

Spring

Sports Report



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Plethora of MUHS teams ready for enjoyable springs

BY ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury Union High School offers its students more athletic choices in most seasons than any other two local schools combined, and spring is no exception — athletes can participate in eight sports at the varsity level alone.

That means more students are involved in healthy activities and having fun, and, yes, more chances for titles.

The spring of 2023 saw one MUHS track star winning gold twice, two Tiger teams reach state finals, and another group come up just short against an eventual champion in a semifinal match. That track star is back, and all three of those teams are optimistic this spring.

Other MUHS teams believe they are ready for steps forward, or can at the very least point to encouraging signs for the future, such as large turnouts.

In all, it's safe to say it looks like an interesting spring on Charles Avenue.

SOFTBALL

Coach Tim Hanley's softball team a year ago made it to the Division-II final as a No. 5 seed, and the group is looking to add one more playoff win this season, a fair goal considering most of the key athletes are back in the fold.

"The feeling is we've got a lot of returners," MUHS Activities Director Sean Farrell said. "We should be able to put ourselves in that position again."

Of course, pitching and catching is critical in softball, and those areas appear to be Tiger strong points.

Senior Emma Deering and junior Lexi Whitney should again make a potent one-two punch on the mound, with whichever is not pitching probably lining up in the middle infield.

Senior Sienna Rubright returns behind the plate to handle the pitching staff, with freshman Sarah Beveré the backup.

Around the infield, junior Meredith Cameron returns at third base, and sophomores Ireland Hanley and Skyler Choiniere look to be set at shortstop and first base, respectively. Hanley could slide over to second while Deering takes over at short if Whitney is on the mound.

Senior Izzy Wilbur, juniors Lily Dame and

Lily Orleans, and sophomores Madison Selleck and Madelyn LaDuke are the outfielders.

Farrell said the Tigers are optimistic: "We're excited for them to pick up where they left off last year."

BASEBALL

Farrell said most of the Tiger baseball team's eight seniors have had quite a journey.

When they were freshmen, low numbers and a lack of upperclassmen led to the school to decide not to field a varsity team. The next season the group took its lumps as the program returned to varsity. In 2023 they began to gain some traction under Coach Tim Paquette, especially in Lake Division play.

Another step forward is reasonable to expect this year, Farrell said, especially once the Tigers get past a tough early non-league stretch against D-I teams.

"We're competitive within the Lake," he said. "That really tough competition gets you ready for the Division."

A deep pitching staff should help.

Seniors Carter Paquette and Tim Whitney, juniors Tucker Morter and Alex Sperry and sophomore Gabe Velez look like the starters, Farrell said, with senior Cole Warren, and freshman Ryan Brouillard also available. Paquette will be the top catcher.

Sperry will return at the top of the batting order and play center field, and others who will play key roles offensively and defensively include seniors Aiden LaDuke, Whitney, Warren, Ethan Sweet and Dylan Stowe. Seniors Riley Disorda and Wyatt Stearns will be role players, Farrell said. Sophomore Owen Butterfield and freshman Tucker Wright round out the roster and could swing to JV at times.

With the team's experience, leadership and deep pitching, there is potential for a breakthrough, Farrell said: "There's a good chance they'll make a pretty good run for it in

the playoffs."

BOYS' LACROSSE

Coach Matt Rizzo's boys' lax team made history in the 2023 D-I semifinal, ending CVU's nine-year championship streak by knocking off the Redhawks. But in the final, top-seed South Burlington claimed the title at the Tigers.

But the Tigers have been knocking on the door in recent years. And Farrell said MUHS should be in the mix again this season.

"It's certainly a seasoned group that's had that playoff experience," Farrell said. "You've got some younger kids in there, but it's a real strong group."

One thing that will be critical will be the performance of the defense in front of a new goalie: Freshman Levi Nuceder is projected to take over between the pipes. Senior defender Noah Doherty Konczal, senior long-stick midfielder Gavin McNulty, junior long-stick midfielder Cam Whitlock, and sophomore defenders Marshall Eddy and Cooke Riney will be tasked with shutting down opposing attacks.

Seniors Jackson Gillett and Gus Hodde return to lead the midfield, along with juniors

George Devlin, Landon Kean and Luke Nuceder. Senior Toby Draper is a multi-year starter at attack, where also juniors Angus Blackwell and sophomore Logan McNulty return. Junior Callan Boulanger is likely to handle the faceoffs.

A return to the championship game is something the team can shoot for, according to Farrell.

"It's a realistic goal for us because we're returning so many athletes," he said.

BOYS' TENNIS

Coach Ken Schoen's tennis team has been on a steadily upward trajectory in recent seasons, and last year reached the D-I semifinal round before falling to eventual champion Burlington in a tightly contested

match.

Farrell and Schoen believe the Tigers could be better this spring, even though two singles players have graduated.

"In talking to Coach, some of our younger (See MUHS, Page 9)

BASEBALL

"We're competitive within the Lake. That really tough competition gets you ready for the Division."

— Activities Director
Sean Farrell

BOYS' TENNIS

"They're a tight group. They really support each other. There's some great leadership with their captains and the seniors on the team to make it really fun, but also very competitive."

— Activities Director
Sean Farrell

MUHS

BASEBALL



**Middlebury Union High School
Varsity Baseball Team**

Coach: Tim Paquette		Cole Warren	12
Name	Grade	Timothy Whitney	12
Aiden LaDuke	12	Tucker Morter	11
Riley Disorda	12	Alex Sperry	11
Carter Paquette	12	Owen Butterfield	10
Wyatt Stearns	12	Gabriel Velez	10
Dylan Stowe	12	Ryan Brouillard	9
Ethan Sweet	12	Tucker Wright	9

**Middlebury Union High School
Varsity Baseball**

Date	Opponent/Event	Time	5/14	VUHS	4:30 p.m.
4/23	Mt. Mansfield	4:30 p.m.	5/16	Mt. Abe	4:30 p.m.
4/27	Colchester	11 a.m.	5/18	@ Milton	11 a.m.
4/30	CVU	4:30 p.m.	5/21	Enosburg	4:30 p.m.
5/2	@ St. Albans	4:30 p.m.	5/23	@ Missisquoi	4:30 p.m.
5/4	@ Montpelier	3 p.m.	5/25	@ VUHS	11 a.m.
5/?	Fair Haven	4:30 p.m.	5/28	@ Mt. Abe	4:30 p.m.
5/9	@ Enosburg	4:30 p.m.	5/30	Milton	4:30 p.m.
5/11	Missisquoi	11 a.m.			

MUHS

SOFTBALL



Middlebury Union High School Varsity Softball Team		
Name	Grade	
Coach: Tim Hanley		
		Lexi Orleans 11
		Lexi Whitney 11
Emma Deering	12	Skyler Choiniere 10
Sienna Rubright	12	Ireland Hanley 10
Izzy Wilbur	12	Madelyn LaDuke 10
Lily Dame	11	Madison Selleck 10
Meredith Cameron	11	Sarah Beveré 9

Middlebury Union High School Varsity Softball		
Date	Opponent/Event	Time
4/23	Mt. Mansfield	4:30 p.m.
4/27	Colchester	11 a.m.
4/30	CVU	4:30 p.m.
5/2	@ St. Albans	4:30 p.m.
5/4	@ Montpelier	3:00 p.m.
5/7	Northfield	4:30 p.m.
5/9	@ Enosburg	4:30 p.m.
5/11	Rice	11 a.m.
5/14	VUHS	4:30 p.m.
5/16	Mt. Abe	4:30 p.m.
5/18	@ Milton	11 a.m.
5/21	Enosburg	4:30 p.m.
5/23	@ Rice	4:30 p.m.
5/25	@ VUHS	11 a.m.
5/28	@ Mt. Abe	4:30 p.m.
5/30	Milton	4:30 p.m.



