missed going to states by just a few strokes. She has worked extremely hard this offseason so I fully expect her scores to improve this year.

“Seniors Mackenzie and Olivia also have the opportunity to compete at the very top of the conference and the region. All three of them could win matches, medal at some invitationals and compete for a top spot in the region. I also expect my top six players to be all-conference. We had four last year and our fifth girl missed all-conference by one spot.”



Photo by Ben Murphy

TAWAS GOLF – Members of the 2025 Tawas Area girls varsity golf team are, from left, Giselle Selman, Gia Lesneski, Quinn Seyfried, Mackenzie Kinney, Penelope Frye, Brooklyn Reid, Lilee Walsh, and Harlee Cooley. Missing from photo are Eliza Primm, Olivia Livingston, Eryn Hayes, Harper Buysens, Tessa St. Charles, Juliet Malewska and Johanna Pelton.

TAWAS

Continued from Page 1

to make us better,” Luzar said. “We have been focusing on accountability, responsibility and having fun. Our goals are to get better each and every play and to play for each other.”

Tawas will compete in the Northern Michigan Football Conference Leaders Division; which along with Tawas consists of Oscoda, Benzie Central, Charlevoix and Elk Rapids.

“The conference is loaded with talent,” Luzar said. “We have to play every play with heart and desire. Oscoda is well coached and they have a lot of returning players. We hope to compete in every game this year.”

Tawas will open the season at Mancelona on Thursday; the Ironmen defeated the Braves in a close one last year, 30-22.

“We are very anxious to find that (who will lead the offense) out, we are hoping to score more points this year,” Luzar said. “The defense has looked good so far, we have to stop the run to be able to compete in this

conference.

“We are working every day to get better on special teams.

This is the most important phase of the game and our kids understand that.”



Tawas Bay Insurance Agency

World class service. Small town values.

(989) 362.3409
tawasbayagency.com
108 W. State St.
East Tawas, MI 48730

Home - Auto - Business - Health - Life

Go Braves!

Branham's

Jewelry

101 Newman St.
East Tawas, MI - 989-362-3674
113 W. Houghton Ave.
West Branch, MI - 989-345-5710

NORTHEASTERN

WINDOW & DOOR

LUMBER • ROOFING • SIDING • HARDWARE • RENTAL

From Footing to Finish,
From Big to Small,
Let our experts assist you with
your next project!

NEW HOMES • REMODELING • ADDITIONS • DECKS • ROOFS
HARRISVILLE ALPENA

U.S. 23 (1 mile north of M-72)
989-724-6393
M-32 (Next to Meijer)
989-356-2332

Our Harrisville Location Offers Installed Sales of Windows, Entry Doors & Garage Doors, Kitchen & Bath Showroom, and Flooring. *True Value Hardware & JUST ASK RENTAL CENTER*

**Johnson
Auto Supply,
Inc.**



436 W. Huron
121 W. State
5070 N. US-23

AuGres
East Tawas
Oscoda

989-876-0300
989-362-3459
989-739-2043

Downtown East Tawas



Beer • Liquor • Lottery

- Smoked Fish
- Home Smoked Sausage & Bacon
- Freezer Beef
- Custom Meat Processing
- Smoked Fish
- 30 Plus Varieties of Home Smoked Jerky

201 Newman St., East Tawas, MI

OPEN 7 Days A Week - Telephone 989-362-2341

State Farm®



TIM KNAPP, Agent CLU CPCU

125 E. Lake Street
Tawas City, MI 48763
Bus (989) 362-5581
tim@timknapp.net



MURPHY

HOME FURNISHINGS

murphygo.com

**1819 E. US-23
East Tawas, MI**

**989-362-2388
Fax: 989-362-3245**

Good Luck Tawas Braves




55 W M-55, Tawas City
(989) 362-3489
deanarbourtawas.com



1859 N US-23, East Tawas
(989) 362-3403
deanarbourcevy.com



CHEVROLET

SALES. SERVICE. PARTS. BODY SHOP. DETAIL SHOP

Eat. Shop. Explore.

LOCAL

Support local
businesses & your
community!

BUY LOCAL!

