

GCHS

FROM **PAGE B1**

our on-base percentage needs to get higher and be creative playing small ball. I'm not saying we're not going to hit it, but our goal is to score seven runs a game."

The Cougars, who went 16-15 last season and opened the year with six straight wins, return two of three hitters who batted better than .350 — senior third baseman Levi Rogers and senior catcher Landon Haycraft. Rogers batted .434 with a team-high 33 hits and 26 runs batted in and struck out just seven times in 76 at-bats.

Haycraft led the team with 26 runs scored and hit .359 and led the team with 14 stolen bases.

The pitching, Nutt said, could be solid with two of the Cougars' top three winners from last season back.

Junior Gage Napier went 4-2 with two saves and 52 strikeouts with a 3.39 earned run average. He also allowed only 20 walks in 43 and one-third innings of work.

Rogers posted a 3-6 record and 3.67 ERA and led the Cougars in strikeouts with 66 in 42 innings.

"They're different. They both throw fairly hard, they're both around the strike zone," Nutt said of Napier and Rogers. "One and two will be really good for us. They understand the game and understand what it takes to throw strikes, so we're really good there."

Haycraft likely will be the No. 3 starter, "but he's also a catcher so that always creates some complications with positions."

Rodney Morris, a sophomore, and junior Jake Bratcher, are



File photo, Jeff D'Alessio

Now in his fourth season, Grayson County High School baseball coach Jody Nutt has led the Cougars to back-to-back 12th District Tournament titles.

among other pitchers expected to see time on the mound.

Napier will play first, and when he's pitching, Bratcher will play there, Nutt said.

Who starts at second base is "wide open," he said.

Eighth-grader Case Rogers, and Bratcher, are the leading contenders to play there with junior Chase Baunach back at shortstop.

Nutt said Baunach's athleticism is a key at fielding the position.

"He's hard-nosed and just a baseball player," Nutt said. "If you beat him once, by gosh you're not going to beat him again."

He batted .261 last season and struck out just seven times in 69 at-bats and had 18 hits and

scored 22 runs.

In the outfield, Garrett Bradley, a sophomore, will be in left. He hit .288 and usually found a way to get on base with 17 walks, and he also was hit-by-a-pitch a team-best 12 times. He also had 17

hits and 19 runs scored.

Senior Greyson Chaffins and sophomore Jett Hawkins will see time in center field. Neither has played the last two years.

Hawkins also will see time on the mound, Nutt said.

In right field, sophomore Cam Fulkerson and junior Carson Dennis will play there.

"It can always change

depending on who is pitching," Nutt said. "I told them we have to better defensively because I don't know how well we're going to be early on offensively, so we'll need to be better defensively."

Seniors Hayden Robinson and Jackson Mayes also will be in the mix for playing time, Nutt said.

As the Cougars eye a third-straight district tournament title, Nutt said the Cougars have the pieces in place for another good season and maybe more.

"They're loose, they like baseball, they like each other," he said. "It seems like the past three, four years or so, the kids have just gotten along. They're buddies on the field, but they're buddies off the field, too. They come to practice, and it's never a push or struggle to get through a practice. They never complain, and they just want to work. I've got athletes, baseball players, and I have good kids ... I enjoy going to work each day, and, honestly, I think they do, too."

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GRAYSON COUNTY

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Bids will be opened at 6:00 PM or as soon thereafter as the matter may be brought before the Leitchfield City Council on Monday, March 17, 2025.

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