

Sports

Sachems make playoffs for first time this decade

Laconia finished regular season with 9 wins and will host Oyster River tonight

By **ROGER AMSDEN**
THE LACONIA DAILY SUN

LACONIA — The Laconia High School volleyball team finished its season with a 9-5 record, good for eighth place in Division II, and will host ninth-ranked Oyster River (9-7) in the opening round of the state tournament tonight at 6 p.m. at Laconia High School.

If the Sachems prevail they will play top-ranked Gilford (14-2) Saturday at 6 p.m. at Gilford in a quarterfinal game.

It's the first time in more than 10 years that Laconia High has made it into the tournament, according to Laconia Coach Jeff Twombly, who said that for now his team is just taking its season one match at a time and won't be looking beyond Oyster River, which he said is a very good team with a record comparable to Sachems.

"We're totally focused on the next game, not the one after that," said Twombly. Early in the season Laconia was so focused on an upcoming match against Gilford that they were beat badly by Plymouth. They rebounded with a strong match against Gilford, although they lost 3-1.

"After Plymouth destroyed us Friday night, we re-tooled our lineup and were able to remain competitive against a very strong team. Gilford's middle is impossible to get around and they return everything. We were very happy with our performance," said Twombly after the 3-1 loss.

The loss to Plymouth served as a wakeup call for his team. "I guess we were so focused on Gilford that weren't playing our game against Plymouth. We made some changes in our rotation and practiced on them Saturday morning before we played Gilford.



Laconia High School volleyball team made the Division II tournament with a 9-5 record and will host Oyster River tonight at 6 p.m. From left, front row: Taylor Morrill, Kaitlyn Brooks, Gabby Caravona, Kayleigh Thoroughgood, Isabelle Cannuli; back row: Caitlin Beattie, Hannah Dow, Emily Perry, Avy Bartlett, Amber Todd and Coach Jeff Twombly. Not pictured is Maddy Todd. (Courtesy photo)

I'm very proud of the way our girls played and how competitive we were. We were in every set in the first three games and really made Gilford work for the win."

Gilford won the first two sets, 25-22 and 25-21. Laconia won the third, 25-18, to force a fourth set. Gilford sealed the match by winning the fourth, 25-12.

It was the same story the second time they faced the Golden Eagles as they lost 3-1.

He said that Hannah Dow, a junior, and sophomore Avy Bartlett, who has registered 64 kills, have had good years for the Sachems, as has Maddy Todd, a senior, who has well over 100 kills.

"In recent years we've been trying to make incremental progress and it's working, we're getting better year by year."

In other tournament games, seventh-ranked Plymouth (11-5) hosts 10th-ranked Coe-Brown (9-7) tonight at 6 p.m. with the winner taking on second-ranked Milford (14-2) Saturday night at 6 p.m.

In Division III volleyball games at 6 p.m. Thursday, eighth-ranked Moultonborough (9-7) hosts 9th-ranked Pittsfield (8-8), fifth-ranked Newfound (11-5)

hosts 12th-ranked Sunapee (8-8) and 11th-ranked Belmont (8-8) plays at sixth-ranked Mascenic.

Undefeated Inter-Lakes (16-0) and second-ranked Winnisquam (15-1) will host games Saturday night at 6 p.m. Their respective opponents are yet to be determined.

GIRLS' SOCCER

In Division III play fifth-ranked Belmont (10-3-3) hosts 12th-ranked White Mountains (7-8-1) at 3 p.m. today and 11th-ranked Gilford (9-7) plays at Campbell (11-4-1) at 3 p.m.

BOYS' SOCCER

Division III games Thursday find 14th-ranked Somersworth 7-8-1 at 3rd-ranked Gilford (13-3), 13th-ranked Inter-Lakes (8-7-1) at 4th-ranked Raymond (12-4) and eighth-ranked Belmont (10-5-1) hosting ninth-ranked Mascenic (10-5-1).

UNIFIED SOCCER

Thursday at 3 p.m. 12th-ranked Inter-Lakes will play at fifth-ranked Gilford and 14th-ranked Newfound will play at 3rd-ranked Laconia.

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