

2011-12 Area High School Basketball Preview

Fayette High School returning basketball seniors: Hayleigh Brunkhorst, Brandon Gilmore, Roshawn Wilson, Bruce Marshall, Krey Cowans and Taylor Rice



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New Franklin Bulldogs

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Harrisburg Bulldogs

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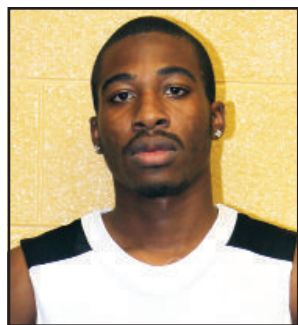
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Fayette Falcons boys basketball



Bradley Bishop
Senior 6'1" Guard
Parents: Jerrod & Melinda Morris



Krey Cowans
Senior 5'8" Guard
Parents: James Williams & Jean Cowans



Brandon Gilmore
Senior 5'10" Guard
Parents: Paul & Kim Gilmore



Bruce Marshall
Senior 6'10" Forward
Parents: Kent & Deborah Marshall



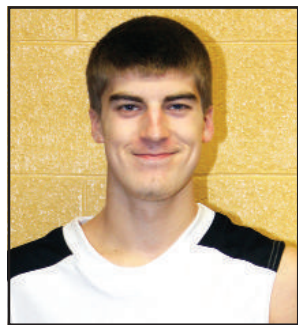
Michale Waton
Senior 6'1" Forward
Parents: Bobby & Darleane Huffstetler



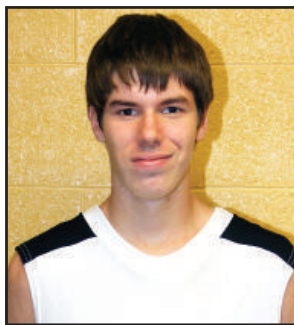
Roshawn Wilson
Senior 5'10" Guard
Grandparent: Mary Petty



Landon Ball
Junior 6'0" Forward
Parents: Jeffrey Ball & Lynette Snell-Ball



Zach Cook
Junior 6'0" Guard
Parents: Rick Cook and Kelly Beeler



Ben Harris
Junior 6'2" Forward
Parents: Rich Harris & Pam Melloway



Rashad Jackman
Junior 6'0" Guard
Parent: Lachandra Jackman



Sam Miller
Junior 5'6" Guard
Parents: Steve & Sue Miller



Ronnie Baker
Sophomore 5'8" Forward
Parents: Billy Shiftlett & Carmen Forbes



Curtis Fretwell
Sophomore 5'9" Guard
Parent: Curtis Herriford



Collin O'Connell
Sophomore 5'10" Guard
Parents: Brian McMillan & Peggy O'Connell



Rudy Williams
Sophomore 6'3" Forward
Parents: Jessie Williams III & Tonya Eubanks



Ethan Harper
Freshman 5'5" Guard
Parents: Cord & Kathyne Harper



Coltin Lewis
Freshman 5'5" Guard
Parents: Billy & Michelle Lewis



Davis Valencia
Freshman 5'8" Guard
Parents: Eddie & Amy Valencia



Marquis Williams
Freshman 6'1" Forward
Parent: Jessie Williams II



Chris Kendrick
Head Coach



New-look Falcons have eye on another winning season

This year's Fayette boys basketball team will have a fairly new look about it.

The 2010-11 Falcons featured several talented seniors that kept Fayette in the Class 2 top 10 rankings for a majority of the season. Fayette head coach Chris Kendrick said the biggest thing with replacing a group of eight seniors is it will largely change the dynamic of the team.

"We're going to go from a team that subs quite a few guys to a team that is possibly a little more fundamentally sound and maybe

a little more basketball savvy," Kendrick said. "You may only see eight or nine guys who consistently play extended minutes, but they may do a better job in the half court on each end."

Fayette will have to replace two-thirds of its scoring with the loss of eight seniors, including four starters. Most of the returning players served a specific role last season, only coming in and playing a minute or two at a time.

As a result, the Falcons don't have quite

the preseason hype they built last season. That doesn't bother Kendrick. He's prepared his team for this over the summer and he prefers coming into the season under the radar. That worked well two seasons ago, when the Falcons jumped off to a hot start after earning the No. 4 seed in the Glasgow Tournament, which is the same seed they have this year.

One player that will be on every opponent's radar is senior Bruce Marshall. The 6-foot-10 forward signed a letter of intent

to play for Missouri State University earlier this month, Fayette's first boys basketball player in nearly 60 years to sign an NCAA Division I scholarship. Playing with a team full of guards last season, Marshall's statistics were a bit low for someone of his talent level.

Expect that to change this season. Marshall is going to be the focal point of every team, but Kendrick said his number of

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Area High School Basketball Preview

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touches will increase drastically this season and most of them will be inside, despite his successful long-range abilities.

"I think the biggest difference for him is with his athleticism, and with that has come the opportunity for him to become more confident in his complete, all-around game," Kendrick said. "He's skilled enough and he's got the size to go down on the block and now finish a shot or make a move that he couldn't do in the past, just off pure coordination and strength. He's stronger and he can take that one-dribble step back and knock down that mid-range jumper. And, if he gets the ball within seven feet, he's most likely just going to dunk it on you, if his legs are still under him."

Marshall accounts for a considerable amount of Fayette's top numbers of all returners. Two other players who had significant minutes last season — seniors Roshawn Wilson and Krey Cowans — will also join Marshall in the starting lineup.

Fans saw last season that Wilson is capable of stepping up and posting star numbers. During the third-place game against Harrisburg in last year's Glasgow Tournament, Wilson picked up a rare start and scored a career-high 18 points. Kendrick said there is a good chance he can post similar numbers nightly, even as the team's starting point guard.

"What we've seen out of him is on-the-floor leadership," Kendrick said. "The biggest challenge for him is going to be the expectation of minutes and being in charge of leading the ballclub on the floor, night in and night out, showing up mentally prepared. He's shot the ball really well and of course he has the run-out ability and defensive skills to really put up some nice offensive numbers."

Cowans will take the No. 2 guard position and will have the same role as he did last season. Kendrick said he is going to handle a lot of the ball pressure in the half-court defense and will score many of his points off breakaway layups from the steals he creates on defense.

"Krey is going to have eight shot attempts a night and six of them are going to be on layups," Kendrick said. "We've been working on getting him to understand that one or two shot attempts, besides layups, is a good night for us. It means he's doing a nice job of distributing the basketball and he's taking advantage of his strengths. But if you leave him unguarded, he's a good enough shooter that he can knock down the open jump shot."

Senior Brandon Gilmore will provide some additional speed and a good shooting ability at the Falcons' third guard position. He has led Fayette's junior varsity team the past few seasons, but that's only because he was the low man on the totem pole of a long list of guards. Now that space has opened for him at the varsity level, Kendrick said he's ready to be a big part of the team.

"On any other ballclub in the area (last year), I think he would have played significant minutes or even started," Kendrick said. "We stuck him in tight spots and he hit some big threes for us in some games we were down and we needed to hit shots last year. He's been around and he's the kind of kid you dream of, as far as if you've got somebody who has to step in and plug a hole as a senior. Now he's just chomping a bit to get his opportunity."

Rounding out the starting rotation at the other forward position is sophomore Rudy Williams. Standing at 6-foot-3-inches tall, Williams will be the complement to Marshall at the post position. On most nights that Marshall draws at least a double team, it will

FAYETTE FALCONS



2010-11 RECORD: 19-6 overall, 8-2 in Lewis & Clark Conference (2nd place)

PLAYOFF RESULT: Lost 73-65 to Sturgeon in Class 2 District 7 Tournament semifinals

TOURNAMENT RESULTS: 3rd place — Glasgow Tournament; 2nd place — New Franklin Tournament; 1st place — Slater Wildcat Classic.

KEY LOSSES: Lorenzo Estes (11.1 ppg, 2.0 apg, 2.0 rpg); Jhreyll Summers (10.2 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 1.4 bpg); Spencer Gerald (8.6 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 1.7 spg).

KEY RETURNERS: Bruce Marshall: sr., 6'10" (11.3 ppg, 8.9 rpg, 4.0 bpg); Roshawn Wilson: sr., 5'10" (3.9 ppg, 2.0 rpg, 1.3 apg); Krey Cowans: sr., 5'8" (3.1 ppg, 2.1 rpg, 1.0 spg).

open the opportunity for Williams to have a big night as a result.

"He's come so far this year on the mental side, as well as understanding the game and knowing the plays," Kendrick said. "Having a 6-foot-10 kid, he might be our best option we have rebounding the basketball. He reads the ball really well and then gets off the floor quickly. I expect big things out of Rudy and he was one of those guys that, every time he played this summer, we did not lose a ballgame, so he's vitally important."

In an injury-free world, Kendrick would have junior Zach Cook as his starting point guard after grooming him at that position on JV last season. However, Cook fractured his right wrist in late October and will miss at least the first half of the season.

"It would be great if we could get him back by early second semester in January," Kendrick said. "The earlier, the better. He will be a complete stabilizer. The kicker for us is losing his length defensively. He is a very good rebounder and just a very intel-

ligent basketball player."

With Wilson taking the point position, other players such as junior Sam Miller will also bring the ball up the court this season. Kendrick said Miller worked harder than probably any other player did this summer, attending every open gym session and hit the weight room during the summer months as well.

"You love that about a kid and I flat-out told him that he's going to get minutes," Kendrick said. "He did exactly what I asked him to do, day in and day out."

The point guard position will be Fayette's strength in regards to roster depth. Most guards, however inexperienced at the position at the varsity level, will be capable of bringing the ball up the court.

"It's just going to be trial by fire for some of these guys early on, to see who can do it," Kendrick said. "We've also got some freshmen that seem to be point guards in Coltin

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Fayette Falcons girls basketball



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Senior 5'9" Forward
Parents: Neal & Karen
Brunkhorst



Taylor Rice
Senior 5'3" Guard
Parents: Tim & Tina Rice



Christina Appleberry
Junior 5'7" Forward
Parents: Kavin & Holly Owings



Kenya Johnson
Junior 5'6" Guard
Guardians: Elsie Johnson
& Marita Harris



Kennzie Thornton
Junior 5'6" Guard
Parents: Pete Thornton
& Micki Polson



Caitlin Wells
Junior 5'10" Forward
Parents: Marc & Janet Wells



Keonna Bush
Sophomore 5'3" Guard
Parents: Curtis Jackman
& Vicky Bush



Kyreon Lee
Sophomore 5'6" Forward
Parents: Dylan Lee
& Myra Kelly



Kenzie Smentkowski
Sophomore 5'5" Guard
Parents: A.J. & Carol
Smentkowski



Ellie Johnson
Freshman 6'0" Forward
Parents: Bobbie & Gloria
Johnson



Tiffany Ray
Freshman 5'5" Guard
Parents: Clifford & Lorrie Ray



Samantha Reed
Freshman 5'8" Guard
Parents: Rich & Chris Reed



Rachel Wayland
Freshman 5'7" Forward
Parent: Vicki Wayland



Mike James
Head Coach



Lady Falcons optimistic that two-win seasons are history

It's been a while since the Fayette girls basketball team has had high expectations heading into a season. That all changes this year.