Local News Matters

SPORTS



Photo by Ben Murphy

OSCODA CROSS COUNTRY – Members of the 2025 Oscoda varsity cross country team are, from left, standing: Eve Holloway, Kaitlyne Stephan, Caleb Clare, Dalton Negro, Blake Roy, Liam Piotrowski, Harley Kenyon, Everett Niskala, and Liam Tait; kneeling: Ember Ballor, Aiden Sheffer, Evelyn Baldwin, Naomi Olsen, Ty Lombardo, and Leonardo Aragona. Not pictured are Malaiah Miller, Tanner Yats, and Mercedes Ogilvie.

Number increase lead Oscoda cross country team hopeful for new season

by Ben Murphy

OSCODA – The Oscoda cross country program saw much success at the junior high level last fall with their boys team winning the North Star League and regional championship. Now that a good portion of them are in high school and as a result, the team is hoping that can translate into some big-time team accomplishments at this level too.

“Our team has grown a ton this season, and we are very excited about that,” fifth year head coach Melissa Winters said. “We have a lot of returning athletes and quite a few new cross

country runners.”

Returning to the team will be Blake Roy (sophomore), Dalton Negro (sophomore), Malaiah Miller (junior), Tanner Yats (senior) and new to the varsity level are freshmen Harley Kenyon, Liam Piotrowski, Ty Lombardo, Caleb Clare and senior Kaitlyne Stephan.

“We have been focusing on form, endurance, and team building, as our team has a lot of first time runners,” Winters said. “Many of our middle school boys have moved up to the high school level. They are hopeful to continue to hold the regional title, but now the high

school regional title. Many individuals are hoping to break last season’s personal records with a few athletes hoping to break some specific times.”

Oscoda will open its season on Sept. 3 at the Rifle River Invitational, hosted by Standish Sterling. They’ll also be at the Northwood Invitational on Sept. 6.

“Many athletes have been working hard all summer to prepare for the upcoming season, so we are hoping to come out strong and improve from there,” Winters said.

Experience fills lineup for Hale Eagles volleyball team

by Ben Murphy

HALE – The Hale volleyball team performed pretty well last fall. The Lady Eagles finished 14-13-2 overall and took second place in the North Star League

Little Dipper; finishing 5-1 in conference matches, with their only loss coming to state quarterfinalist Atlanta.

“I had a young team who came together and performed

well,” seventh year head coach Toni Nieman said. “I have most of my team coming back this year.”

The Eagles do have three newcomers to the squad and

Ben Harrison.

Tawas opens the season on Thursday at the Rau Invitational at Ogemaw Heights and they’ll be at the Rifle River Invite, hosted by Standish Sterling on Wednesday. They’ll also be at the Northwood Invitational on Sept. 6, they’ll head for the Roscommon Midweek Invite on Sept. 10 and the first NSL Jamboree will be held in Oscoda on Sept. 16.

are looking strong along with throwing in a few new runners in mix. We’re always excited to compete against the other North Star League teams and we are interested to see how regionals goes at the new location in Manclona.”

On the team this year will be Joleen Whitford, Molly Hammon, Julia Slack, Vivian Malewska, Louise Aichaoui, Kadance Kendall, Jace Cota, Joel Garner, Henry Brummeler, Lucas MacEwen, Nick Sides



Photo by Ben Murphy

HALE CROSS COUNTRY – Members of the 2025 Hale varsity cross country team are, from left, Anella Barclay, Sean Bernard, Paxton Downing, and Rowan Hood. Missing from photo is Thomas Degrez.

Hale cross country team light on numbers, high on potential for new year

by Ben Murphy

HALE – With just five total team members, the Hale cross country program knows that accomplishing team goals just isn’t going to happen this fall. That’s perfectly fine with long-time head coach Steve Bradley though, as it gives his talented group other things to focus on.

“With a smaller team, the team trophies and things like that (won’t happen), so basically the goal is to do well in the league individually,” he said. “I would like to see them be in the first team all-league. That’s our goal, for them to achieve that

and also to qualify for the state finals.”

On the team this year will be seniors Paxton Downing, Sean Bernard, Rowan Hood, sophomore Anella Barclay and freshman Thomas Degrez.