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MUHS

GIRLS' LACROSSE



Middlebury Union High School Girls' Varsity Lacrosse Team		
Name	Grade	
Coach: Jeff Weaber		Addison Schnoor 11
		Pelagia Slater 11
Hope Bellinger 12		Ada Weaber 11
Brandy Bishop 12		Lila Cook Yoder 11
Lily Finn 12		Ronan Young 11
Addison Dunakin 11		Lia Calzini 10
Aven Frankovic 11		Kenyon Connors 10
Juliette Hunsdorfer 11		Quinn Doria 10
Sara Kent 11		Isla Weaber 9
Georgie Kiel 11		Alice Livesay 9
Sophia Lawton 11		Ida Blackwell 9
Margaret Orten 11		Isabel Quinn 9
Ava Schneider 11		

Middlebury Union High School Varsity Girls' Lacrosse		
Date	Opponent/Event	Time
4/10	Harwood	4:30 p.m.
4/13	St. Albans	11:45 a.m.
4/15	Stowe	4:30 p.m.
4/17	CVU	4:30 p.m.
4/29	Rice	4:30 p.m.
5/1	S. Burlington	4:30 p.m.
5/4	@ Essex	11 a.m.
5/7	@ Mt. Mansfield	4:30 p.m.
5/9	@ Colchester	4:30 p.m.
5/14	@ St. Albans	4:30 p.m.
5/17	@ CVU	4:30 p.m.
5/21	@ VUHS	4:30 p.m.
5/24	@ S. Burlington	4:30 p.m.
5/28	Essex	4:30 p.m.
5/31	Mt. Mansfield	4:30 p.m.

MUHS

BOYS' LACROSSE



Middlebury Union High School Boys' Varsity Lacrosse Team

Coach: Matt Rizzo

Name	Grade	Name	Grade
Noah Doherty-Konczal	12	Tassilo Luksch	11
Toby Draper	12	Luke Nuceder	11
Jackson Gillett	12	Aiden Pellerin	11
Gus Hodde	12	Cooper Quinn	11
Brady McDonough	12	Cam Whitlock	11
Gavin McNulty	12	Ben DeBisschop	10
Angus Blackwell	11	Marshall Eddy	10
Callan Boulanger	11	Jaxson Heffernan	10
George Devlin	11	Logan McNulty	10
Landon Kean	11	Cooke Riney	10
		Brady Lloyd	9
		Levi Nuceder	9

Middlebury Union High School Varsity Boys' Lacrosse

Date	Opponent/Event	Time
4/11	Harwood	4 p.m.
4/13	@ St. Albans	11 a.m.
4/16	Woodstock	4:30 p.m.
4/18	@ CVU	4:30 p.m.
4/20	Rice	11 a.m.
4/27	@ Woodstock	11 a.m.
5/1	@ S. Burlington	4:30 p.m.
5/4	Essex	11 a.m.
5/7	Mt. Mansfield	4:30 p.m.
5/10	@ Burr & Burton	4 p.m.
5/14	St. Albans	4:30 p.m.
5/17	CVU	4:30 p.m.
5/21	@ Rice	4:30 p.m.
5/24	S. Burlington	4:30p.m.
5/28	@ Essex	7 p.m.
5/31	@ Mt. Mansfield	4:30 p.m.

MUHS

(Continued from Page 3)

players are ready to contribute,” Farrell said.

Junior Jackson Murray returns at No. 1, and senior Kellan Bartlett will probably move up from No. 3 to No. 2, unless freshman Charles Young, currently penciled in at No. 3, unseats him. Senior Iver Anderson could move up from doubles to take over No. 4 or No. 5, and senior Brian Newton, No. 5 a year ago, or freshman Nate Cook Yoder might hold down the final singles slot.

Seniors Eddie Fallis, Milo Rees and Eliot Heminway all return after starting on doubles teams a year ago, and one will likely pair up with whoever doesn't claim the final singles slot. Competition will be stiff, though.

The team will also be looking to maintain its traditions of good chemistry and sportsmanship while contending for a title.

“They're a tight group. They really support each other,” Farrell said. “There's some great leadership with their captains and the seniors on the team to make it really fun, but also very competitive.”

GIRLS' TENNIS

“The athletes we have back are great kids. We've got three seniors who are great leaders in Amelia Coburn, Audrey Carpenter and Caroline Nicolai.”

— Activities Director
Sean Farrell

GIRLS' TENNIS

Coach Dan Comar's girls' tennis team is now two years removed from the program's second of two straight appearances in D-II finals, and for the second straight spring some players have been lost to graduation.

Still, Farrell said the team should have strong senior leadership and an enjoyable season.

“The athletes we have back are great kids. We've got three seniors who are great leaders in Amelia Coburn, Audrey Carpenter and Caroline Nicolai,” Farrell said.

Carpenter played mostly at No. 2 a year ago

and should take over at No. 1. Nicolai saw time on the singles ladder and should do so again.

Both doubles pairings who teamed up in the 2023 postseason return: Coburn and junior Piper Farnsworth at No. 1 doubles, and juniors Maryam Khan and Anna Wolosinski at No. 2. Both pairings could team up again, or depending on who emerges among the newcomers as doubles or singles players, those four could also compete for spots on the singles ladder.

The team only won twice in 2023, but were often competitive in their setbacks. For example, the Tigers lost by 4-3 to higher-seeded Harwood in the first round of the playoffs, with the teams splitting four individual matches in tiebreakers.

The Tigers' cohesion could help them improve that record this spring, according to Farrell.

“They may be a little stronger due to their time together,” he said.

GIRLS' LACROSSE

The Tiger girls' lacrosse team is seeing a
(See Midd, Page 12)

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MUHS

BOYS' TRACK AND FIELD



**Middlebury Union High School
Varsity Track and Field**

Date	Opponent/Event	
4/11	@ Burlington	3:15 p.m.
4/15	@ CVU	3:30 p.m.
4/30	@ Mt. Abe	3:45 p.m.
5/8	@ Mt. Mansfield	3:30 p.m.
5/15	Host at Midd College	3:30 p.m.
5/20	@ Burlington	3:15 p.m.

**Middlebury Union High School
Varsity Track and Field Team**

Coach: Chris Anderson			
Name	Grade		
Keil Broderson	11	Kaden Hammond	10
Aaron Carr-Perlow	11	Mary Harrington	10
Lucas Flinger	11	Teddy Manning-Lonczak	10
Jazmyn Hurley	11	Vivian Mott	10
Beth McIntosh	11	Grace Ritter	10
Maggie Noble	11	Laila Sunderland	10
Gabe Schmitt	11	Sarah Tolgyesi	10
Ethan Spritzer	11	Alixis Williams	10
Solstice Binder	10	Sawyer Witscher	10
Maya Breckenridge	10	Blake Davidson	9
Navah Glikman	10	Try MacTavish	9
		Sawyer Malzac	9

MUHS

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Midd

(Continued from Page 9)

fair amount of change this spring. Several key players graduated, and its former coach stepped down late this winter, with team parent Jeff Weaber stepping up to fill the void.

Weaber has some youth lacrosse coaching experience, and Farrell said Middlebury College Women's Lacrosse Coach (and former MUHS all-star) Kate Livesay has been generous with her time helping out at preseason practices, and the transition has gone smoothly.

The Tigers have more often than not won at least one playoff game each year since the championship seasons of 2017 and 2018, but have not been serious title threats. There are plenty of good young players, though, and Farrell believes the team will be competitive.

Key returners include senior defender captain Lily Finn; junior midfielder Ada Weaber, who hopes to make an impact after injury-plagued seasons; junior Ava Schneider, moving out from the goal up to attack; sophomore middle Quinn Doria; and sophomore attacker Kenyon Connors.

GIRLS' LACROSSE

"We have players who have some experience, and this could be a year where we bring it together. We have some pieces we didn't have before. I have high hopes for them."

— Activities Director
Sean Farrell

Taking over in goal is ninth-grader Ida Blackwell, and joining Finn on defense will be players from a group that includes seniors Brandy Bishop and Hope Belling, and juniors Lila Cook Yoder, Margaret Orton, Addison Dunakin and Ronan Young. The other midfielders are freshman Isla Weaber, sophomore Lia Calzini, and juniors Juliette Hunsdorfer and Georgia Kiel. Listed on the attack are freshman Isabel Quinn and juniors Pelagia Slater, Addison Schnoor, Sara Kent, Sophia Lawton and Aven Frankovic.

