



2025

FALL
SPORTS

The
SENTINEL
ECHO



FOOTBALL PREVIEWS



Mason Griffin was the fourth leading passer in the state last season in class 5A, according to Coach John Hines.

Expectations are high for Hines' Cardinals

By Les Dixon
For the Sentinel-Echo

LONDON — South Laurel coach John Hines knows what it takes to build a program into a district, region, and state contender — he accomplished all three feats at Pulaski County.

After one season at South Laurel that saw the Cardinals win six games, advance to the Class 5A playoffs while drafting crosstown rival North Laurel during regular season play, have many folks believing Hines has his squad heading into the right direction.

"The expectations are higher than they've been, probably ever," Hines said. "But that's OK, we're not gonna worry about something like that. We're just trying to take each week as it comes, will be the best team we can be each Friday night."

"The fact that the team is very hungry to be successful — It's been the number one asset that we have discovered since we came aboard here," he added. "The players are hungry to be successful in our willing to do whatever it takes to get there that makes for some very positive outcomes."

South Laurel returns eight starters on offense and six starters on defense, and should be even better on both sides of the ball this season.

"We return eight starters on the offensive side," Hines said. "They're led by quarterback Mason Griffin, senior, who was the fourth leading passer in the state last season in class 5A. Also, running back Wes Dowell, who is poised to have a tremendous season, and wide receivers Waylon Hensley, and Garrison Brown. New to the team is Carter Kelley, senior, wide receiver. He has shown some real explosive ability in preseason practice. On the offensive line, we return starters Jonathan Inman, Junior, Gunner Queen, Junior, and Tanner Hammons, Senior."

"We return six starters on defense," he added. "Senior outside linebacker Liam Newton, and senior outside linebacker Tim Thompson, are big-time playmakers for us. Defensive ends, Bridger Ray, and Braxten Carroll, had really strong seasons last year. And in the secondary, cornerback Waylon Hensley tied for the

state lead in interception last season in class 5A, is back at one corner, and Garrison Brown returns in the secondary as well. Bo Walters, senior, became a starter mid season last year and returns for his senior year.

"Special teams was a huge bonus for us last season," Hines continued. "Our Kicker returns in junior Cullen Dalrymple. Cullin is a strong reliable extra point kicker and has become a strong field-goal threat. Jackson Hart is a tremendously talented young Kicker as well. Liam Newton is a very good punter, and will handle that duty most of the time. Garrison Brown can also pun, as can Caleb Roark, and Quinn Strunk. Bridger Ray and Elijah Roark will handle the long snap duties, and Maddox Warren and Mason Griffin will handle the holding duties for field goals. Ethan Leach is the kickoff specialist."

Senior leadership is the Cardinals' main strength entering the season, according to Hines.

"We have a very nice senior class, that have all played a lot of football in their career," he said. "They have been strong to lead the way in everything that we do in the off-season, spring practice, speed training, summer workouts, etc. I'm proud of the example they're setting."

"Our concerns, are our lack of size upfront, and our lack of depth," Hines added. "We're not a very big team. Our matchups upfront with the lineman will hardly ever be in our favor. Our depth, primarily will be our freshman group. We're very excited about them, they show a lot of ability coming into our program."

Hines confirmed another tough schedule awaits his Cardinals.

"The schedule is always tough at South Laurel," he said. "We've only had two winning seasons in the last many, many years. Everybody on the schedule is good from our viewpoint. Our district is very strong, with Pulaski County, southwestern, and rival North Laurel, all in the Mountain top 10 preseason."

"Our district is very strong," Hines added. Only four teams, but three of the

SCHEDULE

AUGUST 2025

- Sat, Aug 23: Somerset (Away) - 8:00 PM (Alton Blakely Bowl)
- Fri, Aug 29: Clay County (Home) - 8:30 PM

SEPTEMBER 2025

- Fri, Sep 5: Knox Central (Away at Knox Ky Central) - 7:30 PM
- Fri, Sep 12: Whitley County (Home) - 7:30 PM
- Fri, Sep 19: Wayne County (Away) - 7:30 PM
- Fri, Sep 26: Harlan County (Home) - 7:30 PM

OCTOBER 2025

- Fri, Oct 3: Perry County Central (Home) - 7:30 PM
- Fri, Oct 10: Pulaski County (Away) - 7:30 PM
- Fri, Oct 17: Southwestern (Home) - 7:30 PM
- Fri, Oct 24: North Laurel (Away) - 7:30 PM (First Priority Bowl)



The Jaguars came away with some big wins last season, and look to make a run at district and regional crowns.