“Sean is coming back from shoulder surgery, so he is a little laid up right now but Paxton has been running all summer, putting in a lot of miles and he looks very strong,” Bradley said. “Anella is new to cross country, she has a lot of potential to do well. Thomas, he did

See CC, Page 7

TA cross country team excited for new season

by Ben Murphy

TAWAS CITY – The Tawas Area cross country team is hoping to make a run at the North Star League championship this fall; on both the boys’ and girls’ side of things. They should have one of the deeper teams in the conference as they look to battle it out against the other squads at the league meets.

“I’m really looking forward to this upcoming season,” head coach Brianna Nelson said. “The returning runners



Photo by Ben Murphy

TAWAS CROSS COUNTRY – Members of the 2025 Tawas Area cross country team are, from left, back row: Ben Harrison, Nick Sides, Lucas MacEwen, Henry Brummeler, Kadance Kendall, Jace Cota, Joel Garner, and Louise Aichaoui; front row: Vivian Malewska, Julia Slack, Molly Hammon, and Joleen Whitford.



Photo by Ben Murphy

HALE VOLLEYBALL – Members of the 2025 Hale varsity volleyball team are, from left, back row: Aleese Kimmerer, Anella Barclay, Ali Beebe, Hailey Carpenter, and Cordelia Streeter; front row: Lexi Cook, Callie Hicks, and Kenady Walsh. Missing from photo are Ciara Kesler and Isabella Barkholz.

SPORTS

HALE

Continued from Page 1

return to backfield off successful freshmen years," Barnes said. "Runyan, Patten and Jaremba return as our defensive leaders and are the main offensive line leading the way."

New to the team is senior Wyatt Irwin (wide receiver, defensive end), junior Blake Chrivia (wide receiver, cornerback), sophomore Justin Short (guard, defensive line) and freshmen Brady Sheldon (wide receiver, cornerback), Cooper Irwin (offensive line, linebacker), Danin Lippert (offensive line, defensive line) and Owen Martineau (wide receiver, cornerback).

"Things have been going well, our new offense seems to be jelling and our defense is giving great looks," Barnes said. "I've been satisfied with the work that has been put in to this point, just excited to (get things going).

"Learning the new offense has been a main focus point so far. Also just building as a family, we seem to have a pretty good brotherhood going on right now and that will only help come game time."

Hale opens the season on Thursday, when they head to Rogers City to take on their junior varsity team. Their only varsity contest is schedule for Oct. 17; which will be homecoming night against Forest Area.

"Offensively with it being a new offense, mistakes are going to happen, the kinks are already being worked out, so hopefully that carries over into the season," Barnes said. "Our offense has a potential to be dangerous, we have the size and strength up front and the speed coming out of the backfield is hard to measure up to. Great potential to do great things.

"If I had to sum up our defensive I'd say aggressive. We have a defensive line and linebacker corps who love to hit,



Photo by Ben Murphy

HALE FOOTBALL – Members of the 2025 Hale varsity football team are, from let, back row: Blake Chrivia, Cooper Irwin, Noah Koepke, Connor Runyan, Wyatt Jaremba, Wyatt Irwin, Owen Martineau, and Leeland Lippert; front row: Preston Coleman, Jason Kimmerer, Justin Short, Kyran Johnson, Silas Patten, Brady Sheldon and Danin Lippert. Missing from photo is Jacob Shick.

they are aggressive and they bring it every play. Our secondary has the speed and tackling ability to prevent big plays and they aren't afraid to get their nose in there."

MIKEY'S PIZZERIA
 Hand Tossed Brick Oven Baked Pizza
 PIZZA • SUBS • SALADS
 Delivery • Dine-in
 221 N. M-65, HALE (989) 218-3333

GO EAGLES!
ALWARD'S MARKET
 IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BACON
 AlwardsMarket.com order online
 Michigan's Best Bacon
 Home Cured Meats • Groceries
 M-65, 1 Block South of the Light, Hale (989) 728-2315

GOOD LUCK EAGLES
 "Serving The Area Since 1945"
SCOFIELD REAL ESTATE
 www.scofieldrealestate.com
 989-728-2603

Hale Chiropractic
 If you're in pain, we can help!
 Specializing In
 •Headaches •Migraines •Neck Pain
 •Mid Back Pain •Low Back Pain •Sciatica
Shannon Chrivia, D.C.
 3141 M-65, Hale • Accepting Most Insurances
 (989) 728-6638

