

Fall

Sports Report



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MUHS sports teams look to build on a pretty good year

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury Union High School teams didn't earn any new banners to hang in the school gym during the fall of 2023, but the season had to be rated a success.

The Tiger football team won a road Division I quarterfinal, and came achingly close to claiming a semifinal victory. Girls' volleyball posted double-digits in wins and earned a home playoff victory in its inaugural campaign.

Boys' soccer reached the D-II semifinal round and lost an OT heartbreaker to the eventual champion. A Tiger bass fishing duo followed up its 2022 state title with a runner-up finish. The girls' and boys' cross-country teams each finished fourth in D-II.

The recently reborn boys' golf program qualified for the D-II tournament.

Only the young MUHS girls' soccer team failed to enjoy any postseason success, though the group had its moments.

Can the Tiger athletes match or surpass those accomplishments this fall? MUHS Activities Director Sean Farrell shed some light on what to expect.

FOOTBALL

Farrell brought up a data point that shines a light on the consistency of the Tiger football program under three coaches during the past two-plus decades, all with similar, if not exactly identical, philosophies and tactical approaches.

"We've had one losing season in 22 years here, so the prognosis is always good," Farrell said.

Certainly there were, as always, graduation losses, including the team's starting quarterback and three Shrine Bowl players, one of whom was the team's leading rusher.

But the new starting quarterback, senior Luke Nueder, saw playing time a year ago, and the running backs who'll see most of the carries this year — the top two are fullback Avery Carl and halfback Alex Sperry, plus junior Logan McNulty and senior Tassilo Luksch — all saw action in 2023.

At offensive tackle, seniors and tri-captains Kyle Stearns and Angus Blackwell will help open holes for the backs, and other experienced linemen are back on both sides of the ball, including their Callan Boulanger.

"We do have a good core returning, which is great," Farrell said.

The Tigers will run most of the time, but the pass was effective in the first game. When Nueder throws, likely targets will be senior

Tucker Morter and junior Cook Riney.

"We've always had throwing in our arsenal, and we can do it when it makes sense," Farrell said. "Tucker is certainly an asset for us out there, and Cooke Riney at tight end has a lot of height and athleticism."

Many of those same players will be fixtures on defense.

"We've always been a program with a lot of players going both ways," Farrell said.

The Tigers should have the depth to spell them, with 57 athletes signed up.

"We've got a lot of solid players returning. We've got a great coaching staff who seem to always get them ready," Farrell said during preseason. "So, as always, I think we're going to be right in the mix and have a great season."

VOLLEYBALL

Coach Bethany Morrissey's girls' volleyball program made quite the splash in its first season at the varsity level, showing enthusiasm and chemistry as well, earning the No. 4 seed in the only statewide division and winning a home playoff game before falling in a quarterfinal. The Tigers wound up at 13-3.

The Tigers' senior captain graduated, but Farrell said there are others ready to step up.

"There is a lot of good leadership still within the program. Emma Morrissey, Georgie Kiel and Ronan Young are the three captains and are consistent players," Farrell said.

"We have great numbers, so we have three teams, balancing out the development of our players and the development of our program, as well as having a competitive varsity team," he added.

With nine seniors on the varsity team, experience should mean more good results, he added: "We should be very strong."

BOYS' SOCCER

The new boys' soccer coach is Max Ratti-Bicknell, a former Vergennes standout who graduated from VUHS in 2017, played club soccer at UVM, and for the past two seasons coached JV teams at Mount Mansfield Union that lost only once overall. Early Tiger player feedback has been positive, Farrell said, adding Assistant Coaches Andrew McWilliams and August Morrison have been instrumental in creating a smooth transition.

Ratti-Bicknell inherits a Tiger squad that's reached — and lost in — the D-II semifinal round in four straight seasons, the last two in tough, one-goal setbacks.

This year's squad also saw its leading scorer

and several key players graduate in June.

"Just like any program, you have your graduates, and you have your core behind them," he said.

Returning to start for a third year is senior all-state midfielder Ollie Choudhury, and for a second year starting, junior all-league goalie Jonathan Kafumbe. There are also experienced defenders and midfielders and promising young attackers on the roster, including junior striker Ben Longman.

Farrell said the group played a lot of soccer over the summer and appears to be developing good chemistry under the leadership of Choudhury, Kafumbe and its new coach.

"One of his (Ratti-Bicknell's) strengths is his ability to connect with the players," Farrell said. "He's bringing the group together."

BASS FISHING

Maybe the most successful sport at MUHS during the past two years has been bass fishing, thanks to Coach John Fitzgerald and two 2024 graduates, Dylan Stowe and Riley Disorda.

In 2022, they edged a Mount Abe pair by a slim margin and claimed the state championship. In 2023, in stormy conditions off Grand Isle, the duo settled for silver.

This fall, Fitzgerald and his assistant coach/boat captain Chris Groman will have to evaluate their 10 anglers' abilities to see who the final four are who will compete at the VPA championship.

One team member could have an edge if all things are equal: Senior Vance Larocque is the only Tiger who has been on the squad since its founding.

The program's numbers this year are comparable to 2023, Farrell said, but there appears to be a difference. "More of these kids are dedicating themselves to bass fishing," he said. "There's a lot of interest. Our success at the state level doesn't hurt."

Farrell credited the coaches, who take the students out on their own boats and volunteer their efforts in the offseason.

"It really comes down to the coaches/captains who are willing to use their boats. They put in the time and energy. They will take these kids out all summer if any of these kids are available and want to go," he said. "It shows true commitment."

CROSS COUNTRY

A year ago, Coach Chris Anderson's MUHS girls' and boys' cross-country teams both

(See MUHS, Page 4)

MUHS

(Continued from Page 3)

finished fourth in Division II at the state championship meet in Thetford, stretching a string of the program's respectable or better efforts.

There's reason to expect more of the same this fall.

On the girls' side, junior Mary Harrington and senior co-captain Beth McIntosh are back after running 2-4 in the 2023 championship race, and senior co-captain Sarah Benz and classmate Jessie Bodette are also back after scoring at the state meet.

It's too early to say who will step up as the fifth scorer or even possibly challenge for a higher spot, but Farrell suggested freshman Louisa Orten could be one candidate.

The boys' team lost its top finisher, but five runners at the 2023 Thetford state meet return. In order of their finish a year ago, they are junior Kaden Hammond and seniors Baker Nelson, Ethan Spritzer, Aaron Carr-Perlow and Keil Broderson.

Nelson and classmate Matthew Berg are the co-captains.

"That's our core back that we expect to lead the team throughout the season," Farrell said "I fully expect them to be competitive through the season. We've had a good tradition in our cross-country program of success. Chris Anderson will do a good job."

GIRLS' SOCCER

Coach Reeves Livesay leads a veteran girls' soccer team, with eight seniors, while at the same time it's blessed with youth on a roster of 19 that includes six sophomores and two freshmen.

"There's a lot of senior leadership," Farrell said, which he said is supplemented by junior all-league midfielder Solstice Binder, a co-captain along with senior back Meredith Horne, a multi-year starter.

Offense can come from seniors Jazz Hurley and Lily Dame, while senior Kaitlyn Brown returns in goal. Seniors Elsa Burrows and Ada Weaber and sophomore Isabel Quinn, a returning starter, are among those who will work with Horne in the back.

Farrell believes the team has ample reason to believe it can improve on its No. 10 seed and first-round loss in the D-II tournament in 2023.

"I think they're going to have a great season. Reeves does a great job working with them," Farrell said. "I think we have some very good athletes, and we're starting to develop some team chemistry and work together. They're going to do a good job."

FIELD HOCKEY

Tiger field hockey Coach Makayla Foster and assistant Tajah Marsden focused on intangibles as well as skills and tactics during the Tiger field

hockey preseason, according to Farrell.

"Makayla and Tajah are doing a great job," he said. "They're bringing a great energy and bringing more community to it."

For example, he said the team is re-starting the traditional Monday afternoon youth clinics run jointly by the coaches and athletes, something that had been an important way to introduce younger potential players to the sport as well as build team camaraderie.

"They're just trying to get the sport out there again," Farrell said, noting there are now six athletic offerings for girls in the fall now at MUHS — soccer, field hockey, cross country, and the recent additions of volleyball, bass fishing and golf

The program does have better numbers. Eight ninth-graders signed up, boosting the varsity team's count to 18, including just three seniors, defender Meredith Cameron, midfielder Lila Cook Yoder, and goalie Michaela Charbonneau. Junior Kenyon Connors joins Cameron and Cook Yoder as tri-captains.

"We haven't had that growth at that level for a while, so that obviously is spelling a good future for us," Farrell said.

On the field this season, the team will be looking for its second D-II postseason victory in six years.

