

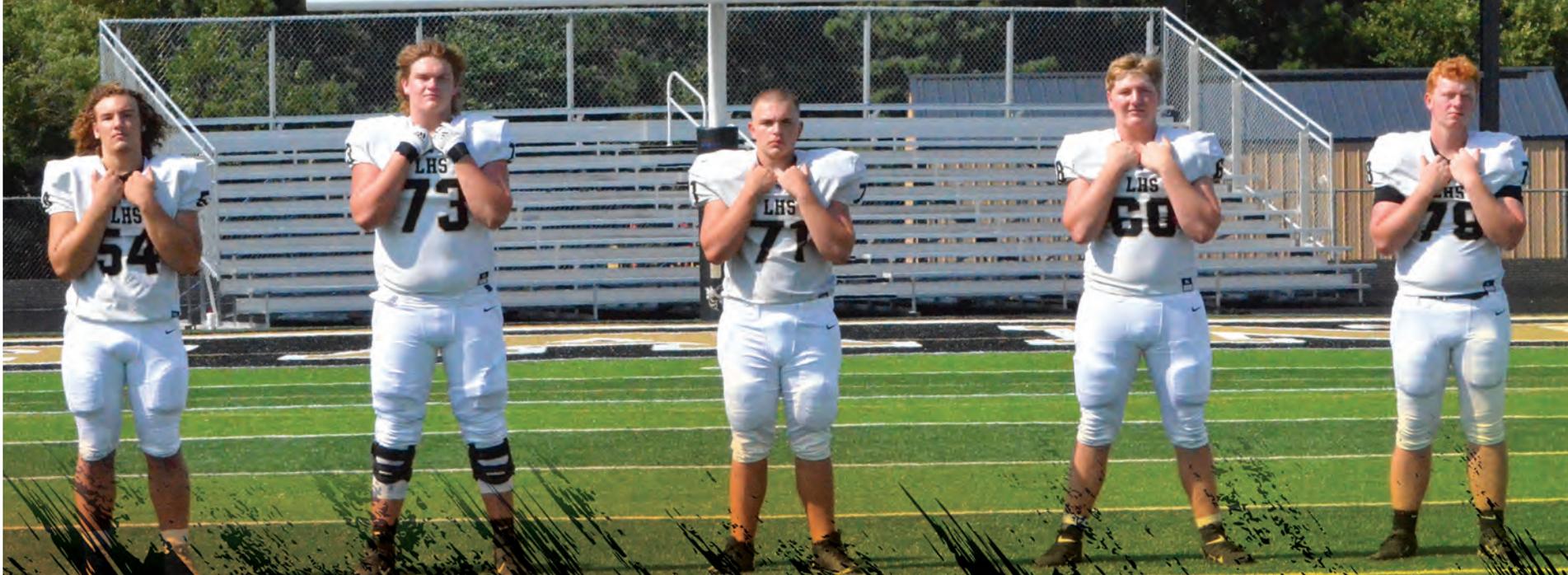
# Fall Sports

# Buzz



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Fall 2021 Edition

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# Lady 'Jacket tennis leans on deep roster

ALEX BOYER

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The Lebanon Lady Yellowjackets tennis team returns to the court this fall after having another solid season last fall, finishing with a record of 8-11.

They return some of their lineup from their 2020 season, and head coach Ron Crowell is excited to see what this year brings.

"We had a very young group last year, so going in, I wasn't sure how we were going to do truthfully," Crowell said.

After losing their top two players in the 2020 graduating class (Haley McBride and Jasmine White), Crowell said he is looking forward to the season after getting a year of experience under their belt for their young team.

See 'TENNIS' / page 3



LCR photo/Alex Boyer

**Pictured is the 2021** Lebanon High School girls' tennis team. In the front row, from left, are Ashlyn Weddle, Caylie Helton, Haven Segabarth, Autumn Caley, Amelia Norris, Adali Hendrix, Olivia McGruder, Opal Antoszewski, and Abi Simmonds. In the second row, from left, are Mary Oberdieck, Aubrey Popes, Eliana Richards, Kelsey Daugherty, Carly Miller, Alia Barker, Emma Davis, Scarlette Anderson, Abby Cones, Brooklyn Arthur, Destiny Stokes, Bailey Lowrance, and Halle Twenter. In the third row, from left, are Reagan Tucker, Hannah Lane, Payton Fuller, Kendall Brown, Audrey Dow, Gracie Uder, Emma Blair, and Paityn Hudson. In the back row, from left, are Haylei Hash, Hannah Henson and Abbey Twenter.

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## Tennis

from page 2



Lebanon senior Abbey Twenter attempts a volley during a high school girls' tennis match in 2020.

