

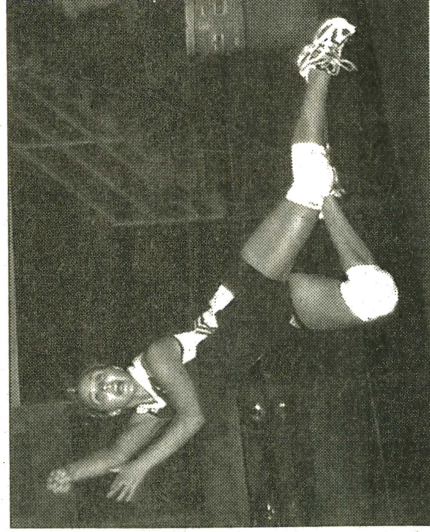
SPORTS

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 16, 2005 14

Winning fall sports season

Shallenberger said his team is focused on what it wants to accomplish as the postseason plows ahead.

"We've been in the playoffs a few years now," he said. "We know what it's about, and we



know what we've got to do if we want to play the next week."

Gher conceded that following last year's team was a tall order, but the optimistic and enthusiastic quarterback has more than fit the bill in succeeding sooner.

"We had to change our offense a little bit," said Gher. "We didn't pass as

much this year as we did last year. All I needed was varsity experience, (just) start throwing the ball and just become comfortable sitting in the pocket and completing some passes."

Surrounding Gher is a talented group of players including the aforementioned workhorse backs, receiver back, Tanner Robberstad, of the area's best kickers in Steven Fetzler and an offensive line that Shallenberger has said could be the most dominant ever to play at Mahomet-Seymour.

With the monkey of last year's team off its back quite some time ago, this year's football squad is highly focused on getting past Newton to end up at Memorial Stadium on Nov. 25.

Golf

If you were to ask M-S golf coach Nathan Mills at the start of the season if his team would qualify for the state golf meet at Bloomington in mid-October, he probably would have answered no.

In this instance, Mills surely loved being proved dead wrong.

After placing third in regional competition and advancing, Mills' team really picked up its play at sectionals, especially senior Cameron Heinö, who tied with Austin Urwiler for the day's best score at 76.

The team finished a surprising third place at sectionals, as Jacob Agnew and Shane Romine scored in the high 70s, followed by Dustin Clark and Pat Backer's impressive rounds in the low 80s.

According to Mills, his team's stellar play couldn't have come at a better moment in the season.

Of the sectional meet, Mills said, "We never could get four scores to score low in one day throughout the season and they did that day." The two-day state meet was held at the Den at Fox Creek in Bloomington and M-S ended up finishing 11th overall.

"Just getting to state was a great accomplishment," Mills said.

Mills said he was proud of his seniors' play, and looks forward to building upon the legacy they have left to the promising junior-varsity squad.

Girl's Cross Country

How talented is Bonnie Moxley's 2005 girls' cross country team?

Competition was so heavy for the top seven varsity spots this year that some very talented M-S runners, some of whom ran in varsity positions last year, were left watching on the sidelines.

Moxley said such a scenario was both wonderful and disheartening. Wonderful because of the plethora of talent, but frustrating because so many hardworking runners didn't get a chance to shine in meaningful competition during the season.

Led by freshman Amy Clawson, the girls' cross country team went to state for the third time in four years. In a field of over 300 runners at Peoria's Detweiller Park, Clawson finished 91st.

As a team, the Bulldogs placed 24th out of 30 teams, equaling their best team finish at state.

The success of this year's freshman runners at M-S was by no means a fluke.

"This particular group of girls did more summer running than any group of freshman I've ever had," Moxley said. "They came to the weight room, they were on the long runs all summer putting in the mileage and it shows."

Joining Clawson were Hannah Schaap and Jessica Butther, both of whom have been running competitively with Clawson since the sixth grade. Add freshman Amanda Rodriguez

and many other talented underclassmen to the mix and the girls' cross country team it M-S indeed looks promising for several years to come.

"I'm incredibly proud of them," Moxley said of her team's performance this fall, adding that not a single runner cared about who got the glory throughout the season.

Boys' Cross Country

The boys' cross country team also had a successful season, finishing third as a team at regionals and tying its highest ever postseason standing since moving to Class 2A. The team finished in third place in the Class 2A regionals last year as well.

Troy Pittman led the team with a sixth-place finish at regionals and a time of 16:25. Justin Sebens came in ninth for M-S at 16:39.

The Bulldogs' team score at

regionals was 9, behind Charleston (63) and Centennial (61).

Head coach Neal Garrison said at the start of the season that his team was in a developmental stage, and admitted it likely wouldn't dominate. Nevertheless, Garrison said his team had the potential to be one of the better teams in the area, which it was, and he set a team goal of having a successful outing at regionals, which it did.

Garrison's team failed to qualify for sectionals but it was still a tremendous year. And with lots of young runners and an solid senior class coming up, there are definitely high hopes for next year.

Volleyball

"From what I have heard," said volleyball head coach Genevieve O'Malley, "this is the best volleyball team Mahomet-Seymour has ever had."

The coach probably heard right. O'Malley, who has coached volleyball at M-S for three years led a talented group of girls to a 30-3 record.

M-S volleyball was undefeated in the Cornbelt Conference (14-0), won 25 straight matches and made it to the regional title game against a Centennial team that was itself exceptionally talented.

"We have had a ton of fun this year," O'Malley said. "Our team really enjoys, supports and cares about one another and this has had an impact on our play throughout the season. You can have all the talent in the world, but if the team has internal problems, you may not get too far."

Statistically, M-S had several area leaders on the team, including Rippy with 310 kills and 384 digs, Laura Morris with 95 blocks, Goddard with 40 aces, and Ruedi who contributed 666 assists.



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