

## **Consolidated Winter Sports Review 2015-2016**

### **Boys' Basketball**

7-7 section/11-11 overall

While Coach Zach Skrinjar had hoped for a more productive year, he did like the way the season ended on an upswing and praised the team's defense and ability to score numerous double-digit assists. Senior Mike Zappala was named to the WPIAL AAAA all-section first team, junior Jake Livingston was voted to the second team and senior Brendon Urso was honorable mention. Mike and Brendon were also invited to play in the prestigious Cager Classic tournament. The team will lose four seniors, three of them starters, but two starters will return, as well as two players who saw starter minutes off the bench. Coach Skrinjar also is expecting some contributions from underclassmen next year.

Due to the PIAA/WPIAL reclassification system for next season, basketball will move to Class 6A, the top classification based on student population. The team had been in 4A, the previous top classification. Additions to the Foxes' 2016-2017 section schedule will be Hempfield, Latrobe, Norwin and Penn-Trafford high schools. Gateway and Franklin-Regional high schools, both good competitors, will no longer be on the Foxes' section schedule.

### **Girls' Basketball**

11-3 section/13-9 overall

When Coach Jennifer O'Shea took over the team last season, it was nothing like she had expected. The team was fraught with injuries and many young players without much experience were called upon to fill big shoes - that was good and bad. Their record didn't reflect how good the team could have been, but the underclassmen gained valuable experience. What a difference a year can make. With everyone healthy this season and quite a few players able to score double-digit figures, the team averaged 52 points a game, significantly more than last year. At the end of the season, the team advanced to the WPIAL playoffs, but in a heartbreaker, they lost to Canon-McMillan High School in the final seconds of the game. Despite that, Coach O'Shea was very pleased with the progress the team made and how focused they were on getting better. The squad will lose four seniors — Taylor Cohen, Anna Kelly, Kayla Slovenec (who scored her 1,000th career point this season) and Sarah Supsura. Standout junior Gabby Badway, this season's leading scorer, will return as will fellow junior Bryanna Urso and sophomore Claudia Guerrieri. All are expected to be key contributors in 2016-2017. Post-season honors went to Gabby Badaway and Kayla Slovenec, who were selected first team all-section, while Taylor Cohen was voted to the second team. Byranna Urso received honorable mention.

Due to the PIAA/WPIAL reclassification system for next season, girls' basketball will move to Class 6A, the top classification based on student population. Additions to next season's section schedule will be Hempfield, Latrobe, Norwin and Penn-Trafford high schools. As with the boys' team, due to section realignments Gateway and Franklin-Regional high schools will no longer be on the Foxes' section schedule.

## **Gymnastics**

1-7

Even though the team got off to a slow start, first-year coach Nadine Buchanan was still very pleased with their continual progress throughout the season and how their performance peaked at just the right time. Freshmen added depth to the team and the hard-working upperclassmen were positive influences. Individuals who qualified for the WPIAL championships were juniors Sarah Hamilton, Christina Massalski, Taylor Thiele and Dixon Veltri (who also qualified for the WPIAL diving championship), sophomore Vicki Mountz and freshman Maggie McCoy. Without any seniors on the team, the underclassmen gained great experience. Coach Buchanan believes those accomplishments will translate into a more competitive season in 2017.

## **Swimming/Diving**

Boys' swimming 4-4 section/6-6-1 overall

Girls' swimming 6-2 section/9-4 overall

New head coach Dan Taylor had an advantage coming into his new job. A coach for the local club team, Killer Whales, he had known many of the swimmers since they were children and had been instrumental in their early development. Those relationships provided good continuity between the swimmers' on- and off-season training and probably were a factor in doubling the size of the boys' team this year.

Even though the teams were young, their enthusiasm and motivation made up for any deficits. Overall, 13 swimmers advanced to WPIALs, including half of the girls' team. Ten out of 11 girls on the team set career or season best times at the WPIAL championships. Girls who advanced were seniors Kelsey Denny (200/400 free relay) and Nicola Lee-Oesterreich (200 medley relay), and juniors Sada Lantigos (100 fly, 200 medley relay), Maia Pauley (200 free, 500 free, 200/400 free relay) and Megan Wiese (200 free). Also qualifying were sophomores Joslyn Filo (200 free, 100 free, 200/400 free relay), Morgann Green (200 medley relay) and Molly Wiese (200 medley relay), and freshman Maria Luciana (50 free, 100 free, 200/400 free relay).

For the boys, Alec Eckman, a senior, qualified for the WPIAL championship (200 free relay), as did freshmen Jonah Cagley (200 free relay), Colin Hackwelder (200 free, 500 free, 200 free relay) and Nathaniel Roe (200 free relay).

Combined, the teams will lose 10 seniors: Kelsey Denny, Nicola Lee-Oersterreich and Emily Trageser for the girls and boys' team members Che Esch, Logan Foster, Glenn Matamoros, Kristo Penner, Stephen Polcyn, Rob Rago and Ben Stevenson. Luckily, they have a deep bench: 19 out of 26 boys and 16 out of 19 girls are expected to return next season and there are some promising upcoming freshmen whom Coach Taylor expects will make immediate contributions.

### ***Diving***

Boys 4-4 section/6-6-1 overall

Girls 6-2 section/9-4 overall

Three divers advanced to the WPIAL championship - junior Dixon Veltri, and freshmen Jonah Cagley and Magnus Loeffler. Jonah placed second in the WPIAL competition and advanced to the PIAA championship. With so much young talent on the diving team, the future looks bright.

### **Wrestling**

3-2 section/9-4 overall

The Foxes had seven wrestlers qualify for the WPIAL championships: Seniors Derrin Dietz, Tristin Houser and Andrew Kopco; juniors Mike Mahon, Billy Meyers, Jared Pegher and Nate Smith; and sophomore Zach Carcy. Zach and Mike both placed fourth in the tournament and advanced to the PIAA wrestling championship. Mike concluded the season in the top 16 in Pennsylvania, while Zach finished in the top 20. As a team, the squad showed very good performances at the Hampton Duals and then at the Buckeye Local, where they finished in second place out of 34 teams. At the Allegheny County Championships, the team also did well, finishing fifth out of a field of 24 teams. This was the 15th year that Fox Chapel Area High School hosted the Allegheny County tournament, which was founded by coaches Ron Frank and Bob Siar. With the help of many volunteers, the event has grown to become the only sports activity in the region that has competitors representing both genders and all types of schools — large, small, public, private and parochial.

Next season, the team will miss many seniors who made significant contributions, including Derrin Dietz, Tristin Houser, Andrew Kopko and Austin Pisano, all four-year letter winners. Coach Frank expects the team to be solid in the upper weights next year, but is looking to fill in spots in the lower weight classes.