Jaguars return veteran squad setting sites on a deep postseason run

By Les Dixon
For the Sentinel-Echo

LONDON — It's a new season, and second year coach Michael Nelson believes his North Laurel Jaguars are ready to take the next step.

The Jaguars came away with some big wins last season, and look to make a run at district and regional crowns.

"The entire coaching staff has high expectations for this team," Nelson said. "The players have not focused on those expectations at all and had a great summer. They had fun and I truly felt like they got better every single day. They know that we play in a tough district and they have to work hard every single day to get better. Nothing is guaranteed to us and we understand that, hard work and pushing each other every single day will help us fight back to the top of district."

"I believe this team is ready to take the next step," he added. "They are very player led, and we have great seniors this season and they truly believe in themselves and the coaching staff. They are excited for the season and the level of competition we play. They have all the tools to be successful, but they have to push each other every single day."

With 10 starters returning on offense and nine on defense, you can understand

why Nelson is excited to see what North Laurel can do.

"Cooper Robinson is our senior running back returning and we expect him to have a huge season," he said. "His speed has improved as well as his patience as a runner. Jude McWhorter is coming in as the quarterback and had an awesome offseason, he gained a lot of speed and size as well as his throwing mechanics improving. Cam Anderson is a name we expect to have a huge year at receiver as well as newcomer RJ Noble, and senior Colton Gilbert. The entire offensive line has made a huge improvement and gotten much stronger this season."

"Ryse Sutton is the first name that stands out with his motor on the defensive line," Nelson added. "Both safeties Jude McWhorter and Cooper Robinson are veterans in the secondary for us and phenomenal tacklers. LB Brody Pruitt and Bryson Nantz also return and have a year of experience under their belts as well as newcomer Caleb Roark at linebacker."

"Special teams can win or lose you football games," he continued. "We return our kicker and punter Cam Anderson. He is a phenomenal kicker who will kick at the next level and we have all the faith

SCHEDULE

AUGUST 2025

- Fri, Aug 22: Perry County Central (Away) - 7:30 PM
- Fri, Aug 29: Corbin (Home) - 8:30 PM (Praxel Line Services Bowl)

SEPTEMBER 2025

- Fri, Sep 12: Madison Central (Away) - 7:30 PM
- Fri, Sep 19: Lawrence County (Away) - 7:30 PM
- Fri, Sep 26: Whitley County (Away) - 7:30 PM

OCTOBER 2025

- Fri, Oct 3: Collins (Home) - 7:30 PM
- Fri, Oct 10: Southwestern (Away) - 7:30 PM
- Fri, Oct 17: Pulaski County (Home) - 7:30 PM
- Fri, Oct 24: South Laurel (Home) - 7:30 PM (First Priority Bowl)
- Fri, Oct 31: Wayne County (Home) - 7:30 PM

SEE SQUAD, PAGE 8



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GOLF PREVIEWS



FILE PHOTO

Another tough schedule will have the North Laurel Jaguars prepared for regional tournament time.

Young Jaguar golf team ready to surprise

By Les Dixon
For the Sentinel-Echo

LONDON — The North Laurel Jaguars golf team is ready to turn in another impressive season, but to do so, they must find a way to replace seven seniors from last year's squad.

"After last year's great season, one of the best in school history, we lose seven seniors," North Laurel boys' golf coach Chris Stone said. "We return a young bunch of players that got a few

matches under their belt but still lack the seasoned experience we have had in the past. Though we are young I expect the team to compete and gain experience each time out and by the end of the season be in the hunt again."

Players that Stone believes will step up to the challenge are Wil Sutton, Wes Storm and Max Dotson.

"(Wil) will work to improve on mental part of the game and should a major part to team this

year," he said. "Wes Storm is another sophomore that really strikes the ball well with a lot of distance. He will learn to harness that length and should have several rounds in the 70s this year."