Lebanon will have some holes to fill in their lineup when they take the court this year.

Crowell also said that he sees 16 players who could make their way into the top six through the first few weeks of practice.

Lebanon returns seniors Abbey Twenter, and Hannah Henson, who Crowell said are both outstanding players.

"Abbey and Hannah have been really focused on becoming better players," he said. "They both are great leaders and are always trying to find ways to motivate their teammates, and I am excited to see how they perform this year."

Emma Blair and Grace Uder

are coming back for the Lady 'Jackets again this season, and Crowell said they have looked great through the first few weeks of practice.

Payton Fuller ended last season in the No. 6 position for Lebanon the previous fall and finished the year with a win at the district tournament.

Crowell also spoke of the team's young nucleus this year, which is always nice to have.

"Haven Segabarth is a freshman whose skill level is really high," he said. "I think she will factor in there somehow."

"She is dedicated to the game and is always willing to get better. I am excited to see her over the next four years."

After coaching the team for several seasons, Crowell said this team gets along great and it makes them closer.

"They all are friends and get along so well," he said. "They are all dedicated to getting better and showed up to a lot of stuff this summer to make sure they were ready for the start of the season."

"Our goals are to beat our rivals (Camdenton, Rolla, and Waynesville), have a winning record at home, and do well in tournaments. This is a special group of girls."

The team looks to get off to a solid start to the 2021 season when they travel to Jefferson City to compete in a tournament Friday, Aug. 27.

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# LEBANON VOLLEYBALL SEEKS DISTRICT TITLE

**ALEX BOYER**

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A year after losing a heartbreaking match in the Missouri Class 5 District 10 finals to the Central Bulldogs, the Lebanon High School volleyball team is hoping to bounce back in a big way in 2021.

Head coach Jenny Collins will lead the Lady 'Jackets for another strong season after graduating just one senior in Sydney Leake and winning 13 games.

"This group of seniors has been playing volleyball together for a long time and not just in-season ball, but through Club Synergy as well," she said. "By playing together, this has allowed them to build trust amongst each other.

"Four out of the five seniors are three-sport athletes, and through all of these sports experiences, they have become very mentally tough individuals who don't give up with struggle or through frustration. They don't feel sorry for themselves and figure out what they need to do to keep pressing forward and reach their goals."

The team will be led by a key senior class including Myah Hough, Chloe Shivers, Jocce Pettyjohn, Destiny Zimdars, and Karagan Bean.

"Myah competes strongly in all aspects on the floor," Collins said of the senior. "She is a defensive machine and is showing that she will be a force on the front row. She loves the game and loves to compete, and you can see that from her every time she steps on the court. Chloe is an intelligent player who makes much of her setting job and front row job look effortless. She is consistent in her play and can be counted on to make great choices while on the floor. Jocce takes great pride in her defensive role and is a relentless defender. In serve receive, she gives our setters great opportunities to set the hitters up for success.

"Destiny Zimdars and Karagan Bean at 6-foot will be our twin towers out of the middle and will help put up a solid block along with their offensive play. They are both very different hitters out of the middle, which makes them a little tougher to defend."

Junior Jaidyn Collins will be a key returner this

fall and help set opposite of Shivers.

"She has the ability to make quick split-second decisions on the court, helping to deliver a good ball based on position of pass and available hitters," said Collins.

Junior Chava Yevsa is primarily seeing action from the right side, and fans should get to become acquainted with freshman Addy Rebmann. She is expected to see plenty of time at the varsity level.

"Chava has worked very hard in the offseason to improve blocker to hitter transitions, and this will give her more opportunities to be a utilized hitter," mentioned Collins. "Addy has shown through our summer and club ball play that she is a huge impact offensively for our team. She is the girl from a young age that would be found at her brother's wrestling tournaments or following her Dad (head track coach) around on the track with a volleyball in her hand. If she couldn't find a partner, she found a wall. She is a studier of the game and loves high-level competition."

See 'VOLLEYBALL' / page 5

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*Chloe Shivers*

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LCR photo/Alex Boyer

**Pictured is the 2021** Lebanon High School volleyball team. Pictured in the front row, from left, are Jenna Rosen, Saylor Helton, Raylee Quick, Addy Collins, Kaylee Uder, Jocee Pettyjohn, Chloe Shivers, and Keelie Mahan. In the middle row, from left, are Myah Hough, Shelby Halstead, Nicole Winfrey, Morgan Durbin, Ella Goforth, Sadie Douglas, Jaidyn Collins, Arianna Thomas, and Lexi Hash. In the back row, from left, are Kaidynce Buttram, Chava Yevsa, Addy Rebmman, Destiny Zimdars, Karagan Bean, Brandi Leifer, Macy Offut, Michaela Wehner, Ciaria Keeney and Jordan Lester.