Farrell sees a good blend of seasoned players and newcomers who could make an immediate impact, plus good numbers to create internal competition and depth during games.

"We have players who have some experience, and this could be a year where we bring it together," he said. "We have some pieces we didn't have before. I have high hopes for them."

TRACK & FIELD

Probably the single best bet for a championship at MUHS this spring is junior Jazmyn Hurley. At the 2023 Division II title meet Hurley won both the girls' 200- and 400-meter races. This past winter, Hurley doubled up again, winning at 55 and 200 meters at the D-II indoor championship meet.

"We're expecting a lot of great things out of her," Farrell said.

Of course, maybe Hurley shouldn't look over her shoulder: Sophomore Solstice Binder might be gaining. Binder placed in both the girls' 100 and 400 a year ago, and joined classmates Grace Ritter, Alexi Williams and Sawyer Witscher on the third-place four-by-400-meter relay team. All four return this spring.

Also on the girls' side, junior Beth McIntosh and sophomore Mary Harrington ran on a sixth-place 4x800 team a year ago, but Coach Chris Anderson will have to find new teammates to run with them after the other

(See Tigers, Page 16)

MUHS

ULTIMATE



Middlebury Union High School Varsity Ultimate

Coach: Michelle Steele		Axel de Boer	11	Avery Hohenschau	10
Name	Grade	Javier Fernandez Garcia	11	Callan McDowell	10
Asa Baker-Rouse	12	Anika Heppell	11	Sole Pareja	10
Robin Chamberlain	12	Zackery Ho	11	Toby Baker-Rouse	9
Maura Connelly	12	Gavin Jones	11	Ava Bienvenu	9
Addison Copeland	12	Ella Kozak	11	Julie Connolly	9
Benedict Diehl-Noble	12	Jackson Trump	11	Annan Duquette-Hoffman	9
Max Carpenter	12	Avery Vant	11	Lila Hescok	9
Bea Porter	12	Elen Melkonyan	11	Adalaide Markowski	9
Sara Sansone	12	Ian Sinclair	11	Charlie Reiderer	9
Henry Weston	12	Nick Carpenter	10	Isaiah Robinson	9
Matthew Berg	11	Peter Conklin	10	Ana Sansone	9
Jessie Bodette	11	Berkeley Graham-Gurland	10	Greta Suter	9

MIDDLEBURY UNION HIGH SCHOOL Ultimate

Date	Opponent/Event	Time
4/12	Burlington	4 p.m.
4/17	Rice	4 p.m.
5/1	S. Burlington	4 p.m.
5/3	@ VT Commons	4 p.m.
5/8	TBA	4 p.m.
5/10	@ Colchester	4 p.m.
5/20	CVU	4 p.m.
5/22	@ Milton	4 p.m.
5/24	@ Mt. Mansfield	4 p.m.
5/29	St. Johnsbury	4 p.m.

MUHS

GIRLS' TENNIS



Middlebury Union High School Girls' Varsity Tennis Team

Coach: Dan Comar		Piper Farnsworth	11
Name	Grade	Subia Khan	11
Audrey Carpenter	12	Mirabelle Markowski	11
Amelia Coburn	12	Olivia Kearley	10
Caroline Nicolai	12	Maryam Khan	10
Ryte Akramaite	11	Oprea Littlefield	10
Sophia Boise	11	Anna Wolosinski	10
Clara Chant	11		

Middlebury Union High School Varsity Girls' Tennis

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent/Event</u>	<u>Time</u>			
4/10	U-32 at MUHS	3:30 p.m.	5/6	Montpelier	3:30 p.m.
4/13	@ Harwood	3:30 p.m.	5/8	N. Country	3:30 p.m.
4/17	Spaulding	3:30 p.m.	5/10	Mt. Mansfield	3:30 p.m.
4/19	@ St. Albans	3:30 p.m.	5/15	Stowe	3:30 p.m.
4/29	@ N. Country	3:30 p.m.	5/17	Harwood	3:30 p.m.
5/1	Rice	3:30 p.m.	5/20	St. Albans	3:30 p.m.
			5/29	@ Colchester	3:30 p.m.

MUHS

BOYS' TENNIS



**Middlebury Union High School
Boys' Varsity Tennis Team**

Coach: Ken Schoen		Avery Hamilton	11
Name	Grade	Jackson Murray	11
Iver Anderson	12	Kirin Biancosino	10
Kellan Bartlett	12	Matias Citarella	10
Eddie Fallis	12	Spencer Copeland	10
Baxter Harrington	12	Yankee Rheaume	10
Eliot Heminway	12	Nathan Stefani	10
Brian Newton	12	Nate Cook Yoder	9
Milo Rees	12	Charles Young	9
Silas Taylor	12		

**Middlebury Union High School
Varsity Boys' Tennis**

Date	Opponent/Event	Time
4/12	CVU	3:30 p.m.
4/15	Stowe	3:30 p.m.
4/17	@ Colchester	3:30 p.m.
4/29	S. Burlington	3:30 p.m.
5/1	@ Rice	3:30 p.m.
5/3	Burlington	3:30 p.m.
5/6	@ Essex	3:30 p.m.
5/8	@ CVU	4:30 p.m.
5/10	@ Mt. Mansfield	3:30 p.m.
5/13	St. Johnsbury	3:30 p.m.
5/15	@ Stowe	3:30 p.m.
5/22	@ N. Country	3:30 p.m.
5/24	U-32	3:30 p.m.
5/29	Colchester	3:30 p.m.

Tigers

(Continued from Page 12)

two runners graduated.

On the boys' side, juniors Ethan Spritzer and Keil Broderson and sophomore Kaden Hammond ran on relay teams that either placed or came close a year ago, but others who placed or did well at the state meet have moved on, and those relay groups will have to be rebuilt.

Farrell acknowledged the numbers are down, but said that would also allow Coach Anderson and his two new assistants, William Haig and Stephen Kelley, to devote more time to individuals on a smaller team and help them develop; thus, he said, it's possible several could emerge among the team's returners, 12 sophomores and three freshmen.

"You're focus can be greater, and you can kind of push kids a little harder with a small group," said Farrell, himself a former track and field coach.

ULTIMATE

The Ultimate program has a problem, but in the long run a good one. Plenty of girls signed on, enough to field a separate girls' team, but not until after the multi-school administrative deadline to field a varsity team.

As a result, despite having 37 athletes signed up with an almost even split by gender, MUHS has one co-ed Ultimate squad playing a boys' varsity schedule.

It's not a matter of wins and losses, as the MUHS Ultimate teams have never had a remarkable record, but enthusiasm for the sport played with throwing discs known by their commercial name Frisbee. It is also a matter of the Tiger teams' reputation for sportsmanship in competition in which players officiate themselves.

The issue is that Farrell said it will be difficult for Coaches Michelle Steele and

ULTIMATE

"Watching the team, they appear to be having a lot of fun. They've come together, and are looking to grow the program for future teams."

— Activities Director Sean Farrell

Drew McDowell to find playing time for all the athletes, a fair number of whom are learning the sport. Thus he is looking for other larger schools who might also have extra numbers and be willing to schedule JV coed competition. But as of late in the preseason he was still looking for a JV coach.

"We're trying to break it up into a varsity and JV," he said. "We're trying to figure that out, and figure out coaching."

On the field, a number of players return who Farrell said would both help model the ethos of the sport and raise the level of play for the newcomers. He cited as among them seniors Asa Baker-Rouse, Robin Chamberlain, Maura Connelly, Max Carpenter, Bea Porter and Henry Weston, and juniors Matthew Berg and Ian Sinclair.

Farrell also pointed out the original version of Ultimate was coed, and as for the numbers — better late than never.

"Watching the team, they appear to be having a lot of fun," he said. "They've come together, and are looking to grow the program for future teams."

