

FOOTBALL FEVER 2019

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Altus begins first volleyball season with low expectations

BY RICK CARPENTER
rick@altustimes.com

As Altus High School opens its first-ever girls' volleyball season, Head Coach Maggie Sasse says she doesn't expect the team to win the state tournament in its first season, but she has some talented players who will probably win more games than expected.

Sasse has spent the first few weeks of practice, which began July 15, teaching the basic skills of serving, digging, setting and receiving the volleyball. At the same time, she has to teach them about rotation and how the high school game differs from physical education classes' volleyball.

With cross country and fast-pitch softball the only other girls' sports to compete

**Altus Lady Bulldogs
Varsity Volleyball Roster**

Faith Biddlecom
Kady Bowen
Teresa Brown
Abbie Harms
Taylor Johnson
Lexie Kelley
Hannah Pedersen
Bekka Stottman
Addison Stultz
Kaileigh Weaver

with in the fall, she had close to 100 girls sign up for the team. Now the team is down to about 93 players, but the new program will field three teams, varsity, junior varsity and ninth-grade teams. And she said some players haven't even practiced yet because of family vacations, summer camps and jobs.

By the time you read this,

the team will have opened with a scrimmage match at Clinton on Aug. 6. And they scrimmage Elgin tomorrow. And it's first game begins the regular season at home against Vernon Northside on Monday, Aug. 12.

The team schedule is still in a bit of flux because the announcement of having the volleyball program didn't come until late in the spring when most teams had already filled their schedules. Still, the teams are entered in three tournaments and 10 matches including three at home. Besides the opening day at home, the other home matches are against Tipton on Sept. 16 and against Lawton Christian on Sept. 30.

"We have a very young team filled with freshmen

SEE VOLLEYBALL, PAGE 3



Junior outside hitter Lexie Kelley practices passing the volleyball to a teammate during the beginning of practice in July.

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THE ALTUS TIMES

VOLLEYBALL
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

and sophomores,” Sasse said. “That allows us to build the program from the ground up.”
Even with saying that, she has a few juniors and seniors with talent she hopes to fully develop.
She pointed to Lexie Kelley, a junior, who has already developed into

a strong outside hitter. She said she has a lot of natural talent and, at 5’10”, stands as one of her tallest players.
Sasse also highlighted senior Rebekka Stottman, an outside hitter; Kaileigh Weaver, a junior defensive specialist; freshman setter Taylor Johnson; senior middle back Faith Bidlecom; sophomore right outside hitter Hannah Pederson; freshman setter

Kady Bowen and sophomore middle front blocker and hitter Addison Stulz.
Most of the players have never played on a high school volleyball team, as she said, but some who came here through Altus Air Force Base, have played in junior high.
Assisting Head Coach Sasse will be assistants Kelly Cox, Robert Garrison and Paul Loe. Cox will serve as assistant head

coach and head junior varsity coach. He retired from teaching and coaching in Missouri last year and moved back to Altus where he once taught and coached. He has experience coaching volleyball.
Garrison will serve as an assistant coach and head ninth grade coach. He has experience playing recreational team volleyball.
Sasse said late summer practices were beginning at 9 a.m. and most girls arrived by 8:30 a.m. to practice some of the skills they have been learning.
And while she said practices are focusing on the fundamentals of serving and hitting the ball correctly, she’s been impressed with how quickly they’re catching on. By the end of the season, she said, the team will be able to hold their own and may surprise some teams.

- Altus Lady Bulldogs Schedule
- Aug. 6 at Clinton Scrimmage — 9th - 4 p.m./JV - 5 p.m./V - 6 p.m.
 - Aug. 8 at Elgin Scrimmage Elgin — V - 4:30 p.m./JV - 5:30 p.m./9th - 6:30 p.m.
 - Aug. 12 vs. Vernon Northside — V - 3 p.m.
 - Aug. 15 at Snyder — 9th - 4 p.m./JV - 5 p.m./V - 7 p.m.
 - Aug. 17 at Tipton tournament — TBA
 - Aug. 20 at Lawton Christian — JV - 5 p.m. /V - 7 p.m.
 - Aug. 23-24 at Clinton Invitational — TBA
 - Aug. 29 at Harding Fine Arts — JV - 4:30 p.m./V - 5:30 p.m.
 - Sept. 16 vs. Tipton — 9th - 4 p.m./JV - 5 p.m./V - 7 p.m.
 - Sept. 17 vs. Erick — JV - 4:30 p.m./V - 6:30 p.m.
 - Sept. 19 at Weatherford — 9th - 4:30p.m./JV - 5:30 p.m./V - 7:30 p.m.
 - Sept. 23 at Erick — JV - 4:30 p.m./V - 6:30 p.m.
 - Sept. 26 at Elgin — 9th - 4 p.m./JV - 5 p.m./V - 7 p.m.
 - Sept. 28 at Mustang tournament — TBA
 - Sept. 30 vs. Lawton Christian — JV - 5 p.m./V - 7 p.m.
- NOTE: varsity teams play for the best three out of five games to win a match while junior varsity and ninth grade teams play the best two out of three games.



