



SPRING SPORTS PREVIEW

2018 *April 5*

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After placing second at the section tournament in 2017, Declan Beers and the Luverne Cardinal baseball team hope to take the next step and qualify for state play this spring.

*Featuring Golf,
Baseball, Softball,
Track & Tennis from*

**Luverne,
Hills-Beaver Creek,
Ellsworth & Adrian**

Positive attitudes lift spirits of H-BC track coach

By John Rittenhouse

Hills-Beaver Creek's Rex Metzger enjoys the tasks that go along with being the school's track coach.

He will like his job even more this spring, as the veteran mentor is in charge of a bunch of high-character athletes in 2018.

"We have a great bunch of kids on both the boys' and the girls' sides," he said.

"They are kids who show up ready to work and get better. This group will get better this year because they are a bunch of hard workers."

With the depth that comes along with having strong participation, Metzger likes the prospects facing the H-BC boys this spring.

With 26 kids in grades eight through 12 to build around, Metzger thinks it could be a good year for the Patriots.

"We have more depth on the boys' side this year, and we'll be a young team without a senior on the roster," he said.

"Some of these kids were very competitive for us last year. Now that they are one year older, I think they will be even more competitive."

H-BC is coming off a 2017 season that included a fourth-place finish at the Red Rock Conference meet, a seventh-place showing at the Southwest Sub-Section 3A meet and an 11th-place effort at the Section 3A meet.

Unfortunately for the Patriots, they did lose two key senior members of the 2017 squad.

Zach Scholten, who advanced to state competition in the high jump the last three seasons, was one of H-BC's top point-producers for a number of years.

Scholten placed second in the section and 11th at state in the high jump last year.

Jed Burgers also had a strong senior season at H-BC.

Along with qualifying for the section meet in the 400-meter dash, Burgers ran a leg with H-BC's 400-meter relay, which placed sixth at the section level in 2017.

"Losing those two guys will hurt us, but we do have most of



Five athletes who advanced to Section 3A competition last spring return to the Hills-Beaver Creek boys' track team this season. They are (from left) Gavin Wysong, Jax Wysong, Tyson Bork, Luke LaRock and Hunter Bork.

John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab hbc boys track

the guys returning to our relays," Metzger offered.

H-BC's 2018 roster consists of four juniors, two sophomores, nine freshmen and 11 eighth-graders.

The list includes five section competitors and two other letter winners from the 2017 campaign.

Juniors Hunter Bork and Luke LaRock and sophomore Jax Wysong and freshmen Tyson Bork and Gavin Wysong bring section experience to the team.

The Wysongs ran with the 400-meter relay last spring.

Gavin also will compete in the long jump, while Jax will long jump, triple jump and high jump.

Hunter Bork, LaRock and Tyson Bork ran legs for H-BC's

section-qualifying 800-meter relay in 2017, while the Wysongs and LaRock advanced to the section meet as members of the 1,600-meter squad.

"We have a lot of the kids who ran relays for us last year coming back, and I think we'll be strong in those events again," Metzger said.

Other returning letter winners from 2017 include junior George Merson and sophomore Easton Harnack.

Merson is a thrower, while Harnack hurdles, springs and competes in the jumps.

Injury kept current junior Garrett Raymon from participating in the program last spring, but Metzger believes he will help the team as a thrower this season.

Freshmen Brandon Taubert, Calvin Erickson, Chase Bosch, Jessup Dunn, Tryce Bennett, Dewell Rauk and Zander Wysong could emerge as varsity contributors in 2018.

Erickson and Bosch are throwers, while Wysong is a thrower/sprinter.

Rauk is projected to compete in the sprints, hurdles and the triple jump.

Dunn runs middle distances and sprints. Taubert runs middle distances and distances and competes in the high jump.

Bennett competes in the high jump and the hurdles.

Metzger is unsure which events

Lift/continued on page 4

H-BC Track

March 27	Luverne	A
April 3	Luverne	A
April 10	Luverne	A
April 14	Pipestone	A
April 17	Fulda	A
April 26	Worthington	A
May 1	Pipestone	A
May 4	Howard Wood	A
May 5	Howard Wood	A
May 7	True Team Sections	A
May 10	MCC	A
May 15	Worthington	A
May 17	Red Rock Conference	A

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Patriot golfers could rise to success this spring

By John Rittenhouse

With experience on its side, things are looking up for the Hills-Beaver Creek boys' golf team in 2018.

H-BC is not exactly a veteran team, but with five players returning to the fold with postseason experience from 2017, the Patriots have a chance to become a competitive squad this spring.

"Even though we only have two seniors on the roster, we do have a lot of experience," offered H-BC coach Dan Ellingson.

"It's kind of nice to be an experienced team and a young team at the same time."

The Patriots are coming off a 15-32 2017 season that was deemed a rebuilding season entering the campaign.

H-BC placed sixth at the annual Red Rock Conference meet and was unable to reach the second day of play as a team at the Section 3A Tournament last spring.

Considering the team's lone senior in 2017, Justin Dunn, didn't see much varsity action, most of the key contributors from last season are back in the ranks.

"We have five of the six kids who played in the section tournament coming back," Ellingson said.

The five returning players are spread from grades nine through 12, giving Ellingson a battle-tested team that relies on the performances of upper classmen and lower classmen alike.

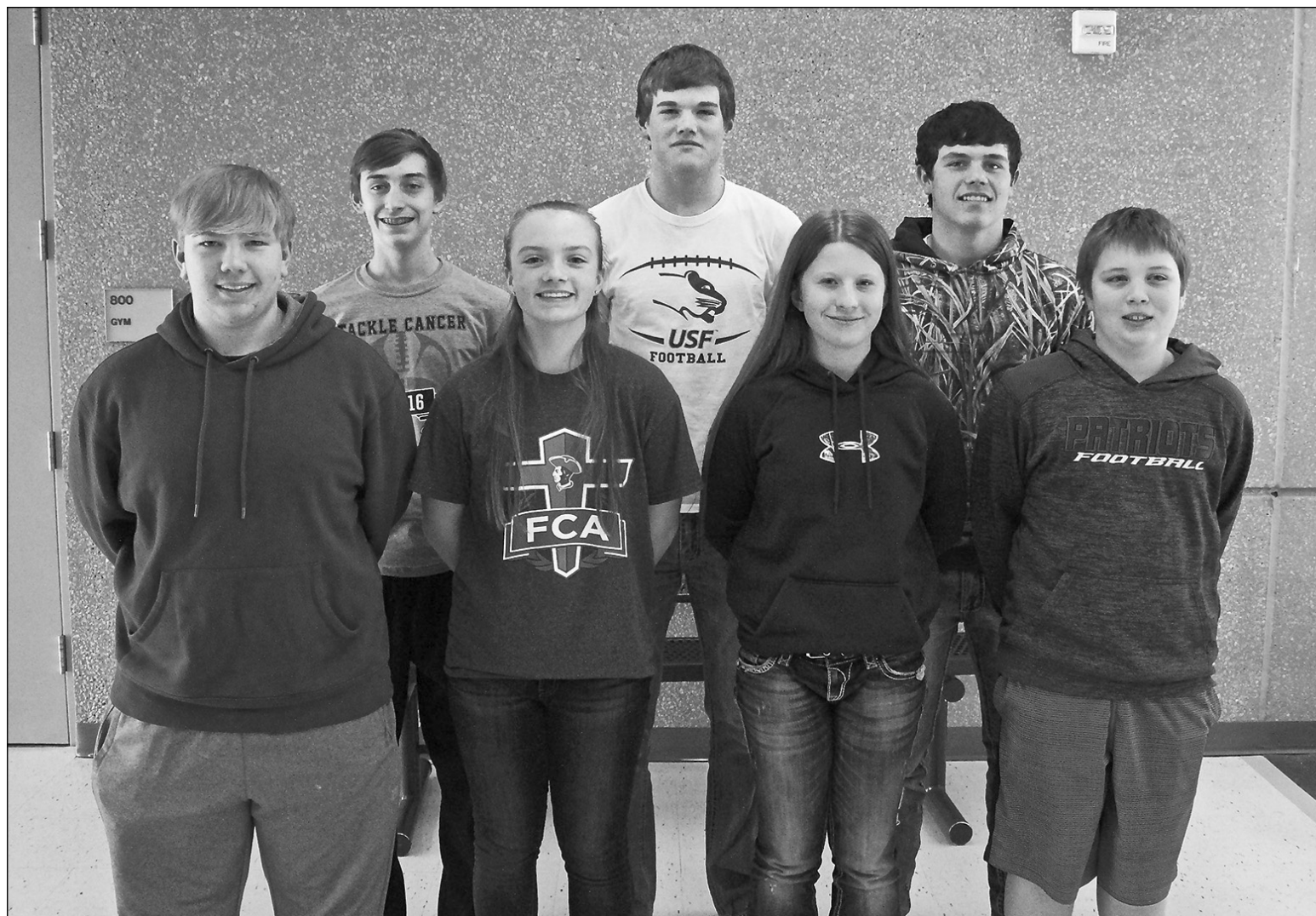
H-BC takes an 11-player roster consisting of two seniors, one junior, one sophomore, one freshman and six eighth-graders into the 2018 campaign.

The list includes senior Preston Maassen, who is coming off a solid junior season.

Maassen made the All-RRC squad and advanced to the second day of section play individually last year.

"He is our leader," Ellingson said.

"Preston is a strong kid who hits the ball along way, and he actually is a pretty good putter. He made the all-conference team and was two strokes away from qualifying for the state tournament last year, and his goal is to get to the state tournament this year."



John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab hbc golf

Seven section competitors from 2017 return to the Hills-Beaver Creek High School golf program in 2018. They are (from left) Noah Hellerud, Parker Gehrke, Tess Van Maanen, Dylon Taubert, Hannah Fick, Preston Maassen and Thomas Dysthe.

Dylon Taubert, another H-BC senior, is expected to be another key contributor this spring.

Taubert missed making the all-conference team as a junior by three strokes when he was the team's No. 2 player in 2017.

Other players returning to the squad as varsity players from last season include junior Noah Hellerud, sophomore Parker Gehrke and freshman Thomas Dysthe.

Dysthe, the youngest player on the roster with varsity experience, usually was H-BC's No. 3 player in 2017.

Hellerud and Gehrke were varsity fixtures in 2017 and are projected to be again this spring.

Ellingson will be searching for a sixth player to field a complete team in 2018.

H-BC Golf

April 3	SWC	A
April 9	Red Rock Central	A
April 10	Fulda/Pipestone	A
April 12	Adrian	A
April 17	SWC	A
April 19	Luverne	A
April 21	Worthington	A
April 24	WWG	A
April 26	MCC/Fulda	A
May 3	Adrian	A
May 8	Fulda	A
May 10	SWC	A
May 15	Red Rock Conference	A

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Six eighth-graders are the candidates.

Dallas Page, Jacob Axness, Ethan Kruger and Austin Allen participated in the program as seventh-graders.

They are the leading prospects to move into the sixth spot in the varsity lineup.

Robbie Drake and Brayden Mirth are eighth-graders participating in the program for the first time.

Ellingson lists Westbrook-Walnut Grove as the team to beat in the RRC and Section 3A this year.

Murray County Central and Fulda-Heron Lake-Okabena are potential RRC contenders.