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Mount Abraham teams seeking championships

BY ANDY KIRKALDY

BRISTOL — The spring of 2023 overall treated Mount Abraham Union High School athletes pretty well, even considering a few glitches.

The Eagle softball team picked up its fifth Division II crown in six years, while the boys' lacrosse team saw a furious comeback fall short in the D-III final.

Despite an unfortunate DQ for the best D-II boys' hurdler, the Eagle track and field team still managed a few podium places at the state meet. The only team that never really got on a roll was Eagle baseball, despite some good moments along the way.

This spring brings new faces and renewed optimism to most of the teams.

SOFTBALL

After Coach Don McCormick watched his softball team win the D-II championship last year, he then saw his top two pitchers, and his top three power hitters (two of them the same players, and one of that duo his daughter Eve), walk across the stage and receive diplomas.

But the Mount Abe program has been reloading for years, and this season could be no exception.

"It's a little bit of a different squad," said Athletic Director Devin Wendel. "We'll be younger in a few positions. But we're still returning some key players, and I think that overall the culture of our program is so strong that it allows players to step up and shine."

Among the key returners are senior Madelyn Hayden, a three-year starter either at second base or outfield; Joanna Toy, probably the team's catcher this season; versatile senior Sarah Heath; and junior infielder Abigail Parker.

Wendel expects several sophomores who played limited roles in 2023 to see more fulltime action this spring, in particular Gretchen Toy, the team's No. 1 pitcher, and infielders Gen Forand and Morgan Larocque.

The lineup in the field would most likely be influenced by what McCormick saw during a team trip last week to South Carolina, Wendel added, where he could "see them in an open

field to determine what serves us best" rather than the school gym.

Overall, it's safe to say the Eagles will be a solid squad once again, offensively and defensively.

SOFTBALL

"It's a little bit of a different squad. We'll be younger in a few positions. But we're still returning some key players, and I think that overall the culture of our program is so strong that it allows players to step up and shine."

— Athletic Director
Devin Wendel

to be players. Some of them are going to see reps at the varsity level, I'm sure."

And the team is confident and motivated heading into the season.

"The kids, being in the state championship two years in a row, having the feeling of getting that close, and especially last year, having that comeback and falling just short, I think this group is pretty darn hungry," Wendel said. "And they have one goal in mind."

A dozen seniors return to lead the way, including goalie Walker Forand; midfielders Jamison Couture, Sam Mangini and Finley Kaeck; defenders Jordan Schroeder, Connor Kelly and Olin Kidder; and attackers Andrew Nolan and Noah Ladeau.

"The leadership that is there, too, is going to be pretty spot on," Wendel said.

"I think this team is going to have to play a little bit more small-ball to get the job done," Wendel said. "Once we catch our groove I think we're going to be just fine."

BOYS' LACROSSE

Coach Ed Cook's boys' lacrosse squad has reached the D-III final each of the past two seasons, and has hopes of reaching the top of the mountain this season.

Two high-scoring attackers graduated, but most of the team's core returns this spring, and Wendel noted at least some of the 13 freshmen who signed on can help right away.

"When I look at just the lacrosse IQ, and the general baseline skills of these kids coming in ... it's huge," he said. "To lose two and replace with 13, it's big. And these kids, some of them are going

TRACK & FIELD

"I think we're going to see a lot more explosiveness out of some of these kids this spring. We definitely have some kids coming back that are going to be pretty successful, for sure."

— Athletic Director
Devin Wendel

Among the key juniors who return include faceoff specialist Lorenzo Atocha and midfielder Spencer Gebo.

Wendel also credits Cook for instilling a strong team atmosphere.

"He's done a nice job," Wendel said. "Ed's now been at Mount Abe for long enough to build a lacrosse culture, too, and a positive and consistent one. And I think the kids have bought in, and they're holding each other accountable."

TRACK AND FIELD

Returning scorers from the 2023 D-II state meet are for Co-Coaches Katie Burdett's and Brent Crum's 2024 Eagle track and field team: Senior Joseph Darling returns after taking fourth in the discus and sixth in the long jump and junior Hazel Stoddard finished fourth in the high jump.

At this winter's indoor track championship meet, Darling moved up to second in the long jump, and junior Ruby Connell was just out of the money at 50 and 300 meters.

Wendel said Darling will be looking to cap his career with more podium appearances.

"He hit some really nice marks in indoor, and obviously had some great success in outdoor last year," he said.

Given their recent track records, Wendel also cited Stoddard and Connell.

"Hazel Stoddard and Ruby Connell are going to be kids to watch this spring," he said, noting that Connell broke the Eagle 300-meter mark this winter.

Wendel and the coaches were pleased to see 10 ninth-graders sign up. Among them Truman Sawyer could make the earliest impact in the long jump and at the middle distances.

"He has a lot of potential," he said, also citing his classmate Kassondra Garrow in the long jump and at 55 meter as "someone to watch."

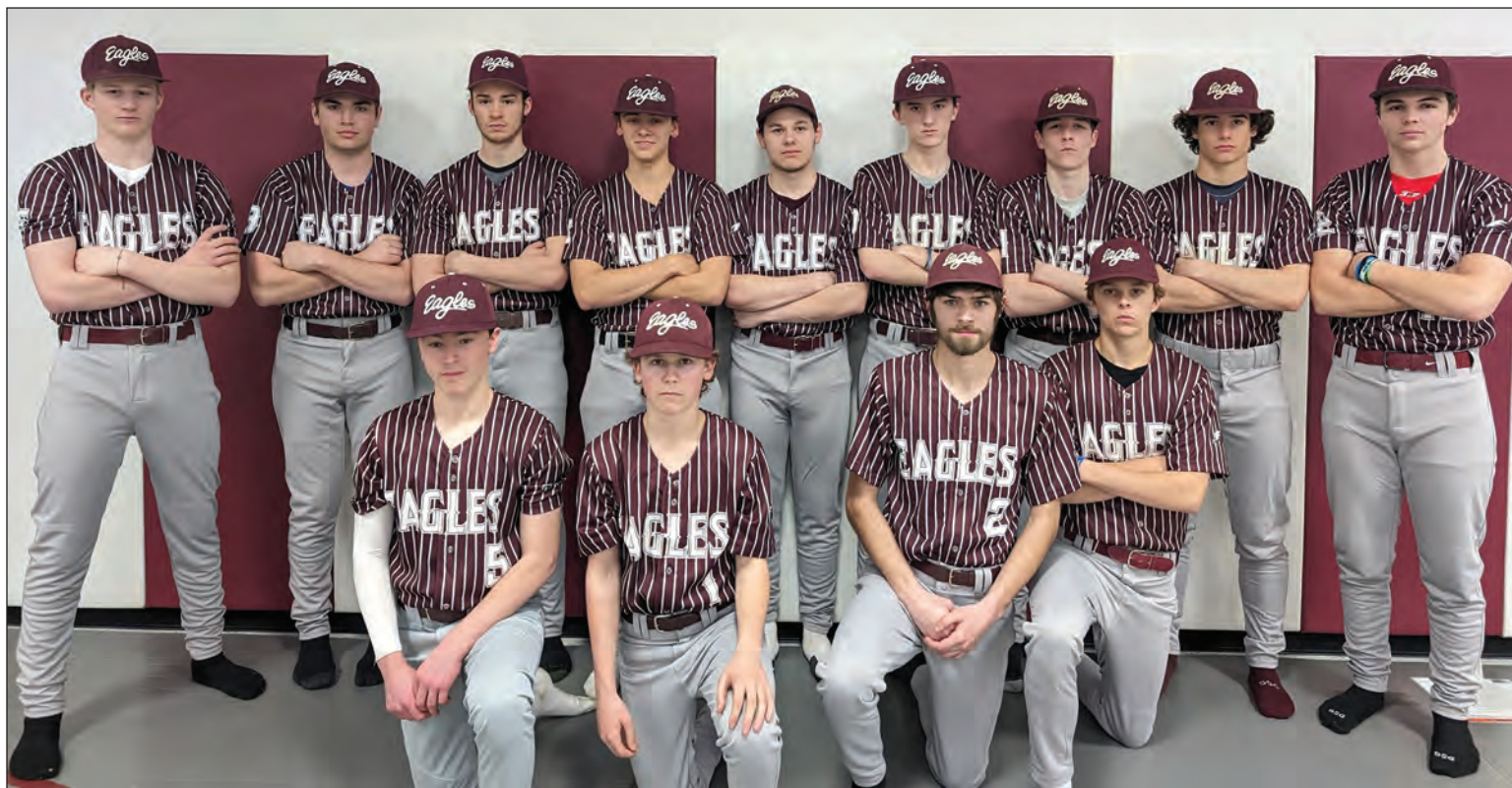
The coaches are also stressing "general strength and conditioning," including weight training with the expectation that other athletes could emerge in the course of the season,

Wendel said.