## Volleyball

from page 4

Collins also said that Addy Collins, Ciaria Keeney, and Saylor Helton have experienced varsity time and shown grit and fearless determination.

The strengths of the team are chemistry more than anything in 2021.

"I love that this team genuinely seems to enjoy their time together both on and off the court," Collins said. "They can laugh and keep the mood light and at the same time know when it is time to flip the switch and become a focused competitor. Many of these girls want to be coached, and they accept challenges and tackle them head-on."

"While we have seen some success early on through our summer league competitions, we know we have much work to do. Continuing to work communication efforts while on the court will be key."

The team is scheduled to play in their Jamboree at 6 p.m. on August 25 at Central High School.

Lebanon will begin their season on Saturday, August 28, at the Branson tournament. The home opener is Thursday, September 2, against the Branson Pirates in non-conference action.

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## LEBANON SOCCER LOOKS TO CARRY ON PROGRAM SUCCESS

**ALEX BOYER**  
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The Lebanon High School boys' soccer program had a record-setting year in 2020, and it will be a season that fans remember for as long as they can.

The Yellowjackets set records for wins in a season (17) and captured the program's first district championship with a 3-1 win over the Rolla Bulldogs.

Lebanon graduated ten seniors from the championship team, and head coach Matt Jernigan knows those will be hard shoes to fill.

"They are a great group not just on the field, but off the field," he said of the 2020 group. "They are best friends and always want to get better. We had several with opportunities to play college soccer, so it just shows the talent they had.

"It is going to be weird not having

that group who has played varsity three or four years, but we are ready to get back to it."

In the graduating class was forward Zach Richards, arguably the program's most talented player of all time.

Richards committed to Central Methodist to continue his career. During the 2020 season, he scored 41 goals, tallied 11 assists, and was named to the Class 3 All-State team, Class 3 All-Region, and was the Ozark Conference co-player of the year.

Other key seniors included Luis Vasquez, Cameron Fisher, Angel Pedroza, Evan Rogers, Austin Barber, and Eli Myers.

Returning to the pitch this fall will be senior captains Quinton Doughty and Ryder Rhoades.

Doughty is a midfielder who netted nine goals in 2020 and was named

to the All-OC second team. Rhoades scored six goals and was All-OC honorable mention.

"Quinton is a great scorer, and we will be looking to him a lot this season," Jernigan said. "He has been playing club in the offseason and has improved his game a lot. He is getting college looks and will be a key for us this year.

"Ryder is a versatile player who we will look to fill many roles this year. Ryder is one of the smartest players I have ever coached and a great leader. He knows the game so well and is ready to take the next step for our team."

The team also brings back junior goalkeeper Clayton Frazier who won a goalie battle his sophomore season, to take over the position full-time.

"Clayton has played a ton of soccer with his family being a soccer family,"

said Jernigan. "He knows the game well, and I thought he did a great job of competing at the varsity level as a sophomore. He earned the spot last year, and he kept us in a lot of games last year.

"He has grown a little bit, and that always helps between the pipes."

Other veteran players expected to contribute are Logan Durbin, Dylan Jamieson, and Kaden Hooper.

"Logan is our lone returning varsity player in the defense," said Jernigan. "He will be looked at to be vocal in the defense and lead our younger players back there.

"Dylan has been a swing player for us and will be looked at this season to step into a varsity role. Kaden played some varsity for us last year and has a great feel for the game in the midfield."

See 'SOCCER' / page 7



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Photo by Marc Fisher (CreationServices)

Pictured is the 2021 Lebanon High School boys' soccer team. The Yellowjackets captured the program's first district championship last fall.

## Soccer \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ from page 6

Jernigan mentioned a handful of newcomers who are expected to see varsity time, including Ethan Fisher, freshman, defender; Noah Anderson, freshman, midfielder/forward; Brock Piercy, freshman, midfielder; Jeremiah Rivera, freshman, defender; Trevor Meints, junior, defender; and Caden Morris, junior, midfielder.

"Noah is a very skilled freshman and reminds me of Quinton (Doughty) at that age," mentioned Jernigan. "Ethan (Fisher) is the younger brother of Cameron (Fisher), and there are several others like Brock (Piercy) who we will probably rely on."

The team will kick off their season with their home tournament on Friday, Aug. 27, and August 28. Their first home game will be on Tuesday, Aug. 31, against Glendale.

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# LEBANON SWIM TEAM EXCITED FOR SEASON

**ALEX BOYER**

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Head coach David Krev is entering his fourth season leading the Lebanon High School boys' swim team, and the Yellowjackets are hoping for a big season in 2021.