"As far as individual players, I think we have a shot at getting three kids on the all-conference

team this year," Ellingson said.

"I also think we have a good shot at being one of the top three teams at the conference tournament."

Two girls will be playing varsity golf for the second consecutive year for H-BC.

Eighth-grader Tess Van Maanen played well enough to make the All-RRC squad as a seventh-grader.

Hannah Fick competed at the varsity level as well.

"They both played pretty well last year," Ellingson said.

"We thought there might be a couple more girls coming out for golf this year so we could compete as a team, but it didn't happen. Maybe next year."

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Luverne baseball team hopes to take next step this spring

By John Rittenhouse

After a fantastic finish to the 2017 season, members of the Luverne High School baseball program are hoping to take the next step this spring.

Luverne, a young team that lacked varsity experience in 2017, put together a late-season push that nearly led the Cardinals to their first Section 3AA title in four years.

The dream of advancing to state went unrealized last June, but there's no reason to believe the Cardinals won't make another run for a berth in state competition in 2018 considering last season's roster remains basically intact.

"We do have a lot of experience," said veteran LHS coach Mike Wenninger.

"Last year we were a young team that took some bumps and bruises during the regular season. We still are going to be a relatively young team this year, but the kids received a lot of varsity playing time last year and gained more experience during our run in the section tournament."

The Cardinals didn't turn in an eye-popping performance during the 2017 regular season.

LHS placed second in the Big South Conference's Small School Division with a 6-4 record, which was a part of a 12-7 regular season showing.

Luverne found its groove during section play, when it won six of eight games to finish the year with an 18-9 record and fall one win short of collecting its first section title since 2013.

The Cards defeated Lakeview (7-3) and Windom (4-2) to open the tournament before taking a 3-1 setback from New London-Spicer in the third round.

The Cards fought back to post consecutive wins over Paynesville (4-0), Minnewaska Area (7-5), Jackson County Central (11-1) and NL-S (3-2) to earn

Luverne Baseball

April 3	Martin County West	H
April 5	Redwood Valley	A
April 10	Pipestone	H
April 16	Windom	A
April 20	Tracy-Milroy-Balaton	A
April 23	Windom	H
April 24	Edgerton	H
April 26	Pipestone	A
April 30	Fairmont	A
May 3	JCC	A
May 10	Worthington	A
May 12	St. James Area	H
May 14	Lakeview	H
May 17	Marshall	H
May 21	Adrian	H
May 22	Murray County Central	A

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a berth in the section title tilt. NL-S, however, topped the Cards 8-3 to claim the championship.

The good news is LHS didn't lose many key contributors from the 2017 team.

Chase Johnson didn't receive many plate appearances during his senior season, but he did play solid defense in right field for the Cards.

Kaden Ericson received some playing time early in the year before an injury sidelined him for the rest of his senior campaign.

With the exception of those two individuals, most of the players who made 2017 a success are back in the ranks.

The Cardinals open the 2018 season with a 20-player roster consisting of five seniors, seven juniors and eight sophomores.

The list includes eight players with starting experience,

Step/continued on page 5



John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab hbc girls track

Six athletes with section experience from 2017 return to the Hills-Beaver Creek High School girls' track program this spring. They are (from left) Taryn Rauk, Kenadie Fick, Kourtney Rozeboom, Ashlee Kelderman, Sidney Fick and Taylor Durst.

Lift/continued from page 2

eighth-graders Cole Baker, Andrew Harris, Connor Vande Voort, D.J. Swenson, Donovan Leenderts, Liam Raymon, Max Scholten, Oliver Deelstra, Sean Elbers, Troy Durst and Ty Bundesen will compete in at this point.

"I like the relays and the sprinters we have this year, and we should be pretty strong in the field events," Metzger said.

"We do lack depth in the middle distance and distance events. I know we were very competitive with a lot of these kids last year and that we should take a step forward with a lot of the same kids this year."

The **Patriot girls** may lack the depth compared with the boys this season, but they may be the more experienced team.

"We didn't have any seniors on our roster last year and we have most of the kids who were with us last year coming back," Metzger said.

"We don't have depth, but we should be strong in the field events and I'm hoping we'll field some competitive relays again."

The Patriots turned in a second-place performance at the RRC meet during the regular season in 2017.

H-BC finished sixth in the sub-section field and 11th at the

section meet.

The Patriots open the 2018 season with a 16-athlete roster consisting of two seniors, three juniors, one sophomore, six freshmen, two eighth-graders and two seventh-graders.

The list features six section-qualifiers, 11 letter winners and one state participant from last spring.

Senior Kourtney Rozeboom gives the Patriots instant credibility heading into the 2018 campaign.

Rozeboom emerged as one of southwest Minnesota's top throwers as a junior, when she advanced to the section meet in the shot put and discus.

Rozeboom finished fifth in the discus at the section event and earned a berth into state competition by placing second in the shot put.

The H-BC standout turned in a fifth-place performance at the state meet.

Along with Rozeboom, junior Sidney Fick, freshmen Taryn Rauk and Ashlee Kelderman and eighth-graders Kenadie Fick and Taylor Durst bring more section experience to the team.

The Ficks and Rauk helped form a 1,600-meter relay that placed third at the section meet

last season.

Kelderman, Sidney Fick and Rauk ran with a 400-meter relay that finished sixth at the section event.

Kelderman, Sidney Fick and Rauk also ran with a section-qualifying 800-meter relay.

Other letter winners from 2017 returning to the team include juniors Madison Spath and Ana Hagen, sophomore Joslyn Birger and freshman Abby Knobloch and Lauren Tatge.

Spath runs sprints and long jumps, while Hagen runs distances and middle distances.

Birger competes in the hurdles and triple jumps, while Knobloch hurdles, throws and competes in the high jump.

Tatge runs middle distance and distance races.

Senior Avery Wysong didn't participate in the track program last spring, but Metzger believes she can help the team in the sprints and as a thrower.

Freshmen Erika Dysthe and Shayla Rainford are middle distance runners, while seventh-graders Olivia Bork and Tyrae Goodface-Shanahan round out the roster.

"We have a great bunch of girls who are always trying to get better," Metzger concluded.

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John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab lhs baseball

Five seniors are members of a Luverne High School baseball program that turned in a second-place performance during the Section 3AA Tournament last spring. They are (from left) Declan Beers, Frederik Nielsen, Dylan Mente and Tyler Reisdorfer. Missing is Jaxon Nelson.

Step/continued from page 4

three all-conference selections and two honorable mention picks from 2017.

The roster is a solid one that contains a number of versatile players.

"Of the 12 juniors and seniors we have on this team, many of them are multiple position players," Wenninger said.

"We've got a lot of guys who can pitch, and we can plug someone into the position vacated by the guy who is pitching at the time without losing much. That really helps us because that's usually not the way it works in high school baseball."

As returning all-conference performers, seniors Tyler Reisdorfer and juniors Derek Lundgren and Ben Serie are proven leaders of the team.

Not only are they some of Luverne's top returning pitchers,

they also are solid defenders who are productive at the plate.

Reisdorfer can play any position on the field when he's not on the mound.

Lundgren and Serie played the third base and shortstop positions when they were not pitching last year.

Along with the returning all-league selections, seniors Jaxon Nelson and Declan Beers are coming off seasons that included them drawing honorable mention from the BSC coaches.

Nelson plays first base and pitches.

Beers returns as the starting catcher and pitches as well.

Juniors Gaike Nath, Mark Sterrett and Charlie Reisch bring more starting experience to the 2018 team.

Nath, unfortunately, will not return as a starting outfielder this

spring as he will miss the entire season due to an arm injury he sustained this winter.

Sterrett started at second base as a junior and has the potential to play in the outfield.

Reisch returns as the starting center fielder.

Two other juniors expected to help the team in 2018 are Jade Smith and Jake Haugen.

Haugen, who missed the entire 2017 season due to injury, is a strong pitcher who can play infield positions.

Smith is another pitcher/infielder.

Rounding out the seniors on the roster are Dylon Mente and exchange student Frederik Nielsen.

Both Mente and Nielsen are potential outfielders.

"I like that we have pretty good pitchers on this team," Wenninger

said.

"We've also got a lot of guys playing positions with experience. The keys for us this year are to have our pitchers throw strikes consistently, play solid defense and receive timely hitting. We have the experience. We just need the kids to play consistently."

Some of the eight sophomores on the roster could get the chance to play at the varsity level this spring as well.

The list includes Colby Crabtree, Nathan Nekali, Isaiah Bartels, Tyler Roberts, Noah Herman, Quinn Buss, Jacob Von Terschand and Jaden Knips.

Wenninger lists Windom and Pipestone as being the top challengers to claim the BSC Western Division title this year.

As the defending champions, NL-S has to be considered the team to beat in Section 3AA in

2018.

Morris Area and Minnewaska Area are other top challengers for the section championship.

LHS stacks up well with the challengers in both the conference and section title chases, but the Cardinals will not sneak up on anyone due to their postseason run in 2017.

"I would like to say we have the opportunity to play well with the experience we have, but we won't be surprising any of our opponents because of the run we made in the section tournament last year," Wenninger said.

"We just need to keep on improving, find spots for all of the kids to play in order to keep them sharp. We also want to keep everyone healthy and hopefully make another long postseason run at the end of the season."

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John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab lhs gt

Thirteen athletes with section experience from 2017 return to the Luverne High School girls' track program this spring. They include (front row, from left) Mallory Thorson, Tenley Nelson, Brooklynn Ver Steeg, Jadyn Anderson, Regan Feit, Cassie Flanagan, (back) Sierra Schmuck, Gracie Zewiske, Gabrielle Ferrell, Sydney Bieber, Autumn Nath and Ivy Hudson. Missing is Mackenzie Petersen. The Cardinals are taking instruction from second-year head coach Pete Janiszkeski.

Track squads need to scale new True Team obstacle

By John Rittenhouse

The Luverne Cardinal track teams face a new obstacle heading into the 2017 season.

After years of running the show as a Section 3A True Team entry, the Cardinals have been bumped up to the Section 3AA ranks in 2018.

LHS still could have something to say about which team advances to state in the new section, but the Cardinals probably will not be the favorites when they compete at the meet in early May.

"We're going to have the same

goal of getting to the true team state meet, but it will be a bigger challenge to get there," said Cardinal coach Pete Janiszkeski.

"Class AA has teams with bigger enrollments than we do, and some of them are big enough to have kids specialize in certain events. We're not big enough to do that, so the road to state will be a lot more challenging."

The Luverne girls could be up to the challenge.

The Cardinals are coming off a successful 2017 campaign that included them winning their 11th

consecutive 3A True Team title and falling 1.5 points short of winning the state championship.

LHS also claimed team titles at the Big South Small School Division, the Southwest Sub-Section 3A and Section 3A meets last spring.

The Cardinals did lose some key seniors on the 2017 roster.

Tianna Doppenberg, who qualified for section competition in the long jump, tops the list.

Doppenberg won the section title in the 100-meter dash along with running legs with Luverne's

section-qualifying 400- and 800-meter relays.

The 800-meter squad placed second at the section level to advance to state, where the Cardinals were unable to place.

Bergin Flom, another senior member of the 2017 squad, advanced to state in the pole vault to cap a successful high school career.