As well as the talent of the team's captains, Farrell noted Charbonneau is an accomplished goalie, junior Quinn Doria has established herself at midfield, most of the team's other juniors will be entering their third season and are now experienced players, and the freshmen appear to be holding their own during practices.

So it's fair to expect the Tigers to be more competitive this season. "The energy on the field is better than it has been in years past, and I'm always one to say chemistry beats talent. So if you've got talent and chemistry on your team, that makes you tough to stop," Farrell said.

GOLF

Coach Joe Crodelle's MUHS golf program is growing, with 11 boys signing up this year and all three girls from last year's team returning.

On the boys' side, the Tigers qualified for the D-I tournament a year ago. The top scorer graduated, and another golfer didn't return, but seniors Cooper Quinn and Ben Fuller and sophomore Reany McKinley are back to give another shot at qualifying and competing for a title.

Farrell believes sophomore newcomer Rowdy Malcolm, already an experienced golfer, will join them on the tournament unit.

The fifth spot will likely be up for grabs among the one junior, two other sophomores, and four freshmen boys on the roster.

The three girls on the team are all sophomores — Abigail Andres, Sedona Carrara and Maggie Morter. On the girls' side, that's enough to compete as a team, and Farrell hopes the trio can progress to the point they could give it a shot.

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MUHS

FOOTBALL



Middlebury Union High School Varsity Football Team

Name	Grade
Angus Blackwell	12
Callan Boulanger	12
Tanner Burns	12
Avery Carl	12
Grayson Dennison	12
George Devlin	12
Tassilo Luksch	12
Tucker Morter	12
Luke Nuceder	12
Aiden Pellerin	12
Tyreese Rucker	12
Alex Sperry	12
Kyle Stearns	12
Cam Whitlock	12
Wesley Audet	11
Levi D'Avignon	11
Ben DeBisschop	11
Marshall Eddy	11
Mason Harrington	11
Jackson Heffernan	11
Steven Lackard	11

Brayden McKee	11	Brady Lloyd	10
Logan McNulty	11	Levi Nuceder	10
Yankee Rheume	11	Sam Sherman	10
Sutton Rubright	11	Jason Sperry	10
Cooke Riney	11	Tucker Wright	10
Aiden Benoure	10		
Parker Carl	10		

**Middlebury Union High School
Varsity Football**

Date	Opponent	Time
8/30	St. Albans	7 p.m.
9/6	Mt Anthony	7 p.m.
9/13	@ Rutland	7 p.m.
9/20	@ Hartford	7 p.m.
9/27	Brattleboro	7 p.m.
10/5	@ CVU	3 p.m.
10/11	Essex	7 p.m.
10/18	@ Burr & Burton	7 p.m.



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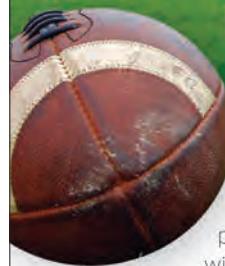
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MUHS

FIELD HOCKEY



**Middlebury Union High School
Varsity Field Hockey Team**

Coach: MaKayla Broughton

Name	Grade
Michaela Charbonneau	12
Meredith Cameron	12
Lila Cook Yoder	12
Addison Schnoor	12
Hex Bingham	11
Maya Breckenridge	11
Kenyon Connors	11
Quinn Doria	11
Ivy Gates	11
Heaven Ross	10
Thea Boglioli	9
Bea Deering	9
Jocelyn Foster	9
Lena Guiliani	9
Harper Hendy	9
Elle MacIntyre	9
Fallon Ray	9
Sophie Simpson	9

**Middlebury Union High School
Varsity Field Hockey**

Date	Opponent	Time
8/31	Mt Abe	10 a.m.
9/4	Burlington	4:30 p.m.
9/7	OV	10 a.m.
9/10	@ Colchester	4 p.m.
9/12	Fair Haven	4:30 p.m.
9/18	Essex	4:30 p.m.
9/26	@ S. Burlington	4 p.m.
9/28	@ CVU	10 a.m.
9/30	@ Mt Abe	4 p.m.
10/5	Colchester	10 a.m.
10/8	Mt Mansfield	4 p.m.
10/10	@ Burlington	4 p.m.
10/16	@ Rice	4 p.m.
10/18	@ Essex	4 p.m.

MUHS

BOYS' SOCCER



Middlebury Union High School Varsity Boys' Soccer Team

Coach: Max Ratti-Bicknell

Name	Grade
Ollie Choudhury	12
Joshua Kafumbe	12
Jake Mitchell	12
Colton Odell	12
Keith Odell	12
Haakon Olsen	12
Ian Sinclair	12
Nick Carpenter	11
Trennon Cioffredi	11
Oscar Drake	11
Theo Fallis	11
Jonathan Kafumbe	11
Ben Longman	11
Callan McDowell	11
Barlow McWilliams	11
Annan Duquette-Hoffman	10
Landon Hunt	10
Noah Gillespie	10
Timmy Laframboise	10
Henry McDonnell	10
Ellington Patterson	10

Middlebury Union High School Boys' Varsity Soccer

Date	Opponent	Time
9/4	Spaulding	4:30 p.m.
9/7	@ Harwood	10 a.m.
9/13	Hartford	4:30 p.m.
9/18	Milton	4:30 p.m.
9/21	VUHS	10 a.m.
9/24	Mt Abe	4:30 p.m.
9/27	@ Rice	4:30 p.m.
10/2	Missisquoi	4 p.m.
10/5	@ Milton	10 a.m.
10/8	@ VUHS	4 p.m.
10/11	@ Mt Abe	4 p.m.
10/16	Rice	4 p.m.
10/19	@ Missisquoi	10 a.m.

MUHS

GIRLS' SOCCER



**Middlebury Union High School
Varsity Girls' Soccer Team**

Coach: Reeves Livesay

<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Kassidy Brown	12
Elsa Burrows	12
Lily Dame	12
Jillian Dragon	12
Addison Dunakin	12
Meredith Horne	12
Jazmyn Hurley	12
Ada Weaber	12
Esra Anzali	11
Solstice Binder	11
Lia Calzini	11
Cooper Cannon	11
Skyler Choiniere	11
Sawyer Witscher	11
Violet Anderson	10
Emilia Bullock	10
Alice Livesay	10
Isabel Quinn	10
Jordyn Rushton	10
Evelyn Schoelzel	10
Anni Broderson	9
Finley Drake	9

**Middlebury Union High School
Girls' Varsity Soccer**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Time</u>
9/3	Montpelier	4:30 p.m.
9/7	@ U-32	10 a.m.
9/10	Otter Valley	4:30 p.m.
9/14	Spaulding	10 a.m.
9/17	Milton	4:30 p.m.
9/20	VUHS	4:30 p.m.
9/23	@ Milton	4:30 p.m.
9/25	Mt Abe	4:30 p.m.
9/28	@ Rice	10 a.m.
10/7	@ Mt Abe	4 p.m.
10/9	@ VUHS	4 p.m.
10/15	Rice	4 p.m.

MUHS

CROSS COUNTRY



Middlebury Union High School Varsity Cross Country Team

Coach: Chris Anderson

Name	Grade
Eva Andrews	12
Sarah Benz	12
Matthew Berg	12
Jessie Bodette	12
Keil Broderon	12
Aaron Carr-Perlow	12
Lucas Flinger	12
Avery Hamilton	12
Beth McIntosh	12
Baker Nelson	12
Gabe Schmitt	12
Ethan Spritzer	12
Berkeley	
Graham-Gurland	11
Kaden Hammond	11
Mary Harrington	11
Nate Cook Yoder	10
Blake Davidson	10
Truth Fetterolf	10
Jase Kozak	10
Charlie Reiderer	10
Charles Young	10
Alex Anderson	9
George Cammack	9
Jorgen Pirrung	9
Annika Bruning	9
Sadie Chance	9
Selma Citarella	9
Eva Menguc	9
Louisa Orten	9



Middlebury Union High School Varsity Cross Country

Date	Opponent/Event	Time			
8/31	@ Essex Inv.	10 a.m.	9/28	@ U-32 Inv.	9:40 a.m.
9/7	@ Burlington Inv.	10 a.m.	10/5	@ Thetford Inv.	10 a.m.
9/17	@ Mt Abe	3:30 p.m.	10/11	NVAC Meet at MVU	1 p.m.
9/20	Hosts	3:30 p.m.	10/26	State Meet at Thetford	10 a.m.