Freshman setter Taylor Johnson practices a serve during the opening workout sessions for the Altus High School Volleyball Team.

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Bethany Garrison, who was on the state-champion 4X400-meter relay team last year, is such a versatile runner, she can run anything from the 200 meters and hurdles to being the top returning cross country runner. Here she was competing in the 4X800-meter relay at Regionals last spring.

Boys cross country team loaded while girls rebuild

BY RICK CARPENTER
rick@altustimes.com

The Altus High School Bulldogs' boys' cross country team should be loaded this year with its only state qualifier, Calvin Wagoner, leading the team.

Wagoner gained confidence last year after qualifying for state. He finished 46th with a time of 18:14, his best time of the year. But he's coming back after being on the sixth place 4X800-meter relay team and placing 11th in the open 800-meter run where he ran 2:05 in the state track meeting in Moore in May.

Wagoner and his coach Rick Patterson know that cross country state championships are won in the summer by athletes who use the summer to build mileage to go into the season ahead of runners who start during team practices. Wagoner said he's been running once or twice a day during the summer and building to about 50 miles a week.

Using that same philosophy of training, junior Michael James, a number three cross country runner in 2018, used the cross country season to build a base for winning a state championship in track in the open 400-meters in 48.99 during his sopho-

more year. James was also on the 4X800 meter relay that finished sixth and the 4X400 relay that finished third in state.

Patterson also has back Justin Ortiz, a sophomore who won the Altus High School track meet as a freshman last year in the 3,200-meter run and was on the 4X800-meter relay at state. Other returning starters include seniors Macel Canterbury, Jona-thon Wathen and Rafael Ramos.

Two new runners came

in from Ohio including Taeve Elliot, 11th grade and his brother Tuck Elliot, ninth grade. Patterson said Taeve Elliot ran track last year but is in his first year of cross country. He's been keeping up with Wagoner in the early going of practices this year and shows promise.

Other incoming freshmen Nic Borghini and Carson Brooks-Petty are looking good early in the practice sessions. Practice

SEE **CROSS COUNTRY**, PAGE 5

Altus High School Cross Country Team Rosters

This is the roster for the Altus High School Boys' Cross Country Team as of Aug. 1. After each name is the grade the student is in.

Faust Alonzo, 10
Anthony Benitez, 12
Nicholas Borghini, 9
Caron Brooks-Petty, 9
Macel Canterbury, 12
Missael Castro, 10
Alan Chavez, 9
Chance Cushner, 9

Here is the roster for the Altus High School Girls' Cross Country Team as of Aug. 1, listed by name and grade:

Kylie Allemeier, 11
Allison Cope, 12
Kristen Farriar, 11
Bethany Garrison, 12

Mark Delos Santos, 11
Taeve Elliot, 11
Tuck Elliot, 9
Ronnie Estraca, 11
Brady Garman, 9
Michael James, 11
Aiden Kille, 10
Osmar Martinez, 11
Justin Ortiz, 10
Rafael Ramos, 12
Isaiah Sanchez, 9
Russell Starcher, 9
Calvin Wagoner, 12
Jonathan Wathen, 12

Zoe Grubaugh, 9
Sidney Hamm, 12
Montaya Harris, 10
Olivia James, 12
Celeste Jencks, 9
Mariah Maldonado, 9
Alexis Salazar, 11
Angel Willoughby, 11





Calvin Wagoner was the lone Altus High School qualifier for the state cross country meet last year. Here he won the Altus Invitational Track Meet in the 1,600-meter run. Wagoner qualified for state in the 4X800-meter relay and the 800-meter run last spring.



Justin Ortiz, left, won the 3,200 meter run at the Altus Invitational Track Meet last year as a freshman and should be a contender on this year's cross country team.

CROSS COUNTRY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

began on July 15.

One notable runner, Moses McCaskill is sitting out cross country this year and is reportedly working in the conditioning program. McCaskill placed fourth in the 200-meter dash at state last year and was on the relay teams that placed third in the 4X100-meter, 4X200-meter and 4X400-meter relays at state.

And while the boys' team appears loaded this year, the girls' team only returns one starter, Bethany Garrison, who was the number one runner for some meets for the Lady Bulldogs last year. She was a key runner that led the girls' 4X400-meter relay to a state title last year. Garrison, who ran multiple distances

Altus Cross Country Schedule

Aug. 31 at Duncan HS/JH — 8:15 a.m.
Sept. 6 at Elgin HS/JH — 10 a.m.
Sept. 13 at Cameron HS/JH — 9 a.m.
Sept. 20 at Anadarko, JH only — 9 a.m.
Sept. 21 at Norman, HS only — 9 a.m.
Sept. 28 at Edmond Santa Fe, HS only — Noon
Oct. 5 at Ardmore, HS only — 10 a.m.
Oct. 11 Altus HS/JH — 9:30 a.m.
Oct. 26 at Norman, HS only — TBA
Nov. 2 at Edmond Santa Fe, HS only — TBA

and even hurdle races in track, was also on the third-place 4X800-meter relay team that finished third at the state track meet.