Kami Sawtelle placed third in the shot put and discus at the section level for LHS as a senior, while Shelbie Nath advanced to section competition and placed

fourth in the 400-meter dash.

After dominating Section 3A distance runners for years, an injury-plagued senior season kept Madison Schandelmeier from advancing to the section meet in 2017.

A knee injury limited senior Courtney Siebenahler's appearances to one meet last spring after being a top-notch long and triple jumper as a junior.

"We lost a lot of leadership from last year's seniors. Those

True/continued on page 7

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True/continued from page 6

kids scored a lot of points for us," Janiszkeski said.

Luverne opens the 2018 season with a 59-athlete roster consisting of six seniors, 10 juniors, 10 sophomores, 14 freshmen, six eighth-graders and 13 seventh-graders.

The list includes 30 returning letter winners, 13 section participants and nine state meet entries from 2017.

"With the numbers we have, we will have good depth in all areas," Janiszkeski offered.

"We did lose our top thrower from last year, so how much the throwers we have coming back improve this year will determine how we will fare in those events. We also need to develop some depth in the jumping events. On the track, we're going to be as good as anyone. We have a lot of good sprinters, distance and middle distance runners coming back."

As returning state-qualifiers, senior Sierra Schmuck, juniors Jadynd Anderson and Gabrielle Ferrell, sophomore Sydney Biever, freshmen Regan Feit, Autumn Nath and Gracie Zewiske and eighth-graders Tenley Nelson and Brooklynn Ver Steeg form the nucleus of the 2018 team.

Ver Steeg, Feit, Nath and Anderson formed Luverne's section champion 1,600-meter relay, while Ver Steeg, Feit, Ferrell and Anderson claimed the section crown in the 3,200-meter relay.

The 3,200-meter relay placed sixth at the state meet, while the 1,600-meter relay finished ninth in state competition.

Anderson also placed second in the 800-meter run at the section level to earn a berth in the state field, where she did not secure a place.

Feit also placed third at the section meet in the 1,600-meter run.

Nath also placed third at the section meet in the 400-meter dash and advanced to the section event in the high jump.

As well running with the 3,200-meter relay, Ferrell placed fifth at the section level in the 800-meter run.

Schmuck, Biever and Zewiske joined forces with Doppenberg to form the state-qualifying 800-meter relay.



Star Herald file photo

Luverne junior Mackenzie Petersen returns to the Cardinal girls' track team as the top competitor in the hurdles during the 2017 season. She is pictured during last year's section meet.

Along with Doppenberg, Schmuck and Zewiske helped the 400-meter relay place third at the section meet.

Schmuck also placed fifth at the section meet in the 200-meter dash, and Biever advanced to section competition in the 200-meter dash.

Tenley Nelson advanced to state individually by placing second at the section level in the 3,200-meter run.

Other returning section-qualifiers from the 2017 team include junior Mackenzie Petersen, sophomores Ivy Hudson and Mallory Thorson and freshman Cassie Flanagan.

Petersen advanced to the section meet in the high jump and the 100- and 300-meter hurdles as a sophomore.

Hudson ran with the 400-meter

relay and qualified for the section event in the 100-meter dash.

Flanagan advanced to the section meet in the 3,200-meter run, while Thorson qualified in the triple jump.

Other seniors returning to the team with varsity letters from last spring include Annika Gust (middle distances), Michaella Sandbulte (thrower), Brooke Feit (thrower) and McKenna Westphal (thrower).

Senior Layne Benson is a first-year program member who will compete as a sprinter.

Juniors Emilie Staeffler (thrower), Julia Ferguson (sprints/long jump), Madison Reisdorfer (middle distance/distance), Tia Hadler (thrower) and Faith Mounce (sprints) earned letters last spring.

Junior Lilli Donohue (thrower)

and Kaylie Ossefoort (pole vault) are new team members.

Other sophomores back on the roster after lettering in 2017 include Gracie Hudson (sprints), Meghan Mollberg (sprints), Alyssa Nattress (sprints), Mallory Oye (sprints) and Madison Gebauer (sprints).

After not participating in track last season, sophomores Isabel Smeins (sprints) and Madigan Flom (sprints/pole vault) return to the program.

Freshmen Savannah Siebenahler (jumps/sprints), Elise Jarchow (hurdles/sprints/middle distances) and Lauren Ver Steeg (hurdles/sprints) lettered as eighth-graders.

Gretchen Jacobsma (thrower), Tyricia Davis (sprints), Hailey Kruger (sprints) and Solveig Tofteland (sprints) are freshmen

that participated in the program last season.

Sophie Holmberg, Rachel DenHerder and Mia Halverson are freshmen sprinters new to the team.

Other eighth-graders participating in track include Silvia Recuero (sprints), Hannah Baker (sprints/high jump/pole vault), Mia Wenzel (sprints/high jump) and Honor Hough (sprints).

Seventh-grade program members include Mallory Nelson (sprints), Elizabeth Wagner (middle distance/distance), Anja Jarchow (sprints/middle distance), Josie Anderson (middle distance/distance), Tiana Lais (sprints/middle distance), Kamryn Van Batavia (middle distance/distance), Cedar Viessman (middle distance/distance), Jocelyn Hart (throws), Jadynd Hart (throws), Zoe Eek (events are unclear), Grace Ingebretson (middle distance/distance), Mallory Von Tersch (sprints) and Savannah Perez (sprints/throws).

"We have good numbers, a lot of experience and good leadership on our team. We have the capability to win a section true team title. It just will be a little more challenging," Janiszkeski said.

Just like the girls, the **LHS boys** are coming off a successful 2017 season as well.

The year was highlighted by team wins at the Section 3A True Team Meet and the Southwest Sub-Section 3A meet.

The Cardinals placed second in the BSC Small School Division, third at the section meet and fifth at the state true team meet.

Unfortunately for LHS, a lot of the 2017 success can be attributed to the way some of the 12 seniors on the roster performed in their final seasons.

"Our seniors scored a lot of points for us last year," Janiszkeski admitted.

"There were some meets when we had guys place first, second and third in the throwing events and in the pole vault. We also lost some good jumpers, sprinters and hurdlers. We are a young and inexperienced team, but I think we'll be respectable in the middle distance and distance races."

True/continued on page 8

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True/continued from page 7

Logan Stratton, Matt Hup and Griffin Ahrendt are three seniors from the 2017 team that may be impossible to replace.

Stratton won the Section 3A titles in the shot put and discus.

He went on to place fourth at the state meet in the shot put.

Hup ran legs with Luverne's 800- and 400-meter relays, which placed third and fourth respectively at the section meet last spring.

Hup was even more valuable to the team in the pole vault, an event that sent him to the state meet after capturing the section championship.

Along with placing eighth in the 200-meter dash at the section meet and running legs with the 400- and 800-meter relays, Ahrendt emerged as one of southwest Minnesota's best triple jumpers in 2017.

He placed second in the triple jump at the section meet to earn a berth into state competition.

Jeremiah Dooyema, Dylan Thorson, Brandon Winter and Andrew Reisch qualified for the section event during their senior seasons as well.

Thorson placed third at the section level in the shot put, while Reisch was a member of the 400-meter relay.

Along with running as a member of the 400- and 800-meter relays, Dooyema placed fourth at the section meet in the pole vault.

Brandon Winter ran legs with Luverne's 1,600- and 3,200-meter relays, which placed fifth at the section meet.

Other senior members of the 2017 team include Tanner Wiese, Cyris Halverson, Levin Stuker, Doug Rozeboom and Jesse Kontz.

LHS opens the 2018 season with a 45-athlete roster consisting of four seniors, nine juniors, five sophomores, 12 freshmen, 11 eighth-graders and four seventh-graders.

The list includes 14 returning letter winners and eight section-qualifiers from the 2017 campaign.

"I think we'll be a team that is deep with veteran throwers and one really good guy coming back in the pole vault," Janiszski said.

"We'll need to build up some depth in the areas of sprints and



John Rittenhouse photo/0405 lhs bt

Eight athletes who represented LHS at section competition return to the Cardinal boys' track program in 2018. They include (from left) Austin Winter, Michael Rahm, Eli Haugom, Jordy Thone, Matthew Ziegler, Dalton DeSollar and Shane Berning. Missing is Jed Dooyema.

hurdles this year, but we do have a lot of new kids on the team that I don't know much about yet and they could help us out in those events."

Returning to the fold as section competitors in 2017 include seniors Eli Haugom and Michael Rahm and juniors Austin Winter, Jed Dooyema, Shane Berning, Matt Ziegler, Dalton DeSollar and Jordy Thone.

Haugom advanced to section competition in the high jump, while Rahm advanced as a member of the 3,200-meter relay.

Austin Winter ran with the 1,600- and 3,200-meter relays at the section meet as well as qualifying for the event in the 800-meter run.

Dooyema ran legs with the 800- and 1,600-meter relays last season and returns as the team's top competitor in the pole vault after placing fifth at the section

level in that event as a sophomore.

DeSollar advanced to the section meet as a member of the 3,200-meter relay and in the 3,200-meter run.

Thone was a section-qualifier in the 100- and 200-meter dashes and as a member of the 400-meter relay.

Ziegler advanced to the section meet in the shot put and discus, while Berning qualified in the 1,600-meter run.

Other returning letter winners from the 2017 season include juniors Eric Thorson and Joel Ortiz, sophomores Brayden Tofteland, Jonah Friedrichsen and Nicholas Rogers and freshman Seno Chanthalangsy.

Thorson is a thrower, while classmate Ortiz competes in the hurdles and sprints.

Friedrichsen and Tofteland are distance runners, Rogers runs sprints and Chanthalangsy runs

sprints and middle distances.

Other upperclassmen who could help the team this year are seniors Brogan Hart (thrower) and Jarod Berndt (sprints/high jump/throws), and junior Abraham Hernandez (middle distance/distance).

Sophomores Andrew Wagner (sprints/high jump) and Jonah Louwagie (throws) are first-year program members.

Freshmen who could make an impact at the varsity level in 2018 include Zach Ahrendt (throws), William Rysdam (sprints), Peter Baustian (throws), Justin Dohlmann (throws), Kameron Keene (throws), Tyler Decesare (sprints), Ethan Curtiss (sprints/distances), Arekel McLaughlin (sprints/throws), Eduardo Godines (sprints) and William Fischer (events unsure).

Eighth-graders participating in the program are Sam Emery

(distances), Eli Radtke (sprints/pole vault), Jordan Friedrichsen (throws), Ethan Rahm (distance/middle distance), Ashton Sandbulte (sprints), Griffin Jarchow (distance/middle distance), Jamie McCarthy (events unsure), Burke Johnson (distance/middle distance), Matthew McClure (distance/middle distance), Noah Mehlhaff (distance/middle distance) and Tanner Terrio (sprints).

Brady Bork, Henry Ramstorf, Carsen Tofteland and Camden Janiszski are seventh-grade distance runners.

"The big thing for our boys is to see them grow and improve," said their coach.

"That's the only measuring stick that really matters. We have a lot of new faces this year, so it's hard to say where we'll be as a team at the end of the season."

