

## McCurdy's example going from CR-6 to Quincy

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

Amy McCurdy likes to have her actions do the talking.

The Community R-6 senior infielder was loud with her numbers this season, earning second team all-state and first team all-conference, all-district and all-region. McCurdy took a resounding step on Friday in the Community R-6 High School gym when she signed to play college softball at Division II Quincy University.

"I've put in a lot of hard work, and I've had to prove to a lot of people that I am good enough to play at the next level," McCurdy said. "A lot of my coaches did not believe in me or have faith that I would be able to do it or even think I was good enough. A lot of my old team-

mates didn't. I just really wanted to prove to them that I can and I am."

McCurdy said she loves softball and it's what she does "every single day, all day." She said she has been playing on a diamond since she was in kindergarten but became more serious around eighth grade when she started playing travel ball.

When she was 12 or 13 years old, McCurdy said she played on a 16U team so she was the youngest on the roster. It was a feeling she was used to until she eventually rose to a role of leadership later in her high school career. As a senior, McCurdy was a steady presence in the lineup by leading the team with a .464 average, a .524 on-base, 30 RBI and a 1.122 OPS and tied for the runs lead along with Peyton Schafer with 42.



Community R-6 senior Amy McCurdy is surrounded by family and coaches on Friday at Community R-6 High School in Laddonia during her college signing ceremony to play for Quincy softball.

[Jeremy Jacob]

"I'm not used to being the oldest or the leader on the team," McCurdy said. "I'm used to

being one of the youngest and always having somebody tell me what to do. I don't like telling

other people what to do."

Head coach Kendra Murphy said McCurdy set a good example for her teammates. McCurdy started this season with a 14-game hitting streak and stretched that into a 21-game on-base streak.

Murphy said there were some areas where she thought McCurdy could improve going into her senior season. She said McCurdy's work in school and travel ball cemented her future as a college player.

"We went through some highs and lows last year, and she did a much better job in every game, making a statement at the plate," Murphy said. "Last year, there were several games of, 'OK, where did Amy go?' and all of a sudden, we

See **MCURDY** on page C2



Mexico senior PJ Perkins contests a shot against Rock Bridge during a preseason jamboree hosted by the Bulldogs on Gary Filbert Court in Mexico.

[Jeremy Jacob]

## Mexico boys looking for depth for another deep run

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

The Mexico boys are returning most of its roster from a state quarterfinal team.

In a 27-3 season, the Bulldogs won a North Central Missouri Conference championship and district title last season before eventually losing to state champion Vashon in the state quarterfinals.

Head coach Darren Pappas said eight of last year's 12 on varsity will be back. Pappas said 12-14 out of the total 30 kids on the roster will be on

varsity this season so Mexico needs to figure out what is the best combination of players. Last year's Bulldogs had plenty of depth that took them deep into the playoffs.

"We've got to find some depth," Pappas said. "That's the big question mark this year. We're going to ask those guys that are coming off the bench that are we going to produce or are we going to take a little dip. We don't want to take that dip."

Pappas said players will be taking bigger roles due to the graduates but

See **BULLDOGS** on page C2

## MMA soccer earns runner-up in state after special season

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

Missouri Military Academy might not have been able to become No. 1 on Thursday night but still feel like No. 1.

The No. 3 Colonels lost the Class 1 soccer state championship game to No. 1 Valley Park 4-0 at Harlen C. Hunter Stadium at Lindenwood University in St. Charles. MMA had only been shut out once before this season and the loss ended a nine-game winning streak, but the program earned its second ever state trophy and first ever since 1992.

The 1992 team finished fourth so Thursday was MMA's first ever state championship game. The Colonels (17-5) fell behind 2-0 within the first three minutes and then 3-0 within the first 15 minutes but shut out Valley Park (25-3), who won its first ever soccer state title, in the second half. Head coach Elliot Goodwin said he knows his players gave everything they had and shouldn't hang their heads.

"Every time they've worn the shirt this year, they've given everything," Goodwin said. "That's all you can ask. As coaches, if



Missouri Military Academy cadets, from left, Avin Hernandez, Alex McBride, Fernando Puebla and Mu Ye embrace head coach Elliot Goodwin after earning runner-up honors Thursday at the Class 1 soccer state championships in St. Charles.

[Jeremy Jacob]

they go out there and give it their all, we'll always be proud of them. They've achieved something remarkable that will always be remembered in MMA history."

Goodwin's assistant coach Rodrigo Padilla was added to his staff this season after working solely for the admissions office. Padilla graduated from the school in 2015 and played soccer just like this year's Colonels. Since Padilla is a former MMA cadet, he wanted to "give back" even more.

"It's the first time in 32

years the boys have made it this far," Padilla said. "Just today, even though the results weren't expected, they made history. They should be proud of what they accomplished today. As a MMA cadet, I know how amazing this is. Everything they did this season got them here. Their talent got them here."

Valley Park scored six goals in its 6-3 semifinal win Wednesday over New Heights Christian Academy with McAuley Catholic and continued its offensive

See **MMA** on page C8

**Pearl**  
MOTOR COMPANY

CERTIFIED PRE-OWNED



CHEVROLET  
FIND NEW ROADS



GMC  
WE ARE PROFESSIONAL GRADE



BUICK

Since 1916,  
We Treat Everyone Like Family

3100 SOUTH CLARK • MEXICO, MO  
573-581-3392 • PearlMotor.com

2025 BUICK ENVISION SPORT TOURING  
Stock #25523 MSRP: \$43,240  
**NOW \$41,240**

2024 CHEVROLET SILVERADO 1500 LT  
Stock #24127 MSRP: \$57,565  
**NOW \$47,815**

2025 CHEVROLET TRAX LT  
Stock #25022 MSRP: \$24,190  
**NOW \$23,690**



**GOOD LUCK TO ALL THE WINTER SEASON ATHLETES!**



the wrong  
bank holds  
you back.

The right bank pushes  
you forward.



Switch to a bank  
that's on your side.

bankofmissouri.com/business



Live well. Bank well.



# Mexico girls bring speed, hopefully better defense

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

The Mexico girls want to play for championships this season. The Lady Bulldogs lost the district title game a season ago to Moberly and believe they can have a better year than last year's 12-16 campaign.

Head coach Makenzie Mudd said Mexico has four seniors, two juniors, two sophomores and three freshmen on its varsity roster of 11 this season. Mudd said the Lady Bulldogs will have a lot of speed like last season but wants to bring more defense unlike last year, when they matched the previous year's defensive average of 47.6 points allowed per game.