Before the season started, Krev knew he wanted to make this season a little more challenging than in years past with an experienced group returning to the pool.

"I put us in more meets this year," he stated. "I think this group is pretty experienced, and we are excited to see how they perform this year."

Out of eight swimmers last year, the team lost two this year but picked up two new swimmers in Noah and Avery Long, who Krev is



LCR photo/Alex Boyer

**Pictured is the 2021 Lebanon High School boys' swim team.** In the front row, from left, are Reed Danek, Avery Long, Dakota Windsor and Greg Keen. In the back row, from left, are Matthew Wall, Trystan Presley and Noah Long.

extremely excited about.

"One of the brothers was home-schooled, and they decided they

wanted to swim and will complete the courses they have to take to become eligible," he mentioned.

"Noah will be a senior, and Avery is a sophomore."

The team also returns experience in senior Dakota Windsor, Greg Keen, Reed Danek, Trystan Presley, and Matt Wall.

"Last year, we qualified for state as a team," Krev said. "I expect the relays to all qualify again this year, too. We have some great swimmers."

The 200 IM relays, 50 free, fly, back, breaststroke, and the other relay events will be the strong suit for the team, but the challenging thing is, swimmers can only pick two events.

"That is the coach's nightmare," Krev said about the event limit. "We have swimmers at all events, but some of our guys we have to pick and choose wisely what events they swim."

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## Coach Rob Selander takes over LHS softball

**ALEX BOYER**  
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Coming off an 18-9 finish in 2020, expectations are high for the Lebanon High School softball team as the program returns a host of talented performers from a squad that went 7-2 in Ozark Conference play.

The Yellowjackets lose just two seniors, but will also be replacing former head coach Stan Crum, who announced his retirement in early May after five seasons at LHS.

He will be replaced by head coach Rob Selander, who was most recently the head coach at Climax Springs and before that Stoutland.

"We have a lot of returning starters," Lebanon head coach Rob Selander said.

See 'SOFTBALL' / page 22



LCR photo/Alex Boyer

**Pictured is the 2021** Lebanon High School softball team. Pictured in the front row, from left, are Kaylee Johnston, Peyton Jewell, Makayla Dawson, Cailyn Willbanks, Kendall Bybee, Andrea Whitten, and Giannah Waterman. In the middle row, from left, are Cameron Compton, Brooklyn O'Cain, Neva King, Kaylee Howerton, Gracie Gilbey, Halea Bartel, and Kyla Boggs. In the back row, from left, are coach Jade Robinett, Katie Schneider, Kamryn Luthy, McKinley Rodden, Gracie Waterman, Raegan McCowan, Taylor Rodden, Bailey McDermott and coach Rob Selander.

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# LADY 'JACKETS HOPING FOR SUCCESS ON GOLF LINKS

ALEX BOYER

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The Lebanon High School girls' golf team sent their first golfer to the MSH-SAA State championships last season for the first time in recent memory in senior Jalynn Allen.

Allen placed tied for 63rd with a score of 219 through the two-day tournament and will be the leader of the team in 2021, according to head coach Lindsay Darnell.

"It was my first state qualifier since I have been coaching, so that was pretty neat," she said. "She is going to do well this year, and I think she has a chance to place at state this year."

Senior Kendra Peltzer is also another player to keep an eye out for this year.

See 'GOLF' / page 11



LCR photo/Alex Boyer

**Pictured is the 2021 Lebanon High School girls' golf team.** In the front row, from left, are Jaila Thompson, Tessa Kremer, Emma Hough, Donna Riffle, and Katie Hopkins. In the back row, from left, are Jalynn Allen, Kendra Peltzer, Abby Goodwin, and coach Lindsay Darnell. Not pictured is Maddie Carr, Libbee Hays and Lindsey Bonnette.

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## Golf

from page 10

"I think she (Peltzer) has a good chance of going to state, too," Darnell said. "She practices hard, and she and Jalynn practice a lot together."

"Jalynn is consistent and has had a lot of lessons. She takes it seriously and had some college visits, and her long game is amazing. Kendra is consistent, too. Her short game is good, and they both have made golf a priority."

The team also welcomes a handful of new players this season, but Darnell said Libbee Hays and Maddie Carr have transitioned from volleyball to golf and should make an impact.

"They are hard workers and have solid swings," she said.

"I think they are athletic girls, and I potentially think they can be a part of our varsity because they are showing a lot of potential."

Senior Donna Riffle has been a key contributor in years past, and Darnell said she is hoping she has a solid senior season.

With many newcomers, Darnell is trying to show them the basic fundamentals of golf.