The Lady Falcons lost a few underclassmen from last year's team, but they'll be loaded with talent from the other returners and a few newcomers this season. Head coach Mike James doesn't want to brag too early, but the 2011-12 season could be the turnaround year his program has been waiting for.

"We've dealt with a few injuries here and there, so that's cut some of our practices down on what we would like to do," James said. "All in all, we've had a pretty good opening couple of weeks. We're getting better."

Optimism began to grow during a highly successful summer season. Fayette lost only a game or two and even beat a few Class 4 programs, although James said you can't always put too much stock in summer basketball games. However, it may just be the boost the Lady Falcons need heading into this season.

While Fayette didn't lose any seniors to graduation, five underclassmen didn't return

to the team this season. With a roster of 11 varsity players and 13 in all, James said it's as if his team is still starting over, in a way. But a strong group of seasoned lettermen will lead the way this season.

Fayette returns its leading scorer and rebounder, junior Caitlin Wells, who will be one of the starting forwards again this season. Wells has been a starter during each of her first two seasons and an All-Conference player in each season as well. On a team that averaged less than 30 points per game last season, Wells accounted for nearly 20 percent of the team's scoring.

In the past, James said she was the No. 1 source for scoring, but that may not be required of her again this season, which will make her more effective.

"I think she's got the experience now that's necessary," James said. "Hopefully it will elevate the offensive side of her game. She's a pretty good rebounder and a decent defensive player. It's just we need a little more offense out of her and I think she's going to be able to do that this year."

Senior Hayleigh Brunkhorst will also compete for time at the post this season, a position with which Fayette hasn't had

much depth in the past. Brunkhorst was Fayette's second leading scorer behind Wells, but as a forward, she has more range. She'll play mostly at the No. 4 position but she's also capable of stepping outside and hitting 15-footers with ease.

"She's got a bit more range than some of our other post players," James said. "She's a good passer and a smart player who knows the offense better than some of our younger players. She's capable of putting up big numbers on any given night. I look for big things out of her and I think she's going to have a good year."

The other senior, Taylor Rice, is someone James described as "the ultimate team player." Her ability to excel in several different categories — shooting from 3-point range, leading the team in assists and grabbing many steals — defines that role and is someone James said has really improved every year.

"She's going to get more open looks this year and I think she's going to make some people pay," James said. "I'm looking forward to it because we haven't had depth at the (shooting) guard the past few years and now we have some good depth there. She'll

help lead that group for us."

Junior Kennzie Thornton tore the ACL in her right knee during the second game at last year's Glasgow Tournament, allowing for junior Kenya Johnson to pick up several minutes at the point guard position. In a sense, James said it was a learning experience for both players.

In an obvious sense, the increased playing time allowed for Johnson to spend more time bringing the ball up the court. However, James said Thornton benefitted from watching on the sidelines for an entire season, taking what she learns by observation and adding that to her game.

"It should help us become deeper (at the position)," James said. "Kenya probably knows the offense as good as anybody and has done a good job of peer coaching and leading."

James said Thornton has responded well after her injury, but as with most young athletes returning from ACL injuries, she hasn't quite gotten back to 100 percent just yet. Although she tweaked her knee during the first week of practice, James has noticed it's

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becoming less of a problem with each practice. Losing her last season took away an experienced press-breaker.

"She seems to be running at full force now, getting into it and being scrappy," James said. "As the knee gets in better shape, her confidence will grow. I think people forget that as a freshman, she was our third leading scorer. She put up a decent amount of points. If we get her back to full strength, that gives us yet another scoring option."

Fayette has a freshman duo that's ready to make a splash in the high school basketball scene after dominating at the middle school level. Forward Ellie Johnson and guard Samantha Reed both have played AAU basketball during the spring and summer months in the past and will add another dimension to this year's team.

Johnson spent a majority of her middle school career matched up against other girls who were four or five inches shorter than her. It will be more of an even playing field this season and James said that although she may be up against mostly seniors this year, he thinks she will handle it fine, but her biggest concern will be avoiding injuries during the season.

"She's not your typical freshman and has played nationwide against some pretty stellar competition," James said. "What I've seen of her so far, she has every tool to be an excellent basketball player. Injuries might slow her development a little bit, but right now, she's as skilled a freshman as I've had in my career."

Reed ran a one-two punch with Johnson last year, working the point and picking up assist after assist passing to Johnson. However, Reed also has the capability of being a big scorer. She could bring the ball up for Fayette, but James said he would like to tin-

ker with the offense a bit to take advantage of her skills on offense.

"We're deep at the guard spot and she brings a lot to the table with her basketball IQ," James said. "We need to take advantage of her skill set. She's a really intelligent player who can play any of the guard positions."

Sophomore Kenzie Smentkowski also picked up valuable minutes as a freshman, playing as both point guard and shooting guard. James said she's one of the most improved players on the team has shot the ball better in the first few weeks of practice than she did all of last season.

"If that carries over into a game, I think she's going to be a big part of what we're going to do," James said. "I just really like how her game has developed in one year and I think she's way ahead of where she was last year at this point. She could be somebody you're going to have to pay attention to and I look for big things out of her."

Another candidate for one of the guard positions is sophomore Keonna Bush. James said she's another player that brings something different to the table because she's quicker than most players and can be fearless at times.

"If she gives a lot of effort, she's a pretty good player," James said. "There's no doubt about that. That's what we have to do, is get a consistent effort out of her. If that happens, then Keonna Bush can put up close to All-Conference numbers. I think her talent is at that level, we just have to get her the experience to get there."

The list of guards continues to grow and grow. Sophomore Kyreon Lee will come off the bench this season after playing mostly at the junior varsity level last year. James said she just needs to get some more playing time under her belt to help refine a skill set that needs more time to develop.

FAYETTE LADY FALCONS



2010-11 RECORD: 2-21 overall, 0-10 in Lewis & Clark Conference (6th place)

PLAYOFF RESULT: Lost 65-29 to Sturgeon in Class 2 District 7 Tournament quarterfinals

TOURNAMENT RESULTS: T-7th place — Glasgow Tournament; 7th place — New Franklin Tournament; 7th place — Slater Wildcat Classic.

KEY LOSSES: Sam Strodman (2.7 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 65% FT); Shayana McQuitty (1.3 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 1.7 bpg).

KEY RETURNERS: Caitlin Wells: jr., 5'10" (5.8 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 2.2 spg); Hayleigh Brunkhorst: sr., 5'9" (4.7 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 1.3 spg); Taylor Rice: sr., 5'3" (4.0 ppg, 1.8 rpg, 1.8 spg).

Rounding out the varsity roster is freshman Tiffany Ray, who transferred from Slater earlier this month. With a small roster, Ray could also pick up some early minutes this season at the varsity level.

While this year's team is capable of showing plenty of promise, James isn't quick to say the Lady Falcons will be a worst-to-first team. Salisbury, despite the loss of Morgan Vetter, appears to be one of the frontrunners in the Lewis & Clark Conference and other teams like Marceline and Slater will be very competitive in the conference as well.

"To me, it's as balanced as it has been since I've been here (in Fayette)," James said. "There's no real clear favorite, but until someone knocks Salisbury off, I guess you have to give Salisbury the nod. They're a very talented and bring back a good young group. With that said, they lost their leading scorer, but they still have the nucleus of a pretty good team back."

James said it will be a dogfight each night and Paris also brings back a veteran ballclub. It's hard to factor where Fayette

will fit into the mix until it finally takes to the floor, but it's rare to see five teams out of six that will have a legitimate shot at the conference title.

Fayette will find out what it's made of this week in the Glasgow Tournament. The Lady Falcons drew the No. 6 seed and will face Glasgow in the opening round, providing a great first test for this team. The first week of the season may very well dictate how the remainder of the year will unfold.

"We'd love to win the thing and I think that's the way you have to think," James said. "That's where our thinking has changed over the course of the last couple of years. Realistically, with the youth we have, I'm not sure if we're at that level yet to be considered one of the top two teams in that tournament. Generally, a good goal and a good start would be getting two wins out of that tournament in some way. We'd like to make it a goal to reach the championship game of that tournament."

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New Franklin Bulldogs boys basketball



Austin Baker

Senior 5'10" Forward
Parents: Tim & Michelle Baker



Michael Hall

Senior 6'0" Forward
Parents: John & Malisa Hall



Nick O'Neill

Junior 5'8" Guard
Parent: Dwight O'Neill



Jordan Reimer

Junior 5'10" Forward
Parent: Eva Painter



Evan Storjohann

Junior 5'10" Guard
Parents: Scott & Joyce Storjohann



Tyler White

Junior 6'0" Guard
Parents: Scott & Becky White



Jacob Woodbury

Junior 5'9" Guard
Parents: Jack & Kay Woodbury



Matt Anderton

Sophomore 5'9" Guard
Parents: Rodney & Melissa Anderton



Adam Harris

Sophomore 5'8" Guard
Parents: Darren & Jane Harris



Alex Holem

Sophomore 6'1" Forward
Parents: Larry & Kelly Holem



Tyler Hull

Sophomore 6'2" Guard/Forward
Parents: Jay Hull & Nicole Carleton



Ryley Lyons

Sophomore 6'2" Forward
Parents: Ryan & Leslie Lyons



Dalton Welbern

Sophomore 5'6" Guard
Parents: Mark & Connie Welbern



Cody Wells

Freshman 5'9" Guard
Parents: Jerry & Becky Wells



Tanner White

Freshman 5'10" Guard
Parents: Scott & Becky White



Jim Schlotzhauer

Head Coach



Revamped roster looks to keep New Franklin competitive

Don't even bother mentioning "rebuilding year" in front of New Franklin head coach Jim Schlotzhauer. He already knows what you're going to say.

His 2010-11 senior-laden team did almost all of the work on a team that finished with a 10-14 record. This season, he returns four players that played very little on the varsity level. How little? Of the 1,063 points scored last season, the returners accounted for 17 of those points, less than two percent.

And yet, when you see Schlotzhauer at the Glasgow Tournament this week, you won't see him in a panic mode.

"Offensively, I believe we have better ball-handling on this year's team," Schlotzhauer said. "That has been a problem for all of the teams I have coached at New Franklin. We must make good decisions still, but our skill set seems to be much improved as a whole. This will hopefully allow us to push the ball and get some easy baskets in transition."

This season, New Franklin will have a completely different look with a completely different set of leaders. The Bulldogs will have to replace Travis Crowley, who

reached the 1,000-point plateau in the final game last season, as the centerpiece of the team. While several other players formed a strong supporting cast, replacing Crowley will be a tall order.