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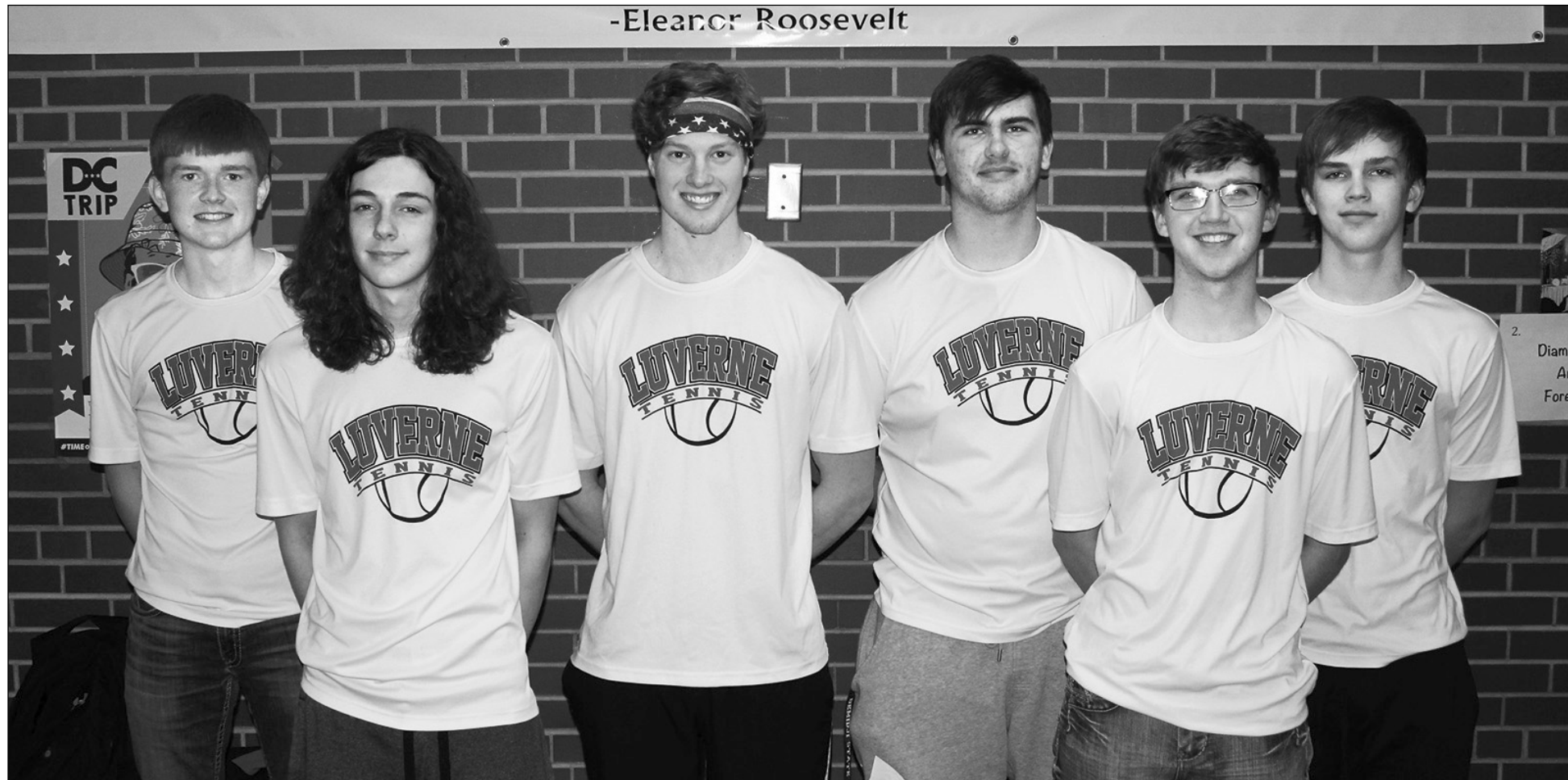
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John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab lhs tennis

Six athletes who represented the Luverne tennis program during postseason play in 2017 return to the team this spring. They are (from left) Trey Baustian, Luke Jarchow, Jim Erickson, Cade Ver Steeg, Mark Robinson and Matt Jelken. The Cardinals are hoping to win their ninth consecutive Section 3A title in 2018.

Boys pursue ninth consecutive Section 3A tennis title

By John Rittenhouse

What has been an impressive run has a good chance to continue this spring.

The Luverne High School tennis team has emerged as a southwest Minnesota power for the better part of a decade by winning the last eight Section 3A titles.

With some battle-tested veterans and some young and hungry challengers participating in the program this spring, the streak could reach nine consecutive section conquests in 2018.

"If we play up to our capabilities, we should be able to play with anyone on our conference and be right up there with the top teams in our section," said Cardinal coach Greg Antoine.

"We have to play up to our potential, but we should be able to go after (section title) number nine this year."

Before the Cardinals begin their quest to chase down a section crown, they do have some holes to fill in their lineup.

Luverne captured the Big South Conference Western Division title with a 4-0 record in 2017 before winning the overall conference championship with a 5-2 victory over Fairmont.

After ending the regular season with a 16-2-1 record,

the Cards posted consecutive wins over Redwood Valley (5-0), Montevideo (4-3) and Lac qui Parle Valley (5-2) to claim the Section 3A Team Tennis Tournament title.

LHS was unable to keep the run going at state, where the Cards lost matches to Virginia (5-2) and Litchfield (5-2) to wrap up a 19-4-1 team season.

LHS had four seniors on its roster in 2017, and all of them made key contributions to the team's on-court success.

Chris Jelken, who played No. 1 singles for LHS last year, claimed the singles title at the Section 3A Individual Tournament and went 2-2 at state tournament to finish as the consolation runner-up.

Jelken made the All-BSC team at season's end, as did classmates Layne Curtis and Dalton Schoeneman, who played at first doubles.

Curtis and Schoeneman won the doubles competition during the Section 3A Individual Tournament and went 1-2 without placing at state.

Isaac Gillette, who played at second doubles during his senior season, drew honorable mention from the BSC coaches.

"We lost 87 wins from last year," Antoine said, when asked what the seniors meant to the 2017 team.

Luverne Boys' Tennis

March 31	Gustavus Tournament	A
April 3	Madison	H
April 5	Vermillion	H
April 10	Blue Earth	A
April 16	Fairmont	A
April 17	Harrisburg	A
April 21	Montevideo Invitational	A
April 25	O'Gorman	H
April 26	Sioux Falls Lincoln	H
April 27	Worthington	H
May 1	St. James Area	A
May 3	Redwood Valley	H
May 5	Lac Qui Parle/New Ulm	A
May 8	Pipestone	H
May 19	St. James Quad	A

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"Those four kids were a combined 87-9. It will take some serious replacing to make up for what those guys gave us."

LHS opens the 2018 campaign with a 28-athlete roster consisting of seven seniors, two juniors, seven sophomores, eight eighth-graders and four seventh-graders.

The list includes eight returning letter winners, six section competitors, one All-BSC selection and two honorable

mention selections from 2017.

As members of last year's postseason team, seniors Trey Baustian, Jim Erickson, Mark Robinson and Cade Ver Steeg and juniors Matt Jelken and Luke Jarchow bring the most experience to the team.

Robinson, who played second singles last season, made the All-BSC squad as a junior.

Ver Steeg, who played third singles during section play last year, and Erickson, who teamed up at second doubles with Gillette, received honorable mention from the BSC coaches at season's end.

Baustian and Jarchow formed Luverne's third doubles team last season, while Matt Jelken played at fourth singles.

"The six section kids from last year all want to play singles this season," Antoine said.

"There will be some real battling going on for our four singles positions. We'll probably stage playoffs for the singles positions. The two kids who don't play in singles probably will play at first doubles because those six kids are above everyone else in their level of play right now."

If the six section competitors from last season claim varsity positions in 2018, it leaves four positions to be filled at second and third doubles.

As returning letter winners from last spring, seniors Tyler Fick and Ethan Thorson are doubles candidates.

Senior exchange student Pradana Arviano is another possible doubles player, as are sophomores Graham Cunningham, Carson Ehde, Cole Stoltenberg, Jordan Winter, Matt Sehr and Riley Siebenahler.

"We'll have nine people fighting for four doubles spots in our lineup," Antoine said.

"They will be pushing each other for those spots. The nice thing about a situation like this is those kids will be trying to get better individually, which will make our team better."

Eighth-graders participating in the program include Seth Bose, Pierce Cunningham, Kyle Ferguson, Jonathan Saarloos, Colin Schoeneman, Elliot Stoltenberg, Luke Thorson and Chance Tunnessen.

Seventh-graders Kaleb Hein, Ethan Nath, Logan Ommen and Parker Carbonneau round out the roster heading into the 2018 tennis season.

"It should be an interesting season for us," Antoine said.

"Once we get our lineup figured out, we should be able to play with anyone if we play up to our capability."

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Luverne's Lundgren Graces BSC List

Tue, 03/27/2018 - 9:32am jrittenhouse

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BY: JOHN RITTENHOUSE

A Luverne High School junior wasn't overlooked when the 2017-18 All-Big South Conference Western Division Boys' Basketball Team was announced last week.

Derek Lundgren, a starting guard for an LHS team that secured one BSC victory over the winter, drew an honor for the Cardinal boys.

Lundgren is one of five players to earn honorable mention recognition from the league's coaches.

A total of 10 players form the All-BSC Western Division squad.

Marshall, which captured the conference championship with a 12-0 record, led all teams by landing three all-conference selections.

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Softball team retools after losing seven seniors

By John Rittenhouse

Luverne second-year softball coach Brooks Mauer is finding out how much things can change in the world of high school sports.

One year after inheriting a team loaded with experienced and talented upperclassmen, the situation has changed dramatically for Mauer and his Cardinals.

"It's a lot different than it was last year. I can tell you that for sure," Mauer said.

"Last year I knew what our starting lineup would be and that we would be flexible at a couple of positions. Now we have to replace seven starters. Out of those seven, we had three all-conference players and one honorable mention selection. We definitely have a lot to replace both offensively and defensively."

Graduation was unkind to Luverne's varsity roster last spring.

With seven seniors leading the way, LHS experienced a winning campaign that ended with a 12-9 record.

The Cards went 6-4 and placed second in the Big South Conference's Small School Division during a 12-8 regular season, but the campaign came to an end with a 5-2 loss to Jackson County Central in the opening round of the South Section 3AA Tournament.

Seniors Ariel DeBeer, Katie Kracht, Zayna Hustoft and Mariah Aukes played key roles in Luverne's successful 2017 season.

DeBeer (pitcher/first base), Kracht (catcher) and Hustoft (center field) made the all-conference squad, while Aukes (right field) drew honorable mention.

Classmates Ashton Kruger, Makayla Huisman and Hanna Honermann were varsity regulars as well.

Krueger played left field and second base, Huisman played first base and was a designated hitter, Honermann played shortstop and second base.

Natasha Luke was another senior member of the 2017 squad.

Losing that many key performers leaves Mauer facing a rebuilding situation this spring.

LHS opens the year with a 17-player roster consisting of two seniors, five juniors, three sophomores and seven freshmen.

Two of the program members return as starters from 2017, while two others gained limited playing time.

"We're going to have some growing pains this year," Mauer admitted.

"Hopefully our inexperienced kids get more comfortable playing at the varsity level by the middle of the season and we'll start playing better softball as a team."

Senior Gracie Bosch and junior Rylee Olson bring the most varsity experience to the 2018 team.

