

Play ball! It's time for baseball season

Orange High looks to take 'next step' with nice mix of youth and experience

Last season the Orange High School baseball team showed great improvement under first-year head coach Wally Boyett.

The Tornados qualified for the state sectional tournament and finished third in the Super Essex Conference-Colonial Division.

"I was pleased last year to do well in our division and to reach the state tournament," Boyett said. "It was a step in the right direction, but to take that next step we must be more consistent executing the fundamentals."

Orange lost five players to graduation, including a pair of All-SEC-Colonial Division award winners in first-team catcher Ramon Johnson, who is attending Prince George Community College, and honorable mention third baseman Cherrod Roberts, who is attending Morgan State University. Both players made significant contributions to the 2010 team.

This season, Orange will feature a mix of seasoned veterans, newcomers and skilled freshmen. The Tornados return All-SEC-Colonial Division first-team outfielder/pitcher Kevin Singh and All-SEC-Colonial Division second-team shortstop Anfermy Ellis.

Singh, a junior, batted .484 last season, while Ellis, a sophomore, hit at a .397 pace.

Also returning is senior first-baseman/pitcher Tyrell Shivers, who batted .345 last year; junior right fielder/pitcher Keville Campbell, .257; senior center fielder/pitcher Contrez Hunter, .241; and senior outfielder Quentin Boyd, who had last season cut short due to injury.

Newcomers Ross Wright and Yufial McDougald, both juniors, will be counted on to make significant contributions.

But if Orange is going to have success this season, the freshman class will need to produce right away. Catcher/pitcher Samuel Dominguez; third baseman/pitcher Rasheed Williams and infielders Andre Williams, Gerson Hierro and Jonathan Ramirez were all part of the Monte Irvin middle school team that won back-to-back championships in the Tri-Town Middle School league, featuring towns such as West Orange, Montclair and Cedar Grove.

"These guys came into our program this fall and

quickly picked up the way we do things," Boyett said. "They have the right combination of size, speed and strength to contribute right away."

As for pitching, Orange returns its top two starters from 2010 in Singh and Shivers. Additionally, Campbell and Hunter have shown potential in the scrimmages and will have opportunities to pitch, as will Dominguez, Rasheed Williams, Ross Wright and Andre Williams.

In addition to Boyett, the Tornados' coaching staff includes assistants Ed Harris, John Boykin and Jason Bullock. "We have an excellent coaching staff," said Boyett. "Harris played at UMES; Boykin has been part of the Monte Irvin program for several years and Bullock played at OHS and Union County College."

The Tornados open the 2011 season tomorrow at home when they host Bloomfield Tech at 4 p.m.

Schedule

- April 1, Bloomfield Tech, 4 p.m.
- April 4, at Irvington, 4 p.m.
- April 5, St. Benedict's Prep, 4 p.m.
- April 6, at Golda Och Academy, 4 p.m.
- April 8, Central, 4 p.m.
- April 11, Newark Tech, 4 p.m.
- April 13, at Barringer, 4 p.m.
- April 15, at University ACD, 4 p.m.
- April 18, at Science Park, 4 p.m.
- April 20, Cedar Grove, 4 p.m.
- April 25, Technology, 4 p.m.
- April 27, at Bloomfield Tech, 4 p.m.
- April 29, at East Orange Campus, 4 p.m., Mayor's Trophy Game
- May 2, Irvington, 4 p.m.
- May 4, at Arts, 4 p.m.
- May 5, Golda Och, 4 p.m.
- May 6, at University, 4 p.m.
- May 11, Barringer, 4 p.m.
- May 13, Science Park, 4 p.m.
- May 16, at Belleville, 4 p.m.
- May 17, Newark Tech, 4 p.m.
- May 18, at Technology, 4 p.m.
- May 20, North 13th St. Tech, 4 p.m.



File photo

Orange High's Kevin Singh earned first-team honors on the All-Super Essex Conference-Colonial Division last season, batting an impressive .484.



File photo

Orange High's Keville Campbell slides into third base during action last season.