"We've been working a lot in practice on defense," Mudd said. "We want to find a strong defensive presence. Last year, we got a bit weak and gave up

a lot of high-scoring games. We're focusing more on shutting down the opponents and then making our own offensive opportunities, rather than focusing on just the scoring part."

Mudd said good defense sparks offense, and the Lady Bulldogs do have some girls capable of scoring the ball. Claire Hudson is a senior and three-year starter that will be Mexico's key returner that averaged 14.6 points to lead the team last year. She can also rebound at a 6.8 average last year and defend with two steals as an average.

Hudson's younger sister and sophomore Grace Hudson is a returning point guard that can knock down shots from the perimeter, and juniors Landri Teel and Hannah Loyd are key post players returning. Senior Kenzie Taylor is another post player who is returning from



Mexico senior Kenley Jones briskly moves down the court with the ball during a preseason jamboree on Gary Filbert Court in Mexico.

[Jeremy Jacob]

last year's varsity roster but should be available the whole season after dealing with recovery from ankle surgery last year.

Haley Perkins is a senior guard also back from injury,

Mudd said, that adds to the senior group along with guard Kenley Jones, who brings a lot of that speed.

"We're trying to force turnovers and use some of that speed that we've got to get to

that end of the floor," Mudd said.

Mudd said she's "the same or even better potential" from this year's Lady Bulldogs. When she looked at some of Mexico's North Central Missouri Conference opponents, they graduated some key players from a year ago. Moberly, for example, lost three seniors that did a huge amount of its scoring.

Mexico will be adding a couple historically good programs to its non-conference schedule like Harrisburg and Southern Boone. Mudd hopes those more unfamiliar challenges will help acclimate everyone to varsity competition.

"We have a lot of girls with not much varsity experience, but I think that they have the drive to want to get better," Mudd said. "I don't think that's going to be a huge problem for us for very long."

# Mexico boys wrestling full of state experience, accomplished coaches

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

It isn't out of the realm of possibility for Mexico boys wrestling to have a team at state this season.

The Bulldogs had almost a full team's worth qualify for state individually with eight making it to Mizzou Arena. Seven of those boys return this season, including two state runners-up in Grant Van Horn and Carlos Juarez Ramirez.

Head coach Gayle Adams said he expects there to be around 25 on the roster this season with two seniors: three-time state medalist Van Horn and the two-time state qualifier Watson Azdell. Adams said there are quite a few freshmen that are looking for a solid start in the program and sport.

"Anytime you're returning two state finalists and all of them state qualifiers, it's always a good thing," Adams said. "I've got some good leadership in the room where some kids are wanting to try it and get better at the sport of wrestling."

Adams has been saying for years that Van Horn will be a state champion



Mexico juniors Isai Hernandez (left) and Grant Walker practice together with assistant coach Jordan Jones in the background.

[Jeremy Jacob]

and believes wholeheartedly that will happen this season after he came the closest to the rising to the top in his career.

"He's got that caliber and he's got a great work ethic," Adams said. "It's going to happen. I promise you. It will happen this year."

Juarez Ramirez, who is a sophomore and younger brother of assistant coach and former state medalist Ricardo Ramirez, won more than 30 matches like Van Horn did. Adams said Juarez Ramirez and Van Horn proved to be capable

of making it to the state finals so that wouldn't be a surprise this season.

"I would be surprised if they don't make the state finals," Adams said. "I would even be surprised if they don't win it. I've got that much faith in my two kids."

Adams said Azdell is at the top of the list of other returning state qualifiers. He said Azdell is looking to "maneuver through the bracket" after drawing some tough state brackets the last two years.

"We can say maybe, 'OK, this weight class is better

suited for you for your size or this one is suited better for your style of wrestling.' We're going to play that by ear."

Kyler Carr was "getting his feet wet at the varsity level" as a freshman. Brayden Arnold was a freshman qualifier too but brings varsity experience and a potential to improve since he has plenty of good lower-weight wrestlers to practice with beyond Juarez Ramirez and Evan Blair.

Isai Hernandez and Grant Walker go into this season after qualifying for state as sophomores last season. Adams said he loves Hernandez's "ability to compete" and "willingness to get better," and Walker has more size on top of already being a "strong, feisty kid."

Adams said he doesn't overlook the contributions his wrestlers make at other sports that show their competitive drives like Arnold with baseball, Hernandez and Walker with soccer, and Van Horn this season as an active tackler on the football field.

Evan Wilson and

# Bulldogs from page C1

is glad to have three of its five starters from last year. Those three were Mexico's second-, third- and fourth-leading scorers and one was its leading rebounder.

PJ Perkins was Mexico's leading rebounder and third leading scorer and will be a senior along with Jaydon Eldridge, who was the Bulldogs' second-leading scorer. Kaden Benne was Mexico's fourth leading scorer, and Charlie Fisher was the team's fifth-leading scorer that will run the offense for the graduated leading scorer DJ Long.

"That's a good core that we have," Pappas said. "We definitely have a lot of talent at the guard position. We've got some guys that are going to have to play inside and outside. Hopefully, we can mix and match and do some things."

Kinser Groves and seniors Sam Ryan, Austin Maxwell and Hunter Bickell are among the other returning guards for Mexico, but Pappas said post player Holden Aulbur is included among the "five key guys" along with Perkins, Eldridge, Benne and Fisher.

"We'll throw some different lineups out there at times, like we did last year going with a smaller lineup," Pappa said. "It all just depends on how the flow of the game's going and who's got the hot hand."

Some new names Pappas said can definitely be added to that familiar group are guards James Matthews and Vershard Williams. Matthews is a sophomore that can give Mexico a "little spark" and is a good defensive player, and Williams is a junior coming up from junior varsity as a backup point guard.

Having contributions from as many kids as possible is what Pappas wants from this year's Bulldogs. He isn't just referring to the offensive end.

"Hopefully it's going to be the way we get after it defensively and the unselfishness," Pappas said about his team's potential identity. "We can move the basketball and find the open man."

# McCurdy from page C1

found her again. She was a constant threat at the plate all season along, and then on defense, getting the errors down. She stepped up huge on defense."

Murphy said McCurdy showing the willingness for further improvement definitely makes her ready for the college level. As of the senior Lady Trojans this season, that's a necessary quality to have.

"It's important for the upperclassmen to both be able to lead the team with their words and then back it up with their play," Murphy said. "She's somebody that

has a lot to offer the underclassmen with her knowledge of the game. When you're able to produce on the field, I think it takes it to a whole other level. The underclassmen are able to see, 'When we do it like this and when we practice like this, these are the results that we get.'"