"All summer, I told the team that we must play as a unit," Schlotzhauer said. "Last year everything we did as a team came from Travis. He was our team leader that everyone fed off of on offense and defense. Nate (Brown) and others were successful because Travis was a catalyst for those opportunities. I think this year's team will be more balanced in our ability and skills."

Much like a college basketball program, Schlotzhauer will rely on some returners and will also have a couple of transfers thrown into the mix this season. The top candidate expected to take Crowley's place is junior Tyler White, a transfer student who played the past two seasons at Exeter High School, where he played for his father, Scott White. While at Exeter, White was a two-time Ozark 7 All-Conference selection in his first two seasons, first as an honorable mention selection and most recently a second team selection.

"We were lucky to have Tyler move

in to the district this year," Schlotzhauer said. "He had a successful fall baseball season and we expect the same in basketball. He understands the game very well and has the ability to play any position for us on offense and to guard anyone on defense. Being such a young team, I think he will help bring experience to our young nucleus. In tough situations, I think we will look to him as our leader."

The next experienced varsity player on the team is sophomore Dalton Welbern, who will start at one of the guard positions for New Franklin. Schlotzhauer said he may be undersized a 5-foot-6, but Welbern is still very skilled.

"He ran the point for us all summer and is learning to move the ball within the offense," Schlotzhauer said. "He has a good jump shot that he has worked very hard to improve. I see him playing either the No. 1 or No. 2 for us, distributing the ball and stretching the defense with his ability to shoot."

Schlotzhauer will turn to sophomores Alex Holem, Tyler Hull and Ryley Lyons to command the forward positions this year. The three have some big shoes to fill and

will share time at the No. 4 and No. 5 positions.

"They all have good size and are athletic in different ways," Schlotzhauer said. "They must control the paint as a group to help us win games."

Senior Michael Hall will also get some time as a forward. He's one of two seniors on this year's team and Schlotzhauer said he is an extremely talented player, but he must learn to work within a team concept. If he can get settled in, expect him to make an impact this season.

New Franklin's other senior, Austin Baker, was one of the four returning players who had minimal varsity time on the court last season. He will add size on the inside and also get some playing time here and there for the Bulldogs.

Junior Evan Storjohann and sophomore Matt Anderton will both come off the bench as reserve guards. Schlotzhauer said Storjohann will play more often when New Franklin needs to stretch the court and to slow down the opponent's tempo. Meanwhile, Anderton's strengths lie in New Franklin

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putting on a press and will have success when the offense is going to be active in the lane.

Schlotzhauer may also give a starting nod to freshman Tanner White, Tyler's younger brother. With a smaller team compared to last season, New Franklin will go with a three-guard set that isn't afraid to take the ball straight to the rim.

"He has a good ability to pass, shoot, and get to the rim," Schlotzhauer said of Tanner White. "If he and Welbern can play off of each other, our team will have a lot more success. I expect a lot of growth from him throughout the year."

Other players that look to factor into the varsity rotation include junior Jordan Reimer, sophomore Jacob Woodbury and Adam Harris and freshman Cody Wells, who got a head start by playing some during the junior high season.

"I have coached all of these players in junior high, so they know what our philosophy is," Schlotzhauer said. "Getting experience is the main thing for this group. There is no substitution for repetitions on the varsity level. Everything is faster and more sophisticated. Focus is the key for these kids. If they maintain focus on the things we have taught them, they will play well."

On offense, New Franklin is built this season to score from the perimeter if it chooses to do so, but the inside game will be there as well, despite a height disadvantage. Schlotzhauer said one of the team's strengths is its shooting ability, which

should lead to more points and a higher scoring average than 44 points per game last season. However, with a whole new team this season, he also said the number of turnovers may be significantly high early in the year while everyone is still getting used to one another.

"In the half court, I think we will have more opportunities to score from a distance," Schlotzhauer said. "We have a few players now that can shoot well. This should make a big difference in the way our half court game looks."

"Defensively, I see us trying to pressure a little bit more. Our quickness and length are two things we must use to get easy baskets in transition. Nothing came easy for last year's team. If we could get 8-10 points out of transition, that would be a big help to our offense."

The Bulldogs have solidified themselves as the middle team of the Central Activities Conference, placing fourth out of seven teams in each of the past three seasons. That trend may not change this season, with Sturgeon, Glasgow and Cairo all predicted to remain the top three schools in the conference.

"I think playing the spoiler is a great role," Schlotzhauer said. "The last few years, we haven't beaten teams that, on paper, were better than us. We just lacked the fire power to score the ball with those teams. I think this year we'll have the offense on some nights, but our defense must be solid as well. It would be great to upset a couple teams and push one of those teams out of the top three in the conference, because we

NEW FRANKLIN BULLDOGS



2010-11 RECORD: 10-14 overall, 6-6 in Central Activities Conference (4th place)

PLAYOFF RESULT: Lost 44-33 to Sturgeon in Class 2 District 7 Tournament quarterfinals

TOURNAMENT RESULTS: T-7th place — Glasgow Tournament; 5th place — New Franklin Tournament; 2nd place — Keytesville Tournament.

KEY LOSSES: Travis Crowley (10.7 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 4.0 apg); Nate Brown (9.5 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 0.9 spg); Koddie Schumaker (7.6 ppg, 2.8 rpg, 2.0 apg).

KEY RETURNERS/NEWCOMERS: Tyler White: jr., 6'0" (2-time Ozark 7 All-Conference honors at Exeter); Dalton Welbern: soph., 5'6" (0.8 ppg, 0.3 rpg, 0.2 apg).

know they all expect to be there."

One of New Franklin's early goals will be avoiding back-to-back two-and-out losses in the Glasgow Tournament. Last year's team made significant progress in tournaments, going from a winless performance in the Glasgow Tournament to a championship game appearance in the Keytesville Tournament.

"Hopefully we learned that it's not how many times you fall, but whether or not you are able to get back up," Schlotzhauer said. "There were many times in those players' careers where they could have given up on themselves or the team, but they kept coming back and finished the season on a strong note. With a young group this year, that is a valuable way to see things when you face

some adversity."

Schlotzhauer's goal has always been to get the program back to a .500 record and nearly came close last season, starting the year 7-7 before hitting a rough stretch in February. Despite a fresh team, the Bulldogs saw improvement in the preseason and took the No. 5 seed in the Glasgow Tournament, a step in the right direction. Is this the year it happens?

"I think that getting over that mark has to happen at some point," Schlotzhauer said. "If we play up to our abilities every time we step on the court, I'll be happy. That is the goal, to put our best effort on the floor every day at practices and every night at games. If we do that and lose, I'll be happy. If we do that and win, everyone will be happy."



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New Franklin Bulldogs girls basketball



Amanda Cook
Senior 5'8" Guard
Parents: Larry & Brenda Cook



Taylor Warren
Senior 5'9" Guard
Parents: John & Vicky Warren



Brittany Anderson
Junior 5'7" Forward
Parent: Paula Anderson



Emily Hendrix
Junior 5'9" Forward
Parents: Kenneth & Tami Hendrix



Jasmyne Boggs
Sophomore 6'1" Forward
Parents: Kenneth & Beverly Boggs



Rox'e Hendrix
Sophomore 5'9" Forward
Parents: Mike & Bobbi Hendrix



Aly Hundley
Sophomore 5'8" Guard
Parents: Travis & Wendy Hundley



Sara Montgomery
Sophomore 5'7" Guard/Forward
Parents: Eldon & Heather Montgomery



Kalani Pihana
Sophomore 5'8" Guard/Forward
Parents: Kerry & Denise Pihana



Abigail Prewitt
Sophomore 5'8" Forward
Parent: Alissa Terry



Kaitlin Dobson
Freshman 5'7" Guard
Parents: Kyle & Lora Dobson



Derian Dodson
Freshman 5'10" Forward
Parents: Abiel & Heather Leonard



Aislinn Himmelberg
Freshman 5'8" Guard
Parents: Davie Himmelberg & Amanda Himmelberg



Madi Lyons
Freshman 5'6" Guard/Forward
Parents: Ryan & Lesley Lyons



Sandra Perkins
Freshman 5'8" Guard
Parents: Brian & Janice Perkins



Chris McGowan
Head Coach



Lady Bulldogs offer roster of experienced young players

Last season, the New Franklin girls basketball team showed how it's possible to be successful with a young team. The Lady Bulldogs finished with a 16-10 record after replacing four starters with a starting rotation that featured a few freshmen.

The 2011-12 Lady Bulldogs will still be young, but that experience from last year should bode well for them again this season, especially since they have back four of their top five scorers and another group of freshmen just waiting for their chance to get on the floor.

"We had a lot of younger players play last year and gain valuable experience," head coach Chris McGowan said. "Hopefully entering this year those players will have more confidence and know what to expect. We certainly want to continue to improve and build on last year, but this is a new year with a new team and a chance for a lot of people to play."

New Franklin's defense will have to find a way to bounce back after the departure of Sam Kircher, who constantly gave opponents fits on defense. Her team-best 73 steals and second-best 61 assists, along with her 9.5 point per game scoring aver-

age, will be missed as an all-around threat on the court.

"Sam Kircher was a fantastic athlete and will be tough to replace," McGowan said. "We need to do a better job of team defense without Sam. Our positioning will be even more important this year."

New Franklin was a relatively low-scoring team last year, averaging 38 points per game — just over an average of one point per minute played — and topped 50 points just twice, during back-to-back games in the Keytesville Tournament. However, opponents averaged just 35 points a game against the Lady Bulldogs. With the loss of Kircher on defense, it may take a higher scoring average to compete this season.

One of the go-to players last year was sophomore Jasmyne Boggs and that will continue again this season. At 6-foot-1, Boggs nearly averaged a double-double in points and rebounding and also led the team in blocked shots. She was named a KRES All-Star in just her freshman season and, if she can improve her numbers to 15 points and 10 rebounds on average, that means New Franklin had a pretty successful night in the post. If she can add range

to her shot, those numbers will be even higher.

"Certainly Jasmyne is a fantastic player," McGowan said. "We would like to get her the ball as often as possible and allow her to make plays. She is a good passer and will get her teammates some open shots that we need to make. We want to be balanced offensively and put all of our players in good positions to allow them to score, but Jasmyne has the ability to make her teammates better."

This year's sophomore class in general will be the perfect complement to the senior and junior classes. Most of the experience lies with the sophomores and McGowan said the team might have to lean on them a bit this season.

"They gained valuable experience last year and much more is expected of them as they progress," McGowan said. "I have noticed that they are more aggressive this year and seem to know what to expect. I would expect that their experience from last year will help them relate to our freshmen this year and will hopefully make the freshmen's transition into high school basketball easier for them."