Hale Hardware Doit Center
 S. M-65, Hale
 Paint Rental
 Lawn & Garden Housewares Sporting Goods
 Plumbing Heating Electrical Major Appliances Furniture LP Fills • Rec Gas
 Small Engine Repair Rental
 Husqvarna STIHL
 Mon.-Sat. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. • Sun. 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
 989-728-9581 • halehardware.com

Go Eagles!
Branham's Jewelry
 101 Newman St. 113 W. Houghton Ave.
 East Tawas, MI - 989-362-3674 West Branch, MI - 989-345-5710

Rogers family foods Good Luck Eagles
 20 lb. Propane Refill \$9.99
 Expires 9/21/25 Must Present Coupon
BAKERY • DELI
 (989) 728-2711 • North M-65, Hale, Michigan

PROUD TO BE EAGLES!
 bernardbuilding.com
BERNARD BUILDING CENTER

GENERAC AUTHORIZED DEALER
Colvins HEATING & COOLING
 Since 1971
 24 Hour Emergency Service
 (989) 728-5955
 www.colvinsheating.com
MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC COOLING & HEATING Live Better
Rheem

Good Luck Hale Eagles
dean arbour
 55 W M-55, Tawas City (989) 362-3489 deanarbourtawas.com
 1859 N US-23, East Tawas (989) 362-3403 deanarbourcevy.com
Ford CHEVROLET
 SALES. SERVICE. PARTS. BODY SHOP. DETAIL SHOP

CC

Continued from Page 6

well last year until he hurt his ankle, he is strong this year and we are looking for good things out of him.

"We are heavy on seniors, so we should have some very good leadership coming out of those guys."

Bradley added that he hopes to gain more team members in the coming weeks; giving them a chance to place as a squad at meets.

"It's a different mindset this year, not having a team as of yet, we are still hoping to get more members to create either a boys team or a girls team, but it is a little bit different mindset when you have individuals rather than a team," he said.

Hale opened its season in a meet at McBain Northern Michigan Christian on Friday, and they'll compete in the Rau Invitational at Ogemaw Heights on Thursday. They will also be at the Rifle River Invitational, hosted by Standish-Sterling on Sept. 3.

"At this point, they came into practice in very good shape, so we are working on a lot of tweaking the fundamentals, putting some miles in, creating goals and working hard," Bradley said. "We have taken some trips to Lumberman's Monument to run the sand dunes and Largo Springs, and those have been fun trips for the kids this summer."

SPORTS

New coach getting W-P volleyball ready for new season

by Ben Murphy

WHITTEMORE – The Whittemore-Prescott volleyball team finished last season with just six players on varsity; which certainly made things challenging for them. The Lady Cardinals have gained a few players for the 2025 season, and

they're more than ready to see what happens on the court.

"This is my first year as a head coach with that being said I'm excited to see what the year brings," head coach Alexis Page said. "Our numbers are still low, so we are working with eight players starting the season,

maybe things will change once the school year begins."

Returning to the team will be seniors Taylor Lomason (middle hitter, back row), Cadence Smith (middle hitter, back row) and junior Kylee Mead (setter, right side hitter).

Joining the varsity will be

senior Destiny Lorenz (back row) juniors Breanna Gonzales (left side hitter), JorJa Garno (back row), Dorthy Giordano (left side hitter), Kylie LaFreniere (right side hitter, setter) and also sophomore Isla Smith (right side hitter).

"So far, the girls have been coming together as a new team and a small team at that," Page said. "Our main focus is on being a team, lots of communication and making the game fun. With only three returning players it's been slow moving but we are only a week in and we are getting better day by day."

They will be competing in the North Star League Big Dipper, where they hope to compete well against the likes of Tawas Area, Oscoda, Alcona,

Charlton Heston Academy and Rogers City.

"As for the conference I don't know what to expect. I'm just really hoping for our girls to go into every game with an open mind and to just work hard," Page said.

W-P opened the season at Harrison on Thursday, was at a tournament at Standish-Sterling on Saturday and will host Atlanta on Sept. 3.

"Our first couple games of the season are against some schools we have never seen before, but my hopes are to come out on top," Page said. "We will make adjustments where needed and when needed. I have high hopes for this season and I am ready to see what we can do together as a team."



