

A Rarity: Freshman commands the point for Varsity Girls Squad

Continued from Page 10

sprain in practice.

Beindit, who is the starting point guard, will be out for six weeks and will return from her injury in January.

“Either Carley Bar-jaktarovich or Elizabeth Renner will take my spot while I’m out,” said Beindit. Barjaktarovich got the start on Thursday, December 11 against Almont in the girls’ season opener.

“My first start on varsity was nervous,” said Bar-jaktarovich. However, you couldn’t see the nervousness in Barjaktarovich’s

play.

She went out and handled the pressure and led the team to a win over Almont.

“Originally, we brought her up to *‘I went to the open gyms over the summer and did summer basketball. I think this showed that I would give the effort which is what they wanted.’*”

- Carley Barjaktarovich

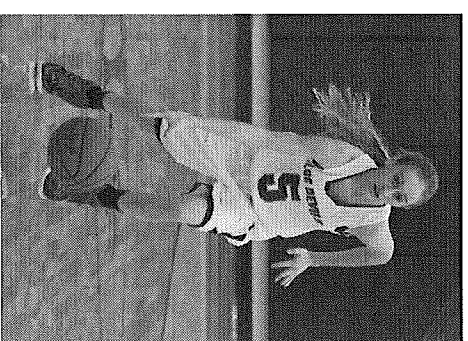
Since Barjaktarovich is a freshman, she still has lots of time to progress and grow as a basketball player for RHS.

Considering she will more than likely be on varsity for four years, she will learn a lot from the other players and Coach Schrodt.

“I have learned a lot already. If I mess up in practice Coach Schrodt helps me. Practicing has made me a lot better too and the other players help push me to get better,” said Barjaktarovich.

Since the varsity girls team has three point guards on their roster, two of which are seniors, Bar-jaktarovich will be the only point guard on the team next year with game experience.

Considering this, she will likely be a key role on the team for many years to come.



Barjaktarovich drives up the court against Almont. (Photo courtesy of Yearbook).

Wrestlers Try to Bring One Home for the Boys

By: Brandon VanGorp
Staff Writer

After a tough loss in last year’s State Final match to Dundee, the Richmond Blue Devils are hoping to turn things around this year and become State Champions for the sixth time in school history.

The team this year is a contender for the D3 State Championship, and is currently ranked number four in the State and has great potential.

Although the team’s loss of seniors from last year was pretty big, they will be able to fill the spots.

Owen Vannatter, a sophomore, 125 and 130 pound wrestler, said, “Even though we lost a lot of talent from the seniors, we have a lot of juniors that can fill the gaps.”

The Blue Devils practice Monday through Saturday for about two- and a-half hours a day. With multiple freshmen coming up, practice time is very important. Senior Devin Skatza, a three-time individual State

Champion and current 155-pound wrestler, said, “It’s important to make sure the young guys get mat time when preparing for the season.”

They run a college-style practice. They are always moving and competing in various real-match situations. This helps the team be ready for all situations during real competition and prepares them for college.

Mr. Brandon Day, the coach of the Blue Devils for the past 12 years, said, “I think we will find success if we take care of business in the classroom and in practice. We have a ton of support from the parents and community.”

To prepare for the season, the team has attended the Jeff Jordan State Champ Camp, the Richmond team camp and many of the wrestlers have attended J Robinson wrestling

camps. Camps have helped the team greatly with skill development and toughness.

Most wrestlers can agree it’s one of the most difficult sports if not the most difficult. Vannatter said, “Wrestling is probably one of the hardest things I’ve ever done.”

Although it may be difficult, wrestlers can obtain a lot from the program. Wrestling teaches athletes many things that are beneficial for the future. Skatza said, “It teaches you respect. It teaches you discipline and to never give up, to always work hard.”

The Blue Devils All-State wrestler Skatza will be a key to the team’s success, but he can’t do it on his own. Everyone on the team has an important role. Richmond wrestling always has been and will be a team sport. They have many talented

wrestlers that are fortunate enough to win because of the great workout partners they have in the practice room.

Coach Day is confident in his team’s ability. He said, “We have a strong senior class with some talented young guys.”

The team does have some spots to fill. They lost senior Xaiver Nuckles and junior Graham Barton who were both injured while participating in off-season sports.

Nuckles suffered an ankle injury during the football season that forced him to miss the remainder of the football season. His injury carried over into the wrestling season this year and will not allow him to participate.

Barton suffered a severe concussion during the soccer season that also forced him to miss the rest of year. His injury is keeping him from wrestling this year as well.

A lot of people are competing for the open spots so it’s uncertain who will be in the lineup. Coach Day said, “We have open competition for every spot on our team regardless of age or grade. No one has a spot sitting and waiting for them.”

The team has a lot of talent, and filling those gaps isn’t a huge concern. However, there are always areas to work on. Vannatter said, “We need to get mentally tougher to be more successful.”

“It teaches you respect. It teaches you discipline and to never give up, to always work hard.”

- Devin Skatza

The team has the skill to make it to the finals like last year. They just need to be able to execute.

The Blue Devils have tough competition every year. They compete at the Medina, Ohio Invitational and The National Duals in Fort Wayne Indiana. They will also be hosting an assembly dual against nationally-ranked Lowell on January 30* at RHS.

These matches are very tough and will prepare the team for the season. The Blue Devils need to get both physically and mentally prepared.

The team has the same mindset every year. They train extremely hard and the kids and parents sacrifice a great deal to try and bring a state title home to their school and community.

Winning is everything. Coach Day said, “Not winning is failing. Most teams would be proud to take second place. To us, it’s a failure.”

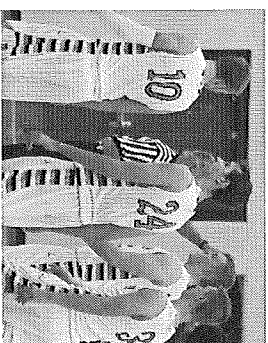
Upcoming Schedule

Boys Basketball:

- 12/29/14 @ New Haven
- 12/30/14 @New Haven
- 1/3/14 @ Peck Community HS
- 1/6/15 Almont HS
- 1/9/15 @Armada HS
- 1/13/15 @ Crosswell-Lexington Community Schools
- 1/16/15 @ Capac HS
- 1/20/15 Imlay City HS
- 1/23/15 Algonac HS
- 1/23/15 Harper Woods
- 1/30/15 @Yale Public Schools

Girls Basketball:

- 12/22/14 @ Merritt Academy
- 1/3/15 @ Peck Community High School
- 1/6/15 @ Chippewa Valley HS
- 1/9/15 @ Armada HS
- 1/13/15 Crosswell-Lexington Community Schools
- 1/16/15 @ Capac HS
- 1/23/15 Algonac HS
- 1/27/15 @ Almont
- 1/30/15 @ Yale Public Schools



Richmond has hopes of going undefeated this year, especially after a solid win over Sterling Heights. (Photo courtesy of RHS Yearbook).