"I think we're going to see a lot more (See Mt. Abe, Page 22)

Mt. Abe

BASEBALL



Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Baseball Team

Coach: Jason Barnard

<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Tanner Castillo	12
Jamison Huizenga	12
Riley Coffey	11
Gavin Conrad	11
Aricin Griffin	11
Connor Peck	11
Tyler White	11
Brody Barnard	10
Evan Corrigan	10
Cameron Castillo	9
Clark Crary	9
Abraham Ready	9

Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Baseball

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent/Event</u>	<u>Time</u>
4/23	@ CVU	4:30 p.m.
4/25	North Country	4:30 p.m.
4/30	Spaulding	4:30 p.m.
5/2	@ OV	4:30 p.m.
5/4	Rutland	11 a.m.
5/7	@ BFA Fairfax	4:30 p.m.
5/9	Missisquoi	4:30 p.m.
5/11	Milton	11 a.m.
5/14	Enosburg	4:30 p.m.
5/16	@ MUHS	4:30 p.m.
5/18	@ VUHS	10 a.m.
5/21	@ Missisquoi	4:30 p.m.
5/23	@ Milton	4:30 p.m.
5/25	@ Enosburg	11 a.m.
5/28	MUHS	4:30 p.m.
5/30	VUHS	4:30 p.m.

Mt. Abe

SOFTBALL



**Mount Abraham Union High School
Varsity Softball Team**

Coach: Don McCormick		Brooklyn Ryersbach	10
Name	Grade	Gretchen Toy	10
Madelyn Hayden	12	Kayleigh Austin	9
Sarah Heath	12	Brooke Barnard	9
Joanna Toy	12	Idalee Jackman	9
Abigail Parker	11	Reese Kihm	9
Elise Parker	11	Reagan LaFreniere	9
Genevieve Forand	10	Emmali Rougier	9
Morgan Larocque	10	Leah Tierney	9
Molly Mangini	10		

**Mount Abraham Union High School
Varsity Softball**

Date	Opponent/Event	Time
4/23	@ CVU	4:30 p.m.
4/25	North Country	4:30 p.m.
4/27	@ Missisquoi	11 a.m.
4/30	Spaulding	4:30 p.m.
5/2	@ at OV	4:30 p.m.
5/4	Rutland	11 a.m.
5/7	@ BFA Fairfax	4:30 p.m.
5/9	Rice	4:30 p.m.
5/11	Milton	11 a.m.
5/14	Enosburg	4:30 p.m.
5/16	@ MUHS	4:30 p.m.
5/18	@ VUHS	10 a.m.
5/21	@ Rice	4:30 p.m.
5/23	@ Milton	4:30 p.m.
5/25	@ Enosburg	11 a.m.
5/28	MUHS	4:30 p.m.
5/30	VUHS	4:30 p.m.

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Mt. Abe

BOYS' LACROSSE



Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Boys' Lacrosse Team		
Name	Grade	
Coach: Ed Cook		Toby Tillotson 12
Jamison Couture	12	Chase Atkins 11
Walker Forand	12	Lorenzo Atocha 11
Noah Ladeau	12	Spencer Gebo 11
Andrew Nolan	12	Hayden Lutz 11
Jake Kadar	12	Jacob Prouty 11
Finley Kaeck	12	Cooper Cook 10
Connor Kelly	12	Connor Nason 10
Olin Kidde	12	Jacoby Senecal 10
Benjamin MacDonald	12	Joseph Sullivan 10
Samuel Mangini	12	Lincoln Painter 9
Jordan Schroeder	12	Asa Pratt 9
		Levi Smith 9

Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Boys' Lacrosse		
Date	Opponent/Event	Time
4/10	OVUHS	4:30 p.m.
4/13	Stowe	11 a.m.
4/16	Hartford	4:30 p.m.
4/19	St. Johnsbury	4:30 p.m.
4/30	@ Lamolile	4:30 p.m.
5/1	Randolph	4:30 p.m.
5/3	Lyndon	4:30 p.m.
5/8	@ Burlington	4:30 p.m.
5/11	@ Milton	11 a.m.
5/15	Harwood	4:30 p.m.
5/18	Colchester	10 a.m.
5/21	@ OVUHS	4:30 p.m.
5/25	Fairfax	11 a.m.
5/29	@ Spaulding	4:30 p.m.
5/31	@ Montpelier	4:30 p.m.

Mt. Abe

(Continued from Page 17)

explosiveness out of some of these kids this spring,” he said. “We definitely have some kids coming back that are going to be pretty successful, for sure.”

BASEBALL

This past spring, despite a few bright spots, was a largely forgettable one for Coach Jason Barnard’s Mount Abe baseball program.

But there are a few reasons for optimism heading into this season, according to Wendel, including veteran pitching and an infusion of young talent, including two sophomores and three freshmen who made varsity.

“We’ve got some pitching coming back,” Wendel said. “This freshman class is one that we’ve been really excited coming up through.”

The team will look to its two seniors, Tanner Castillo and Jamison Huizenga to help Barnard steer the ship.

“Tanner Castillo, Jamo (Huizenga), those two are going to be the leaders this year,” Wendel said.

Live-armed junior lefty Aricin Griffin is back



FILE PHOTO

to lead the pitching staff, and Castillo; freshman Abe Ready, juniors Gavin Conrad and Tyler White; and sophomore Brody Barnard are also candidates to take the mound. They will throw to a catching crew that includes Castillo, Ready

and freshman Clark Crary, Wendel said.

Wendel said other positions were still being sorted out in the preseason, but that the team has the depth and talent to move pieces around.

(See Mt. Abe, Page 24)

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Mt. Abe

TRACK & FIELD



Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Track & Field Team		
Coaches: Katie Burdett & Brent Crum		
Name	Grade	
Joseph Darling	12	Emily Fritz 10
Teagan Obarski	12	William McLeod 10
Michael Sayre	12	James Mount 10
Siena Stanley	12	Charles Anderson 9
Ruby Connell	11	Rhiannon Andrews 9
Ryan Cross	11	Megan Bowers 9
Finn Harris	11	Garrett Duell 9
Whitney Dykstra	11	Elias Eberhardy 9
Damian Newell	11	Ada Fisher 9
Nola Roberts	11	Kassondra Garrow 9
Elliot Senecal	11	Merissa Gordon 9
Isabella Shea	11	Jackson LaMarche 9
Hazel Stoddard	11	Truman Sawyer 9
		Lincoln Ward 9

Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Track & Field		
Date	Opponent/Event	Time
4/11	@ Mt. Mansfield	3:30 p.m.
4/17	@ Burlington	3:15 p.m.
4/24	@ Essex	9:30 a.m.
4/30	Hosts	3:45 p.m.
5/4	@ South Burlington	1 p.m.
5/8	@ Milton	3:30 p.m.
5/11	@ Burlington	9 a.m.
5/13	@ Missisquoi	3:30 p.m.
5/20	@ CVU 3:30	p.m.
5/25	@ Essex	9 a.m.
5/28	@ Mt. Mansfield	3:30 p.m.
5/31	D-II State Meet-Burlington 2	p.m.

Mt. Abe

(Continued from Page 22)

“If someone is on the mound we still have a solid replacement behind them,” Wendel said.