McCurdy admitted there was a "mental toll" this past season, not because of the added leadership responsibility but due to her being sick every single game from the medicine she was taking. She said she is excited to continue playing softball but doesn't want that to take away from her studies as she plans to major in pediatric nursing at a school with "the best nursing opinion around."

"I'm able to balance school and softball really well," McCurdy said. "I need that for college. I put in the work

outside of everything in order to do that. I'm used to doing it now so I'll be able to do it then."

**ALL STAR BANKING**  
PERSONAL CHECKING & SAVINGS ACCOUNTS · BUSINESS CHECKING ACCOUNTS  
COMPLETE LENDING SERVICES · SAFE DEPOSIT BOXES · MOBILE APP

**HOME BANK**

2977 S. CLARK STREET • 573.769.2001 • MYHOMEBANK.BANK • NMLS#450000

**GOOD LUCK ATHLETES!**

**MIDWEST Heating & Cooling**

1703 E. Liberty - Mexico, MO 65265  
Visit us at [www.midwestheatingcooling.com](http://www.midwestheatingcooling.com)

MEXICO: 573-581-4215 HVAC Emergency Service  
BOB HUNN, Owner 573-406-9211

**Good Luck**  
to all  
winter sports  
athletes  
from your  
fans at

Consolidated Electric Cooperative

A Deposit With Us is an Investment in the Mexico Community!

**Good Luck Athletes**  
222 South Jefferson St

**Peoples Savings Bank**  
OurPSB.com

Thanking our community HEROES with a special

**HEROES CHECKING ACCOUNT**

Call, stop by, or scan the QR code for more info!

Member FDIC

**bryant** Factory Authorized Dealer  
Heating & Cooling Systems

Amana Heating & Air Conditioning

# Mexico girls wrestling returning state experience to pair with inexperience

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

While the Mexico girls wrestling program has several new faces to the sport this season, it also has some good experience coming back.

Alexus Johns became the program's first ever state finalist in the four years it has existed while Abby Bowen also returns as a state qualifier. There will be around 11 girls on the roster with a range of experience.

Head coach Tony Senor said his roster is "slim on the lighter weights" heading into the season. He said figuring out the lineup is still a process other than returners Lilly Debo at 100 or 105, Alyssa Knight at 130 or 135, Bowen at hopefully 140 and Johns at heavyweight, and then newcomer Marali Herrera at 135 or 140.

"The new girls are picking things up a lot quicker," Senor said. "That's what we hope to see: girls not spending a whole lot of time on fundamentals but moving forward into actual strategy in what to do in matches and what to do in certain situations."

Senor said he is hoping to qualify at least three wrestlers again, including Johns and Bowen again that went last year along with the graduated Katie Bow-



Mexico senior Matty Tolbert (left) and junior Alexis Johns practice together in the wrestling room at the Mexico Sports Complex.

[Jeremy Jacob]

en. He could see Johns winning state, or at least medaling, and Bowen earning her first medal.

"Before we get there, we need to do things right in practice, do things right at competition and see what we can do for that state title," Senor said.

Sophia Morris is among the newcomers that stand out to Senor after coming to him in May, wrestling either 155 or 170 or potentially 190. He said Morris has the looks of an experienced wrestler despite being new like Heaven Seabolt and heavyweight Raygen Hoffman.

Matty Tolbert is not a new ad-

dition as she returned last season from injury and is the lone senior on the roster this season. Senor said Tolbert brings valuable leadership, whether or not she is a starter.

"I need leaders on my team to help guide girls and also help them with the brand new sport just to be more comfortable," Senor said. "There's a reason she is student council president."

Leaders will come from additions to the coaching staff, Senor said, as Kaylynn Pehle was added as an assistant and Katie Bowen will devote some time that isn't spent on the college mat

with William Woods University in Fulton. Both girls were on the original team when the program started and earned accolades at every level.

Senor said Mexico will be at tough tournaments like the Battle on the Katy Trail and Wonder Woman yet again but will also face loaded fields at Versailles a few days before Thanksgiving. He said the Versailles tournament is looking like a "mini Class 1 state tournament" that will have three other state medalists from Johns' bracket, including the state champion Annabelle Rowe, of Adrian. One of the three home events Mexico has scheduled included a dual against Brookfield, who Senor said is projected to be the state champion.

The Lady Bulldogs are a smaller team, but if at least a North Central Missouri Conference title isn't in the future, Senor said he would several to earn first team or second team individual honors. Obviously, the biggest goal for his girls is to be all-district and qualify for state.

"Every day, every match, every practice, every tournament is a chance to learn and a chance to grow," Senor said. "It's not always going to the state tournament. It's also growing the sport in Mexico."

## Mexico from page C2

Jayden Hodge are juniors that could make a jump to state this season after coming close to state qualification at districts last season as sophomores. Adams said he was excited for his lineup after just one practice.

"Mexico wrestling, we're proving to put kids at the state tournament," Adams said. "If we take 14 to districts, I don't see why we can't qualify the team. I've got winners in my program."

Adams said this includes his assistant coaches this season, which is a who's who of accomplished wrestlers he has coached in the past at Mexico, like the aforementioned Ramirez, who wrestled at a junior college in Iowa. This also includes former Division I wrestler Jake Vitale as the head assistant, former Division I wrestler Jordan Jones, multiple time state champion and Division I All-American Brit Wilson, multiple-time state champion and Division I wrestler Kellen Ekern, and multiple time state champion and Division I wrestler Dillon Nichols.

"I've got a lot of guys that might not be able to come in every day, but I've got a really good coaching staff," Adams said. "Probably in the state of Missouri, I've got one of the best coaching staffs. All of the coaches I've named, they've wrestled in college, they've wrestled at the highest level and they came through my program so they know."

Most notable entries on the schedule this season are multiple trips out of state to see tough competition even outside of the state. Mexico goes to a tournament in Orlando, Florida, a few days before Christmas and one in De Soto, Kansas, in late January, and Adams added Mexico is planning on livestreaming a lot of its matches. All of this helps the Bulldogs be "battle-tested" heading to state this season.

"We get to see some different caliber of wrestling," Adams said. "I'm fortunate. We get to travel the whole state of Missouri. We're getting to see a lot of good wrestlers. We're not going to walk into state with a 45-0 record. People are going to know that Mexico might have a few losses on us, but they know we're battle-tested."

