

Hank Karius
President 644-7701

Gerry Lofy
Vice President 644-8952

Tim Wiedmeyer
Secretary 689-2779

Tim Wiedmeyer
Treasurer 689-2779

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OWLS AGAIN LOOK TO CHALLENGE IN LITTLE TEN

SEVERAL KEY PLAYERS RETURN AFTER 2ND PLACE FINISH

The 2011 – 2012 Slinger Owls showed flashes of brilliance during the season en route to a second place finish in the Wisconsin Little Ten Conference. The Owls tied with Beaver Dam as Wisconsin Lutheran again captured the outright conference title. Slinger lost two close games to WISCO during the season by nearly identical scores losing at WISCO 51 – 48 in December, and then 52 – 48 at home late in the season in a game that would have pulled Slinger into a first place tie for the conference.

The heartbreak continued in WIAA tournament play as the Owls lost at the buzzer in a seesaw game at Plymouth. Slinger led by as many as twelve points early in that game, dominating the first quarter, only to see Plymouth take control in the second quarter to even up the game at halftime. The sluggish play of the Owls continued into the second half as Slinger trailed by ten points heading into the fourth quarter. The team showed great heart and toughness as it battled to even up the game at 45 with about two minutes to go. However, a missed driving layup and a couple turnovers allowed the Panthers to have the last possession. They took advantage as their star guard buried a three-point shot with two seconds remaining. Slinger got a long off-balance shot at the buzzer but it missed.

The loss ended the Owls' season with an overall record of 16 – 8 including a 10 – 4 mark in conference. It was the second time that the Owls have finished second in the WLT since they joined the conference for the 2006 – 2007 season. It was the first time Slinger had won 10 conference games in a single season. Wisconsin Lutheran has captured the outright conference title every single season that Slinger has been a member of the conference (and seven straight titles). The scores from every game from the 2011 – 2012 season are posted on page two of this newsletter. The schedule for the 2012 – 2013 season is also posted there.

The Owls will return several key players from its successful 2011 – 2012 campaign. Slinger will be led by a group of seniors that saw significant playing time this past year. Guards Tanner Schieve and Nathan Roethle, and Guard/Forward Derek Merkes all were regular starters last season.

The Owls will miss the contributions of Guard Kirk Emmer who graduated. Emmer closed out a fabulous career in which he ended up as the second all-time leading scorer in the history of the school with 974 total points. Tim Sonn who graduated in 2005 is the all-time leading scorer with 1010 points.

Emmer scored in double figures in all 24 games last year en route to earning first-team all Wisconsin Little Ten Conference honors for the second straight year, and first-team all Washington Conference honors for the third straight season. He was again voted MVP by the team, and is the only three-time MVP in the history of Slinger HS basketball.

Merkes earned second-team all-conference honors and Roethle earned honorable mention honors in the Wisconsin Little Ten voting.

Slinger hopes to offset the scoring loss of Emmer with a balanced approach led by all of the experienced players who are returning. Schieve, Roethle, and Merkes all had single games in which they scored at least 16 points.

The Owls again appear poised to challenge for their first ever Wisconsin Little Ten Conference championship. Similar to last season, Wisconsin Lutheran is the favorite in the WLT conference race, with Beaver Dam also being a consensus pick for a high conference finish. Watertown and Oconomowoc should also challenge. The conference will be more difficult this year as almost all of the teams return several of their key players from last season.

Slinger *HOOPS* Ltd., P.O. Box 251, Slinger, WI 53086

SlingerHoops@charter.net

Slinger Owls 2012 – 2013 Basketball Schedule

Nov 16	at Pewaukee (nc)	Jan 11	Wisconsin Lutheran
Nov 23	at Mayville (nc)	Jan 15	at West Bend West
Nov 24	TBD at Mayville (nc)	Jan 18	Oconomowoc
Nov 30	at Waukesha North (nc)	Jan 25	Hartford
Dec 7	at Oconomowoc	Jan 26	Greendale (nc)
Dec 8	Cedar Grove - Belgium (nc)	Jan 29	at West Bend East
Dec 11	at Hartford	Feb 1	Beaver Dam
Dec 14	West Bend East	Feb 8	Watertown
Dec 20	at Beaver Dam	Feb 12	at Wisconsin Lutheran
Dec 27	at UWGB vs Shawano	Feb 14	West Bend West
Dec 28	at UWGB vs Ashwaubenon	Feb 22/23	WIAA Regionals
Jan 4	at Watertown	Mar 1/2	WIAA Sectionals

