

# WHITEHALL

## HIGH SCHOOL

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# 2023

# FALL

## SPORTS & ACTIVITIES





Trey Dogmanits is back for Whitehall and will start at quarterback.

# Marino takes over WHS football team

BY JEFF MOELLER  
Special to the Press

The last time Andy Marino was involved with the Whitehall football program was as an assistant coach in 2009, and the team won an Eastern Conference title.

This time around 13 years later, Marino is an elevated role, and another title can be on the line.

In his first high school coaching position, Marino will guide the Zephyrs' football program this fall looking to bring home their third District 11 Class 5A program in the past five years.

Marino took over for Matt Senneca, who resigned and then took the head coaching job at Easton.

Whitehall finished with an overall 8-6 record last season, and the Zephs rallied to win three consecutive post-season games. The season ended with a loss to powerhouse Imhotep Charter in the PIAA quarterfinal round.

Marino saw his team having a productive summer and is confident it can carry over to the regular season.

"We did some good things, but we have plenty of things to work on," he said. "We have done our share of planning, and we believe we have a good plan. We know we have to correct some things for when we get on the field the next time."

"But these guys are very confident, and you can see the growth."

Quarterback Trey Dogmanits, who threw for 1,997 yards and 22 touchdowns, is back along with receivers Jack Kocher and Braden Bashore. They combined for 96 receptions and 1,144 yards with 13 touchdowns.

With the loss of running back Nigel Linton, who rushed for more than 1,200 yards to graduation, Whitehall will rely on a multi-back approach and open up the passing game. Kaden Weaver is back on the line to provide experience and leadership.

Dogmanits already has reached a sense of

comfortability with the new staff. A senior, Dogmanits also knows his team is ready to take the next step.

"We adjusted well to the new system," said Dogmanits. "We all believe we can surprise some people this year. We know we have to win some big games on our schedule. We have to hold ourselves accountable."

Defensively, Marino will look to Weaver, Dogmanits, Kocher, Kaden Davis-Latch and Carter Troxell to anchor the unit. He also expects newcomers Brandon Bird, Dalton Wickell, Talon Dogmanits, and Sebastian Orechena to make an impact.

Marino is anxious to make his mark. The Zephyrs had their lone scrimmage against District 4 power Jersey Shore Aug. 19 and opened with Allen Aug. 25.

"We have an experienced group of skill players and will rely on them to make plays," he said. "Our expectations are to prepare at a high level and allow us to rely on our preparation."



Braden Bashore will see time at wide receiver and defensive back.

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Ava Demjan, left, is a key, returning player for the Zephs this season.



Aubrey Steiner, right, is expected to help lead the field hockey team.

# Young field hockey team ready to go

BY SCOTT PAGEL  
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This year's Whitehall field hockey team will be on the young side, but still hungry to make their mark in the always-tough EPC.

"The girls have been hard at work all summer by attending summer league, lifts, and turf time sessions," said second year head coach Gabrielle Smith, who is

in her eighth year with the Whitehall program. "We also focused a lot of our efforts on providing youth field hockey opportunities throughout the summer to help inspire the next generation of field hockey players."

The team does return several key players.

Aubrey Steiner is a senior defender.

"Aubrey's strong hits and low block tackles

will be essential in the defensive end," said Smith.

Junior Matisyn Derkacs plays midfield, as do juniors Olivia Fonzone and Lydia Keppel.

"Mati's quick stick work and communication will help to connect our lines across the field. Olivia's strong defensive stick, and composure will assist in the offensive and defensive ends of the game," Smith

said. "Lydia's speed and vision of the field will help to distribute the ball."

On offense is junior Ava Kozak and junior Lily Trocki is the goalie.

"Ava's determination and consistency will help to retain the ball on our offensive end of the field," Smith said. "Lily's command of the circle and quick coverage of the goal cage will help when we are on the

defensive."

