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TENNIS

ALEX BOYER
JACKET NATION SPORTS

The Lebanon High School boys' tennis team finished with a 13-11 record in 2023 and fell to Rolla in the first round of the Missouri Class 2 District 5 tournament, 5-0.

Along with a winning record, LHS also won their home tournament and finished second in the Lebanon/Camdenton Invitational.

"The tennis team is looking forward to a great season and practices are going extremely well," longtime head coach Ron Crowell said. "We have a fantastic group returning. We should have a great year and the future is very bright with a tremendous freshman class. We have a good team and they are young so, the future is

very bright."

The team returns key pieces in Ethan Fisher (No. 1 singles), Conor McGruder (No. 2 singles), Kasey Hicks (No. 5 singles), Dathan Durbin (No. 6 singles), and Josiah Ruble.

Crowell said he is excited about some of the incoming freshmen this season including Josh Rogers, Teigan Vance, Denver Woodruff, Shawn Worley, and Ryland Parker.

"This group is young and talented and they work extremely hard," he stated. "We have had great practices and they have a chance to be excellent. They are very coachable and they are great kids."

"We are working on fundamentals and we are trying to develop our



Photo by Marc Fisher (CreationServices)

topspin forehand and backhands. We are also trying to develop a kick serve and we are focusing on footwork. Very soon,

the team will begin playing for their spots so the competition will hopefully make us better."

Lebanon would like to

have a winning season, go undefeated at home, beat their rivals, win a final Ozark Conference title, and qualify kids for the

State tournament.

The 'Jackets are opening up the season on the road on Monday, March 18 at Capital City.

GOLF

ALEX BOYER
JACKET NATION SPORTS

It was a successful spring in 2023 for the Lebanon High School boys' golf team.

The 'Jackets had two State qualifiers in Ethan Mustard and Titan Haney, with Mustard earning All-State honors for the second consecutive year after shooting a 71 and 78 during the two-day Championships at Silo Ridge in Bolivar.

Haney and Mustard also finished 2nd and 3rd, respectively, at the Missouri State Relays.

Lebanon graduates no starters from last year's squad and returns two more State qualifiers in seniors Kory Hough and Canon Roark.

"All four of these guys have made it to the State tournament in their careers and will bring a ton

of experience and leadership to an otherwise young group," head coach Trey Overstreet said. "We are excited to see where it takes us this spring."

Freshman Jacob Clark is also expected to make an immediate impact at the varsity level, according to Overstreet.

"Jacob is an immediate contributor," Overstreet explained. "It wouldn't surprise me at all if he is a multiple-time State qualifier and multiple-time State medalist."

On the JV side, Lebanon returns junior Trustin Cox and Fisk Miller, sophomores Noah Thornhill and Levi Collins, and added a senior transfer in Trenton Perryman.

"I am super excited to see our varsity go compete to win tournaments," Overstreet stated. "The area itself is incredibly strong, with Rolla, Glendale, Kickapoo, Nixa, Rogersville, and Monett all being standouts that

we see at most of our tournaments.

"Our regular season strength of schedule has definitely proved value come State tournament time, and I am hoping that shows through this year and we can rack up a few wins against top-tier opponents."

Overstreet also mentioned that he is excited about the new 9th graders coming into the program.

"We are keeping nine freshmen," he said. "Besides Jacob, we have Josh Boschert, who will be at the top of the JV and potentially fight for a varsity spot later in the season as he gains experience. Masyn Frana, Hudson Starnes, Gavin Gottman, Brody Barker, Tre Simpson, Jag Goforth, and Charlie Windsor round out an awesome group of kids that have the potential to all be varsity contributors as soon as next year, depending on the work they put in over



Photo Courtesy of Alex Boyer (Jacket Nation Sports)

the offseason.

I am over the moon about the direction of the program. We had 26 young men try out, a school record; we are keeping 21 kids, another school record. Thankfully, I have two volunteer

assistants to help me keep some order: Alex Boyer and Jeremy Thornhill."

Lebanon will open their season on March 18 with a match at Osage National.

"We are going to put the gas pedal down and

really attack range sessions and work around the greens," Overstreet said. "We have also already begun talks about the mental aspect of golf, and I think that is a place where we will grow a ton from last year."

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TRACK & FIELD

ALEX BOYER
JACKET NATION SPORTS

Expectations will be high for the Lebanon High School track and field team with an experienced squad returning for head coach Shane Rebmann and the Yellowjackets.

The team is coming off a 2023 season where they had five conference champions (Abigail Tague (800m Run), Addy Rebmann (High Jump), Caden Morris (Triple Jump), Brooklyn O’Cain (Javelin)), four state qualifiers (Abigail Tague, O’Cain, Rebmann – medalist, and Morris – medalist), and two school records broken (Javelin and Triple Jump).

