

*Exemption policy tightened*

# New year brings change to Cy-Creek

By Todd Savage  
Editor

When students returned to Cypress Creek on August 29, they were greeted by a very different school. Not only was the structure of the existing building changed, but many rules and policies, as well. Much of this change is the result of higher academic standards which are being demanded by federal, state and local educational officials. Principal Joseph Shelton reflected this attitude. "I want to make Cypress Creek one of the most outstanding schools in Texas," he said. "It takes many years to get to such a point. We are striving to make it (Cypress Creek) better."

He feels one way to accomplish this is to hire "outstanding" teachers. "We were able to hire some of the best teachers around this year," Mr. Shelton said. "More people applied for positions than ever have in the past." On the average, about six to eight people applied for each position. Over 20 people applied for the position of drill team director.

Mr. Shelton also hopes to improve Cy-Creek by increasing achievement levels in students. "There is room for improvement," he remarked. "In order to build up education, more time on task is required." To assure this, the number of absences for exemptions was tightened. The minimum number for an A, B, C and D is now four, three, two, and zero respectively. No appeals are permitted for students who lose their exemptions, only for students who lose credit when they exceed the maximum number of absences per semester (10) in a particular class. "People who are interested in getting exemptions should be willing to come to school," he explained.

Mr. Shelton said that taking exams should not be considered bad. He feels that a student that consistently exempts his exams will not be prepared for exams in college.

Many students may question the district's reasons for upgrading the policy. Attendance was up five percent to between 95 and 96 percent last year, according to Mr. Shelton. He said that the exemption policy was changed to build up student achievements.

With new additions to Cypress Creek, Mr. Shelton is concerned with vandalism by students. He feels that he cannot do anything to prevent this problem and hopes students will use peer pressure to stop other students from defacing their school. "It has to be left up to the student body to take pride in their school," he said. "We will always have a campus looking cluttered until students have enough pride to get up from their chair to pick up a piece of paper when they see one and throw it away." He feels it is up to the upperclassmen to set an example for the rest of the students. Mr. Shelton also suggested that all the groups and organizations get together and start a campaign to keep the school looking beautiful. "Schools are built to stay," he said. "It (Cypress Creek) has to have the respect of the student body."

Some of the other changes include:

\*No mini-skirts or shorts. "Students should talk to their grade level principal if any question arises (regarding the dress code)," Mr. Shelton said.

\*The traditional Halloween dress-up day will not be permitted this year. He said, "Students tended to go overboard with their costumes." He emphasized that dress-up days will be allowed. "Some may be allowed, and some won't."



Excitement charges through assistant drum major Susan Simon and The Cougar band during the first varsity game of the year. The Cougars won 35-13. Photo by Mike Henderson

## Connection urges readers to participate

We at the *Cougar Connection* have a responsibility to you, our readers. Our major purpose is to keep you informed of noteworthy events at Cypress Creek, but we also want to entertain you, as well. It is a difficult balance to maintain if we do not know what interests you. In order to solve this problem, a readership survey has been printed in this paper for you to fill out. This will give us insight into what types of articles interest you.

If you attended Cypress Creek last year and bought the *Connection*, please answer any of the following questions, cut out the form, and take it to the journalism room (B214) or give it to any *Connection* staff member. And if this is your first time to read the paper, feel free to turn in the survey form at any time during the year. We appreciate your comments and hope you continue to read the *Cougar Connection* in the future. Thanks!

1. Is this your first time to read the *Connection*? If not, how many times did you read it last year?
2. Do you buy your own paper or read someone else's copy? Why do you read it?
3. Do you feel a quarter is too much to pay? If so, why?
4. What is your favorite aspect of the *Cougar Connection*? Why? Least favorite? (Photography, artwork, lay-out, design, style, a particular editorial, news, sports, or feature story, advertisement, etc.)
5. What would you like to see changed about the *Connection*? Why?
6. Additional comments:



Fish fears

See p. 5



Open vs. Closed Classrooms

See p. 6



Koenning and the cougars

See p. 8

The exemption policy: It is a punishment or a reward?