Last year's other top runner, Cayden Beck-

ner, decided to go out for the swim team this year instead of running cross country. Beckner qualified for state as a freshman but was involved in a car accident that required her to sit out an entire track season her sophomore year. But, she qualified for the state track meet and placed 10th in the 3,200-meter run last spring with a time of 13:15.

Still, Patterson, who has built solid teams from the ground up before, has a dozen or more runner including Allison Cope, a senior who ran track for the first time last spring, and Kylie Allemeier, a junior. Olivia James, Michael James' older sister, is a senior who is also on the team.

Patterson will know more about his team after the first meet at Duncan High School on Saturday, Aug. 31.

Experience is key for Lady Bulldogs' softball

BY RYAN LEWIS
ryan@altustimes.com

There is both uncertainty and a certain amount of confidence for coach Ricky Bull as he and the Lady Bulldogs prepare to enter the 2019 softball season.

On the one hand, Bull will be without star pitcher, hitter and softball extraordinaire Kaylen Carroll. On the other, Bull returns eight starters, five of which have been three-year starters for the Lady Bulldogs.

Returning that many players puts the Lady Bulldogs in a good position, and Bull said one thing is certain, "we won't be able to use lack of experience as an excuse for

anything."

Bull is hoping that experience will generate wins for a team he said is solid in nearly every position.

At the pitcher position, Bull expects Brooke Hill and Whitley Townsend to pitch most of the innings for the team, but he said two freshmen pitchers might compete for time in the circle.

"Jayce Foster and Chloe Hill," Bull said, "have really impressed me. We still don't have that type of pitcher who can go out and strike out a bunch of people, but having said that, this is far and away more pitching depth than we've had in the years I've been here. So, that's a good thing."

That pitching depth will

help alleviate fatigue and give Bull options.

Should the pitching present a problem, Bull said he's confident in the team's defense to keep opponents in check, especially in the outfield.

Alana Lopez is a three-year starter in left field, and Annie Petzold is a three-year starter in center field. Lakysia Johnson will start in right field.

Bull said his confidence in his three outfielders is unwavering.

"All three can run really well," Bull said, "and I feel confident if they get to a ball that's in the air, they're going to catch it. If there are balls hit to the fence, they've got the speed to get to them and make a play. That's a big



Rick Carpenter | Altus Times

Aubri Hughes (21) is one of the players coach Ricky Bull expects to have a big season.

asset in softball, especially when you don't have that power pitcher that can limit the number of balls going to the outfield."

Not every hit is going to

travel to the outfield, and for the ones that don't, the Lady Bulldogs have playmakers on the infield, as well.

Brianna McQuiggan

will start at shortstop, and Aubri Hughes will start at second. Both can shut down any balls up the

SEE **SOFTBALL**, PAGE 7



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Emily Hughes (2) earned All-District honors in her first season as a Lady Bulldog. Hughes is expected to have another big season.

Rick Carpenter | Altus Times



SOFTBALL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

middle and make a play at first which Bull said is essential in softball and baseball at any level. As for hitting, Carroll was a player whose production cannot be replaced. Bull said she did it all for the team, leading the Lady Bulldogs in home runs, RBIs and batting average. But, Bull said there are a few players he is looking for to step in as Altus’ power hitters.

“Brooke, Jerzey [Ybarra] and Star [Sims],” Bull said, “all have power. They’re the ones capable of hitting the long ball. Most of the girls are good contact hitters, and several have good speed. For use, just hitting the ball hard and making sure we get it in play, we have a pretty good chance of getting on base.”

Bull said several of the team’s returning players hit between .300 and .400 last year, and he expects them to do as well as or better than last season.

Emily Hughes is just one of the players he has high expectations for this season.

Hughes took over as the

Lady Bulldogs Softball Schedule

Aug. 13 at Lawton Ike — 5 p.m.
Aug. 15-17 at El Reno tournament — TBA
Aug. 19 at Cache — 4:30 p.m.
Aug. 22 vs. Duncan — 5 p.m.
Aug. 27 vs. Lawton Mac — 5 p.m.
Aug. 29 vs. Navajo — 5:15 p.m.
Aug. 31 vs. Ardmore — Noon
Sept. 3 vs. Lawton Ike — 5 p.m.
Sept. 5-7 at Sterling tournament — TBA
Sept. 10 at Lawton Mac — 5 p.m.
Sept. 12-14 at Sayre tournament — TBA
Sept. 17 at Carl Albert — 5 p.m.
Sept. 19 at Duncan — 5 p.m.
Sept. 24 at El Reno — 5 p.m.
Sept. 26 vs. Santa Fe South — 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 1 vs. Lawton High — 5 p.m.
Oct. 9-11 Regional tournament — TBA

Lady Bulldogs’ catcher upon her arrival in Altus, earned All-District honors last season and was the team’s leadoff hitter. She will reprise those roles this season.