Among the team’s better offensive players could be the seniors, junior Griffin, sophomore Evan Corrigan, and freshman Ready, Wendel said.

Barnard was emphasizing fundamentals and team chemistry in the runup to the season.

“He’s just trying to keep it simple. He wants pitchers to throw strikes. He wants his players to make the routine players, and he wants his players to be positive and encouraging,” Wendel said. “Those are the big things he’s focused on. He’s saying if we do those things, we’re going to be just fine.”

As always, the Eagles will play a schedule that will include Division 1 teams, but Wendel believes they will hold their own.

“We can hang with teams as long as everyone does their jobs individually,” he said. “I’m looking forward to it.”

BASEBALL

“Coach Jason Barnard is just trying to keep it simple. He wants pitchers to throw strikes. He wants his players to make the routine players, and he wants his players to be positive and encouraging.”

— Athletic Director
Devin Wendel



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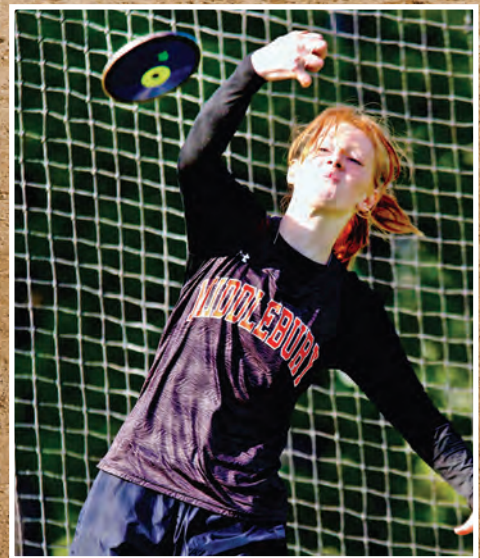
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Good Luck to Area Athletes!

FILE PHOTOS



Commodore teams look to build on past success

BY ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — The spring of 2023 had to be rated a success for the Vergennes sports teams.

The Commodore track and field squad earned two individual victories and one silver medal — and many athletes return.

Meanwhile, the Commodore baseball and softball squads and the cooperative girls' lacrosse team VUHS shares with Mount Abraham all reached semifinals. New faces might have to emerge if those groups are to repeat those performances, but spring always brings optimism, in most cases likely justified.

TRACK AND FIELD

It's been a productive couple of championship meets in the past year for Coach Brad Castillo's Commodore track and field program. In the spring of 2023 Calder Rakowski won the boys' 800-meter race and also ran on the Commodores' winning four-by-800-meter relay team along with Calvin Gramling, Riley Gagnon and Grey Fearon. Fearon also took second at 1,500 meters for the other top boys' result; he was also third at 800 meters. All four return this spring.

A thrower who picked up silver outdoors for the VUHS girls graduated, but Jing Williams is back after taking fifth at 1,500 meters. And she, Quincy Sabick and Gina LeBeau all return after finishing just seconds out of the money in the 4x400 relay.

This winter in the D-II indoor title meet, Fearon won at 1,000 meters, and the four-by-800-meter relay team of Fearon, Gagnon, Gramling and Rakowski prevailed, and taking second were Rakowski in the 600 and the 4X400 team of Rakowski, Fearon, Chance Koenig, and Ryder Messinger. Koenig also returns.

VUHS Athletic Director Peter Maneen said he and Castillo are looking for more good results from that group, including possibly a Division-III record in the boys' 4x800.

"We're expecting some good things there," Maneen said.

The optimism surrounding the program is not limited to the boys' side: 16 girls signed up, including five freshmen as well as strong athletes from the upper grades. In particular it



FILE PHOTO

shouldn't be difficult to add a runner to the girls' 4x400 team to contend again, Maneen said.

"Our track numbers in general have improved," he said. "We have a number of new kids in the program that show a lot of potential."

TRACK & FIELD

"Our track numbers in general have improved. We have a number of new kids in the program that show a lot of potential."

— Athletic Director Peter Maneen

GIRLS' LACROSSE

Coach Marikate Kelley's VUHS-Mount Abraham cooperative girls' lacrosse team has reached at least the D-II semifinals every season since its undefeated championship season in 2019. That record includes in 2022 coming up just short in a final.

Key this year for the team will be replacing offense lost to graduation, Maneen said.

"The biggest thing for girls' lacrosse will be who is going to be the consistent scorer,"

he said. "There are a number of returning defenders, and in the midfield."

The team also returns a veteran goalie, senior Carley Cook. Defenders in front of her could include seniors Nell Harvey and Julia Sonneborn, also potentially midfielders;

juniors Safoura Camara, Ellie Hellier and Kennedy Denecker (the latter two are also potentially midfielders); and sophomores Scout Jacobson and Eleanor Wilkinson-Sachs.

Senior Annie Dufault will help anchor the midfield and could provide an offensive spark. Other midfielders include senior Siena Stanley and sophomore June Yates-Rusch.

Senior Anna Stillwell could be a key cog and leader on the attack, where also junior Esme Visco-Lyons and sophomore Maris LaPerle could line up.

Four ninth-graders will also be seeking roles, probably at midfield or attack, Maneen said: Thompson Davis, Meredith Dufault, Zoey Johnston and Adrienne Smits.

How quickly some or all of the younger athletes acclimate to varsity play will help determine how the Commodores fare, Maneen said.

"The question is which of those players are going to step forward and become more consistent and comfortable at the varsity level and speed of play," Maneen said.

A tough early schedule should help prepare the Commodores for D-II competition, including the postseason, Maneen added.

"Continuing on their recent success is I
(See VUHS, Page 31)

VUHS

BASEBALL



Vergennes Union High School Baseball Team

Coach: Andy O'Brien		Carter McGuire	10
Name	Grade	Dekota Safford	10
Jackson Becher	12	Elliot Cosgrove	9
Benjamin Hargett	12	Juan De La Cruz	9
Tyler Kimball	12	Ryan Johnson	9
Eyon Tembreull	12	Aaron Kandzior	9
Reese Paquette	11	Liam McGuire	9
Gabriel Scribner	11	Colton Reed	9
Aiden Fuller	10	Izaak Wolniewicz	9

Vergennes Union High School Varsity Baseball

Date	Opponent/Event	Time			
			5/14	@ MUHS	4:30 p.m.
4/20	@ Thetford	11 a.m.	5/16	Missisquoi	4:30 p.m.
4/23	@ Richford	4:30 p.m.	5/18	Mt Abe	10 a.m.
4/25	Burlington	4:30 p.m.	5/21	@ Milton	4:30 p.m.
5/2	@ Peoples	4:30 p.m.	5/23	Enosburg	4:30 p.m.
5/4	Randolph	11 a.m.	5/25	MUHS	11 a.m.
5/9	Milton	4:30 p.m.	5/28	@ Missisquoi	4:30 p.m.
5/11	@ Enosburg	11 a.m.	5/30	@ Mt Abe	4:30 p.m.



SOFTBALL



Vergennes Union High School Varsity Softball Team	
Coach: Travis Scribner	
Name	Grade
Savanah Blaise	11
Rory Couture	11
Rory Hendee	11
Katelyn Laberge	11
Ava Mullin	11
Phoebe Raphael	10
Kaiya Corbett-Anderson	9
Alexandria Jewell	9
Jayden Ploof	9
Acasia Visser	9
Ryenn Wisell	9

Vergennes Union High School Varsity Softball						
Date	Opponent/Event	Time				
			5/14	@ MUHS		4:30 p.m.
4/16	Oxbow	4:30 p.m.	5/16	Rice		4:30 p.m.
4/20	@ Thetford	11 a.m.	5/18	Mt Abe		10 a.m.
4/23	@ Richford	4:30 p.m.	5/21	@ Milton		4:30 p.m.
5/4	@ Oxbow	11 a.m.	5/23	Enosburg		4:30 p.m.
5/7	@ Twinfield	4:30 p.m.	5/25	MUHS		11 a.m.
5/9	Milton	4:30 p.m.	5/28	@ Rice		4:30 p.m.
5/11	@ Enosburg	11 a.m.	5/30	@ Mt Abe		4:30 p.m.