**Community R-6 sophomore Caden Thomas protects the ball against freshman KaTavyn Wheeler during an intrasquad scrimmage for the basketball programs' FanFest at Community R-6 High School in Laddonia. The Trojans have a young roster to attempt a bounce-back season.**

[Jeremy Jacob]



**Community R-6 senior Aaliyah Welch rises up for a layup attempt during an intrasquad scrimmage for the basketball programs' FanFest at Community R-6 High School in Laddonia. Welch is one of many returners from last year's roster that clinched the Lady Trojans' 12th straight winning season.**

[Jeremy Jacob]



## Community R-6 boys to lean on youth, speed this season

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

The Community R-6 boys only have four upperclassmen on the roster this season.

The Trojans will obviously have plenty of youth coming but also plenty of talent, head coach Kody Asquith said, as they aim for more wins than five a season ago.

The roster should have 16 total players with some of those upperclassmen being key returners, such as senior Clayton Jennings and junior Cooper Rohan. However, sophomore Caden Thomas saw plenty of varsity time a season ago and should progress this season, according to Asquith, and will see plenty of playing time along with sophomores Clayton Eikel and Brett Beamer.

"We'll be able to move the ball quickly this year," Asquith said. "I'm hoping to be able to run the floor pretty well this season."

Asquith said the roster is smaller this season so a greater emphasis will be put on speed. Eikel, Jennings and sophomore Rett Curtis have some height, but the Trojans don't anticipate having the post presence left from Brant Cope and Mason Carroll last season.

Eikel and Beamer should bring some pe-

rimeter scoring, participating in the 3-point contest at the preseason FanFest this year. Asquith said freshman KaTavyn Wheeler could potentially be an offensive threat and is going to "earn his time quickly" while fitting into this quicker identity.

"He's going to be one that's going to step up early," Asquith said. "We've got big shoes to fill with Mason Carroll, losing him from last year. Between (Eikel and Beamer), Caden and even my freshman point guard KaTavyn, he's going to bring a lot to the table this year."

Asquith has grown more familiar with his roster over time since he also coaches the middle school program. He said it is a big step from varsity basketball to junior high but can be done.

"As much as the work they want to put in, they can go as far as they want to go," Asquith said. "I believe in them. I think they can do some good this year."

## Community R-6 girls bring experienced, versatile roster

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

The Community R-6 girls have the potential to do a lot of things this season.

The Lady Trojans have some experience with seven of the 11 girls returning with plenty of minutes and the composition of the roster includes several players with different skillsets.

Head coach Bob Curtis said he was impressed with the defense displayed by his team during a 16-0 summer. But that isn't all he thinks the Lady Trojans can do.

"Even though there's 11, we're going to play most of those 11," Curtis said. "We're deeper than maybe the number looks like. We're going to pressure people, turn people over and get some transition buckets. This team, over the summer, took care of the basketball much better than we did last year."

Peyton Beamer returns as all-conference honorable mention after running the offense last season while senior Aaliyah Welch also has plenty of starting experience that brings back a post presence along with Jocelyn Curtis, who had a summer showing her size and strength around the

rim. Curtis said Beamer is a point guard that will make teams "question pressing us" due to her good ball handling.

"Offensively, she's probably going to lead us a lot of nights," Curtis said about Beamer. "She is a talented offensive player and really good off the dribble."

"She's going to be a good offensive shot in the arm for us," Curtis said about Welch. "She's a good rebounder and a good defender."

Rylee Rafferty and Amy McCurdy are seniors that have looked good in practice, Curtis said. Rafferty knows the offense after playing the last several years while McCurdy returns after taking a season off but gives Community more depth in the post.

Chloe Johnson and Kat Meyer are juniors that will factor into the rotation more. Curtis said Johnson is a "really good defender" and "tough kid," and Meyer is a "great perimeter shooter" that can get hot, as seen when she won the girls division of the 3-point contest at the preseason FanFest.

Curtis said Lydia Hoyt is a sophomore that brings good ball handling and shooting, and freshman Myla Carroll that had a good sum-

mer around the rim due to her being a "physical kid."

If Community can avoid offensive droughts, like what happened in the second half of its season-ending 64-44 loss to Higbee, Curtis said the program can have another good season to follow a 16-11 campaign a year ago.

"This team can honestly play a low-scoring game - a possession game in the 30s or 40s - but we can also get out and run with you too," Curtis said. "I like that we can contrast styles."

**Have a Great Season!**

**We're here for all your home improvement needs!**

Serving Mid-Missouri builders, contractors and homeowners since 1975!

- Complete line of flooring
- Carpet
- Hardwood
- Laminat
- Tile & Vinyl Flooring Products
- Backsplashes, Paint and Stone

**Erdel & Wood**  
HOME IMPROVEMENT CENTER, INC.

North Side of the Square  
109 W. Monroe, Mexico, MO 65265  
573-581-7064 • erdellandwood.com

**GOOD LUCK ATHLETES!**



- Home
- Auto
- Business
- Farm
- Life
- Health
- Medicare
- Bonds

**MELAHN**  
INSURANCE AGENCY



Insurance and Bonds Since 1967

A Division of Scott Agency, Inc.

**KEYSTONE**

3100 Doreli Lane • Mexico, Mo

**(573) 581-2400**

[www.melahn-ins.com](http://www.melahn-ins.com)



Van-Far sophomore Elliott Utterback drives to the rim in a preseason jamboree in Mexico.

[Jeremy Jacob]

## Van-Far girls one year older into varsity careers

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

Yet again, the Van-Far girls roster will be dominated by underclassmen.

Even though there will be one upperclassman – junior Trinity Skwartz – for the Lady Indians this season, some of the others have a full season of varsity experience from last year.

Van-Far had a record of 4-19 to decline from other seasons but won three games in its final five of the season. Head coach Heather Minter said she expects to have eight of nine players for varsity out of the 12 total players, and five of those are sophomores who have played varsity minutes.

“They’ve definitely grown a little bit,” Minter said. “They’re not where we want them to be. We’re trying to get them out of the mindset of they’re still a young team because no one really cares.”

Elliott Utterback is the leader for this year’s returning sophomore group that also includes Kenya Jones, Mylee Keller, Chloe Zumwalt and Khloe Wallace. Carmen Wilburn was the lone all-Eastern Missouri Conference player and of three seniors who graduated.

“We know Elliott’s going to have a big year, but we also know people are going to try to shut her down because she’s our returning leading scorer,” Minter said. “We’re looking for big things from Zumwalt. Wallace is going to develop into a scorer. Mylee is doing some good things taking care of the ball. Kenya’s that streaky player that is either off or on so we’re trying to get her to figure out how to stay positive no matter what’s going on with her.”