"We have focused in on their short game because that's where a lot of strokes are lost on the course," she stated. "We just want them to build a passion for a sport that they can play for a lifetime."

Lebanon will open up its season at home on August 30 at GreatLife Golf.



LCR photo/Alex Boyer

**Pictured are the 2021 Lebanon High School girls' golf seniors.** From left, are Jaylynn Allen, Kendra Peltzer, and Donna Riffle.

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*Photo courtesy of Marc Fisher (CreationServices)*

**Pictured is the 2021 Lebanon High School football team.** Pictured is the 2021 Lebanon High School football team. In the front row, from left are Drew Truelove, Dax Long, Zack Rose, Andrew Dent, Collin Wilson, Heeger Huft, Walker Smith, Cade Muscia, Benjamin Cluck, Terrence Jones, Richard McCoughney, and Ryan Heinrichs. In the second row, from left, are Tristan Wilson, Sam Cooper, Tim Pruitt, Caden Brown, Jayden Hubler, Thomas Howe, Thomas Wrinkle, Zack Smith, Brandon Hutson, Preston Ellingson, Sam Haney, Griffin Jones, and Sam Henson. In the third row, from left, are Wyatt Schumate, Benjamin Cluck, Jonas Welch, Elijah Elliott, Mariyah Brumley, Nathan Bartell, Logan Lybarger, Max Groce, Austin Hendrix, Hoyt Honey, Drew Shadel, Gunner Williams, and Ty O'Neil. In the fourth row, from left, are coach Marc Whitacre, coach Ben Nail, coach Austin Knight, coach Chris Britt, coach Dalton Pierce, coach Connor Hicks, coach Garrett Childers, coach Zack Miller, coach Will Christian, coach Kurtis Allen, coach Brian Sommerer, coach Dalton Shaddy, coach Tobyn Lybarger, and coach Garett Wade. In the fifth row, from left, are Ethan Faircloth, Griffin Jones, Sean King, Thomas Howe, Quinton Doughty, Hager Huft, Drew Bowling, Gavin Smith, Jacoby Fultz, Dathan Durbin, Joseph Tietze, and manager Ethan Greenwood. In the back row, from left, are Jonas Welch, JC Well, Jacob Wells, Kaleb Nail, Jarrett Sing, Justin Dameron, Peyton Mitchell, Jesiah Mebruer, and Jax Glendenning.

# Football aiming for fourth district title in five years

**ALEX BOYER**

ALEX@LACLEDERECORD.COM

The Lebanon football team has been on a roll in recent years, and they recently captured their third district title in four years after a 52-18 win over the Glendale Falcons in 2020.

After a state quarterfinal loss to the Webb City Cardinals, the team will be hoping to repeat success this season.

The Yellowjackets said goodbye to a handful of impact players, including Garrett Childers, Cordell Zebel, Isaac Ledbetter, Antonio Rogers, and Drew McBride.

Childers, Ledbetter, and Zebel were first-team All-Ozark Conference selections, but per usual, Lebanon will be reloaded all over the field.

“(We are) returning a nice group of kids who have experienced three district championships in the last four years,” head coach Will Christian said.

See 'FOOTBALL' / page 15



Lebanon junior Nathan Bartell runs the ball during the 2020 football season. He is expected to see a jump in carries this fall. LCR file photo/Alex Boyer

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## Football

from page 14



LCR file photo/Alex Boyer

Lebanon senior **Tristan Wilson** rushes the quarterback during a week one game against the Hillcrest Hornets in 2020. Wilson is a Mizzou football commit.

“Expectations remain high, and we will need to have a great spring and summer of hard work to put ourselves in a spot to be where we want to be when it comes November.”

Starting on the offensive side of the ball, Lebanon will be led by All-State senior offensive lineman **Tristan Wilson**. Wilson, a 6-foot-5 right guard, verbally committed to Mizzou towards the end of the school year after holding Division I offers from schools all across the country.

Joining Wilson on the offensive line will be seniors **Tim Pruitt**, **Zack Smith**, and **Caden Brown**.

“Tristan Wilson has looked absolutely dominant, as to be expected, I guess,” Christian said. “Zack Smith at left guard was very good this summer, Caden Brown at right tackle is an animal, and we aren’t surprised by that, and our offensive line overall is

a strength.”

This season, senior **Peyton Mitchell** returns under center for the ‘Jackets after completing nine passes for 283 yards and two touchdowns last year. He also rushed for 233 yards and played nine games.

“I thought Peyton (Mitchell) looked good and distributes the ball well. He is a winner and is that guy,” Christian mentioned. “He is a guy we rely on to lead this team, and I am ready to see him in the second season as the starter.”