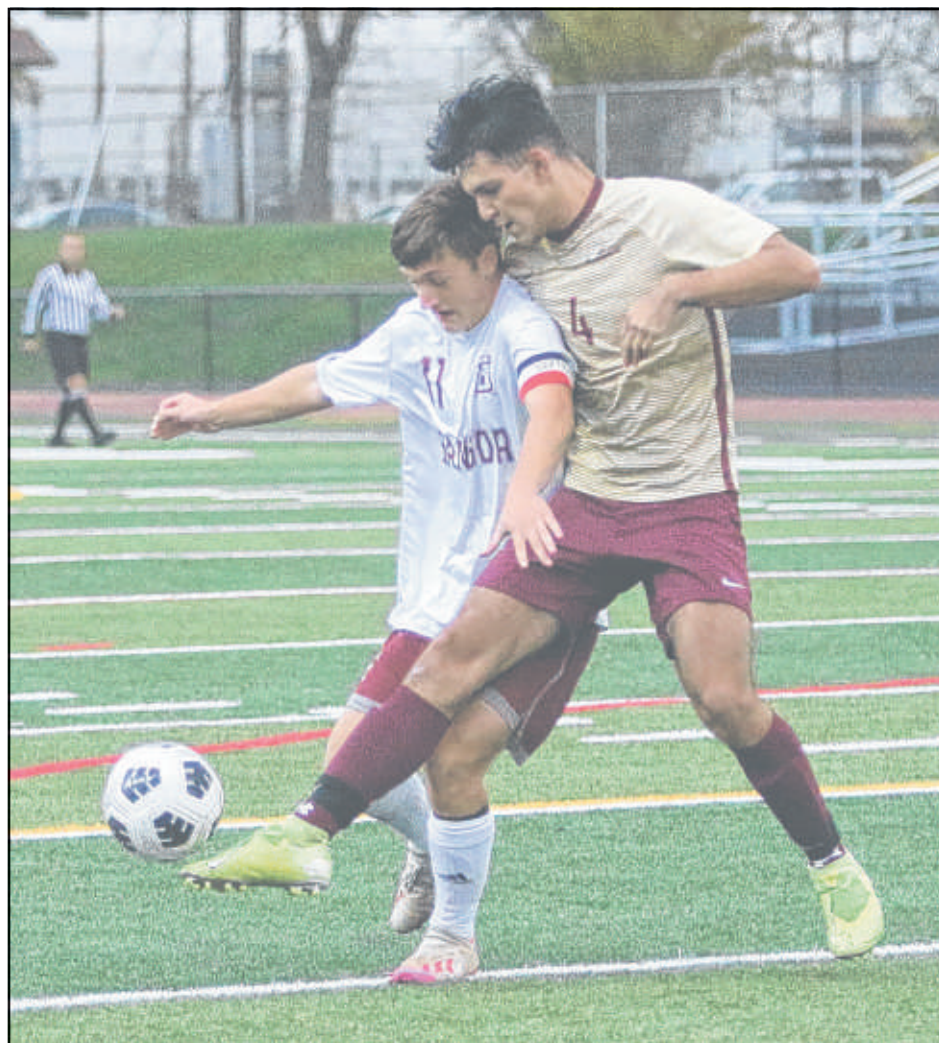
Emily Grol is a junior defender and Sarah Mullin and Emily Kern are sophomore defenders.

"We are excited to put in hard work these next two weeks as we approach our first game. We are a young, small team this year," said Smith last week. "We are looking to focus our efforts on increasing our passing patterns and distributing the

ball across the field. Although young, we are looking to build off of the success from last season and we are getting ready to compete against our toughest competition."

Smith is helped by Mikayla Ninos, the varsity assistant, Brielle Schrey the JV coach and volunteers Melissa Grohotolsky and Cara Bonshak.





Annes Saloum will be counted on as a key, returning defender this season.



Oscar Vazquez is expected to be a key player on the offensive side in 2023.

## Boys looking to return to form in 2023

BY SCOTT PAGEL  
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The Whitehall boys soccer team returns for year two under head coach Chris Malone.