Minter said Van-Far does have a lot of weapons but is still unsure how they all fit together. During positive periods last season, the Lady Indians were hot from the perimeter but need to figure out how this year’s roster will mesh.

Minter said about three of the six freshmen should move up to varsity. She said Carly Hunn will at least be a defensive weapon off the bench and should see minutes along with post player Aviana Early and perhaps eventually Ashlyn Marshall.

“We’re probably going to see a lot of zone so that’s something we have to work on, as the coaches, to get ready for that,” Minter said. “Overall, I’m happy where we’re at but not satisfied where we’re at.”

# Van-Far boys bigger roster with big goals this season

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

The Van-Far boys had a big season a year ago and don’t want to settle for less this year.

The Indians lost in the district championship game against Harrisburg but went 22-6 while running out their best defense in a long time. This year’s Indians will have many back from that roster.

Head coach Pat Connaway said the defense he had last year, averaging 45.9 points allowed per game, was statistically even better than the 2018 state championship team (49.4), but there is an advantage for this year’s team.

“We are a lot bigger,” Connaway said. “We’re not nearly as quick, but I think we can give teams with smaller guards a lot of trouble.”

Pacey Reading is the top scorer returning for Van-Far and only other to average scoring in double figures (14.9) last year along with the graduate Nikos Connaway. He, post player Carter Jennings and guard Gage Gibson won’t be back, but Reading brings his 6-foot-4 frame. Gaven Gaston is 6-foot-1, Kasen Christian is around 6-foot-1, and Carson Huff and Evan Utterback are each around six feet tall.

Connaway said all of that size vertically will help, but there is also some size horizontally with muscular frames being brought over from the football field. Each of those aforementioned names were part of an 8-3 season for the Indians on the gridiron, as was “big-bodied” Gibson Condie that is expected to be more in the post this season.

“We hit the offensive glass well,” Connaway said about last year. “Hopefully, we can be a defensive rebounding team and limit teams to one-and-done.”

Connaway said the Indians want to bring their defensive average closer to 40 points per game but will need to be better rebounding and play a clean brand of defense.

“If we can do it without fouling, I think our defense can be a strength as well,” Connaway said. “We can’t get in foul trouble, especially early on with a lot of inexperience on the bench. There is a lot of experience in the starters, but other than that, it’s going to be a learning curve for a little while.”

Until those inexperienced players on a 12-man varsity roster can “steal minutes,” Connaway said he’s hop-



Van-Far junior Pacey Reading soars through the air for a fastbreak layup during a jamboree hosted by the Indians at Van-Far High School in Vandalia. The Indians had a dominant regular season but fell short in the district championship game. They want to go deeper this season.

[Jeremy Jacob]

ing his returners can carry a lot of the weight. He said Gaston will serve in a big role as the primary ball handler, which previously belonged to Nikos Connaway and Utterback is a “workhorse” in the post. Huff is a senior that enters his second year as an Indian following a transfer from Wellsville-Middletown, which went to a state Final Four his freshman year, and is the second biggest scorer returning after Reading.

Connaway said Van-Far needs a “two-three punch” to go with Reading, who knows can consistently bring scoring, rebounding and 3-point shooting. He said the Indians need that consistency from the rest of his returners, no matter who has the scoring production any given night.

“It might just be one,” Connaway said. “It could be a different kid on a given night. They’ve all got the potential to score in double figures. We can’t have a night where Pacey scores 20-plus and no one else scores.”

Sophomore Kaleb Baskett and freshman Bryce Reading should get some minutes, and the junior Christian should have a bigger role. Connaway said Christian didn’t play a lot of minutes last year due to being a defensive-focused player but expects to fill a similar role to Gibson a year ago as a ball handler and passer.

Connaway said this year’s Indians have “every bit of the same” potential as last year’s team so the goals will be the same. Van-Far won the Bowling Green Tournament and finished third in the Tony Lenzini Tournament in Palmyra along with coming close to a district title. The Indians will be going for those along with an Eastern Missouri Conference title along with teams like Montgomery County, Bowling Green and Clopton.

“Realistically, we might be a year away from a big, big run, but the potential is there this year,” Connaway said. “It’s a good group of kids, and they’ll be a fun team to watch again.”

# North Callaway girls go in with scoring potential

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

The North Callaway girls are confident they'll be able to score the basketball this season.

The Ladybirds lost five seniors from a team that won its most games (18) in seven years and averaged its most points (53.9) in 15 years but have some talent coming in.

Head coach Andrew Klein said that, among the smaller 13-girl roster this season, there are two seniors and three juniors on the roster for not much age experience. However, the freshmen and sophomores have shown some promise for what should be a good offensive year.

"We know how to score the basketball pretty well," Klein said. "One of our strengths will be, as time goes on, will be confidence. I've seen a lot of confidence out of freshmen that you usually have to coach. They brought it in immediately."

Klein said he and his assistants, Olivia Gowin and Mariah Peace, want to "bring the confidence out" so the girls can fare well on the court. Of course, returning



North Callaway senior Natalie Shryock shoots a 3-pointer during a game last season at Sturgeon. Shryock holds school records and leads the Ladybirds into this season.

three starters from last year helps a lot with that.

Natalie Shryock will be a senior after already having a record-breaking career with North Callaway, holding the 3-pointers made record in a game and season. Klein said the three-time all-Eastern Missouri Conference player Shryock will be "padding"

the 3-pointers made in a career record and has a good shot to at least graduate as the second-highest scoring Ladybird.

"I don't know that she's going to get in all-time points, Samantha Heck was a heck of a player," Klein said. "Natalie has a really good chance to be second in all-time points at North Callaway."

[Jeremy Jacob]

It's within striking distance for what she's been averaging really year."

Shryock is the primary threat from the perimeter and the Ladybirds have scoring threats at all levels. Lakyn Hartley is the other senior that is strong offensively and defensively and "hardly came out of the game last year." Kymorie Myers is a junior post player that will play a key role in that area.

Klein said Shryock said records might not be the most important to her this season since she will be player with freshman sister Anna Shryock. The younger Shryock is among a group of talented freshmen that also includes Livia Hartley, Lakyn's sister, and Sophie Olsson. Iceonna Tomlinson is a sophomore Klein said can't be overlooked based on what she did with junior varsity a season ago.