Handling the point guard position for a second straight season is sophomore Aly Hundley. She will be the heir apparent to replace Kircher and will have three more years to grow into her spot, but she could reach that potential before this year is over. Hundley grew plenty last season and was placed in a pressure situation in the very first week. During overtime in the third-place game of the Glasgow Tournament, Hundley knocked down a baseline jumper in the final seconds to give her team the win over Slater and her scoring average should reach double figures this season.

"Aly Hundley is the point guard and has been given a lot of responsibility," McGowan said. "She shoots well and makes her teammates better."

New Franklin's two seniors, Amanda Cook and Taylor Warren, will pick up some additional playing time this season. Cook will work into the mix as player that can play both the post and the perimeter, while Warren will see time as a forward.

"Amanda is one of our seniors and played a lot last year," McGowan said.

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Area High School Basketball Preview

(Continued from Page 8)

"We hope she can provide some stability for us and make some open shots. Taylor is our other senior and is very athletic. She is a good shooter and quick defender that we would like to see play more this year."

Another key returner as a sophomore is Kalani Pihana, who stepped in and averaged nearly three points a game last year. Pihana could be a player the Lady Bulldogs go to down the stretch. Although she only went to the free-throw line for 18 shots last season, she made 78 percent of them to lead the team.

"Kalani is one of our best shooters and we would really like to put her in positions where she gets some open looks for us," McGowan said.

Junior Emily Hendrix and sophomore Sara Montgomery, will also factor into the varsity rotation. McGowan said Hendrix will be a versatile player on his team and work at multiple positions and she is also a very intelligent player. Montgomery is moving to the wing position this year the McGowan wants to take advantage of her athleticism to score some easy baskets.

Other players that saw minimal time last season and mostly played at the junior varsity level were junior Brittany Anderson and sophomores Abigail Prewitt and Rox'e Hendrix. McGowan said all three will be competing for time at the post position and will be good competitors this season.

McGowan will also have a trio of freshmen that will see considerable playing time at the varsity level.

"I expect that Madi Lyons, Aislinn Himelberg, and Derian Dodson will all see significant time on the varsity this year," McGowan said. "They are all very athletic and have improved a great deal since last year. It is exciting for the future of this team to see

the ability of these freshmen. Just like with our freshmen last year, they need to gain experience, but their upside and potential are tremendous. Kaitlin Dobson and Sandra Perkins are also freshmen that will mostly see some junior varsity time in order to continue to gain experience."

Heading into his second season as the varsity head coach, McGowan said the most important concept he learned last season was how vital communication is to the success of the team. The better the players communicate with each other and their coach, the more chance they have to work as a cohesive group, he said.

The Central Activities Conference will be more balanced this season, but Sturgeon will still be the team on top expecting to defend its conference title. Cairo lost some key players from last season and other teams like New Franklin and Glasgow will return young rosters looking to climb the ladder in the standings.

"I am not sure what to expect from the conference this year," McGowan said. "I guess that is what makes it fun, because there is pretty good balance. Obviously we are playing to win the conference title, but so are all of the other teams in the conference, so we will just have to see how it plays out."

Offensively, McGowan wants to run an up-tempo style of play, taking advantage of the athletes' skills he has this season. With that in mind, if the Lady Bulldogs are able to get the ball to the basket quicker, it will cause for more possessions that, in turn, should significantly raise their scoring average from last season.

Defensively, there is plenty of slack to pick up. However, McGowan has the players to step in and fill the gaps that should allow them to continue to force the tempo and play in transition more often.

NEW FRANKLIN LADY BULLDOGS



2010-11 RECORD: 16-10 overall, 6-6 in Central Activities Conference (4th place)

PLAYOFF RESULT: Lost 51-32 to Harrisburg in Class 2 District 7 Tournament semifinals

TOURNAMENT RESULTS: 3rd place — Glasgow Tournament; 3rd place — New Franklin Tournament; 2nd place — Keytesville Tournament.

KEY LOSSES: Sam Kircher (9.5 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 2.8 spg); Valerie Dobson (2.3 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 1.2 spg).

KEY RETURNERS: Jasmyne Boggs: soph., 6'1" (9.9 ppg, 8.8 rpg, 1.7 apg); Aly Hundley: soph., 5'8" (8.5 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 2.7 apg); Amanda Cook: sr., 5'8" (2.7 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 1.0 spg).

New Franklin drew the No. 2 seed in the Glasgow Tournament and is one of the favorites to return to the championship game. If the Lady Bulldogs do that, they'll be in line to try to stop Harrisburg's streak of three consecutive Glasgow Tournament titles. However, it will still be a tall task to get by either Glasgow or Fayette in the semifinals, should they win their opener.

Last year's team also gained plenty of tournament experience last season, playing 11 of its 26 games during bracket play. The Lady Bulldogs won each of their four first-round games — including their district opener — and reached the championship game of the Keytesville Tournament while settling for third-place at Glasgow and New Franklin. Three of their tournament games were against Slater, winning the third-place game in Glasgow and the district opener in Harrisburg over the Lady Wildcats. There could be the possibility these team will play each other up to three more times again this season.

It may be way down the line, but New

Franklin also hopes to end its string of district losses to Harrisburg this season. After upsetting Harrisburg in the 2008-09 season and advancing to the Fianl Four, New Franklin has lost in back-to-back seasons during the district semifinals of the brutal district field.

It seems as if all roads to success may lead through Harrisburg this season, but New Franklin hopes to get its chance against the Lady Bulldogs later in the district tournament, perhaps battling them for a district title in the championship game.

"I think our girls going through the experience last year will help us," McGowan said. "They know what to expect. It is one thing to talk about it, but it is a different matter to actually experience a district tournament. There are some very good teams in our district, so we will have to be playing well by that time of the year in order to have a chance. Fortunately for us we have some time to get to that stage. We just want to improve as the year goes on and peak at the right time and see what happens.

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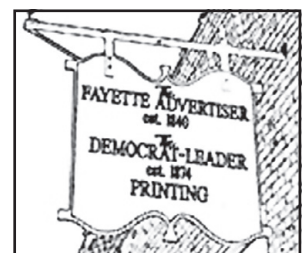
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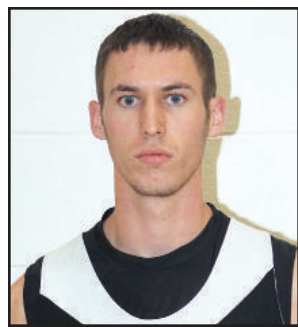
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Glasgow Yellowjackets boys basketball



Dillon Yung

Senior 6'3" Forward
Parents: Tommy & Tammy Yung



Reid Littrell

Junior 6'3" Forward
Parents: Mike & Angy Littrell



Joel Monnig

Junior 6'4" Forward
Parents: Kent & Joyce Monnig



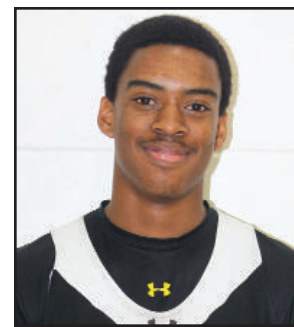
Austin Stockhorst

Junior 6'3" Forward
Parents: Jeff Stockhorst
& Jeannie Fuemmeler



Ethan Thompson

Junior 5'11" Guard
Parents: Joe & Becky Thompson



Jimmie Wilson

Junior 5'9" Guard
Parents: Jim & Gina Wilson



Landon Brand

Sophomore 6'2" Forward
Parents: Sam & Stephanie Brand



Alex Mathews

Sophomore 5'8" Guard
Parents: Bill & Dianna Mathews



Josh Sanders

Sophomore 6'2" Forward
Parents: Tracy & Jody Sanders



Austin Speiser

Sophomore 5'11" Guard
Parents: Greg & Kristin Speiser



Christopher Frevert

Freshman 5'6" Guard
Parents: Shawn & Melissa
Frevert



Garrett Fuemmeler

Freshman 5'9" Guard
Parents: Scott & Steph
Fuemmeler



Blake Hackman

Freshman 5'10" Guard
Parents: Doug & Sally Hackman



Clay Littrell

Freshman 5'11" Forward
Parents: Mike & Angy Littrell



Daniel McMillan

Freshman 5'6" Guard
Parents: Danny & Tammy
McMillan



Mick Cropp

Head Coach



Glasgow boys are ready for another shot at district title

Just inside Glasgow head coach Mick Cropp's office door is a piece of paper, hanging on the wall above his desk. The paper, starting to fade a brownish-yellow color as it has aged, shows the record of each Glasgow team he's coached, along with season highlights and tournament finishes.

Cropp has written down his team's first-place finishes in the Marceline Tournament over the past handful of years and also marked down championships in the Glasgow Tournament the past two years. But there's one thing he hasn't been able to record over the past two years: a district championship.

In each of the past two seasons, Glasgow has fallen short in the district championship game, losing on the opponents' home court. This year, Cropp and his team hope to continue that trend, because the Yellowjackets get to host districts this year and have that home-court advantage that could help push them over the edge, like the 2008-09 season.

Cropp has had to replace star athlete after star athlete in Glasgow, year after year. This year is no different, having to replace Tyler Sanders, who seemed as if he could knock down 3-pointers from the Saline County

side of the Missouri River. Sanders also had a strong supporting cast of seniors that guided Glasgow to a 22-6 record last season. But this year's team is ready to add another district title to the trophy case.

"The term a lot of guys use is 'Next guy up' or 'Next guy over,' and that's kind of the way we do it," Cropp said. "What people don't see is the day in and day out that the guys who are sitting on the bench do. They go just as hard and learn just as much for 20 weeks, every day. While they are on the bench, it doesn't mean they aren't good players. They're just behind some older veterans and they get older and they mature, and all of a sudden they are there in the same spot. I hope it continues to be that way all the time."

But there will still be plenty of veteran leadership on a young team in the 2011-12 season. Dillon Yung, the only senior on the team, returns as one of the leading scorers and is one of the most versatile players on the team. His height suggests he would play the No. 5 position, but his quickness and ability to shoot from the perimeter allows him the chance to play as a guard.

"If I had to, he could even play point guard," Cropp said. "The way I look at Dil-

lon, as a sophomore he played the No. 4 and as a junior he played the No. 3, so he got a whole year of playing the guard spot and now he's back to the No. 4. So now I have four guards around Reid (Littrell) and potentially one of the deepest shooting teams I've ever had."

Taking the other forward position is junior Reid Littrell, who also averaged double figures in scoring last season. He'll add plenty of height to a team loaded with forwards, six of which are 6-foot-2-inches or taller. Glasgow lost each of the three games Littrell missed last season due to injury. If he remains healthy this season and averages double-double numbers, it will be difficult to stop the Yellowjackets.

"I think if teams play man (defense) and guard him with one person, he'll be pretty successful," Cropp said. "He'll get good shots off because he's more powerful this year, I think more than anything. He's always been a fairly finesse player and he's added the 'Ben Meyer' power. So he can still finesse you, but when he needs to, he can just go to the basket. You might see him in a certain combination of players out on the perimeter. I don't have a problem with

him shooting from 16 or 17 feet."