This fall, **Nathan Bartel** will take the majority of the carries after a stellar sophomore season where he rushed 61 times for 668 yards (10.9 YPC) and nine touchdowns.

Junior **Jacoby Fultz**, senior **Logan Lybarger**, and junior **Cade Muscia** are other options at full back and slots this season.

“Nathan Bartel is a beast, and Jacoby Fultz moved from receiver to slot, and he will catch the fan base’s eye pretty fast,” said Christian. “Logan and Cade will take over the fullback spots and start at linebackers.”

Senior **Drew Truelove** has had a great summer and should see some targets as the No. 1 receiver.

On defense, senior **Zack Rose** and **Sam Cooper** will be key components to the defensive line. Rose saw time as a junior on the line and had 17 solo tackles and 14 assists.

See ‘FOOTBALL’/ page 23



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## LHS cross country team hoping for big fall

**ALEX BOYER**

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The Lebanon High School cross country team returns lots of depth on the girls' side, but the team said goodbye to three state qualifiers on the boys' side (Angel Pedroza, Luis Vasquez, and Josh Zachary).

In 2020, Vasquez placed 105th, Zachary was 125th, and Pedroza finished 143rd under head coach Josh Smith.

"Our guys' team is mostly freshmen and sophomores right now, so we lost a lot of leadership and great athletes," he said.

Smith said the boys' team has had runners step up this summer in Trey Alley, Davis Joiner, and Ryan Cole.

"These are guys that weren't even around the program last year," he said.

Other vital runners include senior



LCR photo/Alex Boyer

Pictured is the 2021 Lebanon High School cross country team.

Ayden Carr, sophomore Kelby Conner, sophomore Ethan Jones, and junior Chris Wadley, who Smith expects to step up and perform well this fall.

"All of those guys will step up and perform well wherever we go," he

stated. "They just need a little bit of experience, but I am excited to see how it goes for them."

The girls' team is poised for a big season, with seniors Juliane Lopez and Myah Hough leading the way. The two

of them are state qualifiers in their career, and Smith expects big things from the dynamic duo.

Overall, the girls feature eight seniors who have great leadership abilities, per Smith.

Ella Johnson, Parker Anthony, Kaylyn Rogers, Maddie Jay, and Skyla Sien are some of the other runners who will be counted on for big performances this fall.

"Somebody asked me who my top runner was the other day, and I told them it really depends on the day," Smith laughed. "There isn't one that stands out above the rest, which is good because it means you have a lot of depth there."

Smith has also spent his time at LHS helping with the track team, and he said that both of these sports are great to combine with each other.

See 'XC' / page 23



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# BEARS BASEBALL HOPING TO REPLACE LARGE SENIOR CLASS

Conway finished the 2021 season with a 17-5 record and won the Summit Conference

**ALEX BOYER**

**ALEX@LACLEDERECORD.COM**

The Conway Bears finished the 2021 season with a 17-5 record and won the Summit Conference. The team said goodbye to seven key seniors, including Chase Caffey (now playing at NorthArk), Kason McBride, Kory McBride, Trey Earls, Jake Vestal, Tanner Simpson, and Ryan Dame.

This year, the team brings back two full-time starters, and head coach Clay Bilyeu said he expects this to be a rebuilding year for a team that has had plenty of success over the years during his time at the school.

Troy Replogle and Cade Archer are two key players that the Bears will rely on heavily in the fall and spring seasons.

"We expect both to hit in the top part of our order and to also be our top two arms on the mound," Bilyeu stated.

"They definitely have the ability to lead us to a successful season, but our ability to throw strikes consistently will be the biggest challenge.

"We also bring back Nathaniel Rice and Alton Mackey, who both had significant varsity experience

last year and who I think are both ready to make a significant contribution at the varsity level. We are hoping

that both will also be able to give us some big innings on the mound as well."

Bilyeu mentioned that the team's focus has been great, which is great to hear with a young group trying to play with varsity competition. They are determined to bolster their pitching staff in 2021 after losing a majority of their arms from last season, too.

"With a young and inexperienced group, we have really been trying to focus on fundamentals, and the small details that we think will give us an opportunity to be competitive," said Bilyeu. "We have thrown a lot at them, but they have responded well and have shown significant improvement every day."

"For us right now, it is trying to really get a feel for our pitching staff. We lost all but ten innings from the mound last year, and just making that jump from JV to varsity on the mound can sometimes be challenging."

The team will start their season with the Conway Fall Classic at 7:30 p.m. on Aug. 27 against Dixon.



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Submitted photo

The 2021 Conway baseball team poses for a picture after a recent practice.