Last year students came to school and learned that good attendance would be rewarded with exemptions of semester exams. This was exciting to the high school students of the Cy-Fair School District. Finally an incentive program offered the students something worth working for. Time passed. The exemption policy is successful. Attendance increases by five percent. It is now the beginning of the 1983-84 school year. The students are shocked to learn that the exemption policy, which they felt was very just, was now quite difficult enough. So a new, tougher policy was put into effect. Students get a maximum of four absences for an A, three for a B, two for a C, and no absences for a D. If you lose your exemption days at the annual fit, then tough luck. You want to leave on a family vacation a few days early? Too bad.

A funeral? No sympathy will be offered. No approach whatsoever is allowed regarding lost exemptions, no matter what the excuse. And of course, you mustn't forget that three tardies can be "traded in" for one absence. Consider a student who is taking Chemistry II first period. He (or she) does not miss one day of class for a month. Then he has to go to the orthodontist and has an appointment scheduled in the morning so that he will only miss one or two classes. Scratch off one day. Next this student comes down with a case of the flu or a virus that keeps him home for two days. Scratch two more days. If he only misses two he will be lucky. What if he had mono or the chicken pox? Then scratch the exemptions. With three absences to his record, he is walking a shaky tightrope.

Chemistry II is not an easy class and an A or B is hard to come by. This particular student must get an A or a B to keep his exemption in chemistry. He is safe for now but what if he is sick again, or a relative dies, or he is tardy to class three times? A new policy needs to be written. A complete exemption is an obvious solution. Change the maximum number of absences to six for an A, five for a B, and three or four for a C. This would be fairer than the existing policy and stricter than the original. Another answer is to allow appeals for people who have lost their exemptions due to hospitalizations, illness under a doctor's care, and death in the family. This policy change seems much too strict. But this year a student who makes every attempt to attend school may lose his exemptions unfairly. - TS

firing line

How will closed classrooms affect learning?

- Mr. Shelton, principal: "The teaching will be more efficient. During the split lunches, a large amount of traffic was traveling through the halls. The talking of the students and the slamming of the lockers in the halls was very disturbing to the concentration of students in their classes. Now with the closed classrooms, the noise level is lower, and the attention span of the students is better."
Mr. Lasky, superintendent: "I do not think it will affect the students that much. The open concept does not work as well with the large enrollment of the students in our schools. For example, if there are three different level English classes all teaching different things, an open concept area causes problems."
Do you prefer open or closed classrooms?
"Open. I had too closed in. I like sitting and talking to people walking by." - Michelle Meard
"Closed, it does not distract as much, when I had open classrooms, I usually sat in the back of the class and watched the people go by." - Margaret Lainez
"Open, because I was brought up in an open. I was taught to learn this way, and now they put me in closed classrooms." - Tommie Lattie
"Open, because I like to watch the people walk by." - Chris Ney
"Open, so you can see the people." - Kristina Stafford
"it does not really make a difference. I have been in each classroom and have done fine in both of them." - Chrissy Edwards
"Closed, because the noise level is down. Open had a lot of distractions, like teachers and students yelling." - John Savalli
"Open, I feel like I am all shut in, in closed classrooms. It is also hot." - Eliza Phekas

staff box

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Importance of pep rallies questioned

The freshmen tried to participate but became less and less interested when the football team did not win a game that season. This is not excuse for the class of 1984's non-participation in the past years but does offer an interesting idea. Fans love their trust for a team when they are down fair promises. But don't count them out yet. At the first two pep rallies of the year something almost unbelieveable of us happened. They stood up for the entire half-hour! But what about those people who never participate? Why do they do it? To use an out-of-date word, is it "snooty" to cheer for your school? Or are these people just lazy? It is not that you do not have to stand up if you do not want to. No one can be forced to support their school, the football team specifically. An old grip is that the football team gets too much attention. However, it must be remembered that we live in Texas, where football is big. Very big. It is an institution. An institution that makes money and is a sport that has deep roots in our society. It would be difficult to demphasize football. And even more difficult to have a pep rally for every sport, club and organization at Cypress Creek. Instead, a different kind of recognition should be given for all accomplishments, not just to football players.

calendar

- 7 End of first Six Weeks
11 College Night 7-9 pm
14 Teacher Inservice Day
17 Report Cards
24-28 Homecoming Week
29 ACT - Cy-Creek auditorium

Newsmakers

Get set, Cy-Creek! The drama department is printing on another play this year. "The Discovery" is a story of life in the early '30's in a town where a new preacher comes to work. Starting in the production are Jeff Deakin, Bill Levey, Mark Atwood, Colleen Collier, and Angie Wills. The play will be in late October here at the school. Admission will be \$1 for adults and \$2 for students, and the proceeds will go to the drama department.