Slinger Owls 2011 – 2012 Basketball Season

Nov 25	Kewaskum at Grafton (nc)	W 74-62	Jan 20	Oconomowoc	W 56-36
Nov 26	at Grafton (nc)	W 57-54	Jan 24	at New Berlin West (nc)	L 45-53
Nov 29	Pewaukee (nc)	W 93-89 2OT	Jan 27	at Hartford	W 63-43
Dec 2	Hartford	W 65-45	Jan 31	Watertown	W 52-41
Dec 8	at Watertown	L 48-53	Feb 3	West Bend West	W 48-25
Dec 13	Waukesha North (nc)	L 53-56 OT	Feb 10	at Beaver Dam	L 57-66
Dec 15	at West Bend West	W 60-58	Feb 11	Monona Grove (nc)	W 55-36
Dec 22	at WISCO	L 48-51	Feb 14	at Oconomowoc	W 64-60
Dec 27	Hortonville at UWGB (nc)	L 50-53	Feb 17	WISCO	L 48-52
Jan 3	West Bend East	W 61-52	Feb 23	at West Bend East	W 57-43
Jan 6	at Greendale (nc)	W 47-41	Mar 2	Grafton (WIAA)	W 50-40
Jan 13	Beaver Dam	W 48-34	Mar 3	at Plymouth (WIAA)	L 45-48

Coach's Corner

By Head Coach Alan Schieve

The 2011-12 season by most accounts would have to be considered a very successful season at Slinger High School. It produced a 16-8 overall record to go with a 10-4 conference record. Unfortunately, it ended with a tough last second loss to a very good Plymouth team that lost in the Sectional final to Division 2 State Runner-Up Kaukauna. Along with the successes on the court it was a very successful season in terms of the type of kids we had not only as players but also as people.

I don't believe the importance of team chemistry can be overstated. The group of seniors from the 2011-12 team were as good of a group of players/people as we have had the opportunity to work with. Kirk Emmer, Ben Amman, Drew Mclean, Jared Sandretti, Scott Burns, and Charlie Russell brought heart, determination and leadership to the court every day. They will be missed.

But like every year, one season ends and another one starts immediately. Thus, we begin the 2012-13 with a great deal of optimism. We have three starters back from last year in Tanner Schieve, Derek Merkes, and Nathan Roethle, and Tanner and Derek will be entering their third year on the varsity. We have the 6th man from last year in Jake Anderson also back. Add to that seniors Sean Fassbender, James Boden, and Steve

McLean who were valuable practice players last year and it gives us the basis for another very good season.

We are excited about the players we are getting from a successful 2011-12 JV season and the talents they will bring to the team this year. One of the challenges a new season always brings will be the meshing of the seniors with the players coming up from the JV team. We believe it will be an easy transition for us this year. This group had a very good summer together. They were able to go undefeated and win the West Bend Summer league and also had a very good showing in the Wisconsin Basketball Coaches Association tournament.

Certainly, what we saw in the summer leads us to believe we will continue to be very competitive in the Wisconsin Little Ten Conference. The conference brings back some very good teams with outstanding talent. WISCO, once again will be the pick along with Oconomowoc and Beaver Dam. But don't overlook your Owls. We have high expectations and plan on having a say in how the conference ends up.

So, it is time to start again. This never gets old for me. There isn't a better place to be at this time of year than in the gym with the sounds of basketballs bouncing and crowds cheering. I hope you we all will be able to have a chance to get out and see your Owls play this year. This could be something special and you don't want to miss it. Thanks for all your continued support and hope to see you in the gym this winter.

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