For this season, Bull said the key is consistency.

“We kept going back

Lady Bulldogs Softball Roster

Seniors
Annie Petzold
Emily Hughes
Alana Lopez
Brooke Hill
Aubri Hughes
Jerzey Ybarra
Juniors
Kristin Cantu
Star Sims
Sydney Hamm
Lakysia Johnson
Brianna McQuiggan
Whitley Townsend
Jadean Hartrnft
Sophomores
Breanna Dayton
Anahi Guitierrez
Montaya Harris
Freshmen
Siara Arrington
Jaycee Foster
Zoe Grubaugh
Chloe Hill
Baylee Pence
Danielle Davis

and forth,” Bull said, “with our consistency last year, and it ended up costing us several games. From a coaching standpoint, I feel we’re pretty solid everywhere. We’ll have to rely on playing good defense and manufacturing runs. It doesn’t matter how good you look on paper if you don’t go out and actually make plays.”

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THE ALTUS TIMES

FOOTBALL FEVER 2019 • 7

Beach to take over the reins for the Bulldogs

BY RYAN LEWIS
ryan@altustimes.com

The Altus Bulldog football team will look a little different this upcoming season.

The program graduated a large senior class, including playmakers like Kobi Gomez, Izaiah Hall, Garrett Pride, Scotty Brown and Daniel Riley. That's left the Bulldogs breaking in a new starting quarterback.

But Derek Beach is no stranger to the system.

The team's new signal-caller has plenty of experience to pull from after backing up Gomez last season. He saw action in several games last year as the team built insurmountable leads against Elk City, Southeast, El Reno and Bishop McGuinness. In those games, Beach ran the ball a total of 10 times for 31 yards.

Still, practice is one thing, competing in front of large crowds both at home and on the road is an entirely different beast, especially without a few of the players who made Altus so exciting last season.

Coach Matt Terry said he expects little, if any, fall off from when Gomez ran the offense in 2018.

"Obviously," Terry said, "we're a run-heavy team, so our fullbacks are going to have to get us some yardage. The biggest thing on offense is our depth because we're pretty shallow in some positions. We're going to have to figure out a way to get certain people the ball in certain situations. But overall, we get about nine guys who have playing experience, so we should be able to keep doing what we've been doing."

The Bulldogs will also rely on many different running backs while waiting for a true leader to

2019 Altus Bulldog Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Site	Time
Aug. 30	Cache	Away	7 p.m.
Sept. 6	Vernon	Away	7 p.m.
Sept. 13	Open	—	—
Sept. 20	Elk City	Away	7 p.m.
Sept. 27	Southeast (Homecoming)	Home	7 p.m.
Oct. 4	Ardmore	Home	7 p.m.
Oct. 11	Noble	Away	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 18	Lawton MacArthur	Away	7 p.m.
Oct. 25	Western Heights	Home	7 p.m.
Nov. 1	El Reno	Away	7 p.m.
Nov. 8	Duncan (Senior Night)	Home	7 p.m.
Nov. 15	Bi-District	TBA	TBA

emerge, but that's an area where the Bulldogs are stacked.

The team loses leading rushers Hall and Gomez, as well as the consistent Riley and Nehemiah McCaskill, but the Bulldogs' third-leading rusher in 2018 returns for one final season.

Cabe Dickerson ran the ball 71 times for 458 yards last season. Behind him was Laethon Patterson who rushed for 288 yards on 32 carries.

Both backs are of the bruising variety, preferring to lower their shoulders and run over defenders rather than around.

Additionally, the Bulldogs return Mysean Wells and Chehemu Morgan. Wells ran the ball 23 times for 231 yards after returning to the field midway through the season. Morgan ran the ball six times for 101 yards.

And of course, there's D'Marco De La Paz who was called on often over a three-game stretch before taking a step back. Over those three games, De La Paz ran the ball 26 times for 193 yards.

Luckily for any ball carrier for the Bulldogs, there's plenty of experience to run behind.

"On our offensive line," Terry

said, "including the tight end, we got five out six starters back with the sixth guy playing two or three games for us last year. We're going to hang our hats on the guys upfront."

A strong, unified front is what the Bulldogs need to keep their offense on the field, and by all appearances, that's precisely what Altus has as the team gets prepared for the upcoming season.

The only real question mark is on the defensive side of the ball.