"Anna Shryock will play both ways for us as a freshman, playing some JV and varsity for sure," Klein said. "Livia Hartley will be playing a lot of varsity minutes for us since she's a heck of a defender and ball handler, similar to her sister. Sophie Olsson is a heck of an athlete and has put it

together in the first couple weeks of practice. Iceonna Tomlinson will definitely get some run on varsity too."

While North Callaway had its most successful offensive season in a while, Klein said it was a different story on the defensive end. The 47.5 points allowed per game was a four-year high in a season that ended in the first round of districts after a 69-56 loss to Hermann.

"What we've been working on is our defense," Klein said. "We gave up too many points last year."

Klein said having a smaller and younger roster might have the initial impression of being a retooling season but believes these girls can accomplish more. He said he wants that in his second season as the head coach but knows the girls want that as well.

"It would be an awesome goal for us to shock some people," Klein said. "Ultimately, it's just playing the best basketball down the stretch. That's exactly what any coach wants. The goal right now is to get out of that first round of districts."

# North Callaway boys roster to have more depth this season

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

The North Callaway boys will have plenty of opportunities this season.

The Thunderbirds have quite a bit of players that will have expanded roles, including the four seniors that will be returning with some varsity experience.

Head coach Matt Miller said he estimates those four seniors, three juniors and four or five sophomores will compile the varsity team out of the 25 on the roster this season. Many of those boys rise up the depth chart for more playing time.

"Every year is a brand new challenge," Miller said. "As a coach, you look forward to those new challenges. We had three really good seniors – two first team all-conference and all-district talents that we lost last year. You don't replace those guys. We've probably got more depth one through 10 or one through 12 maybe than we've had on our program."

Sam Pezold and Isiah Craighead are the first team all-Eastern Missouri Conference seniors who graduated, so North Callaway lost their program's all-time leading scorer Pezold and a consistent double-double machine Craighead. Still, Miller likes the players returning this season.

Post player Clayton Moore and guard Levi Drake are seniors that "started quite a bit" and will be expected to have big senior seasons. Miller said CJ Cunningham and Caleb Sheets are the other seniors that were mostly role players last season but will have more playing time, juniors Austin Brown, Dal-

ton Brewer and Zac Craghead will have "expanded minutes," and sophomores Jamarion Glover, Jake Blevins and Brodee Biggers had good summers and will get a look on varsity.

"Balance and depth will be key for us," Miller said. "We can play four games in a row and have four different leading scorers on any given night, which is a good thing and sometimes a bad thing. But I think we're going to be balanced and I don't think opponents are going to be able to key on one or two guys to stop us."

Miller said that the roster doesn't have a first team all-conference player but added that is only "right now." Some can step up to have really good seasons since they are "trending in that direction."

The balance of the roster should allow North Callaway to beat teams in various ways with size, quickness, shooting and ball handling. Primarily, though, Mill-

er said the Thunderbirds' speed stands out.

"We've got some speed across the board," Miller said. "We've got some big athletic post guys that can get up and down the floor and get some stuff done inside, like Clayton, Jamarion Glover, Jake Blevins and Zac Craghead. They are big athletic guys that are 6-3 plus that all run the floor really well."

Miller hopes playing faster will lead to more points rather than turnovers, but that might take time to iron out. It would also be good to at least match, if not surpass, the 10 wins from a season ago, but that depends on the boys.

"If they come to practice to dominate the day or win the day, the outcome will take care of itself," Miller said. "Can we dominate this scrimmage? You do all the things you're supposed to do daily, all of that other stuff will take care of itself."



The North Callaway Thunderbirds run during practice before this season at North Callaway High School in Kingdom City.

[Jeremy Jacob]

**Good Luck!** ATHLETES!

**Poindexter Earth Moving, Inc**

50 years of service

Clearing, Ponds, Lakes,  
Waterways, and Terraces



John Cell: 573-473-4889

Justin Cell: 573-473-2650

16929 Audrain Rd. 725 • Martinsburg, MO 65264



PROUD  
SUPPORTERS OF  
THE PARIS R-II  
SCHOOL DISTRICT!

**Fault Solutions LLC &  
Trash-It LLC**

Paris, Missouri

Quentin & Ashley Ashenfelter

**573-473-6802**

**Good Luck**  
to all the Winter  
sports athletes!

**Fixin' Big Problems, Cars Too!**

**Fischer**  
**BODY SHOP**

3800 S. Clark • Mexico, MO 65265

**573-581-2277**

[www.fischerbodyshop.com](http://www.fischerbodyshop.com)



# Good LUCK

# ATHLETES!



### HS BOYS BASKETBALL

Number	Player	Grade
2	KaTavyn Wheeler	9
4	Brett Beamer	10
11	Matthew Utterback	11
12	Nick Henke	10
14	Caden Thomas	10
21	Layton Wright	9
22	Colton Peak	9
23	Clayton Eikel	10
24	Cooper Rohan	11
25	Clayton Jennings	12
31	Kyler Kobush	9
32	Layne Rohan	9
33	Clayton Crum	9
40	Kyler Swaim	11
41	Rett Curtis	10

*Coach: Kody Asquith      Assistant Coach: Tyler Kobush  
 Manager: Andrew Poindexter*

### HS GIRLS BASKETBALL

Number	Player	Grade
4	Lydia Hoyt	10
10	Peyton Beamer	11
11	Rylee Rafferty	12
20	Sophie Fennewald	9
22	Chloe Johnson	11
24	Myla Carroll	9
25	Gabby Knipfel	9
32	Kat Meyer	11
33	Amy McCurdy	12
34	Aaliyah Welch	12
42	Jocelyn Curtis	11

*Coach: Bob Curtis      Assistant Coach: Kendra Murphy  
 Manager: Kensley Murphy*



### HS CHEERLEADERS

Name	Grade
Ella Duenke	12
Gallie Jennings	12
Kate Robnett	12
Brooke Painter	11
Peyton Schafer	11
Karagen Matich	10
Grace McCoskey	10
Kaylee Braden	10
Rosie Contreras-Mendez	9
Zoey Hull	9
Kooper Schafer	9

*Coach: Charlea Schafer*



COMMUNITY R-VI SCHOOL DISTRICT

# Trojans

*Home of the*

**ONE FREE  
 GAME  
 ADMISSION  
 WITH THIS COUPON**

Must be shown at the gate  
 Home games only  
 One coupon per person

# Davis enters into primed North Callaway boys wrestling

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

It is clear to new head coach Brock Davis that North Callaway boys wrestling is in a good state.