Last year, Malone helped to guide the Zephyrs to a 14-8 season, losing in the EPC semi-finals and then making it all the way to the District 11 finals before falling.

The hurt of dropping the last game of the season in the district finals is something Malone and the team didn't want

to forget as they headed into the offseason.

"The district final loss definitely stung and it's something we have talked about throughout the offseason to fuel us," Malone said. "The district final was on November 3 and by December 1 we were already back at it playing together twice a week. The guys have been working, especially lifting, training and also playing at Lehigh in summer league over this summer."

The Zephyrs will also have to overcome some

losses from last year. Malone said the team lost eight seniors and two of them, Gio Mazzola (Wilkes) and Miguel Roa (LCCC) were all-league selections. A third key loss was veteran keeper Cole Guernsey.

As for some good news, Malone said the JV team had success last year as well and should provide a good pipeline to the varsity team.

"Our JV team had an similar record to our varsity team last year and we are looking forward to seeing some

of those guys step into varsity roles this year," Malone said. "We don't have a large senior class this year, but there are a few key seniors who we will rely on a lot."

Malone will look to seniors Valentin Lezcano and Mauricio Vasquez, both he hopes will give the team a strong offensive punch in the attack. Two other seniors to watch are Jayden Bushell and Annes Saloum. Both of them return as strong defenders from last year's unit.

Malone said the the

sophomore and junior class is comprised of quite a few good players.

"Essentially all of our varsity group are playing on quality club teams," Malone said.

Some of the other guys to keep an eye out for are: junior Aiden Taylor in the defense and junior Reed Felker in the attack. The defense will be asked to steady things in the back for a very talented sophomore Cole Richards between the pipes.

"Something we harp every year is that we

want to be playing our best soccer late in the season in order to be clicking right in time for having success in the playoffs," Malone said. "As a coach I am far more interested in how we finish rather than all the preseason accolades. Some keys to us finding the success we want this year will be making sure we stay healthy, and remaining disciplined and focused all season long."

# Golfers hoping to build up the program

BY SCOTT PAGEL  
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A familiar face around Whitehall takes over as the golf coach this season as George Covitch will lead the way.

As of this article, Covitch said the team has seven golfers with three returning from last season.

Dylan Carfara averages around 90 thus far

and Ethan Ringenberger is shooting around a 95.

Bryce Scache is also averaging about 90 and is one of the three back from last season.

Thomas Lloyd has been leading the way shooting around 84.

Matthew Nomie is averaging around 95 and is returning, as is Masson Nomie, who is also averaging around the 95 mark.

Jack Lloyd is shooting around the 91 mark.

Whitehall won just three matches a year but Covitch and the returning golfers are hoping to add a few more while building up the program.

“The three players that are in the lineup currently from last season is Bryce, Masson, and Matt,” Covitch said. “I felt that the preseason

practice went well.

“We hit a couple bumps here and there, but it was good as it will go for my first season at the helm.”

While the team will shoot for adding more wins, at this point, Covitch is just looking for everyone to improve.

“I think our expectations for this season is to get better as a program,” Covitch said. “My as-

sistant Joe Egan and I are committed to taking this program from the bottom tier and moving more toward the middle as a realistic goal.”

As for this season, the team is keeping their goals in perspective and Covitch believes they can get there.

“We gave the kids the goal of shooting 450 (5 combined scores) as a team, and I feel this

group will get there, as they work hard,” he said. “Also for us as a staff, we want the kids to fall in love and be obsessed with golf. It’s not a game you just show up and shoot under par. I like where we can go and will build this for the future.”

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# Tennis returns mix of experience, newcomers

BY SCOTT PAGEL  
spagel@tnonline.com

Susan DiGiacomo takes over the girls tennis team this season at Whitehall.

The team features some returning players as well as some promising newcomers.

"We are a team with experienced and committed returning starting players," said DiGiacomo.