The school store will be carrying all English paperback books this year. They will also have the equipment needed for photography and plan to start a record and tape exchange.

The Gamers Club elected Steve Pitzer president and has decided to meet once a week on Monday from 2:30 to 4:30. Anyone interested is welcome and they will be playing many different games.

Cypress Creek's Spanish department joined the National Spanish Honor Society this year. Students with an "A" average the previous semester of Spanish are eligible for membership. A Spanish club has not yet been formed because no one can be found to sponsor the club. The National Honor Society is joining the parade of clubs involved in fund-raising with a car wash to be held October 1 at the Willowbrook McDonald's from 9-5.



Kelly Hair and the Silverado team at the Northbrook pep rally.

Policy explained

Did something that appeared in the Cougar Connection make you mad? Or did you have a question that you needed answered? Well, we want to help you. We encourage you to write us a letter and explain how you feel. We have limited space, but will try to print as many letters as possible. All letters must be accompanied by an identifiable name; however, names can be withheld upon request. Letters can be submitted to Miss Hoover in the journalism room (B214) or to any Connection staff member. We want to hear from you!

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Davis memorial fund planned for JV players Earlier this month, Cypress Creek High School was touched by the loss of one of our students. Sophomore Darin Davis was involved in a jeep accident on September 3, 1983. In memory of Darin, a scholarship fund has been established for a deserving J.V. football player. The fund was initially named by some of his friends, who first collected among themselves and then got in touch with a lawyer to make it legal. The scholarship will go to a J.V. football player who exemplifies good citizenship, scholarship, friendship, and leadership. "This person should be like the person Darin Davis was," says Mrs. Shraake, senior counselor. Contributions for the scholarship fund can be taken to Mr. Shelton, principal, or Mrs. Shraake. So far, \$200 has been collected.

Dealy wins run-off In a district which contains 79,000 registered voters, a total of 997 votes turned out at the polls for the September 19th run-off election between incumbent Jack Emmons, Jr. and David Dealy. In the first election August 11, the incumbent Wanda Jewell defeated Michael Cocco by a substantial majority. Jewell will be serving her 5th three-year term on the school board. In the run-off election, Dealy defeated Emmons, 780 votes to Emmons' 206 votes.

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Bowie LP chokes

By Alice Walker  
Staff Writer

Since the release of his smash hit album *Let's Dance*, neither this year, David Bowie has released another album. *Outside Years* is actually just a collection of some other Bowie songs which have been already released on previous albums. The album does not even contain such hits as "Space Oddity" or "Rebel Rebel" which have helped make Bowie famous. The songs on this album aren't even live versions; they're just re-released studio versions. There are three songs off of the *Scary Monsters* album: "Fashion", "Adonis to Adonis", and "Scary Monsters". Unless you are a devoted Bowie fan, don't purchase this album.



Police do it again

By Alice Walker  
Staff Writer

Every album by the Police has had at least one hit song. First it was "Roxanne" from *Outlandos D'Amour*, then "Message in a Bottle" from *Regatta de Blanc*. Now, four years and three albums later, the Police have done it again. *Eye-to-eye* made it to the number one album spot in the country, and "Every Breath You Take" was the number one song. The album has definite standing characteristics, like Sting's unique bass lines. Yet this album combines old sounds with new ones. In "Walking in Your Footsteps," a jungle beat in the background distinguishes the song, but "Mother," written by Andy Summers, is a more punk-sounding song. Overall, the album is excellent, and if you haven't had a chance to buy it yet, you definitely should before someone else's and take it.

Creekers enjoy summer movies

One of the favorite summer pastimes of Cypress Creek students has been going to movies. This summer there were lots of good ones to choose from. Whatever your favorite type of movie, comedy, romantic, drama or sci-fi, chances are that you saw it at the theater this summer. According to a poll of 100 students, people enjoy comedy movies the most. The three top movies of the summer were *Trading Places*, *Beats of the Judd*, and *War Games*. *Trading Places*, starring Eddie Murphy and Dan Aykroyd,

was "a hilarious movie." *War Games*, starring Matthew Broderick, was a "fantastic movie." "The suspense really killed me," said one student. *Beats of the Judd*, the third part of the Star Wars saga, also got good reviews. "I mean," said one viewer, "what can you expect from George Lucas?"