"We lost," Terry said, "a bunch of our leading tacklers. We get Cabe back, and he's going to play middle linebacker for us instead of the defensive line. We get Hunter Webb back at defensive end. We'll have some guys at defensive tackle that played for us last year, but they weren't starters. Mysean and Derek will be back in the secondary, but we'll also break in two new guys."

Defense has always been one of the areas in which the Bulldogs excelled the most. Terry said he's hoping nothing changes, but there are a few concerns tasking players who have limited in-game reps with stopping such juggernauts as Ardmore and Lawton MacArthur.

"The guys we're going to put out there," Terry said, "they are high motor guys. They're fast, and we're going to put them in positions where they're going to be successful rather than throw them out into the fire."

While Terry expects the team to go out and perform, he was quick to admit that the team will rely on the offense to put points on the board early in the season.

Terry said he hopes the team will be at full strength by week five, which is when the Bulldogs welcome in the always tough Ardmore Tigers.





ALTUS BULLDOG FOOTBALL 2019

	PLAYER	YR	POS	Ht	Wt.
1	Braden Lollis	12	WR/DB	5'8	140
2	Mysean Wells	12	RB/DB	5'9	165
3	Trey Garcia	12	RB/DB	6'0	165
4	Rece Gribble	12	WR/LB	6'0	170
5	Nick Sanchez	11	QB/DB	5'9	140
6	Bryce Kahla	10	WR/DB	5'10	150
7	Kody Rothchild	11	FB/DB	5'9	170
11	Tyson Vernon	12	TE/DL	6'0	175
13	Derek Beach	12	QB/DB	6'1	160
14	Michael Delgado	10	RB/DB	5'2	130
15	Chase Epperson	12	WR/DB	5'10	150
17	Ty Ray	11	TE/DL	6'1	245
18	Victor Velazquez	11	K	5'11	170
22	Chad Feazel	10	RB/DB	5'6	124
23	Domingo Garcia	11	RB/DB	5'7	150
24	Joseph Buxton	12	RB/DB	5'8	155
25	D'marco DeLaPaz	12	RB/LB	5'9	165
26	Tommy Saxon	10	RB/LB	5'11	145
27	Nick Roman	11	WR/DB	5'9	135
29	Hunter Webb	12	WR/DL	6'3	220
30	Jarrett Hobbs	10	WR/DB	5'7	143
31	Lane Snapp	10	WR/DB	5'7	125
32	Chehemu Morgan	11	RB/DB	5'10	150
34	Kyle Froelich	11	WR/DB	5'6	140
35	Slade Rencher	12	TE/LB	6'0	220
36	Nathan Ybarra	12	WR/DL	6'1	210
37	Cabe Dickerson	12	RB/DL	6'0	220
38	Matt Furfey	10	WR/DB	5'9	158
42	Moses Rodriguez	11	WR/DB	5'7	140
43	Carlo Delapaz	10	RB /LB	5'5	150
44	Laethon Patterson	11	RB/LB	5'8	200
51	Derek Beebe	11	OU DL	6'0	240
50	Luis Gloria	11	OU D L	5'6	190
53	Cale Gallagher	12	OU D L	6'0	210
54	Fenix Rhine	10	OU DL	5'8	224
55	Brady Marple	12	OVDL	6'0	190
56	Patri ck Brough ton	10	OU DL	5'8	180
58	Ryan Rogers	11	OU DL	5'11	260
60	Hernan Rosas	11	OU DL	5'8	215
63	Elias Soliz	12	OVDL	5'11	300
64	Aydan Lesley	12	OU DL	5'8	190
65	Soloman Arrington	10	OU DL	6'0	250
66	Jace James	11	OU DL	6'2	190
68	Tim Kime	12	OULB	6'0	350
70	Kathryn Davis	10	OU DL	5'2	198
71	Marco Jaramillo	10	OL/DL	5'9	185
75	Draven Ybarra	12	O U DL	6'1	320
76	Caleb Leyja	12	OVDL	6'0	240
77	Ty ler Reyes	10	OU D L	5'11	215
78	JT Leyja	11	OL/DL	5'8	215
79	Lane Peart	10	OU DL	6'1	300
80	Dillan Davis	11	WR/LB	5'9	155
81	Ty Ivie	10	WR/DB	5'10	135
82	Damian Maldonado	11	WR /D B	5'9	170
83	DJ Cruz	10	WR/DB	5'6	123
85	Jordan Gillispie	12	WR/LB	6'1	185
86	Deondre Martinez	12	TE /D L	5'10	180
89	Kaden Mayjoffo	12	WR/DB	6'0	215

Head Coach: Matt Terry
Assistants: Dusty Davis, Jay Benway, Jaime Reyna, Jonathon Lamb, JP Snapp, Mark Dabelstein, Mike Torres, Reece Woolbright, Brett Newby

Administration
Roe Worbes - Superintendent; Robbie Holder - Asst. Superintendant;
Chuck Martin - High School Principal; Randall Coffman - Athletic
Dirctor; Meagan Steen - Athletic Trainer

Altus High School Student Athletic Trainers

Student Athletic Trainers are, front row, left to right, Tori Booker, Alison Nichols, Breckyn Brewer and Makenzie Hurst; and back row, left to right, Benji Sanchez, Lexie Preston, Reggie Haywood, Marcus Hartman and Makenzy Augustine.