Returning seniors

are: Izabellah Morales, Brenna Pangaio, Sonakshi Sharma, Olivia Toto and Giovanna Yocoub.

Other returning players from last season are Jessica Lin and Aleksandra Niski.

Other players are: Fatuma Abdella, Elena Attieh, Laetitia Bakar, Giavanna Burgio, Trinity Goeh and Lamitta Layous.

DiGiacomo expects newcomers Goeh, a

sophomore, and Attieh, a freshman to be in starting roles.

"The girls have been working hard to develop new skills, practice effectively while helping each other learn and improve their game, all while curating a strong mindset," DiGiacomo said. "We are looking forward to making it a great season."

The assistant coach will be B. DiGiacomo.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JESSICA TOTO

From left to right, seniors Olivia Toto, Izzy Morales, Sonakshi Sharma, Brenna Pangaio, and Gio Yacoub.

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# Young harriers hoping to take first step



Tess Hopkins is one of a few elder runners back for the Zephys this season.

BY SCOTT PAGEL  
spagel@tnonline.com

The Whitehall cross country teams will have a new look this year as Brandon Hampton takes over after longtime coach Mike Lelko stepped down.

"I'm super excited to get the season and my first year at Whitehall rolling and pick up where Mike Lelko and Fabian left off," Hampton said. "We are coming off of a successful summer of training on the trails, roads, and in the weight room. The turnout for summer training and the first few days of preseason has been awesome."

Hampton said the team is expecting 10-15 boys.

"[That] is great considering we lost around the same number to graduation," Hampton added.

The coach added he

expected 20-25 girls.

"Both teams are extremely young, with only three seniors, two boys and one girl," Hampton said. "We're hoping for a successful first year, which to me and my assistant, looks like our younger, newer kids improving each practice and meet, learning how to compete with the guidance of our 10th, 11th, and 12th grade runners who have experience from the last few years."

On the boys side, the top runner will be Aiden Borkenhagen, according to Hampton, and added on the girls side is senior Tessa Hopkins, Hampton said.

Returning runners are Emma Sargent, Janelle Kies, Grace Tsamutalis, and newcomer Ashley Mendoza will likely be leading the way for the girls.

At the time of this in-

terview, Hampton said the girls team is loaded with potential and it was hard to talk about anymore names.

With such a young team this season, Hampton will have to count on the many younger runners they have coming into the fold this season.

"We're going to lean heavily on some of the younger but more experienced 10th and 11th grade kids on both sides to help the seniors lead both teams to more wins and better placement at the league and district meets," Hampton said. "We're also hoping to bring home some hardware this year individually, which should always be the goal."

Ultimately, this year is the first step to what we hope to be many years of competitive racing from our kids in the conference and district."

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Alexis Barhoum is one of several key returning players for the volleyball team.

# Fernandez returns to Zephyrs as coach

BY SCOTT PAGEL  
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The Whitehall girls volleyball team will have a new look this season as former player Cristal Fernandez takes over as coach.

"As the new head coach, I feel this sense of honor being able to return to my Alma Mater," Fernandez said. "We, the coaching staff, want to bring back the level of competitiveness that was associated with the program years ago. Of course every coach wants to have a winning season, however, we value effort over results. Once the team has meshed and feels confident in their ability to go 'all-out' during a match, they will definitely be able to compete within the EPC Conference."

Fernandez will have some talent to work with as she returns several

key players.

Alexis Barhoum, a senior, will play libero/defensive specialist as will senior Alessia Gallardo. Emma Granger is another senior who is a defensive specialist and setter.

"We are a young team this year, however, we are returning with a lot of talent, versatility, and athleticism," Fernandez said. "Alexis, Emma and Alessia are vital pieces in our defensive lineup providing the team with experience, energy, and fluidity in the game. These seniors definitely have a 'go to war' mentality which will rapidly spread across the entire team."

Junior Keona Spooner is a middle blocker.