VUHS

GIRLS' LACROSE



Vergennes Union High School Girls' Varsity Lacrosse Team		
Name	Grade	
Coach: Marikate Kelley		Ruby Hellier 11
		Esme Visco-Lyons 11
Carley Cook	12	Scout Jacobson 10
Ann Marie Dufault	12	Maris LaPerle 10
Nell Harvey	12	Eleanor Wilkinson-Sachs 10
Julia Sonneborn	12	June Yates-Rusch 10
Siena Stanley	12	Thompson Davis 9
Anna Stilwell	12	Meredith Dufault 9
Safoura Camara	11	Zoey Johnston 9
Kennedy Denecker	11	Adrienne Smits 9

Vergennes Union High School Girls' Varsity Lacrosse		
Date	Opponent/Event	Time
4/11	Stowe	4:30 p.m.
4/13	Essex	11 a.m.
4/16	@ Hartford	4:30 p.m.
4/20	@ St. Johnsbury	11 a.m.
4/27	@ St. Albans	11 a.m.
4/30	Lamoille	4:30 p.m.
5/3	@ Lyndon	4:30 p.m.
5/8	Burlington	4:30 p.m.
5/11	Milton	11 a.m.
5/14	@ Harwood	4:30 p.m.
5/16	GMVS	4:30 p.m.
5/18	@ Colchester	11 a.m.
5/21	MUHS	4:30 p.m.
5/25	@ Rice	11 a.m.
5/29	Spaulding	4:30 p.m.
6/1	U-32	11 a.m.



TRACK & FIELD



Vergennes Union High School Varsity Track Team			
Coaches: Brad Castillo		Mary Cosgrove	11
Name	Grade	Torrey Hanna	11
BOYS:			
Riley Gagnon	12	Sophia Johnson	11
Calvin Gramling	12	Tryphene Miguel	11
Calder Rakowski	12	Jing Williams	11
Connor Brogan	11	Ava Francis	10
Owen Collette	11	Gina LeBeau	10
Grey Fearon	11	Faith McAllister	10
Brody McGuire	11	Libby Ringer	10
Chance Koenig	10	Quincy Sabick	10
Peter Maneen	10	Eva Borah	9
GIRLS:			
Alaina LeBeau	12	Isabella Romond	9
		Madeleine Stroup	9
		Isabelle Van Voorst	9
		Megan Willis	9

Vergennes Union High School Varsity Track & Field		
Date	Opponent/Event	Time
4/11	@ Mt Mansfield	3:30 p.m.
4/15	@ CVU	3:30 p.m.
4/30	@ Mt Abe	3:30 p.m.
5/4	@ S. Burlington	1 p.m.
5/8	@ Essex	3:30 p.m.
5/11	@ Burlington	9 a.m.
5/15	@ MUHS	3:30 p.m.
5/21	@ S. Burlington	3:30 p.m.
5/25	@ Essex	9 a.m.
5/28	@ Mt Mansfield	3:30 p.m.
6/1	D-III Title Meet	TBA

VUHS

(Continued from Page 26)

don't think unreasonable," he said. "I think the goal is to be in the top four when the playoffs come around and making another run."

BASEBALL

Coach Andy O'Brien's baseball team won twice in the D-III playoffs a year ago, the second victory being on the road against the top seed. Several players earned diplomas after that playoff performance, but a number of players are back, critically pitchers and a catcher.

"We lost some pretty important players from that program, but we have some pretty key returning players. We have some pretty good pitching depth," Maneen said. "So we're looking for some pretty good things out of the baseball program."

The pitching rotation will include seniors Tyler Kimball and Eyon "Tiki" Tembreull, and juniors Gabe Scribner and Reese Paquette.

Those players will also almost certainly occupy key defensive positions when not on the mound. Paquette will be the primary catcher, with the backup spot up for grabs in the early going. Kimball is the center fielder, Tembreull the shortstop, and Scribner the third baseman.

Other positions were subject to competition in the preseason, with seniors Jackson Becher and Benjamin Hargett, three sophomores and seven freshmen seeking playing time.

Maneen said some of those younger players

will have to make solid contributions and the seniors will have to show the way if the Commodore nine is to contend again.

He added the younger players have devoted themselves to the sport.

"There's a number of younger players, but it's big baseball crew. They've played a lot of baseball over the years," Maneen said. "So it will be a fun year. There will be some young kids in the mix with some veteran leadership. They should be competitive."

SOFTBALL

The VUHS softball program will have a new coach, Peter Monty, who was until this spring the Essex JV program head.

Monte will be looking to preserve the momentum the program has gained over the past few years: The Commodores reached the D-III final in 2022 and lost a close semifinal a year ago.

But Maneen acknowledged some rebuilding might be in order, with just 11 high school students in the program, including five freshmen and no seniors, to tide things over until 17 middle school participants move up the ladder.

"Softball graduated a number of older players last year. They're very young this year," Maneen said.

The good news is two-year starting junior pitcher Savannah Blaise, also a top-of-the-order hitter, is back.

"Savannah is a good place to start from," Maneen said.

SOFTBALL

"We're looking forward to seeing how these players take to the game. The goal is development over the course of the season."

— Athletic Director Peter Maneen



Two other key junior starters return, outfielder Katie LaBerge and infielder Rory Couture, and junior Rizz Mullin has also seen time over the past couple seasons.

Rounding out the roster are junior Rory Hendee, essentially new to the sport; sophomore Phoebe Raphael; the five freshmen; and likely one 8th-grade callup. Of the freshman, one has experience — Ryenn Wisell, who played varsity a year ago as an 8th-grader and, according to Maneen, was a .300 hitter.

Maneen said how quickly the younger players, some of them short on softball experience, adapt to the varsity game could determine the Commodores' fate. But wins and losses might not be the most important piece of the agenda for this season, he added.

"We're looking forward to seeing how these players take to the game," Maneen said. "The goal is development over the course of the season. We obviously want to be competitive, but we want to see these kids learn and enjoy the game and continue to take steps forward as players."

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Otter Valley squads will be relying on new faces

BY ANDY KIRKALDY

BRANDON — Two spring sports programs at Otter Valley have each won a Division II title and reached another final since 2014, those being baseball and softball. Those teams have also more often than not picked up at least one postseason victory during the other years. The third, boys' lacrosse, has had a few bright spots since it was established, including three playoff victories, but has yet to break through for sustained success.

What to expect this season?

BASEBALL

OV athletic director Steve Keith noted the Otter baseball team graduated 10 seniors from the group that hosted and won a Division II playoff game a year ago.

But there are some quality returners, Keith said, including seniors Brayden Chandler, Luciano Falco and Isaiah Wood, while adding that Coach Mike Howe has established a winning culture.

"I think the guys coming are very determined to maintain that same level of expectations," Keith said, including newcomers who had good seasons on the JV team in 2023. "They're excited. They're working really hard, and Mike's been really pleased with the level of effort."

Wood and sophomore Jackson Howe will head the pitching rotation, and Keith said junior Nolan Tripp and sophomore Jacob Warrell will be among "some other guys who are going to contribute" on the mound.

Falco will start behind the plate, and Warrell can also catch and help elsewhere on the diamond. Keith said Howe is carrying just 12 players, most of whom are capable of playing multiple positions and all of whom will play. But with the team's preseason scrimmages snowed out in the first week of April, it was difficult to predict a starting lineup.

"We have a good option for all those guys, and all of them are going to see time in different places," Keith said. "I think the flexibility of them all playing different spots is going to be helpful."

It is possible Tripp could play shortstop, while Warrell and sophomore Dominyk Waite could see time at second base, Keith said, and there are "four or five guys in the outfield that are all going to get opportunities."

The Otters have hosted and won first-round playoff games in two of the past three years.

"It's always a goal to get yourself a home playoff game and put yourself in the mix," Keith said. "They're going to compete and be in the mix for everything. They're always well prepared."