Bosch started at third base for LHS last year, and she could see playing time there and at shortstop this season.

Olson returns as the team's No. 1 pitcher. The 2017 All-BSC selection plays at first base as well.

Other players returning to the squad with limited varsity experience include juniors Halle Hough and Courtney Nath.

Hough is the top candidate to replace Kracht as the team's catcher in 2018, while Nath can play first base and serve as a designated hitter.

Hough and Nath also are the leading contenders to be the team's second pitcher behind Olson.

"With only four girls with varsity experience, there's an open competition for the rest of our positions," Mauer offered.

Senior Ashlee Olson is competing for playing time in the outfield, as are juniors Grace Sweeney and Nicole Aanenson.

Aanenson is a potential second baseman as well.

Sophomore Sydne Johnson is a top candidate to play in the outfield this season, while classmates Chandra Javner (outfield) and Alexa Chesley (second base) are competing for playing time as well.

The seven freshmen on the roster are varsity candidates, too.

Rozilyn Oye is a potential outfielder/pitcher, and Shelby Kracht could play in the infield.

Ainslie Robinson is considered to be a middle infielder, while Sadie Reisdorfer is listed as a first



John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab lhs softball

A young and inexperienced softball team at Luverne High School is led by two senior players in 2018. Gracie Bosch (left) and Ashlee Boltjes (right) are the senior members of the squad.

"By the end of the year, I'm hoping we can compete with other teams and win a few games we probably shouldn't have won."

*-Brooks Mauer,
Luverne softball coach*

baseman/outfielder.

Leah Wynia and McKenzie VanGrootheest are considered to be utility players, while Anna Boltjes is an outfielder.

"I think we'll have three kids with some pop in their bat," Mauer said.

"I think we'll have to play some small ball with the rest of the girls to get base-runners. Then we'll see if we can get our bigger hitters to drive in runs with key hits."

With LHS fielding a largely inexperienced squad, Mauer isn't setting any goals in terms of wins this spring.

"My goal for the year is to get our younger girls adjusted and comfortable with playing varsity softball. By the end of the year, I'm hoping we can compete with other teams and win a few games we probably shouldn't have won," he said.

Luverne Softball

March 27	Adrian	H
April 5	Edgerton	A
April 6	Fairmont	H
April 12	Windom	H
April 14	Martin County West	A
April 20	St. James Area	A
April 23	Edgerton	H
April 24	Redwood Valley	H
April 26	JCC	H
April 30	Adrian	A
May 3	Pipestone	A
May 12	Heron Lake-Okabena	A
May 17	Worthington	A

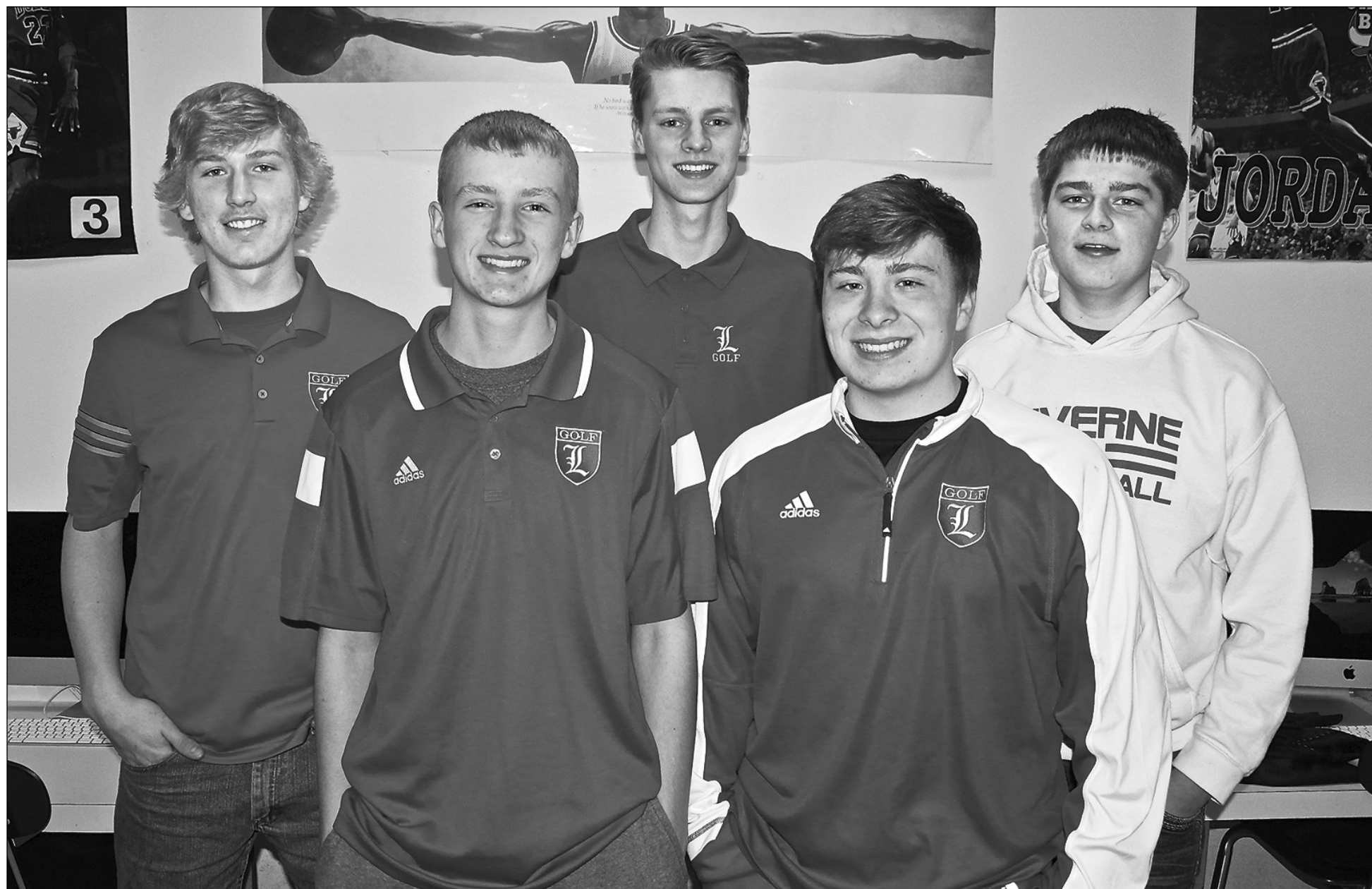
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John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab lhs boys' golf

Five players who competed with last year's postseason team return to the Luverne High School boys' golf program in 2018. They are (from left) Coy Gonnerman, Carter Loosbrock, Jack Golla, Carter Stemper and Will Stegenga.

LHS golf teams to be tested by different situations

By John Rittenhouse

The Luverne High School golf program features one experienced team and one team with partial experience entering the 2018 season.

In what is a role reversal from the 2017 campaign, it's the **Cardinal boys** that have the most experience this spring.

LHS boys' coach John Sichmeller says there are 23 athletes participating in the program in 2018.

Having that many participants is nice, but the fact that LHS has five of the six players who formed last season's postseason team

returning to the fold is a luxury. "We do have more experience this year," Sichmeller said.

"We have some guys who are used to playing at the varsity level. I'm hoping we can get a few more wins this year, but we will need to have some guys shoot better scores for us to improve in the conference."

League success eluded the Cardinals in 2017, when they placed sixth in the Big South Conference Western Division during the regular season and placed 10th at the annual Big South Conference Tournament.

The team portion of Luverne's

13-40 season came to an end when the Cardinals were unable to reach the second day of play in the Section 3AA Team Tournament.

Considering LHS started the 2017 season with two experienced players, the Cardinals appear to be in a position to post more conquests in 2018.

The Cards did lose senior Knute Oldre from the 2017 roster, but he received limited action time at the varsity level.

Luverne's 23-player roster in 2018 consists of one senior, five juniors, four sophomores, five freshmen, as well as eight

seventh- and eighth-graders who will not see action at the varsity level this spring.

Leading the list are five returning players who gained postseason experience in 2017.

Senior Coy Gonnerman returns to the team as Luverne's No. 1 player from 2017.

Gonnerman, a varsity veteran, made the All-BSC squad and advanced to the second day of section competition individually as a junior.

"Coy has been playing varsity golf for us for a long time now," Sichmeller stated.

"I think he should have the

chance to do well again this year if he puts the work in."

Along with Gonnerman, LHS returns three juniors and one sophomore who tested their skills at the section level last spring.

Juniors Jack Golla, Will Stegenga and Carter Stemper were fixtures in the varsity lineup in 2017, as was sophomore Carter Loosbrock.

"The juniors and sophomore we have coming back with experience all are similar in ability, and they all are capable of posting a good score," Sichmeller

Test/continued on page 14

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John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab lhs girls' golf

Three players with prior postseason experience return to the LHS girls' golf team in 2018. They are (from left) Samantha Pierce, Hannah Ver Steeg and Anna Huisman.

Test/continued from page 13

said. "We're going to need three of them to put up good scores along with Coy to get more wins this season."

If the five returning section players regain their varsity positions in 2018, Sichmeller still has one more varsity position to fill.

At that point, the coach is unsure which of the remaining golfers will take the varsity spot. "Freshman Cooper Arendshad a good year playing middle school golf last year, but the sixth position in our lineup could be filled by anyone," Sichmeller offered.

Juniors Mason Overgaard and Quinn Graber are in contention for the sixth position in the varsity lineup, as are sophomores Brody DeBates, Gunnar Oldre and Colton Schutz.

Along with Arends, freshmen Eric Somnis, Derek Stokes, Russell Aanenson and Isaac Eidem could make pushes for varsity playing time as well.

There will be open competition for some spots in the varsity lineup for the **Cardinal girls** this season as well.

Luverne returns two golfers who played in the postseason last

season, and another player who received section experience in prior years.

Other than those three players, veteran LHS coach Chris Nowatzki is unsure which remaining golfers on the roster will be playing varsity golf for him this spring.

"Our varsity lineup was pretty much set at this time last year," Nowatzki said.

"That's not the way it is this year. We have three positions open in the bottom half of our lineup, and you just never know who will take them over. It could be any one of our kids."

Luverne is coming off a strong 2017 campaign that included a 3-3 record in Big South Conference Western Division competition and a fourth-place performance at the BSC Tournament.

LHS qualified for the second day of Section 3AA play as a team, where its 38-14-1 season came to an end with a fifth-place finish in the final standings.

Three seniors were key contributors to Luverne's on-course success in 2017.

Hailey Remme and Madison Crabtree were longtime members of the varsity squad.

Luverne Golf Boys' & Girls'

April 7	Worthington (girls)	A
April 10	Windom	A
April 17	Worthington	A
April 19	Hills-Beaver Creek	A
April 21	Unity Christain (boys)	A
April 24	Marshall	A
April 26	Pipestone	H
April 30	JCC	H
May 3	Redwood Valley	H
May 5	Fairmont	A
May 10	New Ulm (girls)	A
May 12	RV Invitational (girls)	A
May 14	Adrian	H

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Both Remme and Crabtree made the All-BSC squad.

Carly Serie is another senior who capped her high school career as a member of the varsity squad last spring.

"We lost some good players last year," Nowatzki offered.