Another player that will be an asset to this team is junior Austin Stockhorst. He is another 6-foot-3 forward that can also play as a guard. Although he averaged just over two points per game last season, he will be one of those players that will be asked to step up as a leader on this team in one of the starting roles. Cropp said he has been vocal during practice as a leader and also jumps well, adding another top rebounder to the team.

Fully aware that he would need players to replace Sanders and Mitchell Littrell as guards this season, Cropp had been grooming a few players to take their place this season. Junior Ethan (Jay) Thompson will slide into Mitchell Littrell's role as a lockdown defender and will draw the toughest defensive assignments on the perimeter each game.

"Time will tell if he can be as good as Mitchell was, but the thing with Jay is he is a little more offensively-gear than Mitchell was," Cropp said. "He has point guard skills. He's not the quickest kid in the world, but

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Area High School Basketball Preview

(Continued from Page 10)

he's a very crafty player. He seems to always get what he needs to get and he has a great feel for the game."

And as the junior high coach, Cropp has also prepared freshman Blake Hackman for the role as the starting point guard on this year's varsity squad. As any other freshman would, Cropp said Hackman will have to learn on the job and his first test will be bringing the ball up the court for the top-seeded Glasgow team during the Glasgow Tournament.

"He gives us our best chance as a point guard," Cropp said. "I'll tell you, when the games really, really count in late February and early March, when he's had a full season under his belt and he's not truly a freshman anymore, he's going to be a huge asset for us. He's going to be a really good player."

Taking a look at Glasgow's bench, junior Jimmie Wilson is someone Cropp describes as his "five-and-a-half man" rather than a "sixth man." At some point, Wilson could work his way into the starting lineup.

"I'm one who likes to stick with a lineup, but he's going to get a lot of minutes," Cropp said. "He has improved a lot, he's strong with the basketball and he has good instincts defensively. Offensively, he sees the floor pretty well and the thing that has slowed him down the past few years is his shooting from the 3-point line and maybe his aggressiveness and being able to finish around the basket, but that's improved a bunch."

One of the biggest surprises this season for Glasgow will be junior forward Joel Monnig, who will fill in nicely behind Reid Littrell at the No. 5 position. Monnig's lanky 6-foot-4 frame will be put to use early if Littrell gets into foul trouble or if the Yellowjackets need to go with a taller lineup. His eight point, 11 rebound performance against Matla Bend in the first round of districts last season was an early preview of what he has to offer this season.

"He doesn't necessarily have to go out there and be terribly safe," Cropp said. "We don't want to put any team in the bonus a whole bunch, but he can go out there and attack the offensive glass. Maybe he gets one over-the-back call but he gets three offensive rebounds. He can be aggressive and he plays long on defense. He gives us versatility with Reid."

Cropp also has four sophomores on the bench that will be itching to get their first minutes of varsity action. Landon Brand and Josh Sanders, both 6-foot-2 forwards, were forces that were reckoned with at the junior varsity level last season, while Austin Speiser and Alex Mathews are two guards that will add some depth at that position.

"They will be JV players that will see

some minutes on the varsity," Cropp said. "Landon Brand, I was really impressed with him this summer, and Alex Mathews works extremely hard. This is going to be the next group. We're only losing Dillon next year, so we'll pretty much be rolling the same team out there next year. Don't be surprised if they're pretty successful when I lose four starters. These kids will have been in the program doing the same thing for five or six years."

"This is a good group and I was really happy with them last year in the JV season. They're smart and they play hard. Don't be surprised if this group, in two years, is stepping right up."

Cropp described Brand as an Austin Sanders style of player, who always plays extremely hard and understands what he needs to do. Jose Sanders has been working on his footwork and will be much better this season around the basket. It also helps that he's going up against Littrell and Monnig during practice.

Mathews and Speiser will be outside shooters when they're on the court. Mathews handles the ball well and is quick on defense, Cropp said, while Speiser still needs to improve his strength and get more aggressive, but he said that will come with age and experience.

One of the accomplishments Cropp wrote down on his piece of paper was the Yellowjackets won the Central Activities Conference championship last season, finishing with an 11-1 record and lost only to Sturgeon at home. Defending the title won't be so easy, as Sturgeon and Cairo both look to knock Glasgow off the perch.

"I think Cairo and Sturgeon return probably, between the two of them, the top four players (in the conference)," Cropp said. "I think with (Lane) Arends and (Spencer) Kelly and (Aaron) Barratt and (Brad) Roberts, those are probably the top four players in the conference. But I think we're going to fit right in there with them and I think New Franklin is much improved and Madison has some good guards. Every night is tough in this conference."

This year's team will work from the outside-in on offense, Cropp said. Unlike last year's team, this group can spread out and drive and attack the basket more than last year, which relied heavily on perimeter shooting. Much like when Ben Meyer was dominant in the post, the No. 1 priority is to feed the ball inside to Littrell and if that fails, there's still several options remaining.

Glasgow has built a tradition of playing in low-scoring games and it starts with their defense. Cropp said they'll work a man-to-man defense like they have in the past and will switch to a zone defense when the time comes, but it's one of the few weaknesses

GLASGOW YELLOWJACKETS



2010-11 RECORD: 22-6 overall, 11-1 in Central Activities Conference (1st place)

PLAYOFF RESULT: Lost 51-43 to Tina-Avalon in Class 1 District 10 Tournament championship

TOURNAMENT RESULTS: 1st place — Glasgow Tournament; 1st place — Marceline Tournament; 4th place — Slater Wildcat Classic.

KEY LOSSES: Tyler Sanders (14.1 ppg, 2.7 rpg, 98 3-pointers); Mitchell Littrell (7.8 ppg, 2.4 spg, 2.3 apg); Austin Sanders (4.4 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 1.5 apg).

KEY RETURNERS: Dillon Yung: sr., 6'3" (11.8 ppg, 7.8 rpg, 1.5 bpg); Reid Littrell: jr., 6'3" (12.1 ppg, 7.8 rpg, 53% FG); Ethan Thompson: jr., 5'11" (2.0 ppg, 0.8 rpg, 0.4 apg).

this team has.

"Our philosophy is to keep the ball out of the lane, contest shots and rebound," Cropp said. "That's the way we like to play and it's just a matter of doing it from possession to

possession."

During the offseason, Cropp prepared his kids with a strenuous conditioning workout

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Glasgow Yellowjackets girls basketball



Alex Davis

Senior 5'1" Guard
Parents: Jeff & Heather Davis



Carley Brucks

Junior 6'0" Forward
Parents: David & Debbie Brucks



Lindsey Kopp

Junior 5'8" Forward
Parents: Raymond & Candice Kopp



Trisha McMillan

Junior 5'3" Guard
Parents: David & Melissa McMillan



Courtney Neville

Junior 5'2" Guard
Parents: Mark & Tracy Neville



Peyton Davis

Sophomore 5'5" Guard
Parents: Jeff & Heather Davis



Nikki Fuemmeler

Sophomore 6'0" Forward
Parents: Alan & Deb Fuemmeler



Lauren Kramm

Sophomore 5'7" Forward
Parents: Larry & Kristin Kramm



Erin Reynolds

Sophomore 5'8" Guard/Forward
Parents: Mike & Michelle Reynolds



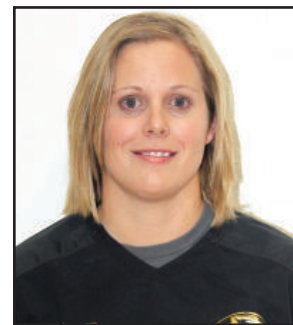
Blakeley Fuemmeler

Freshman 5'11" Forward
Parents: Darren & Sonya Fuemmeler



Abby Thompson

Freshman 5'5" Guard
Parents: Joe & Becky Thompson



Molly Monnig

Head Coach

Lady Jackets ready to bring home district title to Glasgow

In just her first season as head coach, Molly Monnig nearly returned the Glasgow girls basketball program to where it was when she played for the Lady Jackets.

The last time Glasgow had won a district championship was in 2002, when her name was listed as Molly Thompson in a program and she was one of the top players in the state. Last season, her team put together a 14-13 season and came as close as anyone could come to winning a district title, losing to Hale in overtime of the championship game.

But getting back to district championship form was a big step this team took after last year's team had an up-and-down regular season. Although this year's roster will feature just 11 players, all 11 will play a major role and several return with varsity experience, including three starters.

"They almost experienced a milestone in our program that we've missed out on the past 10 years," Monnig said. "Coming so close in an overtime loss makes them want it that much more this year. They talk about it in the locker room, so they haven't forgotten it."

While Monnig loses two experienced forwards from last year with Danielle Fuemmeler and Kellie Bethel, she also returns her top two leading scorers and several players that will continue to pressure the ball defensively in the full-court press.

"I'd say this is a group of girls that gets along very well," Monnig said. "Their roles haven't changed, so that's always a positive when they can stay within their norms of what they're used to doing. It makes things a lot easier when we're putting together offenses because they know their stuff and we don't have to rebuild."

In an area that features several young and tall forwards, Glasgow is no different when it has sophomore Nikki Fuemmeler in the

lineup. It took her a month to get going last season, but by the Marceline Tournament, she was consistently putting up double-double numbers and, heading up the No. 5 position this year, she's very capable of averaging a double-double this season if she can improve her point total.

"She's improved a lot," Monnig said. "She worked very hard all summer and her footwork is much better. She faces the basket before she goes to make a move this year and she's developed a 12- to 15-foot jump shot. She gotten stronger and made giant strides over the summer."

Like the boys' team, the Glasgow girls only have one senior this year with Alex Davis. Opposing coaches have known for her to be one of the fastest girls to step on the basketball court and, as always, she will handle the duties as the main person to apply full-court pressure starting with the in-bounds pass. Davis didn't start many games last season, but Monnig usually made her the first substitution off the bench and will play at the No. 2 guard position.

"She brings the level of intensity up 10 notches when she's on the floor," Monnig said. "She's aggressive and she plays hard. She's one of those kids who can almost will you to win because she wants it that much and everyone else follows her. She can be a fairly decent shooter this year and she's going to get a lot of playing time."

Her younger sister, sophomore Peyton Davis, will return as the starting point guard. She still hasn't quite caught up to the speed of her older sister, but Peyton Davis led the team last year in assists and did finish ahead of Alex in steals.

"She's developed a great shot and she's figured out her footwork," Monnig said. "She can shoot 35 to 40 percent from the floor, which is great and gives us another

scoring threat. She uses the floor extremely well and she's just going to continue to improve as long as she plays."

And we're just now getting to the Lady Jackets' top returning scorer with junior Trisha McMillan, who averaged 10 points a game last season. McMillan picked up where former teammate Dani Borges left off, attacking opponents often from 3-point range, making 46 percent of her attempts. McMillan will handle the shooting guard responsibilities at the No. 3 position and is also a high-percent free-throw shooter.