MUHS

VOLLEYBALL



Middlebury Union High School Varsity Volleyball

Coach: Bethany Morrissey

Name	Grade
India Danyow	12
Aven Fronkovic	12
Juliette Hunsdorfer	12
Sara Kent	12
Georgie Kiel	12
Maggie Klingensmith	12
Emma Morrissey	12
Margaret Orten	12
Ronan Young	12
Marilyn Almedia-Perez	11
Anna Wolosinski	11
Tenny LaRoche	10

Middlebury Union High School Varsity Volleyball

Date	Opponent	Time
8/29	Missisquoi	6 p.m.
9/3	Vt Commons	6 p.m.
9/5	@ Rice	6 p.m.
9/10	@ Rice	6 p.m.
9/13	@ Vt Commons	6 p.m.
9/17	@ St Albans	6 p.m.
9/18	@ Randolph	4:30 p.m.
9/24	Montpelier	6 p.m.
9/27	@ Harwood	6 p.m.
10/1	Lyndon	6 p.m.
10/8	@ Hartford	6 p.m.
10/10	Colchester	6 p.m.
10/15	@ Missisquoi	6 p.m.
10/17	Enosburg	6 p.m.

MUHS

GOLF



Middlebury Union High School Varsity Golf Team

Coach: Joe Crodelle

<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Benjamin Fuller	12
Cooper Quinn	12
Berkeley Graham-Gurland	11
Abigail Andres	10
Max Ayer	10
Sedona Carrara	10
James Hellyer	10
Rowdy Malcom	10
Reaney McKinley	10
Maggie Morter	10
Ethan Dodds	9
Peter Fuller	9
Ibis Kin	9
Case Pitner	9

Middlebury Union High School Varsity Golf

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Time</u>
BOYS:		
9/4	@ Ralph Myhre	4 p.m.
9/5	@ W Bolton CC	4 p.m.
9/10	@ Ralph Myhre	4 p.m.
9/13	@ Jay Peak CC	4 p.m.
9/17	@ Ralph Myhre	4 p.m.
9/24	@ St. J Academy CC	4 p.m.
10/1	D-II Qualifier at Neshobe	10 a.m.
10/10	State Tourney at Burlington CC	
GIRLS:		
9/16	@ Cedar Knoll CC	4 p.m.
9/20	@ Basin Harbor	4 p.m.
9/23	@ Champlain CC	4 p.m.
10/3	@ Cedar Knoll CC	4 p.m.
10/8	State Tourney at Burlington CC	

MUHS

BASS FISHING



**Middlebury Union High School
Bass Fishing Team**

Head coach: John Fitzgerald
& Chris Gorman

<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Austin Gendron	12
Vance Larocque	12
Ezra Louer	12
Kameron Raymond	11
Taylor Altemose	10
Wyatt Bigelow	10
Nate Cook Yoder	10
Connor Gordon	10
Larry Bougor	9
Duncan Wedge	9

**Middlebury Union High School
Bass Fishing**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Time</u>
9/17	VPA Classic at Grand Isle	7 a.m.
10/8	State Tourney at Grand Isle	7 a.m.

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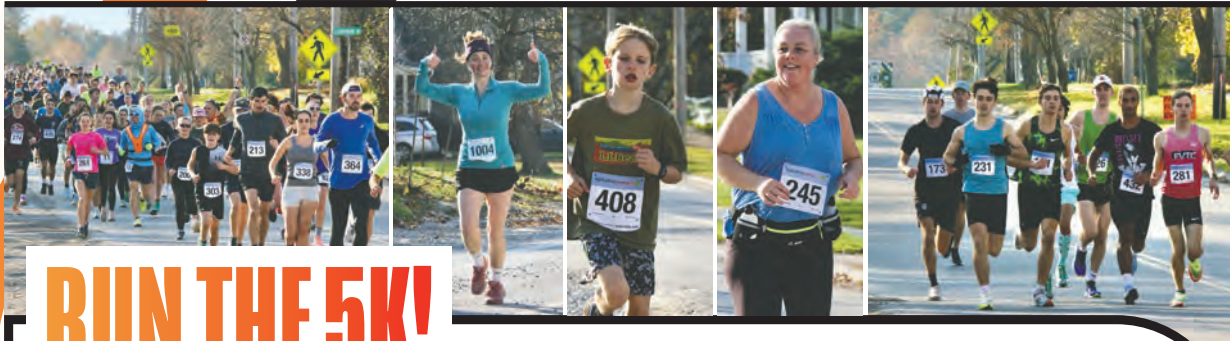
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Many Eagle teams are on the brink of breakthrough

By **ANDY KIRKALDY**

BRISTOL — Overall, the Mount Abraham Union High School teams will be aiming for a little more success this fall than last fall.

Collectively, Eagle teams won two first-round Division II playoff games in the fall of 2023, and neither of those teams, girls' soccer and field hockey, went on to win their quarterfinal matchups.

The Eagle boys' soccer team hosted a playoff game, but fell just short of victory, while the Mount Abe-Vergennes collaborative football team couldn't hold a late lead in its final game and ended up missing the Division II playoffs by a single point.

Not enough cross-country runners went to the D-II state meet to score as a team, and the Eagle bass anglers failed to duplicate a strong 2022 showing. The golf team sent a member to the D-II tournament as an individual, and he put forth a strong effort in taking second, but also graduated.

What to expect in 2024? Mount Abe Athletic Director Devin Wendel offered his insights.

GIRLS' SOCCER

The girls' soccer team's successful 2023 season ended with a loss to traditional playoff rival Harwood — the Eagles and Highlanders have met in seven of the past nine D-II tournaments. Coach Dustin Corrigan's Eagles have won most of the clashes, including the 2014 final. "It's been bonkers how often we end up matched against them," Wendel said of steady playoff pairings of the two perennial girls' soccer contenders.

This year the Eagles should field a competitive side: the roster includes 11 seniors, and several younger veterans also return.

"We're bringing back a lot of solid athletes," Wendel said. "There are some juniors mixed in, and three freshmen that I think are going to be contributors."

The team should have unusual depth, he added, with 19 athletes capable of contributing, which will allow Corrigan to keep fresh athletes on the field.

"Coach is going to feel pretty confident in putting any of his players into any situation at any point in the game," Wendel said.

Wendel said another reason the team should have a successful campaign is chemistry, with many experienced athletes who have also been softball and/or basketball as well as soccer teammates.

"We have a lot of good multi-sport athletes,"

he said. "We also have kids who just love soccer. If not year-round, they're training six or eight months a year to get better. And I think this is just a smart group of players who have come up through the ranks ... I think the mesh is good, and I think there is going to be really good leadership, too."

BOYS' SOCCER

The Eagle boys played well enough to get the No. 8 seed and host No. 9 Rice in the first round last year. But Rice, a team they had edged twice in the regular season in close games, pulled off a mild upset on the way to a berth in the D-II title game.

The team will have a new look this year, and not only due to major graduation losses: Former Eagle player and Addison United coach Chris Coffey takes over as the program's coach. Coffey said he would emphasize fitness, a growth mindset and a positive team culture, while tailoring tactics to his players' strengths.

As for the team, Wendel acknowledged the Eagles would have a different look, with only four returning seniors.

"We were definitely not senior-heavy," he said.

But that doesn't mean the cupboard is empty. As well as those four, junior James Graziadei was an all-state player a year ago and he and classmate Liam Lazare head a talented group of younger players to join with the seniors and help the Eagles be competitive once again, Wendel said.

"As the season goes on it will be a matter of how much are they going to be proving themselves," he said.

Numbers are also strong, with 37 in the program, including three who could swing back and forth between varsity and JV.

"It's a good little squad this year," Wendel said. "I think the vision we have at the midfield is going to be super important."

MAV FOOTBALL

Coach Jeff Stein's MAV eleven's 2023 season combined solid wins and disappointing setbacks, none more heartbreaking than the Eagles' 14-13 season-ending road loss that left the 3-5 Eagles one win short of the D-II postseason.

Among the graduation losses were a 1,000-yard rusher and Shrine Bowl player and the team's top receiver. But quarterback Rhett Lathrop returns, as do many of the team's linemen, according to Wendel, and Lathrop can hand the ball off Cole Gagnon, while

Tyler White and Clark Crary return as proven targets in the Eagles' short passing game.

"He (Stein) is excited about what he has up front. He's excited about what he has coming back," Wendel said. "When you look at what we have up front, we have a nice solid line."

As always, establishing the run will be important, said Wendel, himself a former Eagle football player.

"Balancing that run game has been something our staff has been working more and more on," he said. "You have to have something to keep the defense honest."

In all, Wendel said if the Eagles avoid injuries — and they are not the deepest of teams — they should again be in the hunt.

"Every game counts. We have to take care of ourselves. We have a small roster this year. We have to stay healthy. We have to stay tough," he said. "And we have to go into every game like it's our last one."

FIELD HOCKEY

In 2023 Coach Jen Myers's Mount Abe field hockey team, the last Eagle outfit to play a full Metro Division schedule against mostly D-I teams, did not rack up many wins in the regular season. But the Eagles' strength of schedule earned them a D-II home game, which they won before a quarterfinal loss to eventual champion Hartford.