"Although only a junior, Keona has this presence about her that makes her a crucial part of the team," Fernandez said. "Her athleticism

from basketball allows her to react quickly when blocking and hitting which will be beneficial throughout the season."

Fernandez and the team did do some things in the offseason where they worked on building a foundation.

"It's natural for athletes to need some time to get the rust off from the offseason," Fernandez said. "Throughout summer open gyms and leading into the preseason, this has been our main focus; going back to basics."

"Our goal is to have a solid and universal foundation which will help the team 'reset' when the game gets fast-paced. This is where we really hone in on fine-tuning the techniques which will allow the team to minimize our unforced errors."

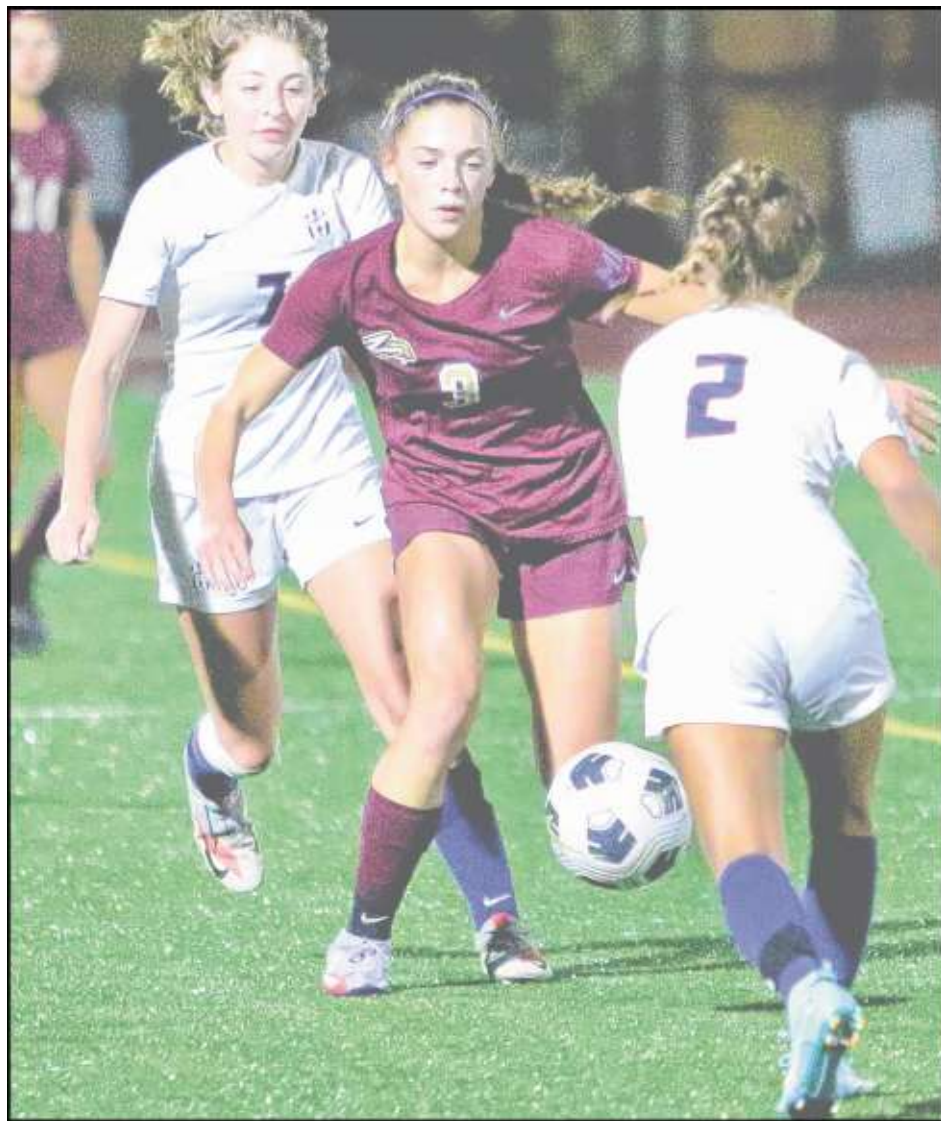
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Ava Wells is back for the girls and will be a team captain this season.