"Throughout the preseason, she developed a shot off the dribble," Monnig said. "She can get to the lane now and she's developed her game to where she's more than a set shooter. She can actually create her own shot now."

Wrapping up the fifth starting spot is sophomore Erin Reynolds, who entered the scene quietly as a freshman. McMillan attempted nearly 75 percent of Glasgow's 3-pointers last year, but Reynolds shot most of the other 25 percent. Her height favors her at the No. 4 position, but if Monnig spreads it out offensively, Reynolds could be another deadly option from 3-point range.

"She can play post or a guard, so she's going to be a mismatch problem for some teams," Monnig said. "She's quick, can handle the ball and she shoots very well. She'll continue to improve as she gets more playing time this year. She's going to struggle a little bit in the beginning because she had to change her role to a No. 4 from a No. 3, but she works hard."

Junior Carley Brucks will be one of the players off the bench that should see a fair amount of minutes. Like Fuemmeler, she is also 6-foot tall and was the fourth-leading rebounder last season, which puts her behind Fuemmeler among the list of returners. With

the loss of two senior forwards, her playing time should increase at a position that will not have much depth this season.

"Carley has really developed to where she can finish underneath the basket," Monnig said. "She's very tough on defense because she's so long and she's athletic and quick. She's one that will get stronger the more she plays."

One of the biggest surprises for the Glasgow girls happened off the court this past offseason. There were high expectations for freshman Abby Thompson — Monnig's younger sister — heading into this season, but she tore her ACL in July during the Show-Me State Games.

For most athletes, that means no game activity for at least six-to-nine months, but because the tear was so clean, Thompson was able to recover well ahead of schedule. During the fall, it was thought she would miss most of December, but up until last week, she was cleared to play in this week's Glasgow Tournament and has been practicing at full strength with the team.

"She's been in the gym an hour to an hour-and-a-half, just doing her leg exercises every day," Monnig said. "It's just a testament to her work ethic. She's on limited time and she'll get to play some, but I don't know how often because we don't want her to get hurt again. She's just doing everything she can to get back."

Monnig said junior Lindsey Kopp will come off the bench and play the No. 4 position quite a bit. Just like any other player, the more experience she gets will help her as the season moves along. Monnig said she's also gotten to where she can make a few post moves.

Junior Courtney Neville will also play

(Continued on Page 13)

Area High School Basketball Preview

(Continued from Page 12)

some time at the No. 2 position and has improved her shooting percentage. Other players that round out the varsity lineup, as well as the junior varsity roster, include sophomore Lauren Kramm and freshman Blakeley Fuemmeler. Monnig described Kramm as one of the hardest-working girls on the team and will contribute as a forward, while Blakeley Fuemmeler is extremely athletic for her height and just needs to find what role she is going to fill in this season.

Monnig said she is looking to putting at least nine of the 11 girls on the court during the varsity games, but it may come down to it that all of them will get into a game here and there. Since the numbers are low this season, the Lady Jackets will play very few JV games, because even the new MSHSAA rule that allows players to play up to six quarters combined in JV and varsity games in the same night won't be of much help.

"Last year we had three JV games and then a few quarters here and there," Monnig said. "Just giving the kids a chance to play is so important with that extra quarter."

The big change offensively this year is Monnig will set up a lineup that allows for all five players to be scorers as well. Last year, players like the Davis sisters served

mostly as ball handlers and press breakers, so their point totals weren't as high as some of the others. With a short bench and a balanced, athletic starting lineup, the starters have the potential to average at least five points a game this season.

Nothing will change defensively. Once again, Glasgow will apply pressure in the full court from the get-go, using its quickness and anticipation to frustrate teams just hoping to get the ball past half court before the 10-second count. Monnig said there will be four different defensive sets from which she can choose and she'll see how effective they are when she puts them into place during the Glasgow Tournament.

Glasgow didn't fare so well in the Central Activities Conference standings last season, but Monnig expects her team to improve upon its fifth-place finish from last year. Teams like Sturgeon will be the favorite early on, but she said her team and New Franklin will make it a tough race.

Heading into the Glasgow Tournament, the Lady Jackets drew the No. 3 seed, putting them in the top tier of the seedings for the first time in a few years. They will match up against Fayette in the opening round, a team with a similar makeup with a young roster that's improved from the previous year.

GLASGOW LADY YELLOWJACKETS



2010-11 RECORD: 14-13 overall, 5-7 in Central Activities Conference (5th place)

PLAYOFF RESULT: Lost 52-46 in overtime to Hale in Class 1 District 10 Tournament championship

TOURNAMENT RESULTS: 5th place — Glasgow Tournament; 2nd place — Marceline Tournament; 3rd place — Slater Wildcat Classic.

KEY LOSSES: Danielle Fuemmeler (5.7 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 63% FT); Kellie Bethel (5.3 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 0.9 spg).

KEY RETURNERS: Trisha McMillan: jr., 5'3" (10.0 ppg, 2.6 rpg, 46% 3-point shooting); Nikki Fuemmeler: soph., 5'11" (8.6 ppg, 12.9 rpg, 47% FG); Peyton Davis: soph., 5'5" (2.5 ppg, 3.8 apg, 2.2 spg).

Unlike most coaches, Monnig described her team's youth as a strength heading into the season.

"We're not nervous to make mistakes yet, which is a positive with the kind of defense we play," Monnig said. "We will go out and anticipate things."

A few things that Glasgow will work on early this season is finding what it is good at, Monnig said. So far, after practicing against just each other, it's hard to determine what sets will work best. Also, injuries need to be

sparse this year with a roster that's more than depleted.

But working toward Glasgow's advantage is it will host the district tournament this year. If the Lady Jackets can pull off a district title, it will approximately be around the 10-year anniversary of their last one.

"We have great fans and they traveled with us (last year), but we'll have more this year," Monnig said. "It's also nice not having that two-hour bus ride before the game. Hopefully we can contend for (a title) again."

Glasgow boys preview

(Continued from Page 11)

to help prepare them to play the 20-24 minutes a game that may be required of them. However, he said if his team is disciplined on offense, it can rest when it has the ball and save the energy for defense.

Cropp said one of the strengths for this

team is its ability to play well together, but one of the weaknesses is having to replace three guards on the starting lineup, one of which will be a freshman point guard. The key is to get them settled early on, but the support from the post players will take off some of the pressure. If this team can stay healthy, another 20-win season will be a possibility.

Glasgow will have a target on its back this week as the No. 1 seed in the Glasgow Tournament, ahead of other strong teams such as Cairo, Harrisburg and Fayette. Coming out of the first week of the season unblemished in the loss column will give Cropp his third consecutive first-place trophy.

"It would be awesome," Cropp said. "I'll

tell you what, winning any tournament is great, but winning your own is double-great. It's a great way to start the season and we go into every tournament hoping to win two and if we can win three, it would be great. That's just icing on the cake. And it's a tough tournament, so more than anything, it allows us to see where we are right off the bat."

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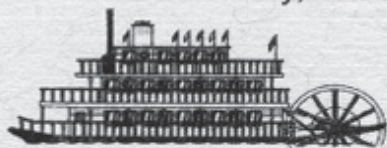
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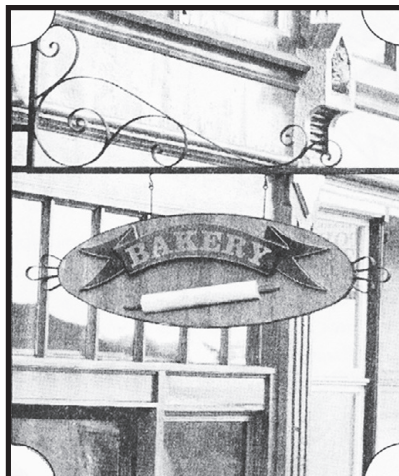


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Harrisburg Bulldogs boys basketball



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Senior 5'8" Guard
Parents: Daniel & Nancy Berry



Gavin Jones
Senior 5'9" Guard
Parents: Thomas Jones & Janie Starr



Shay Jones
Senior 5'9" Guard
Parents: Lonnie & Georgeanna Jones



Eric Penton
Senior 6'3" Forward
Parents: Bob & Kim Penton



Buddy Proctor
Senior 6'4" Forward
Parents: Mike & Tresa Proctor



Paul Rudkin
Senior 6'3" Forward
Parents: Roger Rudkin & Lish Alderson



Ethan Beringer
Junior 6'3" Guard/Forward
Parents: Jeff & Patty Beringer



Josh Cole
Junior 6'0" Guard
Parents: Chris & Christa Cole



Shaman Katsaros
Junior 6'1" Forward
Parents: Mark Katsaros & Maria Coffman



Chris Nichols
Junior 5'9" Guard
Parents: Kerry & Cheryl Nichols



Ian Rich
Junior 5'11" Guard
Parents: Jerry O'Laughlin & Julie Rich



Jared Rich
Junior 6'0" Guard
Parents: Jerry O'Laughlin & Julie Rich



Chris Roberts
Junior 6'0" Forward
Parents: Ed & Katherine Roberts



Jai Tang
Junior 5'11" Forward
Parents: Jamie & Stephanie Richards



David Williams
Junior 5'8" Guard
Parents: Daniel Williams & Kellie Williams



Blake Berry
Sophomore 5'11" Forward
Parents: Daniel & Nancy Berry



Aaron Blakemore
Sophomore 5'9" Guard
Parents: Lance & Cec Blakemore



Blake Cochran
Sophomore 6'1" Forward
Parents: Sean Cochran & Angie Cochran



Cortney Franklin
Sophomore 6'0" Forward
Parents: Rick Gaines & Karla Franklin



Charles Roller
Sophomore 6'2" Forward
Parents: Charles & Cindy Roller



Jacob Rudkin
Sophomore 6'3" Forward
Parents: Roger Rudkin & Lish Alderson



Kale Spry
Sophomore 5'10" Guard
Parents: Blake Spry & Karen Spry



JP Canote
Freshman 5'6" Guard
Parents: Chris & Susan Canote



Austin Horn
Freshman 5'5" Guard
Parents: Wade Horn & Christina Sharp



Takota Miller
Freshman 5'4" Guard
Parents: Daniel Martel & Amy Martel



Blake Williams
Freshman 5'6" Guard
Parents: Daniel Williams & Kellie Williams



Steve Combs
Head Coach



Not Pictured
Zach Sublett

Area High School Basketball Preview

Harrisburg's depth ready to replace Rasmussen at top

Had the Harrisburg boys played the way they did in the month of February for the entire 2010-11 season, it would have been hard to argue against the Bulldogs making another return trip down the road to Mizzou Arena in the Class 2 Final Four.