"Hailey and Madison played varsity golf for a long time, and

Carly was a member of the program for two years."

LHS opens the 2018 season with a 20-athlete roster consisting of six seniors, one junior, two sophomores, three freshmen, three eighth-graders and five seventh-graders.

Four of the 20 team members have played at least some varsity golf for LHS in the past.

"It's been quite a while since we've had this many girls out for golf," Nowatzki said.

"We have quite a few seventh- and eighth-graders out this year, which is nice. I have worked with most of these girls before in our junior program. They are all good kids and I've had fun working with them."

Seniors Samantha Pierce and Hannah Ver Steeg and sophomore Anna Huisman bring past section experience to the team.

Pierce and Huisman were members of last season's postseason squad.

Ver Steeg missed the 2017 season due to a knee injury, but she has a lot of varsity experience from prior seasons.

Zoey Sandbulte, another senior member of the team, did receive some varsity exposure as a junior.

The balance of the roster consists of girls seeking their first opportunities to play varsity golf.

Senior Isabella Donohue participated in the program last spring, while classmates Rachel Oftedahl and Pernille Kjorum are first-time program members.

Junior McCall Stegenga and sophomore Gabrielle Miller round out the upperclassmen.

Freshmen prospects include Paige Sandbulte, Josie Golla and Brynn Thier, while Cheyenne Schutz, Elise Ferrell and Morgan Gonnerman are the eighth-graders on the roster.

Seventh-graders participating in the program include Lauren Hansen, Reese Louwagie, Deziree Nath, Abby Anderson and Jocelynn Mann.

"We're going to be a young and inexperienced team and we'll see how things go in the next couple of months," Nowatzki said.

"As a coach, I really don't keep close track of how things are going during the regular season. To me it's all just practice until we get to the postseason. I just want the kids to work hard and improve throughout the year and then we'll see what happens at the end of the season."

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Dragons rebuilding after losing key contributors

By John Rittenhouse

The roster of the Adrian High School baseball program has dramatically changed in one year.

After leading a veteran squad in 2017 that relied heavily on six seniors and some juniors who decided not to play baseball this year, second-year AHS coach Joe Kruger faces a different situation this spring.

The Dragons will be in rebuilding mode in 2018 as a team with little varsity experience and a total of five players in grades 11 and 12 to build around.

"We basically have a brand new team," Kruger admitted.

"The juniors and seniors we do have are big baseball people who love the game. The good thing is we have a big sophomore class with a lot of potential. They have been playing together for a long time and we'll be counting on a lot of them this year."

Adrian is coming off a solid 2017 campaign that included a 12-6 regular season and a second-place finish in the Red Rock Conference with an 8-2 record.

The Dragons posted wins over Heron Lake-Okabena (4-0), Murray County Central (1-0) and Central Minnesota Christian (6-2) to finish among the top four teams in the Section 3A Tournament.

AHS, however, lost games to Wabasso (4-1) and Lac qui Parle Valley (6-4) in the tournament to end the season with a 15-8 mark.

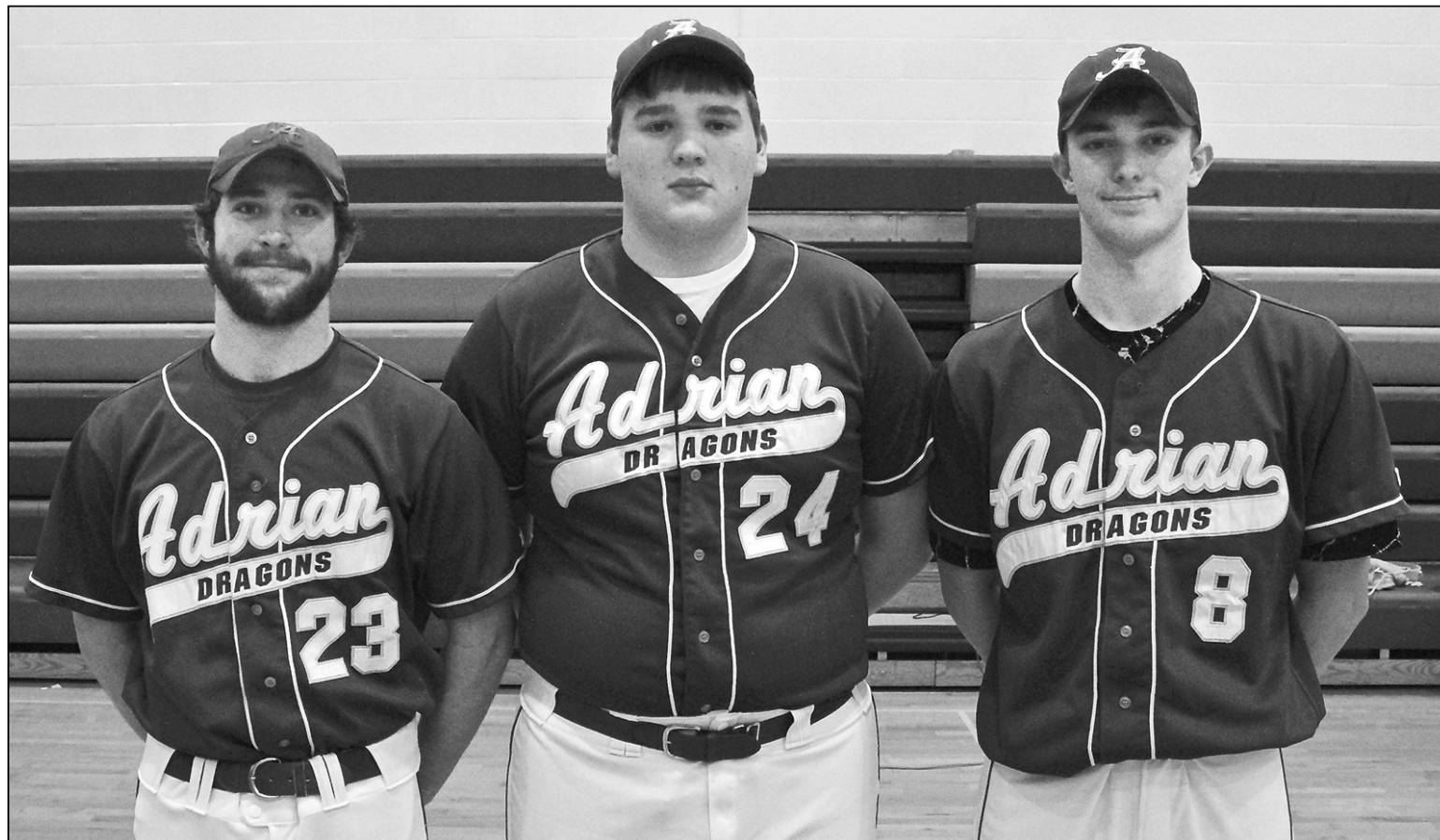
Six senior starters formed the nucleus of the 2017 squad, and the contributions they made to the program over the years will be missed.

"We will miss their dedication to baseball. They just loved playing the game. They had a lot of experience and played in a state tournament," Kruger said.

Alex Loosbrock, Zach Loosbrock, Jacob Stamer and Mitchell Wagner made the All-RRC squad at the end of their high school careers.

Alex Loosbrock was Adrian's top pitcher and played third base in 2017, while Zach Loosbrock was the team's catcher.

Stamer played second base and was the No. 2 pitcher, and Wagner manned first base.



John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab ahs baseball

Three seniors are the leaders of the 2018 Adrian baseball team. They are (from left) Landon Rogers, Skylar Polzine and Jeff Cauwels.

Shortstop Zach Hendel and center fielder Nate Lonneman drew honorable mention recognition from the RRC coaches when their high school careers came to an end last spring.

Adrian opens the 2018 campaign with a 20-player roster consisting of three seniors, two juniors, nine sophomores and five freshmen.

The list includes one returning starter and two other athletes who gained experience in 2017.

"We got a lot of guys who can pitch and I think that's one of the strengths of our team," Kruger offered.

"I'm not going to say they are great pitchers, but the pitch-count rule shouldn't be an issue for us this year because we have a lot of arms. I also like the fact that we have a lot of sophomores on the team that won a lot of junior varsity games last year. We will try to build on that."

Seniors Landon Rogers, Skylar Polzine and Jeff Cauwels are the

players returning to the team with past varsity experience.

Rogers started at third base last season and is projected to be the No. 1 pitcher in 2018.

Polzine was used as a designated hitter and did some pitching for the Dragons last spring, but he could play first base and be the No. 2 pitcher this spring.

Cauwels is projected to start in left or right field and serve as the team's No. 2 catcher.

Juniors on the roster include Skylar Dingmann and Trace Kremin, who are in the hunt for playing time in the outfield.

With the exception of Rogers, who will play third base when he's not pitching, the balance of Adrian's infield will be revamped.

Polzine and sophomores Lance Luettel and Grant Jansma are potential first basemen and pitchers.

It looks like sophomore Ian Stamer will replace his brother (Jacob Stamer) at second base and do some pitching as well.

Sophomore Noah Reyne plays shortstop and classmate Brent Hokeness is the No. 1 catcher.

Other sophomore members of the team include Bailey Schutz (pitcher), Brandon Schnoor (outfield), Tristan Thier (outfield) and Brady Vortherms (third base/pitcher).

Freshmen players include infielders Nick Hendel and Nick Sjogren, outfielders Blake Koffron and Corbin Burcham and utility player Marshall Wagner.

Kruger lists MCC and Mountain Lake Area as the teams to beat in the conference this spring, with Wabasso and Minneota being the section favorites.

With Adrian being a young and inexperienced team, Kruger doesn't know where the Dragons fit in the RRC and section title chases.

"I just want to see us continue to improve and get better throughout the season. I also want us to be playing our best baseball at the end of the year," he concluded.

Adrian Baseball

March 29	Luverne	H
April 6	Jackson	H
April 10	HLO	H
April 12	Edgerton/SWC	A
April 13	Worthington	H
April 17	MLBO	H
April 19	RRC/WWG	A
April 26	MCC	H
April 28	RTR	H
April 30	Pipestone	A
May 1	HLO	A
May 3	Edgerton/SWC	H
May 7	Minneota	H
May 8	MLBO	A
May 10	RRC/WWG	H
May 14	T-M-B	A
May 15	MCC	A
May 21	Luverne	A
May 22	Renville County West	A

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John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab ahs track

Seven athletes who advanced to section competition last spring return to the Adrian High School track program in 2018. They are (from left) Moriah Bullerman, Dakota John, Bailey Lonneman, Kandra Frodermann, Scot Edwards and Hannah Henning. Missing is Chance Turner.

Track teams facing numbers crisis in Adrian

By John Rittenhouse

A lack of numbers is a concern for Adrian High School track coach Cody Henrichs entering the 2018 season.

One year after AHS had 35 athletes participating in the program, Henrichs will open the new season with a total of 24 athletes on both the girls' and boys' rosters.

With 13 participants, the **Adriangirls** are in slightly better shape entering the season compared with their male counterparts.

Unfortunately for AHS, there were 23 girls competing in the program in 2017.

"We're going to be young on the girls' side. We do not have any juniors or seniors on the roster," Henrichs offered.

"We do return a bulk of our section relay team members and a lot of our distance runners this year."