"Max Dotson a freshman with tons of upside," Stone added. "For a young player, the mental game is top notch. That matched with his skill level should produce another great player from North Laurel."

Stone said his team's main

strength this season is having "no fear."

"They are young and have no pressure of expectations," he said. "They can play freely."

"The biggest concern this year will be the mental part of the game," Stone added. "Being young we will have to learn to play through tough holes and not let it snowball and cost us strokes. We have to minimize the mistakes. This is the biggest concern we will work on."

Another tough schedule will have his team prepared for regional tournament time.

"Our schedule is no easier than before," he admitted. "We play in some of the best tournaments against some of the best. We don't shy away, it will only prep us for the postseason. We are young but I expect big steps to be made this year and hope we can surprise some people come end of the season. We have a great bunch of boys."



North Laurel's girls golf team is coming off a regional runner-up effort, and with all five players returning from last season, Lady Jaguar coach Jerry Vickers believes his squad is ready to take the next step. FILE PHOTO

Talented, experienced Lady Jaguar golf team ready to make run at regional crown

By Les Dixon
For the Sentinel-Echo

LONDON — North Laurel's girls golf team is coming off a regional runner-up effort, and with all five players returning from last season, Lady Jaguar coach Jerry Vickers believes his squad is ready to take the next step.

"We're bringing back all five players from last year's team that finished as regional runner-up, and that gives us a big advantage heading into this season," he said. "With a group of experienced competitors, including three seniors, we're confident in our ability to build on last year's success. The team is motivated, focused, and ready to take the next step. We have high expectations and believe this group is capable of making a deep postseason run."

Seniors Lily Kate Chesnut, Katie Gilliam, and Riley Vickers return along with sophomore Maddie Brewer, and eighth grader Ella Baker.

"Lily Kate is our most experienced player and a steady presence at the top of our lineup," Vickers said. "She sets the tone with her leadership and consistency on the course. Katie brings a calm,

composed approach and has been a reliable part of our lineup for several seasons," he added. "Her focus and dedication have been key to her growth. Riley is another senior leader who contributes both with her play and her positive attitude. She's worked hard in the offseason and is poised to have a strong final year."

"Maddie had an outstanding first season and brings a competitive edge that pushes the whole team," he continued. "She continues to develop into a consistent contributor. Despite her age, Ella plays with a maturity well beyond her years. Her poise and talent make her a key part of our team, and she continues to impress with her game."

When it comes to strengths, Vickers immediately pointed out to his team's experience.

"All of our returning players have competed in big moments and know what it takes to perform under pressure," he said. "We also have strong leadership from our seniors and a supportive, team-first attitude that creates a great environment for success. The balance in our lineup means we don't

have to rely on just one or two players—anyone in our top five can post a solid score on any given day."

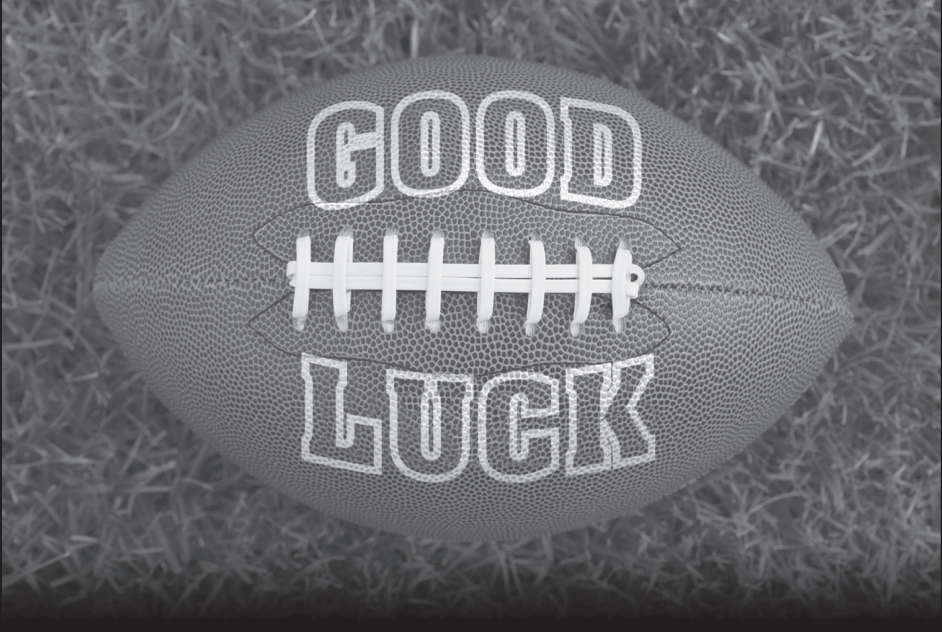
"One concern is continuing to close the scoring gap with the top teams in the region," he added. "While our experience helps, we'll need to see some individual score improvements to push even further in the postseason. Another challenge will be integrating Reese Holiday, into the lineup and getting her comfortable competing at the varsity level. She has the potential to contribute right away, but it takes time to adjust."

