

Baseball looks to improve

Roberts seeing potential at PHS

By Bob Nuse
Sports Editor

Dave Roberts has been finding his second season as head baseball coach much easier than the first go around.

This year the Princeton High baseball coach knows the players better than he did a year ago and the players know what to expect from him.

"That has been much easier," said Roberts, who was an assistant coach for one season before taking over as the head coach last year. "Instead of organizing 45 guys on the way we want to do things, we're organizing the 13 freshmen and teaching 13 new freshmen the way we do things. Last year it was the entire group. So it is much easier this year."

Roberts main goal for this season is to see the Little Tigers improve on the field. Whether or not that means more wins isn't as important as just getting the young players to play better baseball.

"We need some young guys to step up and also some inexperienced seniors who are in their first year with the varsity to step up as well," Roberts said. "We have some sophomores who will need to step in at key spots. Our roster has 10 to 12 seniors, but a lot play them are fighting for playing time at the same positions. Seven of them are outfielders, so they're in the same spots."

Princeton does have a solid top of the pitching rotation with Benito Gonzalez, Danny Powell and Luke Cordonnier. But Roberts is hoping to eventually add depth to the rotation and the bullpen.

"Our pitching is anchored by Benito, who led the team with three wins last year," Roberts said. "He's very good. He's probably in the top seven in CVC and had a great American Legion season. Danny Powell is

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back as a senior looking for a bounce-back year. Our third starter will be Luke Cordonnier, who is a junior and had strong Legion season. He pitched well for them and has had some impressive scrimmages."

The offense has some key players back in the fold, but also will be looking for some depth in the lineup.

"Nick Miranda returns as

our leadoff hitter," Roberts said. "He hit .430 and stole 14 bases. Stevie Etherton returns after hitting .360. They will anchor the top and hopefully Benito bounces back offensively. Trevor (Barsamian) is in his third year with the varsity, so we'll look for him to do well."

"The goal is just to improve. That's what I told the guys I want us to do this year. If we do that, the wins will come."

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