

High expectations set for RCHS softball

by Courtney Alexander

New players and a new coach are just a few of changes that can be seen on the softball field this year.

"I'm expecting great things from this outstanding group of girls," expressed Coach Chris Hendrickson of his team. "The skills of this team are obvious."

Coach Hendrickson, who is also one of the high school's freshmen football coaches, has taken on a new challenge by coaching girls softball. It will be interesting too see how Coach Hendrickson deals with the 16 or 17 girls, 3 of who are seniors, that make up this year's team.

"We run quite a bit more than last year, but it seems to really be

helping the team," stated junior player Angie Howard. "Coach Hendrickson is a good coach who knows what he's doing, and I really think we're going all the way!"

Sophomore Rachelle Riddle agrees.

"If we keep up the hard work, I don't see why we can't go all the way! Our team seems to improve more and more each day at practice."

All the girls reiterated that the team really looks impressive and ready for the tough schedule ahead.

The girls lost their season opener March 27 against South Laurel.

be qualified to diagnose their problems.

"I'm the first coach that is probably qualified to be a doctor," he said referring to the many times he's heard one of his runners complain about something.

Track practice is tough, but it has paid off. Our girls' team placed at state and two even came in first in their individual events. Junior Cheyenne Carmack and sophomore Clarissa Hubbard took home first for 400 meter dash and shotput, respectively.

Our football team is great, our basketball team is wonderful, and the cheerleaders are awesome, but let's not forget those few people throughout the school that represent us in track and field. They work hard and deserve a "nice going" or "congratulations" every once in awhile. If you don't believe me, try keeping up with them at practice sometime.



The softball team was working hard Wednesday afternoon. The team received another chance to practice when Thursday's game was cancelled unexpectedly.

Coach Riddle looks for team to go 'all the way'

by Courtney Alexander

In the words of former RCHS principal Cleston Saylor, "Take care of the little things and the big things will take care of themselves."

This philosophy is something Rockets Baseball Coach Mr. Ryan Riddle takes into consideration every time he steps onto the baseball field. And looking at the quality of players Coach Riddle produces, he must know what he's doing.

Coach Riddle speaks very highly of this year's team, explaining that they have all aspects of the game covered. He never has to tell them what to do. They already know thanks to great senior leadership. High expectations have definitely been set for this year's team.

According to Coach Riddle if this team will "Execute, concentrate, and respect the game of baseball, winning and losing will take care of itself."

Coach Riddle looks for them to win the district and hopefully the region. If improvement continues, the state title is definitely a possibility.

"I want this team to win, if not for themselves, for Wayne and Brad," Coach Riddle expressed, referring to Wayne McNew, who passed away in November 1999. He was a devoted baseball fan and supportive father figure to so many of these boys. "His presence will always be remembered on the baseball field."



The baseball team (shown here in a previous game against Corbin) hopes to complete this season with a record even better than last year's 23-10.

If the team does perform well, some of the credit may go to the new coaching staff.

"The greatest player I have ever coached has come back to assist me with this year's team," Coach Riddle said of the newest addition to the Rocket's coaching staff, Mr. J.D. Bussell.

Bussell graduated from RCHS in 1994. He played baseball for E.K.U. for five years before graduating and returning to Rockcastle County to teach.

Unfortunately, after nine years of coaching assistant Tony Mahaffey was unable to return this year due to family responsibilities.

"I've never had an opportunity to be around such a great group of guys," Coach Riddle beamed as he spoke of all 21 players and as-

sistant coaches Bussell and Mr. Adam Coleman.

This will be a special year for the 2000 Rockets. For the first time, Rockcastle will host both the district and regional tournaments. "It's a big deal for us to host the regional tournament," stated Mrs. Connie Riddle. "Not only is this the first year we've ever hosted regionals, but it will be 8 years before we get the chance to do it again."

In preparation for regional play, a full schedule is in place for the next few months.

The team will get more than their share of practice this week as conditioning for the annual Spring Break trip to Florida. Rockcastle has participated in the Coco Expo Tournament for several years now.



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