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# CONWAY CROSS COUNTRY LOOKING TO REPLACE TALENTED RUNNERS

**ALEX BOYER**  
ALEX@LACLEDERECORD.COM

The Bears of Conway had a stellar cross country season in 2020. The team had three state qualifiers, and the girls' team missed qualifying for state by just a few points, according to head coach Andrew Lowery.

Lowery returns to the program after winning his home meet last season.

Trey Earls was a top runner for the team last year that finished most of the races in the top five and finished 15th to earn All-State honors. The group also said goodbye to Ethan Reid, Brooke Dill, and Emily Lewis.

"They had a big part on the team and were hard workers," Lowery said. "Emily and Brooke helped the girls' team with their hard work and determination to help the team have a good season."

Even with the graduates, Lowery still is holding high expectations for the group in 2021.

"I think the expectations are still pretty high. We would like for some runners to make it to state or even a team," he stated. "Then I think we have a good chance to win the conference meet for the boys and girls this year. The main thing is to keep setting personal bests and just improve our times."

On the girls' side, senior Maggie Sheets is someone who Lowery is expecting to take a huge step forward this year along with two-time state qualifier Gracie Vestal.

"She (Maggie) has been with our program since junior high and will look for some good leadership from and be the one to get everyone motivated," he said. "Gracie Vestal will

be our top girl runner and had a good track season for the team."

Some of the other girls returning from last year that he hopes to make an impact on the team are sophomore Maddy Officer, sophomore Trista Simpson, and junior Emily Twyman. They also have a freshmen group coming in that should help the girls' team do well, including Renee Bell, Quinncy Vestal, and Kendra Nail.

For the boys' team, junior Casey Vaughn has worked hard this summer to improve on time. Other key runners include Makiah White, Cooper Mullins, and senior Joseph Coryell. This fall, new runners out for the team are Quentin Herrera, Steven Vestal, Brixon Bilyeu, and Evan Peters.

"Quentin is a track runner that is coming to run XC and should make a big impact on the team with his poten-

tial to run well," Lowery mentioned. "Steven is one that has been running this summer and has made some big improvements already and will be an excellent addition to the team."

"Brixon and Evan are some freshmen that will be able to push the upperclassmen and be solid runners for the boys' team."

Lowery said the team has done well through the first few weeks of practice and is looking forward to putting in more miles and building the endurance up as they go along in the year.

"We basically have a month before our first race, so just get in shape and put in the work to start off on a good note to begin the season," he stated. "Then just keep improving from there."

The team's first meet will be on Sept. 4 at Strafford (Fellows Lake).

## 2021-2022 CROSS COUNTRY



Pictured is the 2021 Conway High School cross country team. In the front row, from left, are Evan Peters and Trista Simpson. In the middle row, from left, are Kendra Nail, Gracie Vestal, Quinncy Vestal, Maddy Officer, Maggie Sheets, Emily Twyman, and Renee Bell. In the back row, from left, are Anna Harper, Brixon Bilyeu, Steven Vestal, Andrew Terrell, Casey Vaughn, and Joseph Coryell.

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## CONWAY VOLLEYBALL COACH TAMMY BECKLER HOPING FOR 20 WINS IN 2021

**ALEX BOYER**  
ALEX@LACLEDERECORD.COM

The Conway volleyball team finished the year last fall with a 12-13-3 record after posting a 14-13-4 record in 2019.

This year, head coach Tammy Beckler is hoping for big things out of a team that struggled with quarantines and injuries.

The team also said goodbye to four-year starter and All-District performer Alexa Higbee, but that hasn't shown down expectations for Beckler.

"I expect our team to compete at a high level," she said. "We should be able to score off our offense. We have great defenders as well.

"We need a winning season of 20+ wins, and I'd like to go far in post-season play."

All-State performer Gibby Beckler is back with the team this year after

leading the team in kills (240) and assists (281). She was also second on the team in aces (38), blocks (20), and digs (271).

"Gibby studies the game. She loves learning strategies and absolutely despises losing. She is a kid that loves pressure situations and wants the ball. She encourages her teammates and doesn't want to be the center of attention. She is willing to play any position on the floor," Beckler said. "I don't want her to be satisfied with where she is at. I want her to play at a high-intensity level and push her team to excel in tight matches."

Other key players include Callie Cornelison, Breanna Thompson, and Katie Myers.

"I expect her (Cornelison) to step out of her comfort zone this season and cover more of the floor," Beckler stated.

See 'VOLLEYBALL' / page 22



Submitted photo

Pictured is the 2021 Conway varsity volleyball team. Head coach Tammy Beckler is expecting big things from the Lady Bears this fall.

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## Softball \_\_\_\_\_ from page 9

"Number-wise they are a good team. Record-wise they are a good team but we'll see how the transition from coach (Stan) Crum to myself. We have a little bit different style so it might take a bit for us to get rolling.