More offensive production will be vital if the team, which will be led by six returning seniors, is to improve its regular-season mark, according to Wendel, while the defense and goaltending (senior Rory Hendee returns in the cage) should be strong.

"The name of the game this year is really going to be who is really going to step up and be our goal-scorer," he said. "I think we have some good stuff set up in the sense that we can hold some teams in check, for sure ... It's just a matter of are we going to put points on the board."

The schedule will remain a challenge, with the benefit of raising the Eagles' level of play, if they can maintain their confidence.

"We're still playing a super-competitive regular season, which hardens you going into the playoffs, but it is a battle. We're playing the best teams in the state every day. And it's about keeping the chin up ... and going into the playoffs," he said.

CROSS COUNTRY

There's no escaping the fact that current numbers are lower than typical for the Mount
(See *Mt. Abe*, Page 16)

Mt. Abe

(Continued from Page 15)

Abe cross-country running program, with seven boys and six girls signing up.

But Wendel believes new Coach Tucker Anderson can inject “new life” into the program. He and Anderson have talked about how to recruit for and build the program, with offseason training high on the list.

“He’s super invested, and did a great job over the summer getting them ready for the season,” Wendel said. “It’s hard to build that strength and stamina in the course of the season.”

Wendel and Anderson also talked about reestablishing the Mount Abe indoor track program as a way to make running a three-season sport at Mount Abe as a way to help build the cross-country program.

“Having continuity among those three programs will definitely pay off,” Wendel said.

Returners are few. The Eagles did not field scoring teams at the D-II state meet in 2023, and only three sophomores return from among the five athletes who did run: Rhiannon Andrews and Merissa Gordon on the girls’ side, and Ezaias Herben on the boys’ side. Wendel cited freshman Carson Norris as the newcomer with possibly the most initial promise.

Former coach Katie Burdett will also assist. “Having the familiarity with Katie as a coach working with the program and having Tucker as a new point person is really exciting,” Wendel said.

BASS FISHING

Carroll Isham returns to coach and provide a boat for the Mount Abe bass fishing team this fall. The Eagles settled for 15th-place this past season after finishing second to Middlebury in 2022 by the smallest of margins.

As school started in late August only three sophomores had signed up to cast lines into Lake Champlain this fall. The program will also attend an early-season tournament hosted by Burr & Burton and try to get out as often as possible on top of the two sanctioned Vermont Principals’ Association events that make up the sport’s official season.

Isham came aboard late in the season a year ago to fill a vacancy, and this season has been able to get things rolling more smoothly, Wendel said.

“This year Carroll was able to step right in on Day One and meet at the school, going over knots and strategies and boat safety and all that,” he said. “And we started looking for other opportunities for kids ... just to get that extra experience on the boat.”

GOLF

There is good news for the golf team, which will be coached by Emily Ringquist this fall. “Golf is kind of exploding a little bit,” Wendel said, with nine golfers signed up, all underclassmen boys.

Two of the Eagles’ top four golfers from 2023’s small team graduated.

Returning from the Eagle team that came up short in qualifying for the D-II tournament as a group are Stefan Johnson and Brody Barnard, who shot respectable scores of 99 and 104, respectively, in the qualifying effort. Freshman Spencer Sears has some golf experience, Wendel said, but most of the rest of the team are learners: Those who emerge quickly and get around the course reasonably effectively will challenge for a scoring slot.

Overall, Wendel hopes that “Having the numbers will build that culture,” thus allowing what is a lifetime sport to obtain a more solid foothold at Mount Abe. “Having the team go from one kid to nine over the course of three years is pretty cool,” he said.



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CROSS COUNTRY



Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Cross Country Team	
Coach: Tucker Anderson	
Name	Grade
Elliot Senecal	12
Rhiannon Andrews	10
Bennett Eberhardy	10
Merissa Gordon	10
Ezaias Herben	10
Jakob Hill	10
James Mount	10
Oliver Zelonis	10
Saebryn Carter	9
Ellie Newman	9
Sadie Nezin	9
Karson Norris	9
Cameron Vose	9

Mount Abraham Union High School Cross Country		
Date	Opponent/Event	
8/31	@ Essex Inv.	10:30 a.m.
9/7	@ Burlington Inv.	2 p.m.
9/10	@ Milton	3:30 p.m.
9/17	Host	3:30 p.m.
9/20	@ MUHS	3:30 p.m.
9/24	@ Rice	4 p.m.
9/28	@ U-32 Inv.	9:40 a.m.
10/1	@ Milton	3:30 p.m.
10/5	@ Thetford Inv.	10 a.m.
10/11	NVAC Meet at MVU	4 p.m.
10/19	@ Richford Inv.	10 a.m.
10/26	State Meet at Thetford	10:30 a.m.

Mt. Abe

BOYS' SOCCER



Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Boys' Soccer Team

Coach: Chris Coffey

Name	Grade
Riley Coffey	12
Nick Fox	12
Aricin Griffin	12
Jake Prouty	12
Evan Audy	11
Evan Corrigan	11
James Graziadei	11
Zealand Jackson	11
Aidin Hodzic	11
Liam Lazarre	11
Maverick Livingston	11
Cole Putnam	11
Johnny Stanley	11
Abraham Camara	10
Rowan Clark	10
Jaran Griffin	10
Lincoln Painter	10
Abe Ready	10
Truman Sawyer	10
Wayden Cherington	9

Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Boys' Soccer

Date	Opponent/Event	Time
9/7	@ U-32	12 noon
9/13	@ Colchester	4:30 p.m.
9/18	@ Missisquoi	4:30 p.m.
9/21	Rice	9 a.m.
9/24	MUHS	4:30 p.m.
9/26	Milton	4:30 p.m.
9/28	@ GMVS	11 a.m.
10/2	@ VUHS	4 p.m.
10/5	Missisquoi	10 a.m.
10/8	@ Rice	4 p.m.
10/11	MUHS	4 p.m.
10/14	GMVS	4 p.m.
10/16	@ Milton	4 p.m.
10/19	VUHS	10 a.m.

Mt. Abe

GIRLS' SOCCER



**Mount Abraham Union High School
Varsity Girls' Soccer Team**

Coach: Dustin Corrigan

Name	Grade
Rosemary Behounek	12
Lily Benoit	12
Molly Burgess	12
Safoura Camara	12
Lauren Cousino	12
Whitney Dykstra	12
MacKenzie Griner	12
Hazel Guillemette	12
Louisa Painter	12
Abba Parker	12
Hazel Stoddard	12
Morgan Larocque	11
Skyler Macdonald	11
Lila Brightman	11
Isla Underwood	11
Ada Hellier	9
Olivia Sawyer	9
Payton Shepard	9
Sophie Underwood	9

**Mount Abraham Union High School
Girls' Varsity Soccer**

Date	Opponent/Event	Time
8/30	@ Harwood	4:30 p.m.
9/3	Peoples	4:30 p.m.
9/6	@ Spaulding	4:30 p.m.
9/11	@ U-32	4 p.m.
9/17	@ Rutland	6 p.m.
9/21	Rice	11 a.m.
9/25	@ MUHS	4:30 p.m.
9/28	Milton	10 a.m.
10/1	@ VUHS	4 p.m.
10/9	Fair Haven	4 p.m.
10/7	MUHS	4 p.m.
10/9	@ Rice	4 p.m.
10/15	@ Milton	4 p.m.
10/18	VUHS	4 p.m.

Mt. Abe

FOOTBALL



Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Football Team

Coach: Jeff Stein

Name	Grade
Hayden Bassett	12
Gerrit Beenen	12
Tyler Wright	12
Hubert Frizzell	11
Rhett Lathrop	11
Connor Nason	11
Jackson Paquin	11
Gabe Roussin	11
Shayne Russell	11
Dakota Safford	11
Logan Stearns	11
Noah Vartuli	11
Ryan Wright	11
Mason Atkins	10

Clark Cray	10
Juan De La Cruz	10
Cole Gagnon	10
Ryder Heffernan	10
Irie Mazur	10
Eli Schondube	10

Shayne Bratmuller	9
Izaiha Deyett	9
Luca Heins	9
Chase Wright	9
Izaak Wolzinski	9

Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Football		
Date	Opponent/Event	Time
8/31	@ Mill River	1 p.m.
9/5	@ Spaulding	6 p.m.
9/14	@ Rice	1 p.m.
9/21	Otter Valley	1 p.m.
9/28	Missisquoi	1 p.m.
10/5	Fairfax	1 p.m.
10/12	Milton	1 p.m.
10/18	@ North Country	7 p.m.