Other favorite movies were *Clash and Risky Business*, which were described as "your basic stinky teenage comedies that we all know and love." Some movies got mixed reviews, however. Two people, after seeing *Shogun*, came out of the theater mourning the loss of the money they paid to see the movie. "I swear, it was just like Rocky in a leopard," one girl remarked disgustedly. However, another girl said, "I loved the movie, especially the dancing. It was great!" Rodney Dangerfield's *Easy Money* also got mixed reviews. "It was hilarious," one student said. Another remarked, "The one-liners were funny, but the plot was terrible."

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Students open minds in closed classrooms

By Susan Maxima  
Features Editor



Senior government teacher, Mike Hermsdorf, and his classes face a new learning environment for the first time in Cypress Creek history, all academic areas are enclosed. This is a change for the students at Cypress Creek who have grown up in open classrooms.

When the new school year began, the entire student body found new and unfamiliar surroundings. Cypress Creek's interior was remodeled completely. Now, the majority of this year's classrooms are closed.

When hall traffic, locker visits and noise from surrounding areas began to affect the students' concentration levels, closed classrooms seemed to be the only alternative. "I like my new classroom; there are less distractions than in an open area," explained Mrs. Kettinger, senior English teacher. English classrooms, which were partially enclosed last year, are completely enclosed this year. Senior English classes are situated in the left wing along with study skills, math, science, art, sociology and psychology classes.

Corrine Collings also likes closed classrooms better. "I like closed classrooms because I'm able to concentrate without outside distractions," Collings explained. Open area classrooms remain only in the world history area. One partition was eliminated by the world history class in order to block out some of the hall traffic. Open area classrooms were intended for team-teaching, according to Mr. Shelton, but it was never used extensively. Much of the time, several teachers would be teaching at the same time in the same area. This created an echo and made learning difficult for the student. The world history teachers did, however, take advantage of the open area situation and used it to its full potential.

"The world history teachers are a perfect example of team-teaching," said Mr. Shelton.

The idea of team-teaching is to actually form a team composed of teachers, team leaders and students. This team allows teachers to work together and share teaching skills. "You can teach what you like best," said Mrs. Rogers, science teacher. The team is supervised by the team leader. The team-teaching method has proven successful in some situations as well as ineffective in others. For instance, the open concept, team-teaching system is still being used at Markle Elementary and other elementary schools in the district. The area high schools, however, now have closed classrooms due to distractions and increased enrollment.

During the early 1960's, grade-level team-teaching was introduced to the Cypress Creek district. The first school built in the district which reflected this change was Markle Elementary in 1966. Students at Cypress Creek have more or less grown up in open classrooms. Now they are faced with a switch from open classrooms to its opposite, closed classrooms. "I don't like to be closed up in a classroom," said Kevin Bryant, senior. Kevin's opinion differed from junior, Karen Makely who said, "In a closed classroom it is easier to concentrate without the distractions of surrounding classrooms." Students' opinions differ on the change, but all will have to make an adjustment.

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## Seniors go with the flow

By Alice Walker  
Staff Writer

Well, another school year has started. The halls are once again jammed with people who are one year older and one year wiser, including a new crop of freshmen. First seniors were asked to look back on their high school days and remember when they were at the bottom.

Most seniors agree that the first thought that crossed their minds when they first entered Cy-Creek as freshmen was, "It's so huge!" Karin Ah says her first thought was, "I can't wait to be a senior!" Most people liked their freshman year.

"I was finally a part of high school," said Gretchen Tenbrooke.

"I had a blast!" said Sue Lackson.

"I didn't enjoy being a freshman," remarked Donna Carpenter, "but it was a lot better than being in junior high."

Many seniors felt that the best thing about being a freshman was feeling older.

Few people found that Cy-Creek was different than what they'd expected. "I thought that there'd be guys with beards and long hair walking around smoking, and people making out in the corners and stuff," said Lackson.

"I heard all these horror stories of being picked on by seniors," said Bill Lowery, "I was kind of hesitant to go."