Vickers said his team's schedule is designed to challenge players.

"We've got a good mix of tournaments with strong competition, which will give our players the opportunity to be tested before postseason play," he said. "Playing on a variety of courses under different conditions will definitely help us sharpen our game and build confidence heading into Regionals."

"I'm extremely proud of this group — not just for their accomplishments on the course, but for the way they represent our school and community," Vickers added. "The leadership

from our seniors, the energy from our younger players, and the overall commitment to the team is something special. We're excited about what's ahead and hope to make another strong postseason run."



Wishing all the players and coaches
Good Luck on a winning season!



CORBIN

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VOLLEYBALL PREVIEWS



FILE PHOTOS
Coach Shelley Nunley feels she's got a talented roster that's ready to compete for the 50th District and 13th Region crowns.

Nunley's Lady Cardinals ready to get to work

By Les Dixon
For the Sentinel-Echo
LONDON — South Laurel coach Shelley Nunley can't wait for the 2025 campaign to begin. Nunley feels she's got a talented roster that's ready to compete for the 50th District and 13th Region crowns. "There's so much to be excited about in 2025," she said. "We return a solid group of experienced players who have already established a strong foundation and familiarity on a varsity court. Alongside them will be a few new faces who we expect to make significant contributions this season. "Our team continues to demonstrate a strong presence at the net, anchored by aggressive blockers who consistently set the tone defensively," Nunley



With a talented roster returning, Coach Nunley believes the 2025 campaign will be a successful one.

added. "Meanwhile, our back row has been working hard in the offseason to be more consistent in creating opportunities for our offense to do their jobs in the front row." With a talented roster returning, Nunley believes the 2025 campaign will be a successful one. "This roster is built on grit, desire, and drive, which we believe will lead to big victories against tough opponents in the next few months," she said. "Twenty Twenty-five looks good for South Laurel volleyball; we're ready to get to work."



FILE PHOTO
North Laurel athletic director Ethan Eversole said this year's version of the Lady Jaguars are a team that will do anything they can to win and get better.

Versatile Lady Jaguars set to make noise once again in 49th District, 13th Region

By Les Dixon
For the Sentinel-Echo
LONDON — After a first round exit to the region champs in last years region tournament, the North Laurel Lady Jaguars volleyball team is focused on returning to the and competing for another region championship. "It will be no small task after losing two seniors off of last year's team but there is a young, hungry group of players who are ready to step up and make their selves known," North Laurel athletic director Ethan Eversole said. (Coach Lauren Culver wasn't available for comments). We are looking to defend our

49th district crown and make another push in the region tournament." Eversole said a lot of familiar faces return for North Laurel. "Some of those are seniors Addison Metcalf, Mia Rodriguez and Liberty Reyngoudt," he said. "Newcomer senior, Katie Keen, along with others like Hannah Daniels, Baylee Asher, Lucy Jo Lineville, Makayla Clark, Morgan Preston and Mykah Napier, Khloe Blair, Emma Evans, Preslee Collins, and numerous other young Lady Jags, who look to play big roles in this years lineup." Eversole said this year's

version of the Lady Jaguars are a team that will do anything they can to win and get better. "We are a team that is very versatile and can contribute in many different ways while also working hard in practice to master their skills," he said. "It's a team full of great energy and poise. They have good leadership and their weaknesses are their strengths. Meaning that if anything arises they will do what they can to overcome it. They will really lean on their senior presence in Metcalf, Reyngoudt, Martinez and Keen to help

SEE VOLLEYBALL, PAGE 8

GOLF PREVIEWS (CONT.)