AHS is coming off a 2017 campaign that included an eighth-place finish at the Red Rock Conference meet, a seventh-place showing at the Southwest Sub-Section 3A meet and a 25th-place effort at the section event.

AHS, however, did lose six seniors who were key members of the 2017 squad.

Katia Suarez and Katie Reisdorfer were veteran performers who made an impact at the varsity level for a number of seasons.

Suarez ran the anchor legs for Adrian's section-qualifying 400- and 800-meter relays.

Reisdorfer was a member of

those same relays before her season was cut short by a broken toe early last May.

Ashley Schnoor was one of Adrian's top throwers during her senior season, while Kahilee Nelson, Kendra Rautenkranz and Consuelo Gil were other senior members.

"Reisdorfer qualified for section competition six times during her career, and Suarez was our anchor on the 400- and 800-meter relays," Henrichs said.

"Nelson wanted to get in shape prior to leaving for the Marines last summer, and I think we did a good job of that for her. Schnoor and Rautenkranz were members of our team for a long time, and Gil wanted to be a part of a team. We'll

miss the leadership all of those senior girls gave us last year."

With six sophomore girls, four freshmen and three eighth-graders on the roster, youth will be served at AHS this spring.

The list includes four section qualifiers and one place-earner during last season's section meet.

Moriah Bullerman headlines a strong sophomore group of girls, which will be the strength of the AHS team.

Bullerman advanced to the section meet in the 800- and 1,600-meter runs and produced an eighth-place showing at the section event in the 800.

Other athletes returning to the team with section experience include sophomores

Kendra Frodermann and Bailey Lonneman and eighth-grader Hannah Henning.

Frodermann, Lonneman and Henning are sprinters who joined Suarez in the 400- and 800-meter relays at the section meet.

Three other sophomores who could help AHS at the varsity level this season include Emily LeBrun, Elizabeth Erwin and Emma Matdson.

LeBrun and Matdson are throwers, while Erwin will compete in the throws as well as run sprints.

Alicya McEliece, Erika Alvarado, Cheyenne John and Samantha Wieneke are the freshmen

Crisis/continued on page 19



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John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab ahs golf

Nine players who represented Adrian High School during section competition last year return to the Dragon golf program in 2018. They are (from left) Brady Henning, Alexia Kemper, Easton Braun, Annika Elias, John Christians, Gracia Elias, Mitchell Veld, Josi Altman and Landon Runia.

Promising golfers ready to take swings for AHS

By John Rittenhouse

Look for the Adrian High School golf team to field veteran teams containing some top-notch individual players in 2018.

Dragon coach Rob Williamson reports that 15 boys and 12 girls are participating in the program this spring.

The list includes 10 players who took their swings during section competition last year and two past qualifiers for state competition in recent seasons.

The Adrian boys are in a position to make big strides in their pursuit of success in 2018.

Without a senior on the roster, the Dragons compiled a 13-37 record during a 2017 season that included a fifth-place finish at the Red Rock Conference meet.

AHS didn't qualify for the second day of team play during Section 3A competition last year, but two Dragons earned that

individually and one of them advanced to the state tournament.

Five of the six boys who represented AHS in postseason play last season return to the team, but that doesn't mean they all will compete at the varsity level again in 2017.

"We have five of the six guys who played at the section meet coming back this year, but I think we'll need to have some playoffs to decide who will be filling our varsity positions this year," Williamson said.

"I think that's a good thing because the kids will have to earn varsity positions rather than having them given to them. Being challenged like that might make the kids work a little harder and try to improve if they want to play on the varsity team."

Adrian's 15-athlete roster consists of three seniors, one junior, four sophomores, two freshmen,

four seventh-graders and one sixth-grader.

Seniors Mitchell Veld and Brady Henning are the leaders of the team.

Veld experienced a sensational junior season that included him advancing to the state tournament individually, where he placed 59th.

Like Veld, Henning reached the second day of Section 3A play individually as well.

"Mitchell and Brady are our most experienced players. They have been playing varsity golf since they were freshmen," Williamson said.

Junior John Christians, sophomore Easton Braun and freshman Landon Runia gained varsity experience as well in 2017.

Christians, Braun and Runia represented AHS at the section meet last spring.

Runia is considered to be a

varsity prospect again, but he could be challenged for varsity playing time along with Braun and Christians.

"I think Landon can take a step forward this year because he plays more golf than any of our kids in the summer," Williamson said.

"He certainly could help the team by stepping up and posting low scores consistently this year."

Other upperclassmen who could make their presence felt at the varsity level in 2018 include senior Nick Harder and juniors Alex Freimuth, Caleb Hornstein and Blake Madison.

Harder played baseball at AHS last year, but Williamson has heard the senior is a decent golfer with varsity potential.

Other members of the program pressing for varsity positions include freshman Jacob Lenz and seventh-graders Brock Henning, Ethan Langseth, Landyn Loos-

brock and Logan Nogosek.

Aiden Peterson, a sixth-grader, is another member of the program.

As the defending conference and section champion, Williamson lists Westbrook-Walnut Grove as the team to beat in southwest Minnesota this spring.

Murray County Central and Fulda-Huron Lake-Okabena are other potential contenders.


"W-WG, MCC and HL-O probably are the top three teams in our conference and section," Williamson declared.

"I would like to see us up there and competing with them. I would like to say we have a chance to challenge for one of the top three spots in the conference and section this year, but there are just too many wildcards in the mix about our team to say that."

Golf/continued on page 19

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John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab aa softball

Five seniors are participating in the Adrian Area softball program in 2018. They are (from left) Kristi Kooiker, Nathalia Vasquez, Devin Dreesen and Madison Neuenberg. Missing is Paige Bullerman. With eight returning starters, the Dragons are aiming to improve on a three-win season in 2017.

Adrian Area fields salty team with eight returning starters

By John Rittenhouse

Adrian Area softball coach Judy Huisman faces a different situation heading into the 2018 season.

One year after leading a largely inexperienced team into battle, the Dragons will be a salty squad seeking more success this spring.

"This probably is the most experienced team I've had since I've been coach," she said.

"We have eight returning starters, which gives us a good nucleus to start with. We have experience and the capability to succeed, but it will all come down to pitching, hitting and fielding like it always does."

AA struggled during what largely was a rebuilding season in 2017.

The Dragons placed fifth in the Red Rock Conference with a 2-8 record during a 3-18 regular season.

AA's 3-19 campaign came to an end with a 16-3 loss to Wabasso in the opening round of the Section 3A Tournament.

Considering the Dragons took the field with three experienced players last spring, AA was in an unenviable position to start the season.

That won't be the case this year, when the Dragons take an experienced team into battle with players who seem to be determined to improve.

"These kids really work hard," Huisman said.

"They are a fun bunch of girls

to work with. The motto we have adopted for the year is how can they improve each day. I can tell in practice that they are working hard to get better rather than just showing up."

Huisman plans to build her team out of a 14-player roster consisting of five seniors, three juniors and six sophomores to start the season.

Along with six returning starters, the roster includes one all-conference selection and two honorable mention award winners from 2017.

Senior Devin Dreesen, a multi-year starter, brings the most experience to the team.

Dreesen pitched and played shortstop for the Dragons last

season, which ended with her securing a position on the All-RRC roster.

Senior Paige Bullerman and junior Autumn Grussing are returning to the program after earning honorable mention status from the RRC coaches last year.

Bullerman is back as the starting catcher.

Grussing is expected to play first base for the second consecutive season.

Other upper classmen who filled starting roles for the 2017 team include senior Madison Neuenberg and juniors Avery Balster and Halle Heitkamp.

Neuenberg has been AA's starting center fielder for a couple of seasons.

Heitkamp started in right field for the Dragons last year.

Balster is one of the team's top pitchers along with Dreesen, and she can play just about any position in the infield and the outfield when she is not pitching.

Sophomores Kristina Cauwels and Morgan Dreesen round out the returning starters from the 2017 team.

Cauwels is back as the starting third baseman.

Morgan Dreesen is projected to start at second base for the second consecutive campaign.

With most of the regulars returning to the same positions this year, Huisman believes AA

Salty/continued on page 19

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Salty/continued from page 18

should be an improved defensive team with quality pitching and a proven catcher.

What concerns the coach at this point is how much the Dragon players can improve at the plate.

"Hitting is my main concern right now," he offered.

"The middle of our lineup is pretty tough, but we'll need some other people to step up and hit the ball at crucial times for us."

Other potential varsity contributors include seniors Nathalia Vasquez and Kristi Kooiker.

Vasquez could help the team in the outfield or at second base.

Kooiker, who didn't participate in the program last year after doing so in the past, is a potential outfielder.

Other sophomores who could make an impact at the varsity

Adrian Area Softball		
April 3	Worthington	H
April 10	Heron Lake-Okabena	A
April 12	Edgerton/SW MN Christian	H
April 17	Mountain Lake	A
April 19	RCC/W-WG	H
April 20	Windom	H
April 26	MCC	A
May 1	Heron Lake-Okabena	H
May 3	Edgerton/SW MN Christian	A
May 5	Windom Tournament	A
May 8	Mountain Lake	H
May 10	RCC/W-WG	A
May 14	Luverne	H
May 15	MCC	H

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Golf/continued from page 17

Experience favors the Adrian girls heading into the 2018 season as well.

Like the boys, the AHS girls competed without a senior on the roster during a 2017 season that was highlighted by a third-place showing at the RRC meet.

The Dragons didn't qualify for the second day of Section 3A play as a team before their 8-18-1 season came to an end.

Adrian takes a 12-athlete roster into the 2018 campaign consisting of two seniors, one junior, one sophomore, one freshman, one eighth-grader, five seventh-graders and one sixth-grader.

The list includes four section competitors and one all-conference performer from last season.

The return of senior Alexia Kemper gives the Dragons instant credibility.

Kemper won the RRC individual title last season, which was one year after she advanced to state individually in 2016.

Things didn't go well for Kemper during section play last spring, but Williamson believes she will be one of southwest Minnesota's top players in 2018.

"Alexia will definitely be our leader," he said.

"She usually is a very consistent player with a good short game. There were not many rounds when she shot an above-bogey

Adrian Golf Boys' & Girls'		
April 3	Hills-Beaver Creek/SW Christian	H
April 6	RCC-Windom	A
April 7	Worthington(girls)	A
April 9	Southwest Christian	H
April 10	Worthington	H
April 12	Hills-Beaver Creek	H
April 19	Fulda/SW Christian	H
April 21	Worthington Invitational(boys)	A
April 26	Southwest Christian	H
April 30	Fulda-WWG	A
May 3	H-BC/MCC	H
May 8	Fulda Invitational(girls)	A
May 8	WWG Invitational(girls)	A
May 14	Luverne	A
May 15	WCC	A
May 17	MCC	H

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score last year."

Other players who competed at the section event along with Kemper include sophomore Anika Elias, freshman Gracia Elias and eighth-grader Josi Altman.

The four players who represented AHS at the section meet in 2017 formed Adrian's varsity squad throughout the season.

"All of those kids gained experience last year and I'm hoping they all will improve over last season," Williamson stated.

level this spring include Maritza Beltran, Jayda Castaway, Samantha Moulton and Jennifer Preuss.

Beltran (outfield/pitcher) and Moulton (catcher) did receive some playing time last year.