Rick Carpenter |
Altus Times



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The Altus High School Dance Team



The Altus High School Dance Team consists of front row, left to right, Alyna Castillo, Beth Garrison, Alyssa Williamson, Connor Simco, Isabelle Childs and Gracie Furfey; and standing, Paige Yates, Hannah Gilstad, Paige Condon, Madelynn Hawkins and Carrie Bitz.

Rick Carpenter | Altus Times

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The Altus High School Cheerleaders



Cheerleaders for Altus High School are, front row, left to right, Maggie Landers and Skye Martinez; second row Jessi Atchley, Rylee Borrego, Ary Garduno and Kaalon Welch; third row Carly Thomas, Clayten Guerra, Bailey Bryant, Savannah Shipman, Serenity Ridley and Kenzly Schmidt; and fourth row, Nyla Ball, Madelyn Falon, Lexie Scott, Abi Beane, Grace Humble, Gaby Cantu and Ms. Bulldog Korey Saenz.



New coach, same expectations for Duke Tigers

Duke Tigers Baseball Schedule
Aug. 12 at Sentinel — 4:30 p.m.
Aug. 13 vs. Granite — 4:30 p.m.
Aug. 15 vs. Chattanooga — 4:30 p.m.
Aug. 17 at Binger-Oney/vs. Vici — 1 p.m./3 p.m.
Aug. 20 at Sterling — 5 p.m.
Aug. 22-24 at Fletcher Wood Bat tournament — TBA
Aug. 26 vs. Fletcher — 4:30 p.m.
Aug. 27 vs. Blair — 4:30 p.m.
Aug. 30 at Santa Fe South — 4 p.m.
Aug. 31 at Mike Moore Festival — TBA
Sept. 3 at Geronimo/vs. Indiahoma — TBA
Sept. 5-7 at Sentinel tournament — TBA
Sept. 9 at Chattanooga — 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 10 vs. Canute — 5 p.m.
Sept. 12 at Ft. Cobb-Broxtown — 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 14 at Amber-Pocasset — TBA
Sept. 17 at Leedey — 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 19-21 at Hammon tournament — TBA
Sept. 23 at Navajo — TBA
Sept. 26-28 Districts — TBA
Sept. 30 vs. Navajo — TBA

BY RYAN LEWIS
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The last time the Duke Tigers baseball team took the field, it was April 26 at the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association’s Class B Regional baseball tournament. Calumet had handed Duke a 13-8 loss in the first round of the tournament, but the Tigers bounced back with a 6-5 win over Sentinel. That win put the Tigers in another head-to-head matchup with Calumet, and unfortunately, Duke fell 8-4 to end its season. Less than four months later, the Tigers are preparing to step back onto the baseball field. This time, the Tigers are being led by someone who has dedicated his life to baseball and has experience getting to the next level. Loyd Colson assumed coaching duties this summer.

For those who don’t know his name, Colson is a former MLB pitcher with the New York Yankees. For those who do, the excitement surrounding this year’s team is palpable. Colson isn’t a stranger to Duke. The Wellington, Texas, native is well known among the players and parents. “I coached most of these boys,” Colson said, “in T-ball and little league, and I’ve watched most of their games over the last couple of years. I think we have a chance to be pretty good.” There’s a reason for that belief. The Tigers return most of last year’s roster. Duke will be without the services of Tommy McGee and Noah Claussen, which will hurt the Tigers’ pitching depth. But when it comes to scoring runs, the Tigers are still in good shape. Duke’s best hitter is sophomore Bryson Dill. Dill struck



Bryson Dill (1) scores last season for the Tigers. Dill led the team in batting average last season and is expected to be even better.

Courtesy photo

out four times in 69 at-bats in the spring. He hit .449 on the season and drove in 29 runs while scoring 23 times. Dawson Brooks hit for a .400 average, scored 24 times and drove in 20 runs, and Matt Milner hit .344, scored 32 times and drove in 21 runs. Chance Clark hit .286 in 15 games, and the list goes on.