FILE PHOTO
With three returning varsity players, Rusty Siler's South Laurel Lady Cardinals are ready to soar this fall.

SILER: 'This team has the talent, work ethic, and chemistry to make something special happen'

By Les Dixon
For the Sentinel-Echo
LONDON — With three returning varsity players, Rusty Siler's South Laurel Lady Cardinals are ready to soar this fall. "We're excited to kick off a new season with a strong mix of returning talent and promising newcomers," Siler said. "Our three returning varsity players Alyssa Siler, Lilly Barton, and Lindsey House will all be juniors this year. Alyssa and Lilly are stepping into leadership roles as our veteran captains. With the most playing experience on the team, they've already had plenty of success early in their careers. "Alyssa Siler has made it to the first round of the State Tournament every year since eighth grade," he added. "She placed third in region as a freshman and second as a sophomore. Last year, she made it to the final round at the State Tournament in Bowling Green, finishing strong and gaining valuable experience at the highest level." Siler also returns Lilly Barton and Lindsey House.

"Lilly Barton also advanced to the first round of State last season after narrowly missing the cut as a freshman," he said. "Her competitive drive and positive leadership will make her a huge asset to the team this year. "Lindsey House has shown great dedication during the off-season," Siler added. "After qualifying for her first Region Tournament last year, she's been putting in the work to take her game to the next level. We're looking forward to seeing how she contributes to our team scores this season. "Joining our varsity squad this year are two incredibly athletic newcomers Morgan Jackson (Junior) and Audrey Likins (Senior). Morgan is also a varsity volleyball player, and both she and Audrey are standout softball players with college-level talent," he continued. "Coach Branden Grubb has already noted how well they strike the ball and how quickly they're picking up the game. By the time Regionals roll around, we expect them to

SEE SILER, PAGE 8

Cardinals golf team returns experienced squad



By Les Dixon
For the Sentinel-Echo
LONDON — Cooper Dotson takes over as South Laurel's boys golf coach with hopes of leading the program to success this fall. "This is my first year coaching, so I am excited to have the opportunity to

coach such wonderful student athletes," Dotson said. "I hope I can guide these players through the ups and downs of what comes with the game of golf. Returning this season for the Cardinals, according to Dotson are seniors Toby Dotson, and Tyler Douglas, juniors Wilson Hamm, Brennon Combs, Cannon Jackson, and Colton Bates, and sophomore Colton Cox. "Some strengths I see in this team is that we are an experienced team," Dotson said. "With multiple juniors and seniors, this team should see success in the upcoming season. "Some concerns I see are that some players have not played a lot of tournaments, but have played a lot of golf," he added. "We just need games to translate to tournament play. My team's schedule has a variety of matches and tournaments to prepare these students."

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Soccer Previews



FILE PHOTO

Coach Brooks Cawood said the biggest strength he sees so far is just how well his players have come together as a team.

Cardinals looking to improve on last season's success

By Les Dixon
For the Sentinel-Echo
LONDON — A new season means new expectations for Brooks Cawood's South Laurel Cardinal soccer team. The Cardinals posted a 9-9-1 record last season with hopes of advancing to the region tournament

and beyond this fall. But to do so, Cawood knows just how tough the 49th District, and 13th Region is. "Oof, talk about a tough route to get to state," he said. "Our district put out a final four team for the state tournament last year. It's always competitive

and always wide open. But there's a theme to past winners that have gone from our region to state; and that is they were the team that always wanted it more. Last year was a fun postseason and I wouldn't say this year will be no

SEE SUCCESS, PAGE 8



FILE PHOTO

Coach Jessica Perkins said her team's biggest strengths are their depth and team unity.