Davis takes over after being an assistant coach at Father Tolton, a college wrestler at Westminster College in Fulton and a high school wrestler at Rock Bridge. He will lead the Thunderbirds program that had its first ever state champion a season ago with Lane Kimbley and returns a talented roster that includes a state medalist and another state qualifier.

Davis pointed out the “small world” that exists between North Callaway and Tolton as he coached under Ross Rosenbaum, who started the wrestling program at North Callaway. On top of that, Jadon Henry also coached at Tolton last season following some time coaching with the Thunderbirds.

“When I decided it was time to take the next step, as soon as I decided, it was the next week I saw this program was hiring a head coach,” Davis said. “Ross was like, ‘You would be a perfect fit.’ I interviewed and am really liking it so far.”

Davis said he “strictly focused on the wrestling” in his almost a decade experience as an assistant coach but found out quickly there is “a lot more administrative stuff” early in his first season as a head coach. However, he said the transition has been enjoyable due to how excited and receptive the community and wrestlers have been.

“I’ve done my best to try and make experiences and make myself known,” Davis said. “The parent community and wrestlers have already bought in, and we’re not even rolling yet.”

Davis said there will be about 25 wrestlers with about 75 percent being underclassmen but are younger wrestlers with talent and experience. Collin Moore is a sophomore but earned a third-place state medal last season for the best finish ever by a North Callaway freshman.



North Callaway boys wrestling head coach Brock Davis demonstrates a technique with girls wrestling head coach Ronnie Kimbley during a girls wrestling practice before this season. Davis was hired to be the new boys wrestling head coach after being an assistant coach at Father Tolton.

[Jeremy Jacob]

There are a bunch of freshmen this season that can make an impact this season, Davis said, since they have wrestled before. While they aren’t 10-12 year wrestlers, he said he can expect more out of them from the beginning.

“I’m going to have a really big group in here, and I’ve got a really big group of kids that are right there on the edge of stepping up and being the next state champ,” Davis said.

Casper Safranski is a senior that has taken multiple trips to state, including last season when he was one match away from a medal but lost an overtime match by sudden victory. Davis said Safranski has shown good leadership on the football field so expects the same in the wrestling room.

“He is going to be a big-time

leader for the program,” Davis said. “He is type of man I expect to be a leader in my room, based on his personality, how he treats people and how he works.”

North Callaway won its first ever state championship last season after winning the Greater Missouri Wrestling Conference tournament. Davis said he can see the Thunderbirds having the potential for ever greater team glory this or next season, namely a state plaque.

“My individuals, they have some goals that could be podium-worthy, for sure,” Davis said. “As a team, I am definitely looking to get a plaque. It would be really cool. I have been lucky enough to step into a team that probably could have done it without me. With me stepping in now, I’d like to think I can help secure that goal.”

# North Callaway girls return state presence, double the roster

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

Girls wrestling continues to grow at North Callaway. Brooke Giboney returns as the Ladybirds’ first ever state qualifier and will be part of a roster of six girls, which doubles from last year’s total.

Head coach Ronnie Kimbley takes over as the girls head coach again this season and steps away from the head coaching position with the boys in favor of Brock Davis. Kimbley said at the end of last season Giboney had a tough draw in her first ever state appearance, being eliminated after going 0-2 against the eventual state champion and third-place finisher, but brings that experience back.

“I’m expecting her to be someone the girls can lean on for leadership,” Kimbley said. “We have Brooke, a junior, one sophomore and four freshmen.”

With all of the others on the roster being underclassmen, Kimbley said patience for improvement is definitely required but is glad to see girls wrestling programs at North Callaway “growing at all levels.”

“We are definitely young, but everyone brings something different to the room that will help everyone improve,” Kimbley said. “We have to be patient and focus on the little things and wrestle every position. Our goal is to be a team that competes for the podium in every tournament that we enter.”



North Callaway junior Brooke Giboney drills with girls wrestling head coach Ronnie Kimbley before this season. Giboney qualified for state last season.

[Jeremy Jacob]

## Good Luck Athletes!

### Vaccination Season is Here...

- Flu vaccines
- Vaccines required before entering school
- A vaccine to prevent pneumonia
- A vaccine to prevent shingles
- COVID boosters

Our highly qualified staff can easily administer these immunizations. Speak to a staff member today about the immunizations we offer!

We are proud to offer free delivery inside Mexico city limits.

**webber family of pharmacies**

webber pharmacy  
1101 W. Monroe St. #103  
Mexico, MO • 573-581-6930

**jackson street drug**

200 East Jackson St.  
Mexico, MO • 573-581-7561

## GOOD LUCK

to all the WINTER SPORTS ATHLETES!

## Have a great season!

# MillerTire

of mexico, missouri

1212 East Liberty Street • Mexico, MO 65265  
573-581-2890 • millertiremissouri.com

## 71 Years... and Counting!

# Missouri Military Academy hopes size enough to be competitive

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

Missouri Military Academy is looking for a new start this season.

Now Gil Hooker is the new head coach, the Colonels are going for an improvement from last year's 2-22 season. MMA will have returning players when some finish the state Final Four soccer season but many more with some good skills.

Hooker said about 15 will be on the varsity roster, 10 for junior varsity and some freshman and sophomores can form a freshman team. He said MMA can use its size to its advantage but will need to work on other areas.

"We'll be working from the inside out with all the size we do have," Hooker said. "We want to get the ball inside. Transitional defense is something we're going to need to work on. Our offense is a little stale, but



Missouri Military Academy sophomore Kennedy Barchigei goes for a layup in a preseason jamboree before this season at Van-Far High School in Vandalia.

[Jeremy Jacob]

that comes with repetitions and learning each other."

Gihana Favour Nziza is a huge part of the soccer team's success as the goalkeeper but is a huge part of the Colonels on the court. His 6-foot-7 frame towers

over everybody on the floor.

Mateo Eaton is MMA's starting point guard, and Eric Shellabarger is another soccer player that will be on junior varsity at least but has a chance to appear on varsity. Hooker said

Miles Matthews and Kennedy Barchigei are some key returners from last year and Levi Foster is a transfer that provides depth at point guard.

"We've got a bunch of kids from different places," Hooker said. "We're putting it all together."

Barchigei has shown the ability to play good pressure defense and point guard, like Hooker observed in MMA's preseason jamboree at Van-Far. Hooker said Carson Mulvaney is a shooter that can get hot after he hits one of two from the perimeter, and Lance Latting and Pierce Essex are good shooters.