“Our team this year is mostly intact from last season, so that is a great opportunity to build on the success that we had in 2023,” stated Rebmann. “We have a long list of returners who competed at a high level last season.”

Below are a list of boy student-athletes who Rebmann expects to contribute this spring:

“Kelby Conner, Peter Stunja, Liam Allen, Grant Klemin will be the centerpieces of a really good 4x800m Relay Team this year,” he said. “Jax Glendenning returns as the focal point of our sprint group. He will be joined

by Josiah Simmonds and several newcomers to our program.

“Rhett Rhoades was our utility man last year and he returns and will make an impact in several events but his primary focus is on the 300m Hurdles. Danen Conrad, Eli Jackson and Brayden Mann all return as our top throwers from last year. They will be joined this year by Sam Henson, Jesiah Mebruer, Jake Rebmann, Westyn McKinney and Kameron Myers who will all be fighting for the varsity spots. Paul Dubose and Moses McCowan will be looking to contribute at the High Jump this year.

“Caleb Gladden and Gavin Zeihr both return in the Pole Vault and look to improve on their jumps from last year. Carson Hill, Brayden Christian, Cameron Rose and Landon Dimock are all expected to make an impact at the varsity level as well.”

On the girls’ side, Rebmann had the following to say about his squad:

“Brooklyn O’Cain and Morgan Durbin both return as our varsity Javelin throwers,” he explained. “Ciaria Keeney will look to continue her huge success from last year in both the discus and the Shot Put. Ella Johnson

and Jenna Massey are tremendous leaders for our team and are mainstays in the 4x800, 1600 and 3200. Rilee Jackson returns after a great post-season performance last year in the Long Jump.

“Elsie Shadel (Shot Put) and Kamilla Windsor (Discus) will both do great things this year. Kamilla really got better as the year went on last season. Addy Rebmann obviously has big goals in the high jump this year after taking 5th in the state last year. She will be joined by returners Raylee Quick and Raegan Dahm. Addy may also take a crack at the 100m Hurdles this season. Addi Dent is also another jack-of-all-trades for us. She is our top hurdler, she runs on every relay and is also looking to get back to the Triple Jump which is one of her favorite events.

“Bailey Cromer returns as a mainstay last year on our 4x400 relay. She also excels at the 300m Hurdles and is another one of those kids that can do a little bit of everything. Samantha Richardson was our top Sprinter at LHS in 2023 and will continue that in 2024. She is also looking to expand her talents into the Pole Vault world this season. Abigail Tague absolutely dominates the 800m Run

for us. She returns after a State Qualifying season and has her eyes set on improving that performance and getting her name on the school record board this year.

“Abigail is joined with a motivated group of runners who will all compete for spots in the 4x800, 1600 and 3200. Faith Coffman returns from a great sophomore season, Nahia Arrasate is new to Track this year, but had a really good XC season. Lily Waterman and Jordan Eastburn are motivated to compete and earn spots in that 400-1600m range. We have a great group of distance girls this year.”

Overall, Rebmann is excited to get the season going and see what this team can do.

“I am really excited to see how our team has grown since last year,” he said. “We had a pretty small class of seniors last year, so we have a huge number of kids who gained varsity experience in 2023 that are returning for us. We have a few spots where our kids are really good, so that is always fun to watch.

“Our coaching staff has done a great job of evaluating talent and moving kids into events where they will be successful. We are going to have to have kids step up and be competitive in a second and even a third event this year. So the coaches



Photo Courtesy of Alex Boyer (Jacket Nation Sports)

have really challenged our kids to seek out that “secondary” event in order to score as many points as possible.”

Through the first few weeks of the season, the team is still working through some of the early season rust and working in winter sport athletes into the mix.

“Field event kids are spending time learning the event in some cases, but all are working on general technique and drills to set the foundation for the competitive part of the season,” Rebmann stated. “We will start to fine tune what each of those kids need to work on as we get into meets. Our runners are working hard to get tuned up to

race, but they also have a lot of technical skills to master. Whether is hurdle technique, block starts or relay exchanges – they have a lot of work to do. So we try and build those things into our workouts.

“The coaches are excited to see how all of our young kids and newcomers grow into this sport. We can time and measure in practice, but a lot of times, you may not know what you’ve got in a kid until you see them compete for the first time.”

Lebanon will open their season up at Waynesville and Willard on March 15. The team will host their annual home meet on Friday, March 22 at Jacket Stadium.