South Laurel looking to make noise on the pitch

By Les Dixon
For the Sentinel-Echo
LONDON — Jessica Perkins takes over as South Laurel's girls' soccer coach with hopes of improving on last season's 5-8-1 record. "We return a strong core of players who gained valuable varsity experience last season," Perkins said. "This group has grown both technically and mentally, and we're already seeing that maturity carry into our preseason sessions. The team has

shown great leadership, strong chemistry, and a commitment to improving every day. We're excited for what this group can accomplish and confident that we're building something special this year. "Returning players now seniors are Gracie Hoskins, Shelby Gambrel, Halle Reams and Samantha Causey," she added. "Each player on our team, both returning and new, brings something valuable to the table this season. We've seen growth across

the board, and every player has a role in our success. We're excited about the depth and team-first mentality they bring to the field." Perkins said her team's biggest strengths are their depth and team unity. "We have several players who can step into different roles, which gives us flexibility in our system," she said. "The girls are also incredibly close-knit. That bond translates

SEE PITCH, PAGE 8



FILE PHOTO

With a cupboard full of talented players, North Laurel enters the season as the team to beat in their district, and the 13th Region.

North Laurel enters season primed and ready to defend 13th Region crown

By Les Dixon
For the Sentinel-Echo
LONDON — Kayla Carson's first year as head coach of the North Laurel girls' soccer program was a success. She helped guide North Laurel to the 49th District and 13th Region crowns along with an appearance in the state tournament's final four while compiling a 13-4

record. Can the success continue this fall? The prognosticators believe so. With a cupboard full of talented players, North Laurel enters the season as the team to beat in their district, and the 13th Region. SEE PRIMED, PAGE 8



FILE PHOTO

North Laurel was one win away from capturing the 13th Region championship last season. With an abundance of talent returning, the Jaguars are hoping to take the next step.

Strong nucleus of talent returns for Broyles' Jaguars

By Les Dixon
For the Sentinel-Echo
LONDON — North Laurel was one win away from capturing the 13th Region championship last season. With an abundance of talent returning, the Jaguars are hoping to take the

next step. "We have a talented, solid nucleus of players returning this year that includes eight returning starters," North Laurel patch David Broyles said. "Several of SEE BROYLES, PAGE 6

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Weaver

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

tions.”

Weaver said he has 31 runners on this year’s team and mentioned below the runners he feels will make the varsity roster:

- Ayden Harris — He’s a freshman who is going to be filling his big brother’s shoes. His brother Xander Harris led the team last year and this year it looks like he’s going to be leading the team. He has put in some incredible work during our summer training and it’s only getting better now that school has started. He’s young but he has experience as he’s been running for several years and already has some great times posted. I am excited about seeing what the future holds for this young man. I expect great things from Ayden.
- Jesse Madden — He is a senior that I have named as one of our captains based off of his leadership during the summer practices and his willingness to go above and beyond what runs and workouts I prescribe him. He is a determined and very coachable young man that I love working with and talking to. He is a prime example of what I want to represent

North Laurel High School cross country. I can’t say enough about him, he’s helped lead this team in the same way an assistant coach or even a head coach would lead. I wouldn’t be surprised if coaching is in his future after he finishes his running career at whatever college he chooses to attend.

- Jackson Storm — He is a Junior that similar to Jesse has been leading this team through the summer practices. I also made him a team captain based off his work ethic and willingness to lead. He is a dual sport athlete right now as he is also competing in golf and he excels at both of these sports. He has shown some great improvement from summer until now and I am expecting some great times and races from this young man. I am proud to have him as a runner on the NLHS cross country team.
- Jett Hacker — He is a sophomore and boy am I grateful for that. That means I get to work with and develop this athlete for two more years after this season. I have gotten to know this young man very well. He works super hard during practice and gives 110 percent every day. He is also one of the athletes I enjoy speaking with the

most as we both share a passion for cooking and we’ve both worked in the restaurant business. He is going to post some fast times this season, so keep your eyes out for Jett as he will probably surprise himself with how well he will do this year.