SOFTBALL

Meanwhile, the OV softball team has won at least one playoff game for six straight seasons with Coach Kelly Trayah at the helm after Pattie Candon's retirement.

Like baseball, however, there were losses to graduation, and this year's team features only two seniors,

Sierra Cormany, probably the team's No. 1 pitcher and also a shortstop, and MyKenzie Thibault, a versatile player likely to also see time on the mound.

"We have a young roster," Keith said. "We have some sophomores, some freshmen who are all going to play roles, some juniors and the seniors. So we're really mixed across the board."

A strong point could be the

mound corps.

"We have a lot of pitching," Keith said, with sophomore Leann Thomas and freshman Sophia Parker rounding out a deep rotation.

Junior Kaylee Maloy and sophomore Noelle Seigle will handle the catching chores, and they could also DH.

Elsewhere, Keith said there will be new faces around the infield and in the outfield,

and like baseball there are different lineup possibilities for Trayah to work out because of his athletes' versatility.

"He's really excited about that group. They have a lot of softball abilities, a lot of athletes across the field," Keith said.

Junior Lauren Palmer, sophomore Hannah Desabrais and freshman Adyson Humiston, plus Cormany and Parker when not on the mound, are infield candidates. Thibault, juniors Randi Lancour and Charlotte Newton, and sophomores Michael Hobbs and Thomas could patrol the outfield grass.

Overall, Keith foresees the outlook as positive and Otter softball to be competitive once again.

"I think they all hit the ball pretty well," he said. "Kelly's been pretty excited about the possibility of getting speed on the basepaths, and also putting the ball in play."

BOYS' LACROSSE

The OV boys' lax program has a new coach, Emerson Doty, an OV English educator who Keith said played for a strong

high school program. Keith added Doty's classroom skills appear to be translating to teaching the sport.

"He's done a really nice job so far. Practices have been really well run," Keith said.

Critically, the program is picking up some numbers, including nine sophomores who can help grow the program over the next few years joining three juniors and six seniors.

"We're in the 16-to-18 range, which is a healthy number for us," Keith said.

The Otters only won a game or two a year ago, but learned as they went along, he said.

"Obviously there were lopsided scores, but a lot of kids got good playing experience," he said.

There are also valuable players returning, including senior defenders Simon Martin, Aiden Wade and Matt Cole, and senior midfielder Chase Cram, coming off outstanding football and wrestling seasons.

"He's going to score some goals for us," (See OVUHS, Page 35)

BASEBALL

"I think the guys coming are very determined to maintain that same level of expectations... including newcomers who had good seasons on the JV team in 2023. They're excited. They're working really hard, and Mike's been really pleased with the level of effort."

— Athletic Director
Steve Keith

BOYS' LACROSSE

"A lot of those guys in that sophomore group, they convinced their friends to come out. And they really enjoyed it. I think that's really key to our growth (in lacrosse) at school, convincing some of your friends to come out and give it a shot."

— Athletic Director
Steve Keith

OVUHS

BOYS' LACROSSE



**Otter Valley Union High School
Boys' Varsity Lacrosse Team**

Coach: Emerson Doty		Gavyn Towle	11
Name	Grade	Timothy Baron	10
Matthew Cole	12	Jaydon Connors	10
Chase Cram	12	Ethan Dukette	10
Simon Martin	12	Robert Gilbert	10
Sawyer Tinsman	12	Jason Hartwell	10
Aiden Wade	12	Benjamin McGuigan	10
Damon Wood	12	Brayden Meza	10
Kaiden Lee	11	Samuel Luis	10
Jackson Marks	11	Ethan Ross	10

**Otter Valley Union High School
Boys' Varsity Lacrosse**

Date	Opponent/Event	Time
4/10	@ Mt Abe	4:30 p.m.
4/12	Fairfax at OV	4:30 p.m.
4/19	Randolph at OV	4:30 p.m.
4/23	@ Rutland	4 p.m.
4/27	Hartford at OV	10 a.m.
5/3	GMVS at OV	4:30 p.m.
5/8	@ Randolph	4 p.m.
5/13	@ Montpelier	5 p.m.
5/21	Mt Abe at OV	4:30 p.m.
5/25	@ Brattleboro	7 p.m.
5/28	@ Stratton	4:30 p.m.
5/31	Brattleboro at OV	4:30 p.m.

OVUHS

(Continued from Page 33)

Keith said of Cram.

Senior goalie Damon Wood returns for his second year between the pipes. "That's a real positive," Keith said.

Juniors who should make an impact include midfielders Gavyn Towle and Jackson Marks, he said.

SOFTBALL

"I think they all hit the ball pretty well. Kelly's been pretty excited about the possibility of getting speed on the basepaths, and also putting the ball in play."

— Athletic Director
Steve Keith

Several sophomores should be ready to emerge, he added, including T.J. Baron, Braydon Meza and Benjamin McGuigan.

The sophomores have already helped, in fact.

"A lot of those guys in that sophomore group, they convinced their friends to come out," Keith said. "And they really enjoyed it. I think that's really key to our growth (in lacrosse) at school, convincing some of your friends to come out and give it a shot."

As for an outlook, Keith said growing the sport and honing skills are important goals, but winning a couple games would be fun.

"There are games the guys are certainly looking at in the schedule and saying, 'We can compete,'" he said.

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OVUHS

SOFTBALL



**Otter Valley Union High School
Varsity Softball Team**

Coach: Kelly Trayah

Name	Grade
Sierra Cormany	12
MyKenzie Thibault	12
Randi Lancour	11
Kaylee Maloy	11
Charlotte Newton	11
Lauren Palmer	11
Hannah Desabrais	10
Micheala Hobbs	10
Noelle Seigle	10
Leann Thomas	10
Adyson Humiston	9
Sophia Parker	9

**Otter Valley Union High School
Varsity Softball**

Date	Opponent/Event	Time
4/9	Burr & Burton	4:30 p.m.
4/11	@ Fair Haven	4:30 p.m.
4/23	@ Springfield	4:30 p.m.
4/25	@ Rutland	5 p.m.
4/30	@ Bellows Falls	4:30 p.m.
5/2	Mt. Abe	4:30 p.m.
5/3	@ Green Mt.	4:30 p.m.
5/7	@ White River	4:30 p.m.
5/9	@ Hartford	4:30 p.m.
5/14	@ Mt Anthony	4:30 p.m.
5/16	Springfield	4:30 p.m.
5/18	@ Brattleboro	11 a.m.
5/21	Hartford	4:30 p.m.
5/23	Fair Haven	4:30 p.m.
5/25	Bellows Falls	11 a.m.
5/28	@ Woodstock	4:30 p.m.

OVUHS

BASEBALL



**Otter Valley Union High School
Varsity Baseball Team**

Coach: Michael Howe

Name	Grade
Brayden Chandler	12
Luciano Falco	12
Nathaniel Gaissert	12
Isaiah Wood	12
Tucker Maranville	11
Noel Pearsons	11
Nolan Tripp	11
Jackson Howe	10
Lucas Kendrick	10
Dominyk Waite	10
Jacob Warrell	10
Wyatt Cone	9

**Otter Valley Union High School
Varsity Baseball**

Date	Opponent/Event	Time			
4/9	Burr & Burton	4:30 p.m.	5/11	Windsor	11 a.m.
4/15	Leland & Gray	4:30 p.m.	5/14	@ Mt Anthony	4:30 p.m.
4/20	@ Springfield	11 a.m.	5/16	Green Mt.	4:30 p.m.
4/23	@ Fair Haven	4:30 p.m.	5/18	@ Brattleboro	11 a.m.
4/25	@ Rutland	5 p.m.	5/21	@ Hartford	7 p.m.
4/30	@ Bellows Falls	4:30 p.m.	5/23	Fair Haven	4:30 p.m.
5/2	Mt Abe	4:30 p.m.	5/25	Bellows Falls	11 a.m.
5/9	Hartford	4:30 p.m.	5/28	@ Windsor	4:30 p.m.



Good Luck to Area Athletes!

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