"When I was a freshman, I couldn't wait to be a senior. I wanted to be looked up to," remarked Lackson. "You get to do so much more when you're a senior," added Tenbrooke. "You have all the power," said Carpenter. However, most think that they deserve more privileges. "I think that since seniors have had four years of having their lockers stuck everywhere, they should get to choose where they want them," said Lowery. Ah said "I think seniors should be able to go out to lunch." They started at the bottom, and now they are at the top. The class of '84 has endured four long years of Cypress Creek. Just think, seniors: next year you'll be freshmen again.



By Angie Hosteler  
Staff Writer

Upperclassmen, remember your first day at Cypress Creek? All of the fears of what high school would be like? They still feel out-of-place and unsure.

There are about 700 freshmen wandering through the halls of Cypress Creek High School trying to make the change between junior high and senior high.

"It's hard making the change from a small school to a big school, and from being the leader in 8th grade to being the underclassmen," said one girl.

Mr. Shubun feels the freshmen need spirit and pride. "I was the class of '87 to make a mark in our school and never lose sight of their education," he said. Mr.

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## Varsity football Cougars win season opener

By Brad Byrom  
Staff Writer

The Cy-Creek varsity football team rolled to an impressive 35-13 victory over Northbrook September 1 at Trilly Stadium.

Todd Moore, junior quarterback, led the Cougars with three touchdowns passes to Brett Chenebro. Moore completed 3 of 9 passes before being replaced by backup George Dietrich who went 2 of 3 and scored a touchdown on a 5-yard run. Errors by the Raiders including four turnovers and a blocked punt led to four Cougar touchdowns.

The scoring started when Chris Essex blocked a punt, and from the 16-yard line the Cougars moved into the end zone on a one-yard run by Scott Labbanne. David Kruck kicked the extra point and did not miss in his five attempts. Northbrook

scored and pulled with 7 at halftime on a 27-yard pass from Limbrock to Garcia. This is the closest that Northbrook would come.

"Northbrook underestimates us because of how we have played them in the past, and we surprised them," said center Chris Wall. After halftime ended the Cougars came out and struck quickly ending the drive on a 30-yard Moore to Chenebro touchdown.

Northbrook was to score once more but it did little good as the Cougars struck for two more touchdowns to extend out the scoring.

The Cy-Creek Cougars' first home stand at Cy-Fair ISD stadium turned into a 19-9 loss to the Nimitz Cougars.

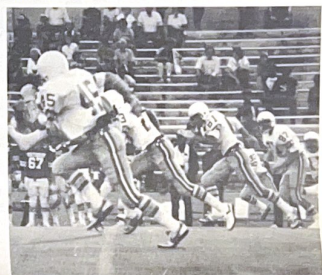
Error prone Cy-Creek finished twice and threw 4 interceptions. The game appeared to be a reversal of the Northbrook game although Nimitz failed to capitalize on Cy-Creek mistakes which nearly cost them the game in the end. Penalties in key situations also hurt the Cy-Creek comeback attempt.

Nimitz scored all 13 points in the first quarter, their opening drive ending on a 3-yard run by fullback Bo Neal. The drive went 62 yards with the key play being a 30-yard run by quarterback Kenneth Pryor. Nimitz scored with 19 seconds left in the first quarter on a 1-yard quarterback sneak. The 89-yard drive produced all the points needed for victory even though the two-point conversion attempt failed.

With a little more than four minutes left the game appeared to be over as the Cy-

Creek Cougars turned the ball over to Nimitz. A fumble recovery by Chris Essex on the Nimitz 21 gave the Cougars new life and they finally took the ball into the end zone on a six-yard scoring pass from George Dietrich to Alan Champagnat.

helping the cause by stopping Nimitz on their next possession without a first down. Nimitz then took an intentional safety as Jordan ran out of the end zone. The Creek retained the free kick to the 30-yard line of Nimitz. But penalties ended the Cougars hopes as Nimitz sent the Cougars backwards and took over possession.



The Cougars' defense then joined in Northbrook. The Cougars opened district play against Katy at Katy I.S.D. stadium October 7.