Mt. Abe

FIELD HOCKEY



Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Field Hockey Team

Coach: Jen Myers

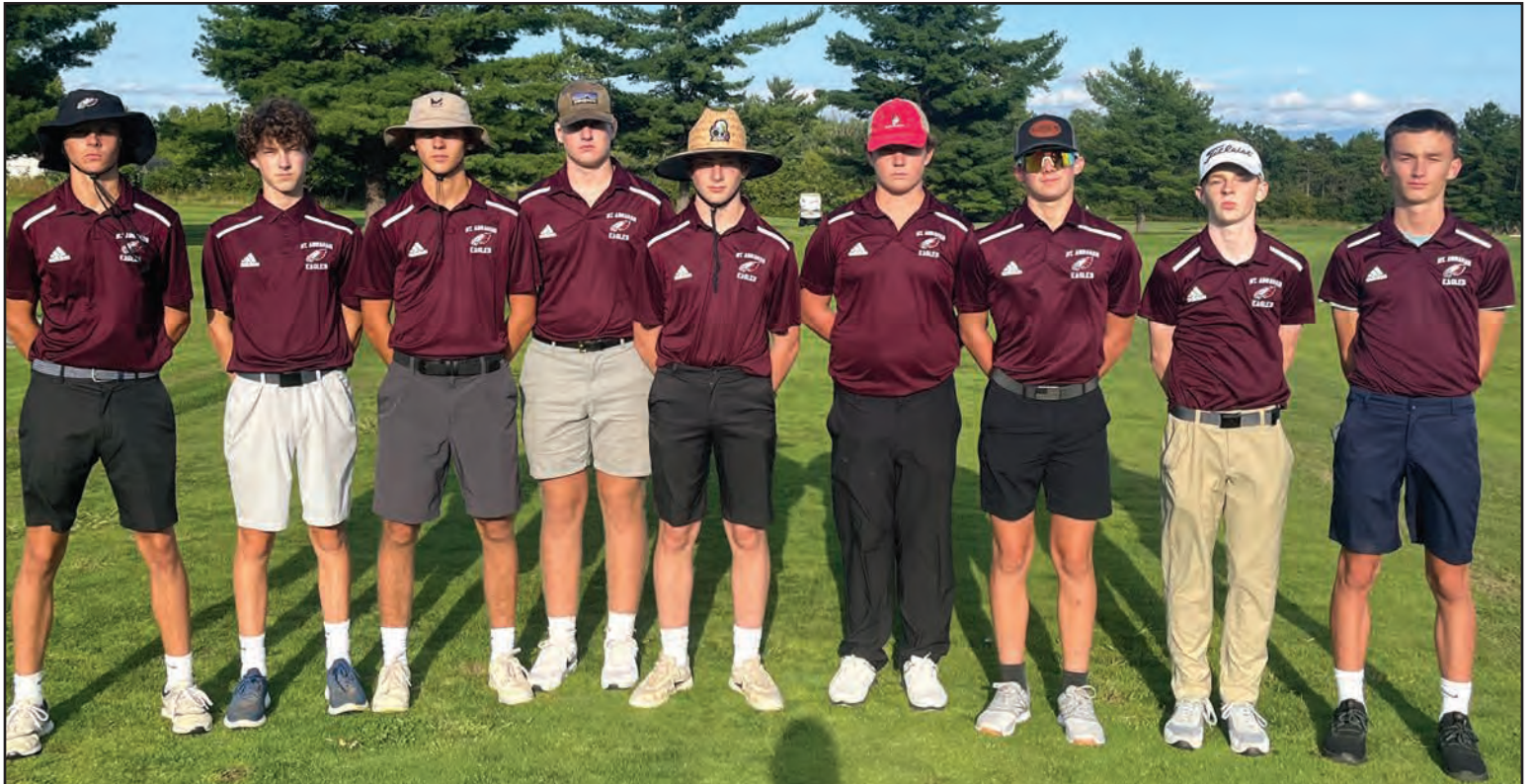
Name	Grade
Lily Case	12
Bella Hartwell	12
Rory Hendee	12
Paden Lathrop	12
Addy Nezin	12
Lexy Perlee	12
Isabelle Allenson	11
Louisa Guilmette	11
Maris LaPerle	11
June Yates-Rusch	11
Addison Wright	11
Eleanor Hurlburt	9
Gwen LaPerle	9

Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Field Hockey

Date	Opponent/Event	Time
8/31	@ MUHS	10 a.m.
9/4	U-32	4 p.m.
9/7	@ CVU	10 a.m.
9/10	Rice	4 p.m.
9/12	@ S. Burlington	4 p.m.
9/18	Mt. Mansfield	4 p.m.
9/21	Colchester	10 a.m.
9/24	@ Burlington	4 p.m.
9/26	CVU	4 p.m.
9/30	MUHS	4 p.m.
10/5	@ Essex	10 a.m.
10/10	S. Burlington	4 p.m.
10/16	@ Mt. Mansfield	4 p.m.
10/18	@ at Rice	4 p.m.

Mt. Abe

GOLF



Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Golf Team	
Coach: Emily Ringquist	
Name	Grade
Brody Barnard	11
Cooper Cook	11
Joseph Sullivan	11
Wyatt Giroux	10
Stefan Johnson	10
Jackson LaMarche	10
Andrew Doherty-Konczal	9
Mason Forand	9
Spencer Sears	9

Mount Abraham Union High School Varsity Golf		
Date	Opponent/Event	Time
9/4	@ Cedar Knoll	4 p.m.
9/5	@ Basin Harbor	4 p.m.
9/10	@ Ralph Myhre	4 p.m.
9/12	@ Basin Harbor	4 p.m.
9/17	@ Lang Farm	4 p.m.
9/24	@ Basin Harbor	4 p.m.
9/26	NVAC Meet at Cedar Knoll	10 a.m.
10/1	D-II Qualifier at Neshobe	9 a.m.
10/10	State Tourney at Burlington CC	tba

Mt. Abe

BASS FISHING



**Mount Abraham Union High School
Bass Fishing Team**

Coach: Carroll Isham

Name	Grade
Ethan Bromley	10
Garrett Duell	10
Hailey Isham	10
Isayah Isham	10

**Mount Abraham Union High School
Varsity Bass Fishing**

Date	Opponent/Event	Time
9/17	VPA Classic at Grand Isle	7 a.m.
10/8	State Tourney at Grand Isle	7 a.m.

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Commodores expect growth will lead to success

BY ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — The most successful teams at Vergennes Union High School in 2023 were arguably cross country and girls' soccer, with the former taking fifth in Division II and the latter winning a playoff game for the first time in four years.

Meanwhile, boys' soccer had its moments; bass fishing team members enjoyed their time on the water, and the activity continues to establish itself as a fall fixture at the school; while golf also continues to grow, and this fall has a new coach.

Here are backgrounds on each of the programs, as well as Athletic Director Peter Maneen's thoughts on outlooks for each.

GIRLS' SOCCER

The big news for the Commodore girls' soccer program is a new head coach: Morgan Kathan takes the reins. Kathan is a 2014 Black River High School graduate who scored 97 goals for her school's girls' soccer team. She went on to play the sport at Keene State College in New Hampshire.

Kathan is better known locally as the PE teacher at Ferrisburgh Central School; she is entering her second year in that post. She takes over the VUHS team from longtime co-coaches Dwight Irish and Maneen.

Kathan inherits a program that reached the D-III finals three times between 2018 and 2020. But the Commodores didn't win a playoff game after that until prevailing in a first-round home contest a year ago.

Many of that squad's players, most of them still undergraduates, return this year, and Maneen said the group is ready to build on last season.

"Everybody got a lot of playing time last year, only having 15 kids on the team, so a lot of kids gained a lot of experience," he said. "This year it will be seeing how quickly those kids go from learning to leading."

The team returns All-State D-III striker Ava Francis, and Maneen said there are also freshman forwards who should help provide scoring punch. Speed on the outside midfield should be a positive, he added, and there are solid outside backs.

Maneen said the core of the team will probably be Francis at striker, Ashtin Stearns and Eva Borah at central midfield, and Adrienne Smits at central defense. "(The team's) strength is going to be right up the middle," Maneen said.

The Commodores play a Lake Division schedule that includes several D-II title contenders, and expectations should be tempered. But that challenge should help come the postseason.

"We're the smallest school in a pretty tough league," Maneen said. "I would say .500, and then work into the top eight again for the playoffs is realistic."

BOYS' SOCCER

Coach Kevin Hayes's Commodore boys had reached the D-III semifinals for three straight seasons and four of the past five before taking a few lumps in 2023, including a first-round road playoff loss as a No. 11 seed. Many players who sparked the earlier run received diplomas before last season. Maneen said teams can experience ups and downs, and the pendulum might be swinging back.

"Over the last couple years they'd graduated a number of all-state players," he said. "Those younger kids last year had to take on larger roles, and that can take some time, but all those kids are returning. So this year they should take a step forward."