"But the main thing is we will be ready for district time."

The 'Jackets will feature one senior this fall, Katie Schneider — who can play infielder and pitch.

"She is a proven player and I got to watch some video of her from the travel ball scene and I'm excited to see what she does in a game," Selander said.

However, Selander otherwise opted not to discuss any specific players in his interview with The Laclede County Record.

"The big thing for any of the teams that Jade and I coach is to be a team," he said. "We don't care about individuals.

I'm really not going to pick out individuals for performance — it's all about a team for us.

"The team becoming a family and being positive — no negative, pouty, poop faces. It's all about being positive and learning from the bad and the good."

Selander said he is focused on improving the cohesiveness of the team as it prepares for its first game this fall as well as the mental aspects of the game.

"They're just not used to being one unit," Selander said. "There's no pointing fingers and it's all about confidence and the mental side of it. They all have the physical skills and I knew that coming in, but a championship team goes down a different road and that is what we are going to try to present to them—the mental side of the game and the preparation and just having a complete team effort."

## Volleyball \_\_\_\_\_ from page 21

"She's a silent leader, so she is working on playing with more energy and being more vocal. Thompson plays year-round sports, so she is much stronger and maturing by making smarter plays.

"Katie will be hitting outside and also setting. She is a fierce competitor and loves to be challenged."

Carlie Stark, Graceson Cromer, and Jamison Cromer are all players who will impact the program this fall.

"They have the ability and athleticism to help us in the front row and even some defense," Beckler said of the senior twins. "Carlie will see time as a setter and should help us a lot."

Beckler admitted the first week of practice was tough but was proud of the way her team responded.

"They worked extremely hard and kept asking for more," she said. "They have come into this season with the right mentality. They know it's their year to shine. Leaders are evolving, and they are really playing as a team.

"We've got to play better defense. We finally have a good group big enough to block, so we've got to focus on closing blocks so the back row can work around that better."

The team will kick off their Jamboree on Aug. 26 at Sparta. Their first home game will be against Mountain Grove on Aug. 31.



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## Football

from page 15

The linebackers will consist of Lybarger, Muscia, and sophomore Gunner Williams (DE/LB).

"Both of these guys (Rose and Cooper) have taken the next step and will be looked upon to stop the run and get pressure on the quarterback," mentioned Christian. "Lybarger and Muscia are beasts at linebacker, and we are excited to see what Gunner can bring on Friday nights after seeing some action last year on varsity."

In the secondary, sophomore Gavin Smith, senior Mason Farris, junior Jarrett Sing, junior Austin Hendrix, junior Andrew Dent, senior Max Groce, and many others will try to be on top of their games this fall.

In June, the team lifted in the mornings two or three times a

week, played in 7-on-7 games on a couple of Mondays, and traveled to Northwest Missouri State for a weekend team camp.

"We had two 7-on-7's and I was very pleased with our performance," Christian said. "Defensively, we had a lot of guys in that back-half that competed well. We have lots of decisions to make."

Lebanon competed against Buffalo, Eldorado Springs, Miller, Skyline, and Bolivar during the two events.

The JV and varsity teams were also gifted a surprise by First Baptist Church preachers Matt Taylor and Luke Winfrey as they provided players with new cleats to wear for the 2021 season.

"First of all, I am speaking for not only the players but also the

parents when I say we are incredibly grateful to First Baptist Church and to Matt (Taylor) and Luke (Winfrey) for providing the cleats for our program," stated Christian. "It will be a blessing to those parents and those kids."

"It isn't the only church that does fantastic things for this community. Our town has so many people that are giving. I have been here for 17 years, and we have a community that will give, but we appreciate the gift from First Baptist."

Lebanon will start their season on Aug. 20 with a Jamboree at Reeds Spring High School against Aurora, Reeds Spring, and Branson. The Yellowjackets' home opener will be at 7 p.m. on August 27 against the Hillcrest Hornets.

## XC

from page 17

"It is a different sport (cross country)," mentioned Smith. "Cross country is a little more mental toughness and little less speed work, but it prepares you for track."

Expectations won't change much for Smith heading into 2021, but he hopes to make a run with his girls' team.

"This group means the world to me, and we took a big trip to Colorado this summer because I knew I had the group to do it with," said Smith. "On the girls' side, they should qualify for state, and it hasn't been down since 2007. There is no limit to how good they can be."

"On the boys' side, they have potential, but we have to see how everyone fits in and turns out. They don't have a lot of varsity experience, but I think they will be okay."

The team will compete on Saturday, Sept. 4, at the SWCA meet in Bolivar. The home match will be Saturday, Sept. 11, at Nelson Park.



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