The Tigers have no shortage of hitters, and if, for some reason, they struggle to score runs, they have three lockdown pitchers who can keep the game close. Brooks was the team’s leading pitcher in the spring. He pitched 39 innings and struck

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Experience-led Duke Lady Tigers expect big things this season

BY DON SIMMONS
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The fast-pitch softball season is approaching, and fans of the Duke softball team should be anticipating great things from the Lady Tigers this fall. There is much to expect from the Lady Tigers who are coming off a 27-13 record last season, and Duke looks to continue with its winning formula in Class B softball. Head Coach Ken Morrell is returning to the Lady Tigers for his second season and emphasizes the team’s experience — led by the seniors — will make all the difference. The Lady Tigers are

Duke Lady Tigers Softball Roster

Calebi Cusher
Kaylee Keck
Kylee Rice
Kelsey Summers
Addi Hanna
Chloe Koontz
Mena Sanders
Corky Hall
Jaden Ruiz
Zoey Koweno
Rylee Puckett
Patricia Garrett
Celia Hall
Skye Claussen
Laura Bustos
Braylee Dollins

returning six seniors who Morrell expects to become leaders for the other players. One name mentioned numerous times was Senior short-

stop Calebi Cusher. Morrell said Cusher “is an all-around good defensive ballplayer.” Morrell also expects big things from third baseman Kaylee Keck, left fielder Jaden Ruiz and outfielder Kylee Rice. The Lady Tigers accomplished two things last year that had never been done in the program’s history, defeated the number one ranked Class B team and beat the Class 2A Magnum Lady Tigers. Morrell said last year the team was learning how to play together and had to learn the little things. The team faced tons of adversity last season beginning the

season with their starting pitcher going down with an injury and losing three straight games. The Lady Tigers would bounce back and make a run in the playoffs but fall short of state and end the season as runners up at regionals. Morrell said despite falling short last year if the team does what it’s supposed to do this time around, they are going have a chance to win it all. To return to the playoffs, Morrell emphasized the Lady Tigers need to do the little things and play routine defense, and everything will fall together. “When we started playing defense last year that is when everything

started clicking,” Morrell said. Morrell said what the Lady Tigers accomplished last year does not count this year. The team needs to focus on what’s going on now and take this year’s difficult schedule one game at a time. “We are smarter than we were last year,” Morrell said. “We all kind of know what we need to do, we aren’t going to miss signals as much as we did last year and we are faster.” Morrell is a master of his craft — he has been around fast-pitch softball for over 50 years, either coaching or playing.

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Duke Lady Tigers Softball Schedule

Aug. 13 vs. Canute — 5 p.m.
Aug. 16-17 at Hobart tournament — TBD
Aug. 19 at Hollis — 4 p.m.
Aug. 20 at Lawton Ike — 5 p.m.
Aug. 22 vs. Sentinel — 4:30 p.m.
Aug. 24 at Walters — 1 p.m.
Aug. 26 at Cyril — 4:30 p.m.
Aug. 29 vs. Hollis — 4:30 p.m.
Aug. 30 at Blair — 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 2 at Fletcher Festival — TBD
Sept. 3 vs. Elk City — 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 5-7 at Sterling tournament — TBD
Sept. 9 vs. Navajo — 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 12-14 at Snyder tournament — TBD
Sept. 16 at Mangum/vs. Cache — 4:30
Sept. 19 at Big Pasture — 5 p.m.
Sept. 20 vs. Hammon — 5 p.m.
Sept. 21 at Fire Lake (in Shawnee) — TBD

Indians to rely on pitching, defense in 2019

Navajo Indians Baseball Schedule

Aug. 12 vs. Olustee — 4 p.m.
 Aug. 15-17 at Arapaho tournament — TBA
 Aug. 19 at Sentinel — 4:15 p.m.
 Aug. 20 at Binger — 4:30 p.m.
 Aug. 23 at Ft. Cobb - vs. Ft. Cobb and Roff — 5:30 p.m./7:30 p.m.
 Aug. 24 vs. Blair — 12 p.m.
 Sept. 2 at Labor Day tournament — TBA
 Sept. 6-7 at Enid Festival — TBA
 Sept. 10 vs. Lookeba-Sickles — 6 p.m.
 Sept. 13 vs. Sterling and Canute — TBA
 Sept. 14 vs. Leedey — TBA
 Sept. 17 vs. Arapaho — 5 p.m.
 Sept. 19-21 at Hammon tournament — TBA
 Sept. 23 vs. Duke — 4:15 p.m.
 Sept. 26-27 Districts — TBA
 Sept. 30 at Duke — 4:15 p.m.
 Oct. 3-4 at Regionals — TBA
 Oct. 10-12 at State — TBA

BY RYAN LEWIS
 ryan@altustimes.com

There will be two noticeable absences when the Navajo Indians take the baseball field this fall — Dallas Cox and Holdyn Mandrell. Other than that, the roster remains largely unchanged.

That's a good thing for the Indians, but a bad thing for the rest of the fall baseball teams in Oklahoma.

The Indians return their core group of players. Cox was a significant arm in the rotation, but there are plenty of other options for head coach Weston Winters and assistant Kale Thompson, which will make pitching Navajo's greatest strength.