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BASEBALL

ALEX BOYER
JACKET NATION SPORTS

The Yellowjackets were dominant in Alex Weathermon's first year as the man in charge of the Lebanon High School baseball team.

A new school record for wins in a season was broken (24), and the team returns seven starters this spring.

The team also finished second in a competitive Ozark Conference and won a district game for the first time since 2017, defeating Parkway South 2-0.

"The 2023 Lebanon baseball team was easily the most underrated baseball team in the southwest Missouri area," stated Weathermon. "We started four players who were juniors the entire season while also starting three sophomores. This team rebounded after graduating a large senior class that included

Zack Stewart and went 10-16 in 2022. We gained valuable varsity playing experience early on, built confidence in our kids, and took down some of the best programs in the state. "We implemented a new system for developing players and playing the game. The

kids bought into our new coaching staff and continued to improve daily. Even though this group mostly flew under the radar of other programs, we return some of the most talented players in the area for the next couple of years."

One of the key players that Lebanon did lose to graduation was All-State selection Payton Wehner. The standout pitcher finished his last season with an 11-0 record, one save, and posted a 0.79 ERA. Wehner and his twin brother, Parker, are currently playing college baseball at McKendree University.

Returning to the diamond will be four key seniors in Gavin Smith (.390 BA, 10 doubles, 16 RBIs, and 32 stolen bases) Josh Zeigenbein (4-0 W-L, 2.92 ERA, .310 BA, 10 RBIs) Hoyt Honey (2.42 ERA, .303 BA, 33 RBIs) and Cole Dustin (2-2 W-L, .239 BA, 10 stolen bases).

"Gavin is one of the most talented baseball players and athletes in our entire area. He will hit leadoff, be our starting catcher, and be expected to help be the sparkplug of our offense," stated Weathermon. "Josh is our starting 1B and had a breakout season at the plate and on the mound for us last year. He has really bought into the weight room and will see another huge jump in production.

"Hoyt played many different roles for us last season as our primary utility. After a great off-season, we expect him to throw many more innings, continue to be a great leader, and improve his overall game. Cole had an injury that limited

himself at certain points last season. We expect him to compete again for a starting outfield position and increase his production at the plate. After changing his approach, we are excited to see him develop a larger role for us on the mound and at the plate."

Three more key pieces returning to the lineup will be juniors Chance Cromer (.341 BA, seven doubles, 20 RBIs, and 20 stolen bases), Braiden Lamontagne (.291 BA, three triples, 27 stolen bases, and 25 RBIs), and Tony Myres (.300 BA, six RBIs).

"Chance has developed into our vocal leader from the shortstop position and also leads by example in everything he does. He's one of the hardest-working kids I have ever coached. Chance has a sweet lefty swing and is a lockdown defender," Weathermon said. "Braiden is the most physically gifted player I have had the privilege to coach. He will lead our outfield and has really

improved his game at the plate and on the mound. He will leave this spring as one of the best overall players in the entire state.

"Tony climbed into a starting second base role a little into our season last year and never looked back. He kept getting big hits in important moments and played lockdown defense. He has grown a ton and has more potential than most kids his age. I'm super excited to watch him play in the middle infield and raise his spot in our lineup this season."

Other key players Lebanon is looking to rely upon this season are Blake Deckard (P), who missed the entire 2023 season with an injury, Javen Wells, Griffin Jones, Austin Garrison, Bronsen Rhoades, Isaac Hillhouse, Chris Kilburn, Eli Graham, Cole Milliken, Mason Hendricks, Brody Shoemaker, and Aaron Graham.

"We are looking to have a successful season in Lebanon this baseball season," explained

Weathermon. "We have had tremendous buy-in for development in our program, and the growth from our players has been phenomenal. We will lean on our strengths during the game and try to find ways to emphasize our brand of baseball. We will be a good defensive team, look to be aggressive on the bases, and find ways to be extremely competitive on the pitcher's mound. If we can find ways to improve ourselves daily, we will be a tough team to compete with come district time.

"These kids are motivated, looking stronger, and are excited for the baseball season to come here fast. We are lucky to be blessed with the best assistant coaching staff in the state and are really looking forward to growing together as a team."

Lebanon will have a Jamboree at Marshfield on March 8 against Marshfield and Marion C. Early. They open their season up at home on March 15 against Light-house Christian.

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SOCCER

ALEX BOYER
JACKET NATION SPORTS

The Lebanon High School girls' soccer team is coming off a 2023 season where the Lady 'Jackets finished 10-16 in head coach Jacob Woolsey's first year.

It was a season that Lebanon faced seven losses that were decided by a single goal.