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## Coach Koenning: brings experience to the Creek

By Jane Thatcher  
Sports Editor

The sudden deafening applause that prevails at a pep rally when he walks across the gym floor to a microphone and introduces team captains for the game that night would clarify that he is head football coach Les Koenning. However, some students may not realize just how much experience Coach Koenning brings to the Cougar football team.

After graduating from high school in 1953 he attended the University of Houston where he played freshman football for Coach Clyde Lee.

"I lasted there one year. Coach Lee told me I was too little and to hit the road, so I went to Mexico City."

After he transferred to Mexico City College he changed his major to Latin American Studies and received a Bachelor of Arts degree which enabled him to teach Spanish. After graduating from Mexico City he returned to his hometown of Medville, Texas and took his first job as an assistant football coach and Spanish teacher. Because coaching was always the one thing he wanted to do, he attended Sam Houston

State University while at Medville and received his Masters Degree in education. Afterward he spent nine years as the head football coach of Hamshire-Fannett High School. While coaching there he led them



Coach Les Koenning plans for success

Photo by Gretchen Spitzer

to season records such as 10-1, and, 13-1. After a 13-1 season at Memorial Senior High School, in 1980 he became offensive coordinator for Rice University. One year later he came to Cypress Creek.

Coach Koenning not only has an impressive past, he also has an impressive son, Les Jr.

"I started working with him from the time he could walk," said Coach Koenning proudly. Les Jr. started at varsity quarterback his sophomore, junior, and senior years during high school. Playing for the University of Texas, he lettered his sophomore, junior, and senior years, and started at quarterback during the middle of his junior year. In 1980 he was captain of the team. Now he is a graduate assistant working on his Masters Degree which he should receive in January.

"If you can find out how somebody is doing something, when they're doing it, and with what ability they are doing it with you have got a chance. It's just like reading a book, if you read enough you learn a lot. These are all the things that make you a good coach. My philosophy has been you only get out of your players what you demand, and I think I demand a whole lot," says Coach Koenning, explaining his methods of coaching. "But the most important responsibility of being a head coach is making sure everything goes right. You coordinate the abilities of the staff and the athletes to make a solid unit."

Coach Koenning has ambitious plans for the Cougars. "The only problem that we have at Cy-Creek is we have no tradition. It is a new school but with what I have seen this year I think that we are progressing. We are getting into the situation now that every time we play we should have a chance to win. I think that our program is to a point where if somebody beats us, it's a real close ball game. I believe we are going to be as good as anyone we play. We may be as good but you still have to back them with a little enthusiasm and that's where the student body comes in. Our spirit is getting better. Everybody participates, the Silverados, the band, and the cheerleaders. Everybody gets involved, to have anything everybody has to get involved.

"Success" is what one player believes the

future contains for the Cougars, and the past records of Coach Koenning indicate the chances for Cougar success are excellent.

## Spikers set goals

By Jane Thatcher  
Sports Editor

The Cy-Creek Girls Volleyball team began the '83-'84 season by defeating Elsie. They won the first game, 15-12, but lost the second game, 14-16. In the third game the Cougars quickly came back with a score of, 15-8, and an overall win.

"Our passing was terrible," said Debbie Zajac after the Northshore game. The Cougars played well and the two games were close, but in the end the girls lost, 8-15, and, 12-15.

On September 1, the Cougars faced Conroe. It was a competitive battle during the first two games when the Cougars took the first game, 16-14, but lost the second game, 12-15. In the third game the girls wrapped it up with a 15-8, win over Conroe.

On September 6, Spring was evidently unprepared for the Cougars when they were defeated in a quick two game victory of 15-4, and, 15-7.

"They have the potential of doing very well, district at least," said Coach Debbie Jaehne about the new season. Confidence is also high among the players. "I don't think anyone else can touch us," says third year letterwinner Holly Evans.

Right now the girls are preparing for Cy-Fair, Klein Forest and Klein Oaks, who are labeled as "tough competitors" by Coach Jaehne.

Other returning letterwinners are Cindy Bartholomew, Jayne Coleman, Robin Serafin, and Debbie Zajac.

Oct. 4	*Katy	Home
Oct. 11	*Klein	Home
Oct. 13	*Cy-Fair	Away
Oct. 18	*Jersey Village	Home
Oct. 20	*Klein Forest	Away
Oct. 25	*Klein Oak	Home
Oct. 27	*Katy	Away

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