Effort won't be an issue, Maneen said, including from key players like senior center back Spencer Gebo and junior center midfielder Ryker Mosehauer, and some quick newcomers up front who show promise.

"They work hard, like you would expect from any of Kevin's teams. They won't get outworked," he said. "It's just a matter of finishing the opportunities when they're there, because you don't always get a ton of them."

The expectations for the boys' soccer team are probably similar to those of the girls' team.

"For them, the goal is to finish in the top half of D-III and get back to having at least one home playoff game," Maneen said.

CROSS COUNTRY

Coach Brad Castillo's cross-country team



BOYS' SOCCER

"They work hard, like you would expect from any of Kevin's teams. They won't get outworked. It's just a matter of finishing the opportunities when they're there, because you don't always get a ton of them."

— Athletic Director
Peter Maneen

FILE PHOTO

in 2023 enjoyed one of its best seasons on the boys' side, posting a fifth-place finish at the D-II state meet despite being one of the division's smallest schools. Three of five scoring runners at that meet return, headlined by the team's top finisher, senior Grey Fearon, who went on to more success in the indoor and outdoor track seasons.

Maneen and Castillo are looking for more big things from Fearon this fall after finishing 17th overall a year ago.

"Obviously, Grey is going to be our top runner. He could be in the top 10," Maneen said. "And the team is looking to improve on their finish last year."

There are 10 boys total on the team, including returning state scorers Carter McGuire and Chance Koenig. Castillo will look for others to step up to fill the scoring vacancies.

Four girls also signed up, three of whom return, all of whom ran at the state meet: top finisher Eleanor Wilkinson-Sachs, Torrey Hanna and Madeleine Stroup. The team needs at least one more runner to field a scoring squad at the D-II meet, and Maneen said the program is working on that.

"We're trying to recruit one more runner so they can score as a team," Maneen said.

Despite that, VUHS will host a cross country meet this fall — the first in decades. The middle school hosted a meet in 2023.

"We're going to look at having Mount Abe and Middlebury come up for a small meet for first time since the '60s, I think," Maneen said.

BASS FISHING

Coach Jack McGuire returns to lead the bass

(See VUHS, Page 26)

VUHS

(Continued from Page 25)

fishing program, with about a dozen students signed up to wield rods, an uptick from the nine of 2023. The program is coming off a pair of mid-pack finishes in season-ending tournaments, but the team of anglers continue to learn the ins and outs of what is a lifetime sport and enjoy their time out on the water.

“As much as it is a state tournament and you’re looking to finish high, their goal every year is just to increase the participation into bass fishing, which is a lifelong sport, and introduce the kids to different styles, different lures, that type of thing, and just get them out,” Maneen said.

The AD is pleased with the program’s progress.

“Jack does a great job with things, giving the kids an opportunity,” Maneen said. “They keep it fun for the kids. It’s been a great addition to our program, to have kids be part of our athletic program that otherwise probably wouldn’t be.”

GOLF

The VUHS golf program’s new coach is school alum Will Benton, a former Basin Harbor Club professional now working as a real estate appraiser in Vergennes.

For the first time since the program was revived a couple years back, the Commodores should also be able to field a scoring team, with six boys signing on. Maneen said Quinn LeBeau appears to be the top golfer of those participants, with the ability to shoot in the 80s. “He’ll take the lead,” he said.



FILE PHOTO

There are good signs for the future as well, Maneen said, with another six boys and a couple girls participating in middle school golf.

Maneen said Benton’s returning as “an accomplished golfer and a former pro” and having the kids have some official scoring opportunities” should combine to give the program a lift.

“We’re really encouraged where we’re headed here after bringing the program back to life just a couple years ago,” he said. “Just like bass fishing, it’s been a great addition.”

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VUHS

CROSS COUNTRY



**Vergennes Union High School
Varsity Cross Country Team**

Coach: Brad Castillo

<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Connor Brogan	12
Grey Fearon	12
Torrey Hanna	12
Brody McGuire	12
Sawyer Garthaffner	11
Chance Koenig	11
Carter McGuire	11
Eleanor Wilkinson-Sachs	11
Madeliene Stroup	10
David Coburn	9
Caleb Hatch	9
Lauren Hill	9
Georgia Kunkel	9
Emerson Morrill	9

**Vergennes Union High School
Varsity Cross Country**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent/Event</u>	
8/31	@ Essex Invitational	10 a.m.
9/7	@ Burlington Invitational	10 a.m.
9/14	@ Queensbury Invitational	10 a.m.
9/17	@ Mt. Abe	3:30 p.m.
9/21	@ Manchester, NH	10 a.m.
9/24	@ Rice Meet	3:30 p.m.
10/5	@ Thetford Invitational	10 a.m.
10/11	NVAC Meet at MVU	1 p.m.
10/18	@ Mt. Mansfield	3:30 p.m.
10/26	State Meet at Thetford	10 a.m.

VUHS

BOYS' SOCCER



**Vergennes Union High School
Varsity Boys' Soccer Team**

Coach: Kevin Hayes

<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Owen Colette	12
Ethan Croke	12
Axel de Boer	12
Brayden Duggento	12
Spencer Gebo	12
Spencer Grimm	12
Reese Paquette	12
Gabriel Scribner	12
Tiegen Buskey	11
Aiden Fuller	11
Peter Maneen	11
Ryker Mosehauer	11
Garrett Wood	11
Colton Reed	10
Connor Simison	10
Rowan Neffinger	9
Liam Paquette	9

**Vergennes Union High School
Boys' Varsity Soccer**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Time</u>
8/30	GMVS	4:30 p.m.
9/10	@ Enosburg	4:30 p.m.
9/14	Fair Haven	11 a.m.
9/18	@ Rice	4:30 p.m.
9/21	@ MUHS	11 a.m.
9/24	@ Milton	4:30 p.m.
9/27	Missisquoi	4:30 p.m.
9/30	@ GMVS	4:30 p.m.
10/2	Mt Abe	4 p.m.
10/5	Rice	11 a.m.
10/8	@ VUHS	4 p.m.
10/11	Milton	4 p.m.
10/16	@ Missisquoi	4 p.m.
10/19	@ Mt Abe	10 a.m.

VUHS

GIRLS' SOCCER



**Vergennes Union High School
Varsity Girls' Soccer Team**

Coaches: Morgan Kathan

<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
MaryBeth Cosgrove	12
Mia Kitchuen	12
Tryphene Miguel	12
Jing Williams	12
Nilah Fitzgerald	11
Ava Francis	11
Octavia Devine	11
Faith McAllister	11
Libby Ringer	11
Quincy Sabick	11
Ashtin Stearns	11
Eva Borah	10
Ella Romond	10
Adrienne Smits	10
Isabelle Van Voorst	10
Megan Willis	10
Lauren Husk	9
Sophia James	9
Addie Smith	9

**Vergennes Union High School
Girls' Varsity Soccer**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Time</u>
8/30	@ Peoples	4:30 p.m.
9/3	Enosburg	4:30 p.m.
9/6	Hazen	4:30 p.m.
9/11	Fairfax	4:30 p.m.
9/14	Lyndon	2 p.m.
9/17	@ Rice	4:30 p.m.
9/20	@ Middlebury	4:30 p.m.
9/23	Rice	4:30 p.m.
9/25	@ Milton	4:30 p.m.
10/1	Mt Abe	4:30 p.m.
10/5	@ GMVS	11 a.m.
10/7	Milton	4 p.m.
10/9	MUHS	4 p.m.
10/18	@ Mt Abe	4 p.m.



BASS FISHING



**Vergennes Union High School
Varsity Bass Fishing Team**

Coach: Jack McGuire

<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Brody McGuire	12
Zachary Norris	12
Felipe Sanchez-Gonzalez	12
Harmony Stearns	11
Trevor Carr	10
Kyle Clark	10
Ryan Johnson	10
Liam McGuire	10
Ella Bearor	9
Caleb Stearns	9

**Vergennes Union High School
Bass Fishing**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent/Event</u>	<u>Time</u>
9/17	VPA Classic at Grand Isle	7 a.m.
10/8	State Tourney at Grand Isle	7 a.m.

VUHS

GOLF



**Vergennes Union High School
Varsity Golf Team**

Coach: Will Benton

Name	Grade
Ben Hale	10
Ryan Johnson	10
Quinn LeBeau	10
Asa Root-Pratt	10

Vergennes Union High School Golf

Date	Opponent/Event	Time
9/4	@ Middlebury College	4 p.m.
9/5	@ Basin Harbor	4 p.m.
9/10	@ Vermont National	4 p.m.
9/12	@ Cedar Knoll	4 p.m.
9/16	@ Barre CC	4 p.m.
9/19	@ Newport Country Club	9:30 a.m.
9/24	@ Orleans CC	4 p.m.
9/26	NVAC Meet at Cedar Knoll	10 a.m.
10/1	D-II Qualifier at Neshobe	10 a.m.
10/10	State Meet at Burlington CC	TBD

Golf & football strong at OV, but others to excel too

By **ANDY KIRKALDY**

BRANDON — A championship golfer and a winning football team provided most of the highlights for Otter Valley Union High School athletics in the fall of 2023, and they appear poised to provide more success this autumn.