Harrisburg finally ran out of steam, carried by All-State performer Tyler Rasmussen to a 15-9 record, after the Bulldogs lost four of their first five games. Suddenly, by mid-January, everything fell into place, picking up wins against state-ranked opponents like Fayette and Sturgeon and rallying to tie for the conference championship in the Mid-Missouri Conference.

"Starting off the second half of last year, I really thought we got back on track," Harrisburg head coach Steve Combs said. "We closed out and won our last eight in a row before getting beat by a good Salisbury team. We had a great summer and the kids worked really hard. There will be a chance for several kids to step up and build some depth. We're really excited about our upcoming season."

Several of those close wins last season came down to Rasmussen making the play during the final possession, but it will be difficult to replace his 17.5 points per game, along with the 10.7 points per game scored by Keegan Peterson. Combs said things are going to be different this year and this team won't rely on one go-to player.

"This year we're more balanced, as far as the inside and outside attack," Combs said. "Right now, we're just trying to figure out who's going to put the points on the board and who is going to play defense. We have a lot of jobs up for grabs and we have one starter returning from last year, but we have several kids who either gained experience on the varsity end or played some JV the past couple of years."

The one returning starter, senior Eric

Penton, missed out on summer activity after breaking his collarbone, but he will return as the team's top scorer and rebounder from last year, nearly averaging a double-double in points and rebounds. Harrisburg's roster is far from being vertically challenged and Penton is one of five forwards that are 6-foot-3 or taller.

"He had a great year last year and was kind of an unsung hero," Combs said. "If he match those numbers rebound-wise, maybe exceed a little bit on the offensive end, it will be a great year for him. He's one of those kids you build your program around. He's very active with the student body, had a 34 on his ACT and he's a very quality kid."

Senior Buddy Proctor was new to the program last year and didn't play much until after the Christmas break. He will be fighting for one of the starting roles at forward, but his length and 6-foot-4 frame make him very comparable to Penton.

"His family had always played (basketball), but he had never played," Combs said. "He dropped about 50 pounds last year and he's almost too skinny now, but for the first time playing last year, we just threw him in at the varsity level and he did a good job. The key will be keeping him out of foul trouble and keep his body low. He's got a great shooting touch and sees the floor really well."

Junior Ethan Beringer has grown three inches from last season, but remains versatile on the outside to allow him to retain his role as a guard. Known more as a baseball player, Beringer has risen through the ranks and will surprise teams this season.

"Last year, he was really hesitant at the beginning of the year and didn't want to step on anybody's toes and try to move up," Combs said. "I challenged him at practice last year during one of those days during the snow storm when all the guys couldn't be at

HARRISBURG BULLDOGS



2010-11 RECORD: 15-9 overall, 6-2 in Mid-Missouri Conference (T-1st place)

PLAYOFF RESULT: Lost 85-75 to Salisbury in Class 2 District 7 Tournament semifinals

TOURNAMENT RESULTS: 4th place — Glasgow Tournament; 3rd place — South Callaway Tournament; Southern Boone Classic — Canceled.

KEY LOSSES: Tyler Rasmussen (17.5 ppg, 3.4 apg, 3.0 spg); Keegan Peterson (10.7 ppg, 2.3 apg, 1.5 spg); Randy Calvert (5.6 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 1.5 spg).

KEY RETURNERS: Eric Penton: sr., 6'3" (9.2 ppg, 9.6 rpg, 1.6 spg); Gavin Jones: sr., 5'9" (6.7 ppg, 1.3 rpg, 1.1 spg); Buddy Proctor: sr., 6'4" (4.3 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 0.4 bpg).

the gym and it was a turning point. He decided he wanted to be a basketball player and had a great summer. He's really tenacious on the defensive end and really takes the ball to the hole well."

Continuing a balanced attack from the guard position will be a couple of players that will be in charge of pushing the game into transition. Senior Shay Jones will start this season after coming off the bench and is the leading returner in assists. Gavin Jones, another one of Combs' five seniors, will join in the effort to apply full-court pressure as well to add the capability of making Harrisburg a run-and-go team.

"Those two kids have very athletic and quick hands," Combs said. "They're very active and both can get off the floor really well, run the floor and stretch the defense. Shay has been one of those kids who has worked his way up all the way since seventh grade and had a really good second half during his junior season last year. He deserves whatever he gets this year. Gavin was new

to the program last year and is a transfer kid that was learning some things. He's starting to get it now and realizes that he has to play defense and not just shoot the ball, which he does extremely well."

Junior Josh Cole and senior Paul Rudkin will also be vying for some minutes this year as well. Cole will battle the Joneses for the fifth starting spot and is a kid that Combs says "does everything the right way."

"He's worked on his shot from the outside and can knock it down," Combs said. "He knows if he can get it from the top of the key (on one side) to the top of the key (on the other), good things are going to happen for us. He's been battling David Williams, but those two are going to look hard to push the basketball and set the table for the rest of the team."

Junior Shaman Katsoras will also get some time early in the season at the forward position along with Rudkin. Combs

(Continued on Page 19)

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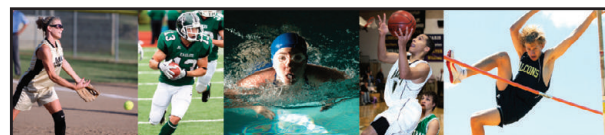
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Harrisburg Bulldogs girls basketball



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Senior 5'3" Guard
Parents: Clark & Donna Chickering



Sonja Eaves
Senior 5'8" Forward
Parents: Jason & Angela Eaves



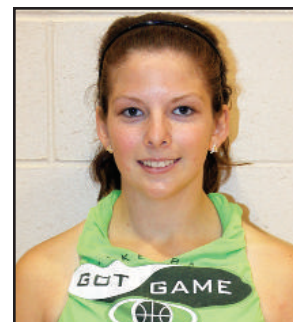
Paige Heibel
Senior 5'7" Guard
Parents: Ben Heibel & Amber Spry



Haley Heuer
Senior 5'9" Forward
Parents: Jamie & Tammy Heuer



Chelsey Kroese
Senior 5'11" Guard
Parents: Terry & Joyce Kroese



Molly Leach
Senior 5'3" Forward
Parents: John & Debbie Leach



Jackie Williams
Senior 5'4" Guard
Parents: Homer & Tammy Williams



Kassi Blakemore
Junior 5'7" Forward
Parents: Gary & Christa Blakemore



Allie Dodson
Junior 5'6" Guard
Parent: April Dodson



Raechel Douglas
Junior 5'9" Forward
Parents: Troy & Cara Douglas



Karissa James
Junior 5'3" Forward
Parents: Mark & Becky James



Kyla Brown
Sophomore 5'2" Guard
Parents: Jim & Tina Brown, Josh & Dawn Stephenson



Lauren Crowley
Sophomore 5'2" Guard
Parents: Russell & Charlyn Crowley



Kate Lewis
Sophomore 5'5" Guard
Parents: Randy & Cindy Lewis



Alissa Lumb
Sophomore 5'4" Guard
Parents: Brian & Angel Lumb



Macy Arp
Freshman 5'4" Guard
Parents: Bobbi & Jeff Arp



Emma Callahan
Freshman 5'6" Forward
Parents: Jeff & Judy Callahan



Alley Forrester
Freshman 5'4" Forward
Parents: Jim Forrester & Nichole Ackerman



Chloe Franklin
Freshman 5'9" Forward
Parent: Karla Franklin



Karyssa Giboney
Freshman 5'3" Guard
Parents: Mark & Jodie Giboney



Sierra LeBlanc
Freshman 5'6" Forward
Parents: Brian LeBlanc & Kimberly Burgett



Hailey Lowrey
Freshman 5'4" Guard
Parents: Todd & Julie Lowrey



Kirsten Southerland
Freshman 5'4" Guard
Parents: Dwayne & Tracy Southerland



Dan Bachmeier
Head Coach

Kroese, Harrisburg eye postseason three-peat this year

It's rare for teams to say they are unhappy with the way their season ended when they reach the state playoffs, but if you're the Harrisburg girls, it's hard to be satisfied with a Class 2 quarterfinal loss for a team that just fell short of reaching back-to-back Final Fours.

But the polls give the Lady Bulldogs a reason to fight again this season. Despite losing three starters and eight seniors, the Harrisburg girls already have the No. 1 ranking in Class 2 in the Missouri Basketball

Coaches Association preseason poll. Head coach Dan Bachmeier said it's a great credit to the girls for what they have accomplished over the past few years, but now they have to go out and prove they deserve that ranking.

"I think it's the way we practice, from seventh grade on," Bachmeier said. "They build confidence in what we're doing each year. When it's time for your turn, it's not such a big transition. It's tough replacing somebody who has done well and every year we lose girls who have done well, but

I think they're prepared to take their place."

The 2010-11 Lady Bulldogs won their second consecutive district championship, this time on their home court, before losing to Clopton in the state quarterfinals. Senior Chelsey Kroese made the All-State team for a second straight season and was one of the leaders on the Final Four softball team this past fall.

After serving as the second half of a one-two punch with Ashley Fisher during her sophomore season, Kroese was last year's

leader. She returns as the team's top scorer, rebounder and was tops in steals as well. If she has another season like last year, a third All-State honor should be in her future.

"Her shot total will probably go up five or six shots, but other than that, I think (her role) will be the same," Bachmeier said. "I've always wanted her to shoot more and she's a very unselfish player. She has shot a lot more in practice this year, so I expect her

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Area High School Basketball Preview

(Continued from Page 16)

shot total to go up. Will we need her to shot total to go up more? I don't know that yet."

Senior Paige Heibel is the other returning starter on this year's team. Known as a 3-point specialist alongside Lindsey Roberts last season, Heibel was one of the area's top threats from behind the arc while enduring a dubious streak of missing her first 28 shots from 2-point range. She's coming back from an ankle injury she suffered in last year's sectional game against Sacred Heart, but the memories of the loss in the following probably hurt more than the injury, Bachmeier said.

"She's come back very well and she's shooting the ball very well," Bachmeier said. "She has also added a shot fake, a sweep and a pull-up jumper that's really good now, which she didn't have the last couple of years. She's also taking the ball to the hole a lot better. I expect her to get a two earlier this season."

Haley Heuer, another one of Bachmeier's seven seniors on the roster, will see her numbers improve this season as well. After missing her sophomore season with a knee injury, it took until the second half of the season before Heuer was effective in a post position that was crowded with competition as it was. Bachmeier said she gets up and down the court well for her size and will be their go-to person in the post this season.

"I might keep her on the floor for longer periods of time," Bachmeier said. "She can help us in the press and she will really help us on post defense, even though she's

only 5-foot-9. And she can score in the post, something we haven't had to really do a whole lot."

With Kroese at point guard — despite being the tallest player on the team — Bachmeier will start with senior Tina Chickering at the No. 2 position. With a loaded varsity roster last season, Chickering didn't get much playing time, but she will pick up several minutes this season. She and Kroese can go back and forth between positions, Bachmeier said.