Manzur Manzur is a big kid that should improve with footwork and practice with Hooker's brother and assistant coach Verlyn Johnson. Seydina Issa Diop should fill in as a backup role for Nziza, Hooker said, and Khas-Erdene Sod-Erdene can be a "switch player" and fill

either guard or forward. Todbi- leg Boldbaatar, Nziza's younger brother Gihana Honour Neza, Foluwasha Adebisi and Justice Cordova are all developmental players Hooker and Johnson are high on.

Hooker wants to be more competitive this season and believes the Colonels should at least aim for better than .500 record, which was previously achieved in 2020 with a 12-11 record. He had three years of coaching experience at MMA before taking last year off and liked what he saw enough from this MMA team during a jamboree even without its full roster.

"I always want to be about .500," Hooker said. "If we get to 12-15 wins, that would be pretty great. I'd like to be competitive in the first round of districts as well. This is probably the best MMA team I've been around since I've been coaching."



Missouri Military Academy senior Avin Hernandez handles the ball during Thursday's Class 1 soccer state championship game in St. Charles.

[Jeremy Jacob]

## MMA from page C1

tear this season, when the Hawks averaged 4.1 goals per game. The Hawks capped the season with an eight-game winning streak.

Goodwin said those early goals definitely had an impact on the game. He just didn't mean on the scoreboard but mentally.

"They put us on our back heels, and I think it shook us a little bit," Goodwin said. "We moved away from the game plan. For a 30-minute spell, we were on our heels a lot. They took advantage of some individual mistakes and simple errors that they capitalized on."

Senior Will Geary set Final Four records by scoring seven goals (two against MMA) and recording 15 points in a season he finished with 60 goals. Meanwhile, Goodwin said Fernando Puebla and his team-high 37 goals going in were shut down most of the game by Valley Park.

"It's his size, his physicality and his speed," Goodwin said. "He's got good attributes as a player. Even matching up our best player against him, he found some good moments and was definitely a handful for us. I don't think he was their biggest threat. It was a contribution of their full team going forward tonight."

MMA did finish this year as the state runner-up, but Goodwin said this team can be simply summed up that way. Goodwin said he saw his players a lot on the practice field and during games but also every day at school. In that respect, the players and people behind those players won't be forgotten anytime soon.

Puebla, Alex McBride and his 16 goals, and the defensive back line that includes Avin Hernandez, Eric Shellabarger, Alvaro Gonzalez and Emiliano Martinez were definitely crucial parts of the team this season. However, Goodwin said success like this year is only achieved by a strong full roster. For example, Mateo Eaton and Patri-

cio Sanchez have been "fantastic" in the mid-field and Emilio Perez gave the Colonels a spark since joining them after the start of the season.

"In my eyes, we'll never be runners-up," Goodwin said. "We'll never be because I'll always be proud and always look back on this moment with pride and so should they. It's a special team. You don't have special teams and groups like that every year. They'll always be a special team and a team I'll remember for a long time."

"Seeing how the chemistry evolves every single practice, every single game and how they get to know each other even more, it's truly amazing," Padilla said. "I'm proud of my boys. They've been doing an incredible job the whole season."

Goodwin is glad to have coached a team where "everybody supports each other" and appreciates everybody around the Colonels, including athletic director Brian Meny offering his support and Padilla being a "phenomenal" coach. That was evident to the very last second of a strong second half to end a special season.

"They played with pride," Goodwin said. "That's all I asked them to do. I said, 'Go out there and prove something. Don't let this season die. Don't shy out. Don't be second best. Go out and prove what we've done.' I was pleased with their second-half performance."

# MMA wrestling fully loaded in weight classes on roster this season

BY JEREMY JACOB  
Sports Editor

Missouri Military Academy wrestling doesn't have any holes in its roster this season.

That means that the Colonels expect to have wrestlers competing at all 14 weight classes and even have multiple cadets vying for the same spot in most cases.

Head coach Levi Iman said the roster of about 35 brings a bigger influx in the smaller weight classes of 106 and 113 pounds.

"We've got four of five kids that are going to be able to fill those two spots for us," Iman said. "Even with the lower number of guys we had come out, we have depth in each weight class. We have two or three guys in most of our weight classes so we have a good backup and we've got a good practice partner for everybody."

Iman is excited to add newcomers like Daniel Bravo and Tyler Isbell to fill those lower weight classes.

The core of MMA's team will be its senior group led by Ryan Miles. Last season, Miles qualified for state after winning 33 matches and went 0-2. He did have a tough draw by facing the eventual state champion Marco Dalakishvili, of St. Pius X (Kansas City) in his first match, and then lost a 3-1 decision to St. Francis Borgia's Adam Ashworth.

"He's looking really good, and he's ready for some more," Iman said. "He wants to go to state again."

Michael Pfeifer is another key senior that hopes to bounce back after a couple of injuries last season and Adam Swenson and Blake Krull also are in that senior group. Nathaniel Summers is a junior heavyweight that will be with the Colonels for a full season after joining them mid-season a year ago.

Iman wants all of the wrestlers to be better prepared for districts and for end of season bouts. Keep-



Missouri Military Academy senior Ryan Miles competes in the Class 1 state wrestling meet last season at Mizzou Arena in Columbia.

[Jeremy Jacob]

ing that in mind, MMA is scheduled to go to the Battle on the Katy Trail tournament in Sedalia, which will bring talented wrestlers from 60 schools, and

a tournament at St. Mary's South Side in St. Louis to face tougher competition.

"Of our district last year, it's got about 75 percent of those schools," Iman said

about the Katy Trail tournament. "It's going to be a great tournament for our guys to be able to go into and get a little bit of district competition."



**Good luck, athletes!**

Watch for Colonels' cadet-athletes in these winter athletics: basketball, wrestling, JROTC rifle and JROTC drill.

Now enrolling for day or boarding school, grades 7-12 PG.

Average class size: 14 cadets, with many classes having less than 10 cadets.

Athletics: 10 varsity and junior varsity sports, plus four middle school sports.

College prep success: MMA's Class of 2024 earned more than \$4.9 million in college scholarships.

Scan for info.





**SET BUMP SPIKE**

**ADULT COED VOLLEYBALL LEAGUE**

CoEd. 18 years of age and older.

**Registration Deadline:**  
**December 30, 2024.**

Registration is by "Team" not individual. One team member registers the entire team.

**\$220/team.**



**GAMES**

**Sundays: January 5, 12, 19, 26 February 2 and 16**

Mexico Area Family YMCA 1127 Adams Street 573-581-1540  
MEXICOYMCA.ORG