

More winter sports underway

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Lakeland varsity boys basketball coach Bob Brugger runs the team through drills. (Photo: Hal Gould | Staff Photographer)

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Like the weather, winter sports start in waves.

This week, it's the first practices for boys basketball, wrestling, bowling and skiing. The only sport left to go for the Lower Peninsula is boys swimming, with the the girls state finals taking place this weekend.

Local coaches were excited to officially get things going.

Doug Host

South Lyon basketball

"I think both coaches and players were excited to get the basketballs back out and hear that thudding on the floor again. The promise of a new season is always a special time that brings a lot of excitement.

"The turnout at all our levels was solid. Our sophomore class is a really dedicated and really large class, so that is very promising for the future. I think, again, that sophomore level is really competitive and that's going to

force us into some difficult decisions this year, but that's absolutely a good thing. Largely, those decisions are tough with that class because many of them have really put in time during the off-season and have gotten much better over the past year.

"We're excited about the upcoming season and seeing what type of growth this group of young men can experience over the next five months. We all realize that there's a lot of room for improvement as a team, but we're looking forward to getting down to work and going through that process and developing this team into something special."

Bob Brugger

Lakeland basketball

"The first few days, the majority of our drills will be full court, emphasizing conditioning and fundamentals. Even though our guys have done a terrific job of staying in shape using our off-season conditioning program, it is difficult to replicate a basketball practice format. We had some guys searching for their second wind today."

"Our five senior returners have been through this before and their experience can help our entire team fight through this first week. I like our mix of experience with youth and believe this team has the potential to be very good."

David Gilbert

Milford basketball

"It was great getting back on the floor with the entire program. The off-season is a time for kids to invest into their individual games and work toward individual improvement, but day one signifies coming together as a team. How quickly we can come together is how successful we will be this season."

"Our turnout was as expected. Doing summer basketball and fall workouts, we had a pretty idea of what our numbers would be. There are going to be some tough decisions to make at each level."

"Our coaching staff and players were very eager to get going. We have a highly motivated group of young men who have some lofty goals this season, so starting to work toward those goals was exciting for them."

Fred Vera

East wrestling

"The wrestlers from last season are very excited for the new season to start. They are still pumped from the district championship we won."

"We've only lost one senior from last season and for the first time in a while, we have experienced freshmen joining the team with many others encouraged about joining as well."

"With more numbers in the sport comes a variety of different abilities and skill set. This should make for a more intense and exciting practice room with each individual competing for a varsity spot."

"When I see the excitement in the wrestlers this season, it get me equally excited for this new season. Everybody wants to be ready for competition and can hardly wait for the first meet."

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