- Bram Miller — He is an eighth grader that has shown great potential. I have never heard a gripe or complaint from this young man. I ask him every day how he’s feeling and I get the same response. “Good.” I can’t tell you how much I love having a young athlete willing to do exactly what workouts I prescribe for him. He gets out each day and gets the job done, and he competes with the high schoolers every practice. I am super excited about this season for him, but even more so the future of his high school career in cross country.
- Noah Hamm — He is a Junior and he wasn’t able to make the summer practices. But he has jumped right in with the practices after school and it seems like he didn’t miss a beat. In the few weeks that I have worked with him he’s ignited my hopes for a potential top finish at region and goals to win more meets this season. I

had seen his PR’s and in just a few of the workouts he’s done with the team this season I am very impressed with him and I can’t wait to see what he does at our first meet so I can truly determine where he is at physically.

- Bentley Carnes — He is a new freshman runner that just came out to practice this week. But based off of his fitness level and willingness to go above and beyond on the workouts I am going to put him in the 7th man spot and have him either prove me right or wrong on my selection. I am confident he will prove me right. Each day at practice I have had him move up groups because the work seems to easy for him. I am still trying to figure out his fitness level and each day he surprises me.
- Finley Waterstrat — He is a freshman and brand new to North Laurel. He came in to summer practice without knowing anyone and was embraced immediately. He is a hard nosed runner that wont give up no matter what. I have seen some great runs from this gentleman and he is another one that goes above and beyond what I tell him to do. He usually comes up to me after his last rep of a workout and asks if he can do another

one. He has never ran cross country before and if I hadn’t known that I would have thought he was a seasoned veteran of this sport. He will be a great runner this season and an even better one next year.

When it comes to strengths, Weaver believes his team has lots.

“This being my first year some of the things I’ve noticed right off the bat is that they are all so bonded already,” he said. “I plan on doing team dinners and team events outside of practice to strengthen that bond, but it already appears unbreakable. These guys act like family and I would go so far as to say a brotherhood. I love that I have been able to step in and be a part of it.

“Some concerns I have is that we don’t have many middle schoolers on the team,” he added. “We only have four middle school boys. I tend on trying to go to the middle school and speak with some of the students there in order to get more of them involved in this amazing sport.”

Weaver said he intentionally structured this year’s schedule to fit the needs of running well at region and state.

“I have two meets on our schedule that are at

our regional course,” he said. “I have two meets on the schedule that are about midseason that I plan on having PR’s at, due to them being fast courses. I like to look at the first two meets as what I call rust busters, so that the runners can get their racing legs back under them as we only get up to race pace a few times at practice and for short distances. So these first races aren’t necessarily about getting a PR or winning. If that happens I will be one happy coach, but the goal is to get out at get used to running 5ks at a tough pace.”

With the talent returning, Weaver believes his team can make a run at a region crown.

“I think we could do it,” he said. “Is it going to be tough? Yes, absolutely. Is it something within reach? Yes, absolutely. I know there are some very good teams in our region, but based off my experience and what I’ve seen at practice from our top guys I would say that we are a contender for the title.

“We will have to remain healthy and train to peak at the exact right time,” he added. “If we do that, then I would say our guys could potentially take home a trophy and secure a spot at the state meet that day.”

Season

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

trips or other summer obligations.”

Weaver mentioned below the runners he feels will make the varsity roster:

- Jada Short — She is our top girl and she is that for a reason. Even though she is an eighth grader, she is a tough and talented athlete. I don’t think it would matter what distance I ran her in, I think she would win and win with a good lead. This girl questions everything I do at practice, but once I explain it to her she does it and does it well. I wouldn’t be surprised if she stays healthy that she could one day be a state champion, at the very least one of the very best in the state.
- Shelby King — She is an eighth grader and by far one of the hardest working eighth graders I’ve ever coached. She will run any distance and at any speed I tell her to without question. She does most of her running with Jada, and unlike Jada, she never questions anything. She just gets it done. I haven’t met many young athletes that are as coachable and tough

as this girl. I can’t wait to see what this season holds and the seasons to come. I expect great things from Shelby.

- Kaegen Peters — She is a ninth grader and one of the most competitive girls I’ve ever coached. She is bound and determined to run fast and run well. I am going to do everything I can to help her reach whatever goals she sets for herself. She is a dual sport athlete and does dance as well as teaches dance outside of practice. I am really enjoying working with her because she is another one that rarely gripes, but when she does, I know it’s something serious and I help her address whatever is wrong. If I tell her to do something outside of practice, exercise or stretch wise, I know she is going to go home and do it in order to better herself.
- Sienna Sizemore — She is a Junior and I am so glad that I will get to work with her for at least one more year. I love it when she is at practice because I can tell she is a natural leader, and it seems like everyone works a little harder when she is around. I am really hoping to see some great times from her this season and based off

how she has been doing at practice that is definitely going to happen.