"With this being my second season coach, I feel better prepared to make and fix the decisions during the game," said Woolsey. "I was very proud of our girls and their dedication to excellence on and off the field."

Lebanon said goodbye to four key seniors in Sydney Wilson, Jaidyn Collins, Jayden Piercy, and Chloe Shearer after a loss to Marquette in the first round of the Class 4 District 4 tournament.

Below are key returners for the season with an excerpt from Woolsey:

Mahayla Smith, junior midfielder- Played a crucial role in our offensive strategy last season. Her ability to control the midfield and create scoring opportunities was instrumental

in our attack, showcasing her exceptional skills and understanding of the game. Her presence on the field significantly contributed to the team's overall performance, making her an invaluable asset to our squad.

Destiny Stokes, senior defender- A three-year varsity stalwart, has been a foundational element of our defense for several seasons. Her consistent performance and leadership on the back line have been pivotal in maintaining our team's defensive integrity. Destiny's experience and tactical understanding have made her an indispensable part of our squad, providing stability and inspiration to her teammates. Her contribution over the years has left an indelible mark on our team's ethos and success.

Addy Collins, senior midfielder- With three years of varsity experience, has been a dynamic force in our midfield. Her exceptional touch and speed with the ball have been key to creating numerous scoring opportunities for our team. Addy's ability to navigate through tight spaces and deliver pre-

cise passes has made her an instrumental part of our attacking strategy. Her contributions have not only been vital in setting up goals but also in maintaining the flow and tempo of our gameplay. Addy's talent and dedication have greatly enhanced our offensive capabilities, making her a standout player in our lineup.

Jenna Rosen, senior defender- Jenna Rosen, our senior defender, has been exemplary both on and off the field. Her consistency in performance has been matched by her unwavering positive attitude towards her teammates. Jenna's reliability in defense has provided a solid foundation for our team, while her optimistic presence has been a source of motivation and team spirit. Her ability to maintain high standards in her play, coupled with her supportive nature, has made Jenna a beloved and respected figure within our squad. Her contributions go beyond just defense, enriching the team's environment and fostering a culture of positivity and resilience.

Zylynn Dozier, junior forward- Possesses a remarkable knack for advancing the ball towards the goal, a testament to her relentless



Photo Courtesy of Alex Boyer (Jacket Nation Sports)

determination and exceptional work ethic. Her innate ability to consistently position herself where the action is reflects her proactive approach to the game. Zylynn's "never give up" attitude is evident in every match, driving her to pursue every opportunity and challenge with unwavering intensity. This combination of natural talent and steadfast dedication not only makes her a formidable presence on the offensive front but also serves

as an inspiration to her teammates. Zylynn's contributions are crucial to our team's dynamics, showcasing the power of perseverance and hard work in achieving success.

Woolsey mentioned more than 30 girls showed up to tryouts and he is excited about the newcomers coming to the pitch this spring.

"Our team's success this season hinges on a unique combination of diverse skill sets, strong team chemistry, tactical

intelligence, unwavering work ethic, defensive solidity, creative offensive strategies, and impactful leadership," mentioned Woolsey. "These elements not only define our team's identity but also equip us with the tools necessary to face and overcome the challenges ahead."

Lebanon will host a Jamboree at 'Jacket Stadium on March 8 with Marshfield, Crocker, and Bolivar.



BASEBALL

STEVE SMITH
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Stoutland's baseball team is looking for strong pitching this year, according to baseball coach Joe Nicholson.

"We have two seniors, Creed Matthews

and Justin Crabtree. They are one and two on our pitching staff," he said. "Our season will go how they go and both of them had arm injuries in the fall, so they didn't get to pitch a lot but both of them seem to be over that and doing well. If

they stay healthy, we should have a pretty decent season."

Nicholson is also looking for big things from freshman Brodie Millsap. "He's probably our third pitcher and he also is a first baseman," he said. "The second baseman will be Devin Barnwell, he will be a junior. The fall was the

first time he started. Defensively, he had a really good fall. His bat's starting to come around in practice, so I expect him to have a pretty good spring."

Nicholson said at shortstop will be Crabtree or Matthews, whichever one is not pitching.

"They both do short-

stop and pitching," Nicholson said. "Riley Bench is a freshman. He'll be at third and he had a really good fall defensively as well," he said.

Junior Will Morrow will be the catcher.

"He's been a really strong player offensively," according to Nicholson.

Junior Aaron Franklin will be the team's centerfielder and he is "extremely quick on the bases," Nicholson said.

Nicholson also noted David Millsap, the Laclede County Sheriff, is a new assistant coach for the team this year. Brodie Millsap is his grandson.

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