Photo by Ben Murphy

CARDINAL VOLLEYBALL – Members of the 2025 Whittemore-Prescott varsity volleyball team are, from left, head coach Alexis Page, Isla Smith, Breanna Gonzales, Cadence Smith, Taylor Lomason, JorJa Garno, Kylee Mead, Dorthy Giordano, and Destiny Lorenz. Missing from photo is Kylie LaFreniere.



Photo by Ben Murphy

CARDINAL FOOTBALL – Members of the 2025 Whittemore-Prescott varsity football team are, from left, back row: Blaine Zuchnik, Brian Schliep, Blake Miller, Austin Hickcox, Gavin Gratopp, Travis Marr, Tyler Schliep, and James Karklin; front row: Nonah Ritter, Aiden Bell, Bodie Lintz, Emerson Sheehan, Tyler Paige, and Hunter Clayton.

W-P

Continued from Page 1

assignment's and playing Team football. (We want to) hit hard every game, create turnovers, take care of the football, minimize mistakes."

In the opening weeks of practice, Murphy has been able to get an early look at what his team might look like in all three phases of the game.

"I think we got the right mix of kids on offense, we have the big bodies up front to get those tough yards along with some speed to get the explosive plays," he said. "The defense is

looking good.

"We are still trying to figure out a couple positions but I like how some of our younger guys are competing and picking up on our defensive schemes. Special teams we are still working on who is going to work best at kicker and long snapper but we got a couple of kids that we think can be really good in those positions."

W-P opens the season at home on Thursday, against Atlanta; a team they lost to last year, 38-12. Teams in the North

Star League Big Dipper this fall, aside from W-P will be Alcona, Rogers City and Charlton Heston. Little Dipper squads are Atlanta, AuGres, Hillman and Mio.

"Our conference overall just lost a ton of talent to graduation but we still have some really good players that are going to be tough to stop," Murphy said. "I think it is going to be very competitive and I think we can be right in the thick of the chase for a conference title."

VOLLEY

Continued from Page 6

tournament at Morey Courts in Mt. Pleasant. It is a lot of competition and is a great way to work out some kinks. They like seeing the variety that tournament brings us.

"Of course, we always love playing at the Volley for a Cure game with Oscoda. It is a game that I hold close to my heart. Overall, the girls are just excited for the start of the season."

Hale opened the season at home against Owendale-Gagetown on Thursday, they were at the tournament at Morey Courts in Mt. Pleasant on Saturday and they'll host the Charlton Heston Academy on Sept. 3 for a North Star League crossover game.

"My hopes are to solidify

my rotation and to work out some of the beginning of the season jitters," Nieman said of the early season contests. "I am fortunate again this year to have a great group of girls who want to compete and win."

NEWS - PRESS
NASCAR
CHALLENGE
WIN PRIZES!

GO CARDS!
 Wishing you every success this season!

BERNARD
 BUILDING CENTER

Hale
 AuGres
 Hillman
 Cheboygan

RAINBOW Gardens
 Serving National City Since 1937

Wed.-Sat. 11 a.m.-10 p.m.
Sunday 11 a.m.-8 p.m.

1539 S. National City Rd., National City
(989) 756-2611

Find us on **facebook.**

MIKEY'S PIZZERIA
 "BRICK OVER BAKED" PIZZA · SUBS · SALADS

(989) 756-2738
Take-Out
 300 S. Bullock, Whittemore, MI

Go Cardinals!

Branham's Jewelry

101 Newman St. 113 W. Houghton Ave.
 East Tawas, MI - 989-362-3674 West Branch, MI - 989-345-5710

GENERAC AUTHORIZED DEALER

24 Hour Emergency Service

Colvins HEATING & COOLING
 Since 1971
(989) 728-5955
www.colvinsheating.com

MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC
 COOLING & HEATING
 Live Better

Rheem

Good Luck Whittemore Cardinals

dean arbour

55 W M-55, Tawas City (989) 362-3489 deanarbourtawas.com
 1859 N US-23, East Tawas (989) 362-3403 deanarbourcevy.com

Ford **CHEVROLET**

SALES. SERVICE. PARTS. BODY SHOP. DETAIL SHOP