Meanwhile, the Otter field hockey and girls' soccer teams will look to conjure up a bit more excitement this season, and could have the offensive firepower to do so.

Unfortunately, OV boys' soccer team will not be joining the party — lower numbers forced administrators to pull the plug on the program's season. Fortunately, most of the team's athletes either signed up for other OV programs or are playing soccer at other schools on member-to-member agreements. And OV Athletic Director Steve Keith said good middle school numbers bode well for this being a one-year blip in the school's six-decade boys' soccer history.

In better news, two-time defending Division II golf medalist Lucas Politano returns, as do three teammates who helped OV almost qualify for the 2023 state tournament as

a group, while numbers are up for both that program and the Otter cross-country team.

Here's a closer look at each program, including fall forecasts from AD Keith.

FOOTBALL

For OV football, it is a case of meet the new coach, same as the old coach: Former Otter program head Jim Hill returned to the fold late this summer after a few years away. Hill most recently leading Division II Fair Haven to an unbeaten regular season in 2023 before stepping away from that post.

Hill just recently took the OV reins soon after Otter Head Coach Jordan Tolar stepped down late this summer when he received an offer he couldn't refuse — one to join the Hartwick College football coaching staff. Tolar left after leading OV to a 6-2 regular season in 2023, although an upset followed at the hands of No. 6 Springfield in a D-III quarterfinal.

"This (Hill's availability) opened up at the right time," Keith said. "We lost JT pretty late in the process."

Hill joins a team that is motivated to make a deeper playoff run and has good numbers in

the program, 40 in all.

"I think the guys got a really good taste of what it takes to have good success last year. The hard work in practices paid off," Keith said. "And they all kind of didn't like how last year ended."

Hill's Otters have plenty of players returning on both sides of the ball, including both in the backfields and in the trenches.

"We have a ton of offensive and defensive skill players back," Keith said. They include junior quarterback Zach Dragon, senior running backs Isaac Whitney and Noel Pearsons (Hill's stepson) and receiver Chase Razanouski.

A couple key linemen did graduate, but senior offensive lineman Colin Carroccia is a three-year starter who will help anchor the offensive line, and there are a handful of other veterans and newcomers on both sides of the ball who should ensure the Otters will more than hold their own up front, Keith said. "We've got some depth," he said.

Overall, Keith expects solid results.

"There are certain expectations for us to compete, day in and day out," he said. "And the hope is we have some talented kids, and we'll have some good success."

GOLF

Any look at Coach Greg Hughes's golf team starts with Politano, who added to his trophy case this summer by winning a New England tournament to qualify for a national junior amateur tournament, the Vermont Amateur tournament in a four-way playoff, and the Ralph Myhre Golf Course Club Championship.

"Lucas has had, by all rights, the best summer a Vermont high school golfer has ever had," Keith said.

Politano aims to defend his D-II medalist title, but just as much would like to see OV win the D-II team trophy, as it did in 2022.

"He would tell you the same as me," Keith said. "All those guys want a shot at getting back the team title again."

It's not an unreasonable proposition. All three of the other Otters who scored in the qualifying tournament a year ago return, Jackson Howe, Jacob Tripp and Rowen Steen,

and all carded right around 100. A few shots lower apiece might do the trick.

"They've all played a good amount, from my understanding, through the summer. Coach Hughes is pretty happy," Keith said. "It sounds like they've seen some improvement."

And the six newcomers could add more than just hope for the program's future.

"We've added a couple of new guys who are going to compete for spots there," he said.

FIELD HOCKEY

Coach Jodie Keith's OV field hockey team has been steadily competitive over the past few years, but the D-II postseason has not been kind to the Otters — Spaulding has knocked them out in the quarterfinal round in each of the past three seasons.

OV's AD said his cousin, the coach, likes what she has seen of this year's group, including players who must replace standout graduates in goal and central defense.

"Jodie's really happy with the depth she has across the field," he said. "A lot of pieces are pretty interchangeable. She returns some really nice players who will kind of step up in the back."

Coach Keith is promoting backup Alexis Beaulieu to start in the goal, while senior veteran Matelin LaPorte will move to central defense in front of her.

On the attack Breanna Bovey returns as the leading scorer, and Keith said Charlotte Newton, Hannah Desabrais and Sophia Parker are among those who should contribute to the attack.

AD Keith said Coach Keith believes her entire roster should contribute to a successful season.

"I know Jodie is excited because she feels she has a strong group top to bottom," he said. "The group we can slide onto the field there has a really nice opportunity to do very well."

GIRLS' SOCCER

Coach Tammi Blanchard's OV girls' soccer team did not lose many seniors to graduation, but those who walked the stage included an all-state goalie and key cogs at central defense and midfield.

The Otters also started fast a year ago at 5-1, but ultimately settled for a No. 11 seed in D-II and dropped a first-round road contest.

Keith said the Otters are optimistic about this season because the team returns goal-

(See OVUHS, Page 33)

GOLF

"All those guys want a shot at getting back the team title again."

— Athletic Director
Steve Keith

OVUHS

(Continued from Page 32)

scoring punch: Mallee Richardson (eight), Allie Charbonneau (seven), Tegan Boynton and senior Randi Lancour all scored multiple goals a year ago.

“We’re really excited about our opportunity to put some goal-scorers on the field,” he said.

Sophomore Ady Humiston takes over in goal. She has not played soccer previously, but played football a year ago, basketball in the winter, and made a big impact at the plate and in the field this past spring for the OV softball field.

While arguably the team’s best defender graduated, three return in the back: Seniors Savannah Cook and Laura Allen and sophomore Michelle Hendee. “We have some really good defenders coming back,” Keith said.

And the program’s future looks bright, as well, he added.

“We’ve got 16 at the high school and 17 in the middle school,” he said.

CROSS COUNTRY

Coach Cameron Perta’s cross-country program fielded a full team at the D-III state meet a year ago, finishing seventh out of nine boys’ teams after failing to field a scoring group the previous two seasons. That result is one of the best ever for a program that historically has failed to attract high numbers.

It’s possible the squad could do better this fall. Three of the top five OV runners at that meet return: Luke Calvin, who was 22nd overall,



Elisha Bagley and Cooper Rubright.

And Keith said the turnout for the team this fall was strong, including a couple athletes who had hoped to play soccer, for a total of 10 runners, seven of them boys.

“We have six or seven boys who can hopefully lock down that fourth spot,” Keith said.

Also last year, OV’s only female runner at the state meet, Sara Loyzelle, finished 27th in the D-II race. She should have company this year with two other girls signing on, and Keith said the program hopes to recruit one or two more runners and field a scoring girls’ team at the state meet.

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OVUHS

FIELD HOCKEY



Otter Valley Union High School Varsity Field Hockey Team

Coach: Jodie Keith

<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Matelin LaPorte	12
Charlotte Newton	12
Alexis Beaulieu	11
Breanna Bovey	11
Hannah Desabrais	11
Marissa Dick	11
Michaela Hobbs	11
Tayah Cram	10
Sophia Parker	10
Mariterese Pearsons	10
Elliana Berriault	9
Isabella Bovey	9
Amelia Gibbs	9
Olivia Gibbs	9
Katherine Bailey-Warner	9
Aleah Romano	9

Otter Valley Union High School Varsity Field Hockey

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Time</u>
8/31	@ Springfield	11 a.m.
9/4	Fair Haven	4 p.m.
9/6	@ Middlebury	4 p.m.
9/11	@ Brattleboro	4:15 p.m.
9/14	Windsor	11 a.m.
9/17	Burr & Burton	4 p.m.
9/21	@ Bellows Falls	12 p.m.
9/24	Woodstock	4 p.m.
9/28	Brattleboro	11 a.m.
10/1	@ Fair Haven	4 p.m.
10/3	Springfield	4 p.m.
10/7	@ Windsor	4 p.m.
10/12	@ Woodstock	11 a.m.
10/17	Rutland (Senior Game)	4 p.m.