## Girls bring back 8

BY SCOTT PAGEL  
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The Whitehall girls soccer team is returning a nice group of starters and is optimistic about their 2023 fall season.

Last year, the girls went 7-7-2 in the EPC and 8-10-2 overall. They just missed qualifying for the league playoffs and were beat by Southern Lehigh 1-0 in the semifinals after knocking off Bangor 4-0 to open districts.

"The team has the potential to be improved from last year despite the losses of Bella Fonzone, Aubrey Vivian and Celeste Yunez-Cosme," said head coach Chris Blead.

The eight returning starters are seniors: Ava Wells, Sam Kern, Ella Weber, Sophia Mrazik, Teagan Crosson, Erika Rape, Kate Yadush and M'Balu Fofana.

Juniors Sage Snyder and Jade Alvarez also return.

Blead said the team also welcomes some



Sophia Mrazik is another key, returning player for the girls soccer team this fall.

talented ninth graders, including keeper Cora Mussleman and Collene Sommers, who are both likely to make significant impacts.

Blead added that Wells will be the team captain.

"We look forward to seeing what other play-

ers step up and make an impact throughout the preseason," Blead said, before adding the team still misses Mia Due, who was tragically killed in a car accident in July of 2022. Due would have been a senior this season.



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# Cheerleaders primed for busy fall season

BY SCOTT PAGEL  
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Alexis Freedman and her cheerleading team are fresh off a trip to cheering camp before getting their season officially underway this weekend.

At the camp, Freedman reported the girls got Overall Camp Champion, first place Camp Routine and second place Cheer and second place Game Day Routine.

"We have a good handful of other competitions in our area we will be attending as well like Easton, Parkland, Nazareth, and Freedom," said Freedman. "Our Varsity competition team will be attending districts on Jan. 6 at Easton Middle School.

The first varsity football game took place last

Friday, Aug. 25 against William Allen, and the teams first varsity cheer competition is Nov. 5, at Southern Lehigh High School.

There are other events the girls are hosting this season: Purse Bingo Sept. 17, at the Cementon Playground and Youth Camp Clinic on Nov. 12, at Zephyr Elementary School.

"You will see us in the Whitehall Halloween parade, Zephyr Elementary Open House, Fellowship Manor, and so much more this season," Freedman added.

There are 25 high school cheerleaders and 16 middle school cheerleaders. There are: (high school) Alexis Jaikes, Amya Robinson, Brianna Andino - senior, Britney Okoth, D'Anjulie Rodriguez, Dayra



PRESS PHOTO BY LINDA ROTHROCK

The Whitehall cheerleaders get in an August practice before the start of football season.

Herrera, Daysha Ortiz, Gabriella Jaikes, Janelly Caban, Julissa Brito - senior, Keira Lisicky - senior, Laney Headman, Maya Williams, Mena Hartzell, Noah Feliz, Noelia Molina, Nore-

lis Severino, Roseline Zulu, Sadaayah Brown, Samantha Abdalla, Sofierose Garbarino, Trisha Theagene, Valencia Rivera, Viviana Ferreira Barragan and Yulianna Mota - senior;

(middle school) Alanna Staas, Auryanna Martinez, Caroline Kline, Danielys Marrero, Elianna Young, Elisania Garrido Rodriguez, Geniyah Vazquez, Hope Warren, Isabella

Klempke, Jaylene Rodriguez, Jianna Hernandez, Makenzie Gery, Nicole Buitrago, Olivia Hall, Sa'Mya Holmes and Vinessa Eggleston.



PRESS PHOTOS BY LINDA ROTHROCK

## Whitehall Band

Members of the Whitehall band, flags above and instrumental below, prep for the season during a summer day in August.





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