A lot of games are won or lost on the mound, and there might not be another school in Class A baseball that can field the amount of talent the Indians do

each year.

Navajo returns Mitchell Smith, Jaden Lingle and Airen Josefy at the pitching position, but they are far from being the only arms on the roster.

Winters said Lingle spent most of the spring baseball season injured, which affected how well the Indians competed down the stretch. Before he went down, Lingle pitched 19.1 innings and posted the third-lowest ERA (3.25) on the team amongst pitchers who threw more than 10 innings. The first- and second-lowest belonged to Smith and Josefy, respectively.

The Indians also have a solid pitcher in Kaleb Covey who threw 14.2 innings and posted a 4.73 ERA. And there is Jacob Tison, who was also injured, Jackson Gilbert and Caden Konen. Each put in time on the mound for the Indians in the spring.

Considering the strength of

the team's pitching, Winters said, "we can win every game, as long as we're scoring five runs a game." But winning every game is an improbable, if not impossible, feat, and Winters knows the team will still have to put forth a solid effort on the field to win.

A big reason for that is the difficulty of playing fall baseball.

While nearly every school in Oklahoma fields a baseball team in the spring, only schools with few other options play baseball in the fall. This means smaller schools like Navajo have to play in one of two classes. Some games are against similarly sized schools, and others are against Class 2A, 3A and 4A schools.

It's a loaded field with plenty of teams vying for a spot in the playoffs. The Indians can use their pitching to stay ahead, but

SEE INDIANS, PAGE 15



Rick Carpenter | Altus Times

Airen Josefy was the Indian's ace in spring baseball and one of the best hitters on the team.



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INDIANS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

it doesn’t put runs on the board. Luckily, Navajo has plenty of big bats in the lineup.

The team’s most significant bats also belong to the team’s best pitchers. Lingle was a .404 hitter in 20 games in the spring, and Josefy hit .402 through 30 games. Brady Jarvis and Gilbert both finished the season with a .333 average, and Covey hit .307.

Those five hitters did the most damage for the Indians, but the team had other playmakers, as well. Kelby Shumaker will reprise his role as the team’s leadoff hitter this season. Shumaker hit .227 in 29 games for the Indians, but

Navajo Indians Baseball Roster

Jaden Lingle
Airen Josefy
Mitchell Smith
Ralph Harford
Kelby Shumaker
Jackson Gilbert
Jacob Tison
Kaleb Covey
Brady Jarvis
Daden Konen
Kreighton Hosley
Kaydin Cassidy
Kenny Carter
Kyler Carter

Winters said the ceiling is high on the junior.

“He’s a stud,” Winters said. “He has good speed, plays 110 percent every day. He’ll run through a wall for you, for sure.”

And then there’s Ralph Harford, the team’s catch-

er. Winters said Harford is a player who “does stuff that you take for granted as a coach.” He said Harford is a decent hitter that can help get the team where it needs to be. Harford hit .263 last season.

And then there’s Caden Konen who plays infield for the Indians and can pitch if needed. Winters said Konen is a left-handed hitter with a lot of potential.

Winters said if the team can stay healthy, there are no limits to what his players can achieve, but there is still a long season ahead of the Indians. If Navajo can play consistently throughout the season, it might be one of the toughest teams to beat.

NEW

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

out 35 batters while posting a 1.07 ERA. Milner pitched 24 innings and struck out 29 batters while posting a 2.62 ERA, and Gage Milner pitched 19.1 innings while striking out eight and posting a 3.62 ERA.

With a strong rotation, solid hitters and a stingy defense, the Tigers could end up

being a tough team to beat in Class B baseball.

When Duke lost games in the fall and spring last year, those games were typically decided by a few runs, thanks to the team’s stellar pitching staff. That’s where this team excels. If those pitchers can continue to keep batters from reaching base, the Tigers will have an opportunity to win every game they play.

Duke Tigers Baseball Roster Seniors

Dawson Brooks
Colton Cushner
Chance Clark
Jase Hammersley
Matt Milner
Mason Rice

Juniors

Tyson Ledbetter
Gage Milner
Sophomores
Atikn Berry
Haydon Brooks
Bryson Dill
Riley Reid
Trevor Hill

BIG

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

Morrell’s goal for himself and his players is getting his seniors noticed from colleges across the country while utilizing his connections to help with that. Morrell said he has worked with coaches from the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, Cameron University, Mid-


western State University and many more.

“I have about 100-something girls I have helped put into college,” Morrell said. “I have girls that have played at Stanford and Arizona State. About six at OU, others at Ole Miss and Oklahoma State.”


As early as July, the team had been participating in scrimmages to help prepare for the season.

“We use the scrimmages to see what our players can do and put them in different situations,” Morrell said. He also uses the scrimmages to look for younger players, who can step up and become x-factors.


Morrell said the Lady Tigers have speed, power and if the team can routinely throw strikes, they are going to be tough to beat.



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