- Cayla Morgan — She is a sophomore, and she is bound and determined to improve. Every day at practice she is getting better and better. What seemed hard for her to do at the beginning of the summer now seems easy to her and I am giving her more and more to do each practice. She handles every day well and is steadily climbing that fitness ladder. I expect her to improve dramatically from where she was last season.
- Jacee Short — She is a sophomore and she thought she wasn’t in great shape, but similar to Cayla she has been steadily climbing that fitness ladder and every day I am seeing improvements from her. I know the sky is the limit for this girl as she has a lot of speed and determination. If she stays healthy and injury free, we will see some great times from Jacee this year and in the years to come.
- Abigail McCowan — She is our senior that has had some struggles with injuries in the past, but so far is looking great. She is going to be a great addition to this varsity team and just like with Sienna

she is a great leader to the young women on the team. I love having her and Sienna around because the whole team atmosphere shifts when they are there. I am looking forward to keeping her healthy for her last season and helping her post some good PR’s and helping her do more than she thought she could do for her last year of cross country.

- Elyn Larkey — She is an eighth grader and another dual sport athlete. She does dance as well and several other things outside of school. She is a fiery and fierce competitor, and she hates to lose. I am very excited to see her race this upcoming meet and see where she officially stands on fitness. She is only able to attend a few practices a week due to her outside commitments, but when she is there you can’t miss her. She is running hard and fast and is a sight to see.

Similar to the boys’ team, Weaver believes his girls’ squad are tight nit and love to run with each other.

“But what I also love about our girls’ team is that I get to work with them for several years as most of the top runners are very

young,” he said. “I can’t wait to develop these girls over the next few years into incredible runners and help motivate them to hopefully pursue college careers and scholarships through cross country.

“There aren’t many concerns with our girls’ team,” he added. “But in general, what you have to worry about with any team is injury prevention. I just want to make sure our girls stay healthy and happy and are able to compete well on race day. Going into each day at practice, I am constantly checking on each athlete to make sure they aren’t having any issues with soreness or injury and if they are, I address it right there on the spot and adjust their runs and workouts accordingly.”

When asked about his girls’ team’s schedule and the chances of them winning a region crown, Weaver responded with the same answers he gave for his boys’ team.

Weaver said he intentionally structured this year’s schedule to fit the needs of running well at region and state.

“I have two meets on our schedule that are at our regional course,” he said. “I have two meets on

the schedule that are about midseason that I plan on having PR’s at, due to them being fast courses. I like to look at the first two meets as what I call rust busters, so that the runners can get their racing legs back under them as we only get up to race pace a few times at practice and for short distances. So these first races aren’t necessarily about getting a PR or winning. If that happens I will be one happy coach, but the goal is to get out at get used to running 5ks at a tough pace.”

With the talent returning, Weaver believes his team can make a run at a region crown.

“I think we could do it,” he said. “Is it going to be tough? Yes, absolutely. Is it something within reach? Yes, absolutely. I know there are some very good teams in our region, but based off my experience and what I’ve seen at practice from our top guys I would say that we are a contender for the title.

“We will have to remain healthy and train to peak at the exact right time,” he added. “If we do that, then I would say our guys could potentially take home a trophy and secure a spot at the state meet that day.”

TEAM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

- Russell Ricketts (freshman) — debut

- Tristan Joseph (senior) — Returning upperclassmen provide depth to roster.
- Seth Dotson (junior) — Returning upperclassmen

provide depth to roster.

- Hunter Gilbert (sophomore) — Strong work ethic is South Laurel main strength, according to

Scheithauer.

“Jay Hoskins continues to improve from year-to-year and shows a lot of potential.”

Not having much depth

and experience on the roster is a concern for Scheithauer, as she is looking to prioritize injury prevention.

Scheithauer said her

team’s schedule provides a variety course layouts with different challenges (hills/switchbacks/trails) that will prepare them for the regional meet.



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