Preuss (pitcher/utility player) and Castaway (outfielder) are new to the varsity squad.

Huisman lists Edgerton-Southwest Christian as the team to beat in the RRC this year, with MCC as being another title contender.

E-SWC and Wabasso are her favorites to win the section crown. As for her team, Huisman is seeking improvement.

"I would really like us to be over the .500 mark at the end of the year," she said.

"We could accomplish that, but our kids will have to come ready to play and play well every day."

The coach plans to have six golfers play at the varsity level this spring.

Senior Courtney Penning, who lettered for AHS in the past before not participating in the program in 2017, is one prospect.

Junior Madelyn Odell will not play at the varsity level in 2018.

Sixth-grader Ana Wolf will not receive the opportunity to golf at the varsity level this year, but seventh-graders Ryan Elias, Mia Hieronimus, Lauren Madison, Tannisha Runia and Madeline Wagner are considered to be varsity prospects.

"I plan to move at least one of those seventh-graders into the varsity lineup. I'll probably do it on a rotating basis and find out which one fits in the best," Williamson said.

The coach lists MCC as the team to beat in the conference this season, with F-MCC being a challenger.

"I would be happy if our team would finish among the top three teams in the conference and finish among the top half of our teams in the section," Williamson said.

"Another goal would be to sneak into the second day of section play as a team, but that would take a full-team effort during the first day of the tournament."

Crisis/continued from page 16

members of the team.

Wieneke is a thrower, while John runs sprints and middle distances.

McEliece and Alvarado run sprints, and Alvarado will long jump for the Dragons.

Rounding out the roster are eighth-grade sprinters Alesha Kenning and Samantha Rivera.

The Adrian boys open the 2018 season with two fewer athletes on the roster compared with last spring.

Considering AHS had only 13 participants in 2017, losing two athletes is a pretty big deal.

"We lost some key seniors last year so our boys' team is wide open this year," Henrichs said.

"I really don't know what to expect from our boys. I think we have some great athletes, but with our numbers, it will be challenging to fill out our slots."

The Dragons earned a share of sixth place at the RRC conference meet last season before placing sixth at the Southwest Sub-Section 3A meet.

The Dragons didn't produce any points at the section level.

Zach Bierman, Tristian White and Kasey Madtson were the senior leaders of the 2017 team, when they all qualified for section competition.

Bierman was Adrian's top point-producer in 2017.

Head advanced to section competition in the 100- and 200-meter dashes and as a member of the 400-meter relay.

White and Madtson joined Bierman in the 400-meter relay, and White also ran a leg with Adrian's section-qualifying 800-meter relay.

"We're going to miss the leadership those guys gave us," Henrichs admitted.

"Bierman was the kind of guy who would place in three individual events and make any relay team we put him on be better. He scored a lot of points and gave us credibility as a team. Madtson was a member of the program for six years, and White was a good relay runner for us."

Adrian's 2018 roster consists of three seniors, four juniors, three sophomores and one eighth-grader.

The list includes three section-

Adrian Track		
April 3	Luverne	A
April 10	Luverne	A
April 14	Pipestone	A
April 17	Fulda - MCC	A
April 26	Worthington	A
April 30	Sibley / Ocheyedan	A
May 1	Pipestone	A
May 3	Worthington	A
May 15	Worthington	A
May 17	Mt. Lake (Conference)	A
May 24	Pipestone (Sub-Section)	A
May 31	Montevideo (Section)	A
June 8	State	A

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qualifiers from the 2017 season.

Senior Chance Turner, junior Dakota John and sophomore Scot Edwards bring past section experience to the team.

John, who also triple jumps, and Turner are sprinters.

John ran with the 400- and 800-meter relays last season.

Turner was a member of the 800-meter relay as well.

Edwards emerged as a strong thrower during his freshman season, advancing to the section meet in the shot put.

Henrichs expects seniors Brendyn White and Ryan Wieneke to be key contributors to the 2018 team.

White is an experienced sprinter, while Wieneke is a first-year program member who shows promise in the sprints and the high jump.

Sophomore members of the team include Tucker Wieneke, Christian Weidert and Tahj Schroeder.

Wieneke is an experienced thrower, while Weidert runs sprints and middle distances.

Schroeder is participating in the program for the first time.

Other sophomore members of the team include Caleb Hornstein and Dominiq Canales.

Canales is a sprinter, while Hornstein runs distances.

Eighth-grade distance runner William White-McEliece rounds out the roster.

Jordan Pater is serving as Adrian's assistant coach this spring.



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Experience works in Ellsworth's favor this spring

By John Rittenhouse

Having a battle-tested roster has Ellsworth second-year track coach Ethan Van Briesen feeling excited about the upcoming season.

Having lost one female athlete to graduation last spring, EHS opens the 2018 season with some young but experienced athletes.

"I like our experience," Van Briesen stated.

"We have a lot of talent in our group of boys this year. We didn't have a junior and a senior on the team last year. Even though we still are pretty young this year, we have a lot of kids coming back who competed in a lot of events for us last year. I'm excited they have another good year of growth as members of our program."

Sixteen boys are listed on the team's preseason roster.

The list includes six juniors, four sophomores, five freshmen, and one eighth-grader.

Two individual section-qualifiers and seven letter winners from 2017 highlight the list.

Juniors Kade and Sean Boltjes return to the program after outstanding sophomore seasons that ended with an appearance at the section meet.

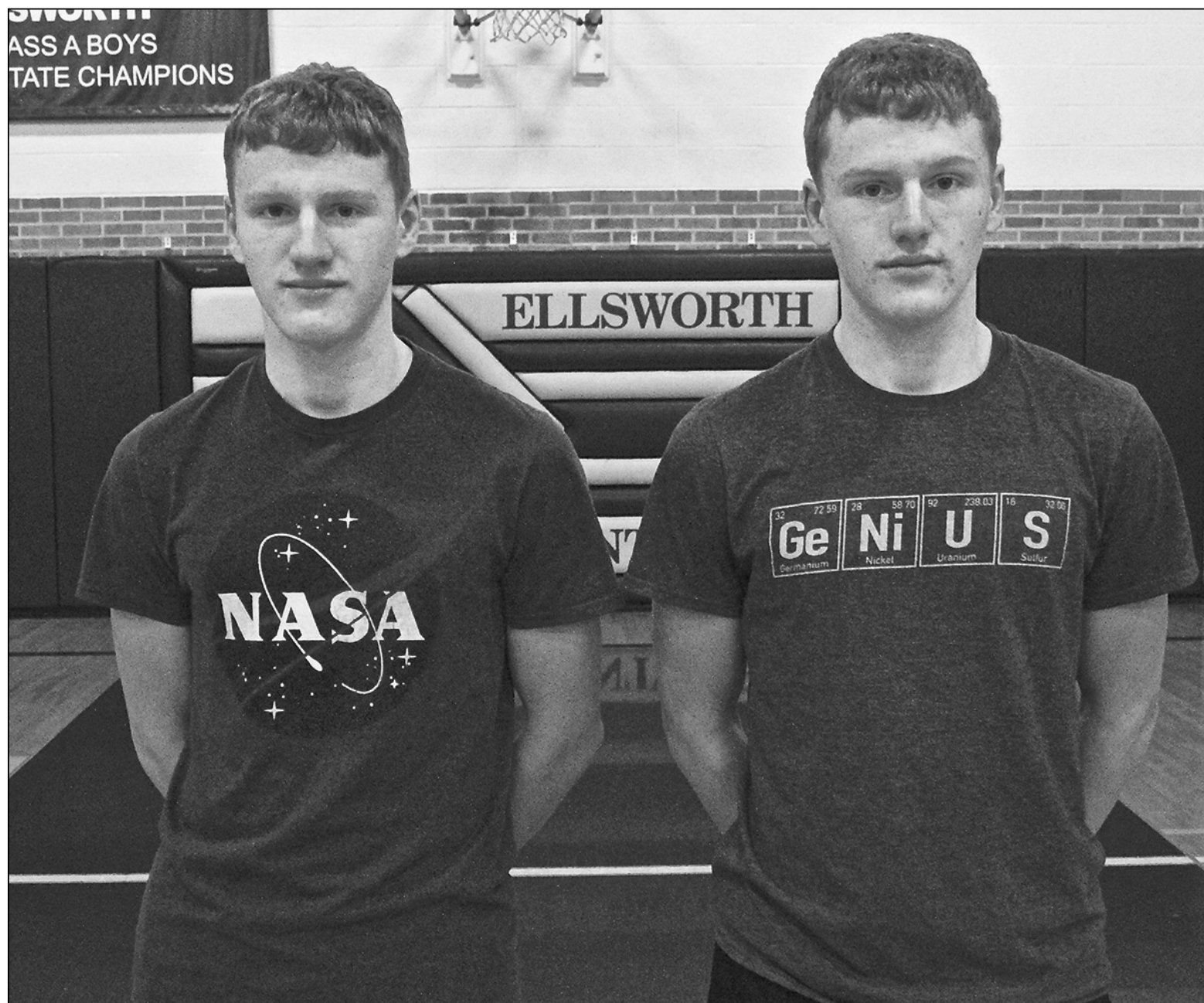
Sean Boltjes emerged as one of Southwest Minnesota's top hurdlers last year when he placed third in the 110-meter event and seventh in the 300-meter event at the section level.

Kade Boltjes, who advanced to the section event in the 200-meter dash without qualifying for the finals, place eighth in the long jump and ninth in the triple jump at the section level.

Other returning letter winners include juniors Carter Boyenga and Sam Kramer and sophomores Robby Armstrong, Christian Hoiland and Rondae Nave.

Kramer runs middle distances and distance races, while Boyenga made a lot of progress as a thrower throughout the 2017 season and competes in relays as well.

Hoiland and Nave are throw-



John Rittenhouse photo/0405 tab ehs track

Ellsworth juniors Sean (left) and Kade Boltjes qualified for the Section 3A Championships last season. They are the top prospects on Ellsworth's roster in 2018. Nineteen athletes are participating in the track program.

ers, while Armstrong excels in the sprints.

Van Briesen expects to receive production from two other junior members of the team.

Brandon Kramer, who competed early in the 2017 season, has the potential to be one of Ellsworth's top throwers.

Noah Kruse is a first-year program member who could help the team in the sprints and the high jump.

Austen Klein rounds out the sophomore members of the squad, and he could help the team in the sprints.

Freshmen Linkin Bossert (middle distances and distances), Micah Onken (middle distances and distances), Simon Boyenga (thrower/sprints) and Elijah Kruse (sprints) participated in the program last spring.

Skyler Shay, a freshman sprinter, is new to the team.

Eighth-grade sprinter Cole Boltjes rounds out the roster.

Three girls are participating in the track program this year, including two returning letter winners.

Senior Madyson Domeyer and sophomore Ashlyn Meester lettered as sprinters in 2017.

Sophomore Sarah Essman, a first-year program member, is a projected thrower.

Ellsworth Track

April 3	Luverne	A
April 10	Luverne	A
April 14	Pipestone	A
April 17	Slayton	A
April 27	Mt. Lake	A
May 1	Pipestone	A
May 4-5	Howard Wood	A
May 7	Luverne	A
May 10	Slayton	A
May 17	Mt. Lake (Conference)	A
May 24	Luverne (Sub-Section)	A
May 31	Montevideo (Section)	A

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