OVUHS

FOOTBALL



Otter Valley Union High School Varsity Football Team

Coach: Jim Hill

<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Addison Boynton	12
Noel Pearsons	12
Kyle Pockett	12
Isaac Whitney	12
Colin Carroccia	11
Jaydon Connors	11
Zachary Dragon	11
Ethan Dukette	11
Eugene Fulton	11
Drake Felkl	11
Ryan Galipo	11
Robert Gilbert	11
Hunter Kehoe	11
Samuel Luis	11
Austin Mallory	11
Chase Razanoski	11
Dominyk Waite	11
Derrick Walton	11
David Bertrand	10
Ayden Larocque	10
Max Potter	10
Keegan Reid	10
George Stamp	10

Colby Benoit	9	Tyson Lanza	9
Colby Brown	9	Eli Larocque	9
Patrick Coleman	9	Jason Littlefield	9
Trevor English	9	Alexandru MacLeod	9
Noah Gilbert	9	Emmett Mallory	9
Garrett Greeno	9	Nolan Quenneville	9
Chase Herrick	9	Jordan Raiche	9
Clover Hobbs	9	Peyton Trombley	9
Ethan Kenyon	9	Lucas Whitney	9
Jared Krans-Gould	9		

Otter Valley Union High School Varsity Football

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Time</u>
8/31	@ BFA-Fairfax	1 p.m.
9/7	Rice	7 p.m.
9/14	Spaulding	7 p.m.
9/21	@ Mt Abraham	1 p.m.
9/28	Milton	1 p.m.
10/5	@ MVU	1 p.m.
10/12	OPEN	
10/19	@ Mill River	1 p.m.

OVUHS

GOLF



Otter Valley Union High School Varsity Golf	
Coach: Greg Hughes	
Name	Grade
Lucas Politano	12
Rowen Steen	12
Jacob Tripp	12
Connor Denis	11
Jackson Howe	11
Jacob Warrell	11
Marek Heitman	9
Gavin Steen	9
Max Eugair	9

Otter Valley Union High School Varsity Golf		
Date	Opponent/Event	Time
8/30	@ Rutland	3:30 p.m.
9/4	@ Woodstock	3:30 p.m.
9/5	@ Manchester	3:30 p.m.
9/9	Neshobe	3:30 p.m.
9/10	@ Equinox	3:30 p.m.
9/11	@ Green Mtn Nat	3:00 p.m.
9/16	@ Rutland	12 noon
9/18	@ Quechee	3:30 p.m.
9/24	@ Woodstock	12 noon
9/25	@ Killington	3:30 p.m.
9/26	@ Ekwanok	1 p.m.
10/1	@ Div 2 Sectionals at Neshobe	9 a.m.
10/8	@ State Girls at Burlington CC	9 a.m.
10/10	@ State Boys at Burlington CC	9 a.m.
10/28	@ New Englands at Mohegan Sun	TBA

OVUHS

GIRLS' SOCCER



**Otter Valley Union High School
Varsity Girls' Soccer Team**

Coach: Tammi Blanchard

<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Laura Allen	12
Savannah Cook	12
Randi Lancour	12
Mallee Richardson	12
Jazalynn Madrigal	11
Emma Stanley	11
Bella Cassel	10
Allie Charbonneau	10
Katelyn Greeno	10
Michelle Hendee	10
Lana Karnai	10
Olivia Quinn	10
Tegan Boynton	9
Amira French	9
Makenzie McNolty	9
Iyla Spensley	9
Madison Stamp	9

**Otter Valley Union High School
Girls' Varsity Soccer**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent/Event</u>	<u>Time</u>
9/4	Hartford	4:30 p.m.
9/10	@ Middlebury	4:30 p.m.
9/13	@ Proc	6 p.m.
9/14	@ GM/Leland-Gray	6/8 p.m.
9/19	Mill River	4:30 p.m.
9/21	@ Fair Haven	2 p.m.
9/24	Woodstock	4:30 p.m.
9/27	MSJ	4:30 p.m.
10/2	@ West Rutland	4 p.m.
10/5	@ Stratton	4 p.m.
10/9	Fair Haven	4 p.m.
10/12	@ Woodstock	11 a.m.
10/15	Stratton	4 p.m.
10/17	@ Hartford	4 p.m.



CROSS COUNTRY



Otter Valley Union High School Varsity Cross Country Team

Coach: Cameron Perta

Name	Grade
Elisha Bagley	12
Luke Calvin	12
Sara Loyzelle	12
Brody Lathrop	11
Brendan McLoughlin	11

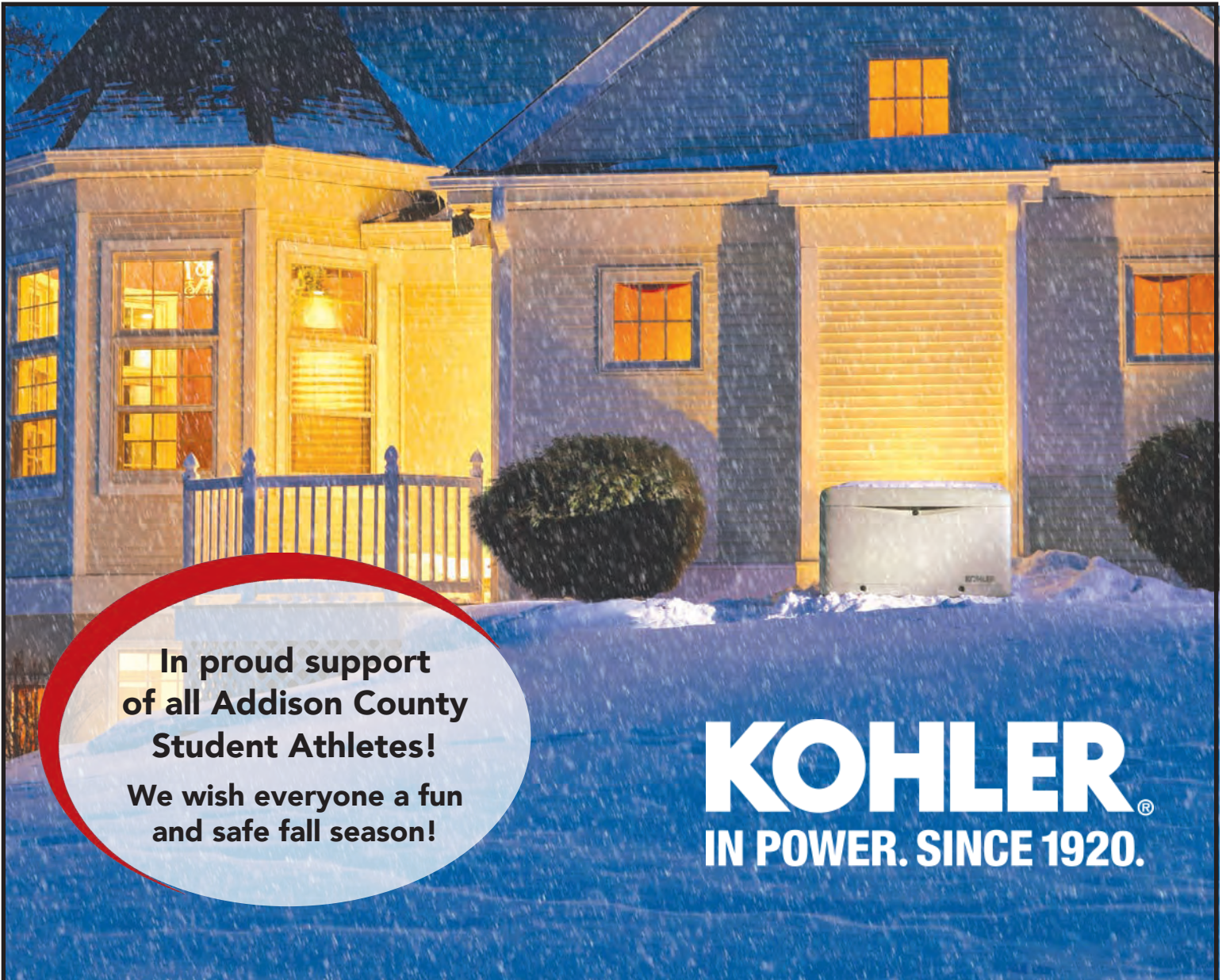
Roni O'Brien	11
Jackson Rawls	10
Cooper Rubright	10
Ryder Snow	10
Shayla Frain	9
Caledonia Gibbs	9



CROSS COUNTRY



Otter Valley Union High School Cross Country						
Date	Opponent/Event	Time				
9/3	@ Rutland	4:45 p.m.	10/1	@ Burr & Burton		4:45 p.m.
9/10	Otter Valley (Senior Race)	4:45 p.m.	10/5	@ Thetford Trail Run		9 a.m.
9/14	@ Queensbury	10:20 a.m.	10/8	@ Springfield		4:45 p.m.
9/17	@ Hartford	4:45 p.m.	10/18	@ Springfield (SVL Champ)		4 p.m.
9/24	@ Fair Haven (Castleton Univ.)	4:45 p.m.	10/26	@ Thetford (State Champ)		9 a.m.
			11/9	@ New Englands		TBA



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