"She's improved every year," Bachmeier said of Chickering. "Girls like Tina and Sonja (Eaves) probably could have started on most teams last year, just not here. They've bided their time and now they're seniors and get to play varsity. Now we're going to see if they can handle it, but they have both improved a bunch."

Battling Eaves for the starting role at the No. 4 position is junior Raechel Douglas, who is also making the jump to seeing more varsity minutes. All three girls averaged fewer than two points per game last year, but there is plenty of points to replace in the scoring column on a team that averaged just under 60 points per game last season.

"Her defense is much improved," Bachmeier said of Douglas. "Some of the girls who are looking to get more minutes need to play defense. They're all capable of scoring, but they've got to improve their defense."

Jackie Williams and Molly Leach are Harrisburg's final two seniors on the roster. Williams played in all 26 games last season and averaged 3.5 points per game, so she will be one of the more experienced players

HARRISBURG LADY BULLDOGS



2010-11 RECORD: 21-5 overall, 7-1 in Mid-Missouri Conference (T-1st place)

PLAYOFF RESULT: Lost 66-53 to Clopton in Class 2 State Tournament quarterfinals

TOURNAMENT RESULTS: 1st place — Glasgow Tournament; 2nd place — South Callaway Tournament; Southern Boone Classic — Canceled.

KEY LOSSES: Shanna Proctor (10.3 ppg, 7.7 rpg, 1.8 bpg); Lindsey Roberts (6.5 ppg, 33 3-pointers); Jennifer Beckley (2.8 ppg, 3.1 apg, 1.3 rpg).

KEY RETURNERS: Chelsey Kroese: sr., 5'11" (13.2 ppg, 7.9 rpg, 4.6 spg); Paige Heibel: sr., 5'7" (7.6 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 48 3-pointers); Haley Heuer: sr., 5'9" (5.0 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 0.9 bpg).

to come off the bench. Leach, meanwhile, played with the junior varsity last season and will be one of several girls looking for their first varsity minutes as a Lady Bulldog.

Bachmeier will have plenty of new faces coming off the bench as well. Juniors Kassi Blakemore and Allie Dodson will be reserves as a forward and guard, respectively. Bachmeier said Blakemore needs to improve to play longer periods of time instead of spurts and is one of the better shooters on the team. Dodson can both shoot from the outside and take the ball to the hole, but she will have to improve her ball-handling, Bachmeier said.

Junior Karissa James and sophomore Alissa Lumb will get their opportunity to play their first varsity minutes this season as well. Bachmeier said Lumb has been consis-

tent and possesses speed on all ends, while James has been in the system for five years and will have to fight for playing time.

Sophomores Kyla Brown and Kate Lewis will also dress out with the varsity, but they are the only two players who will double up and get a majority of their minutes playing with the JV.

Hallsville will give Harrisburg some tough competition once again in the Mid-Missouri Conference. Both teams are ranked No. 1 in the state in their respective classes and Hallsville brings back All-State performer Lauren Little as well.

"I see Hallsville as the toughest team in our conference," Bachmeier said. "Their

(Continued on Page 21)



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Higbee Tigers boys basketball



Austin Messer

Senior 6'0" Forward
Parents: Mike & Teresa Messer



Logan Thompson

Senior 5'11" Guard/Forward
Parents: Ernie & Tammy Boggs



Trent Whisnant

Senior 5'8" Guard/Forward
Parents: Mark & Patricia Whisnant



Mateo Dias

Junior 5'7" Guard
Parents: Tom Brenner & Pamela Dias



David Janson

Junior 6'5" Center
Parents: Karl Janson & Jaudawn Janson



Caleb Starks

Junior 6'3" Center
Parents: Troy & April Starks



Zach Baker

Sophomore 5'11" Forward
Parent: Amy Clemens



Seth Tucker

Sophomore 5'6" Guard
Parents: Jeff & Sherri Tucker



Trent Borron

Freshman 6'1" Forward
Parents: John & Charlette Borron



Garrett Nauerth

Freshman 5'10" Guard
Parents: Larry & Christina Nauerth



Austin Nelson

Freshman 5'5" Guard
Parents: Neil & Angie Nelson



Dalton Perrigo

Freshman 5'8" Guard
Parent: Lori Perrigo



Cody Sinclair

Freshman 6'2" Center
Parents: Richard Sinclair & Teresa Sinclair



Jon Bishop

Head Coach



Higbee returns top players that will boost expectations

After a strong 2009-10 campaign, Higbee boys head coach Jon Bishop saw last season coming.

With only 11 players in grades 9-12, the Tigers fell to 6-16, going from scoring at will to having some difficulty stopping opponents from doing the same against them.

But Bishop said his team did improve with every game. The roster is still somewhat thin with 13 players, but many of them had valuable experience last season.

"We're turning over a little bit of a leaf and have five guys back who either started or played a good bit (last year)," Bishop said. "They're probably going to be our first five. Last year was good for some of these guys because they were able to see some success, but also saw some difficulty, so now they understand what it's going to take to succeed in this league and in this area."

Higbee returns its two leading scorers from last year. Senior Logan Thompson led the offense and with his size as a guard, he'll also be someone opponents have to stop on the boards as a rebounder. Bishop said when his shot was off, the rest of the team was off.

"He's able to get the ball to the hole a little bit smoother this year," Bishop said. "So

we anticipate that's going to help us a lot. We're going to struggle early, but Logan's going to be able to show some leadership and step up and say, 'Hey, this is where you need to go and this is what you need to do.'"

Junior Mateo Dias will continue to take strides as point guard and has been an improving at the position ever since his freshman season. In the past, Bishop has compared him to the Energizer Bunny, saying "he keeps going and going and going..."

"He's stepped up this year so far and has taken a leadership role," Bishop said. "You're going to see him make fewer mistakes and his turnover-to-assist ratio was probably not where it needed to be last year. You're going to see an improvement in that and that's going to be real big for us."

Senior Austin Messer comes in as the team's top returning rebounder and has the ability to play other positions, Bishop said. Out of necessity, he spent time on the wing last season and can handle the ball better than most people think he can.

"He's probably not the most dangerous outside shooter, but he knows how to get to the rim and he knows how to find a good open shot," Bishop said. "I think that's going

to benefit us as well."

Bishop has high expectations for junior Caleb Starks this season. He said if he can get 10 rebounds and a couple blocks a game from him, it will be great for the Tigers.

"He's improving his offensive game quite a bit," Bishop said. "He's starting his second year of actual organized basketball, so the more he gets on the floor, the better he's going to get."

Sophomore Seth Tucker will be out until the second semester, but when he returns, he'll round out Higbee's starting five. With just a 35 percent field-goal percentage last season, Bishop said he needs to continue to build confidence in his shot.

"I'm trying to get him to take more shots and I think it's adequate and good enough of a shot that I think he's going to make enough of them," Bishop said. "He has a knowledge for the game that really puts him into a position to make plays. Quite frankly, this year he's improved his quickness and he's done a great job of that so far."

During the first month of the season, Bishop said there are three options he can go with for the final starting spot. Junior David Janson, a 6-foot-5 junior, is a newcomer

to this year's team and hasn't played since junior high school, so he's still trying to get used to playing again.

"He moves really well and has good feet, so he'll give us a good presence and will be a good sub for Caleb at times," Bishop said. "He may even work himself into the starting lineup, the more he understands where to go and what to do."

Sophomore Zach Baker, a transfer student from Hallsville, is another candidate for the starting guard position. He will be more of a catch-and-shoot player as opposed to creating his own shot. Bishop said he's a little quiet and reserved, but it's something he is working on. The third option, freshman Garrett Nauerth, is a heart-and-soul kid that has worked extremely hard to work into the varsity rotation. Bishop said his passion for the game will carry the team quite a bit this season.

The Tigers have picked up a couple of extra junior varsity games and will have a total of five this season, a pretty high number for such a small program. That will allow Bishop to get some of his freshmen, such as

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Area High School Basketball Preview

(Continued from Page 18)

Austin Nelson, Dalton Perrigo, Trent Borron and Cody Sinclair some early action at a level that better suits them. In addition, senior Trent Whisnant, a transfer from Missouri Military Academy, will only be able to play at the JV level for now because MSHSAA has not granted him eligibility yet to play varsity basketball.

"I think they're going to shine, but they've got to keep working," Bishop said. "I'm very excited for what we have and what I'm seeing. We a pretty good junior high team this year and those guys are going to move in with these freshmen this year. That's just going to make our program better."

Bishop said his team's strength lies with his starting five, which he said can compete with any team in the Cooper County Activities Association, including Pilot Grove.

"Once we get past them, we're going to struggle," Bishop said of his starting five. "If we get into foul trouble or have injuries, those are going to be our weaknesses. As a coach, I need to get confident enough to be able to put a couple of these guys in throughout games and give our starters a rest."

The CCAA will be more balanced year after the departure of Jacob Schuster from

Pilot Grove. Once again, only the games following the CCAA Tournament will count toward the conference standings.

"I would hope we come in second or third, but we're obviously going to go our there and try to win the sucker," Bishop said. "Pilot Grove has lost some players, but I would never really call that program down. I think Otterville will be up there as well and I anticipate Jamestown being pretty competitive. Prairie Home also has Trevor Huth, who can be a game-changer."

Bishop also said Prairie Home's finish in the conference will likely depend on what kind of supporting cast Huth has this season under a new head coach. Also, Bunceton and Malta Bend are going to be down a little this year and will be near the bottom of the conference.

"By the time February rolls around, most of these kids have been playing all year and aren't inexperienced," Bishop said. "Once you get 15 games in, you need to start playing like a veteran."

The Tigers didn't press very much last year after losing a bulk of the team to graduation, and since then they've fallen back to a man-to-man defense over the full court, which Bishop said is the plan for this year as well. And at times, they'll switch over to

HIGBEE TIGERS



2010-11 RECORD: 6-16 overall, 1-4 in Cooper County Activities Association (6th place)

PLAYOFF RESULT: Lost 81-34 to Marion County in Class 1 District 11 Tournament quarterfinals

TOURNAMENT RESULTS: T-7th place — Northwestern Tournament; 6th place — Marceline Tournament; 4th place — CCAA Tournament.

KEY LOSSES: Matt Walker (6.9 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 1.4 spg); Devin Cook (3.5 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 1.1 apg); D.J. Anders (2.0 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 0.5 spg).

KEY RETURNERS: Logan Thompson: sr., 5'11" (12.2 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 2.0 apg); Mateo Dias: jr., 5'7" (11.2 ppg, 4.4 apg, 4.1 rpg, 3.9 spg); Austin Messer: sr., 6'0" (7.9 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 0.8 bpg).

a zone defense because they work hard at that as well. On offense, it will be a mix and match of everything. Bishop said they will motion and screen, try a ball screen, pick-and-roll, just to find the best opportunities they can to find the easiest basket.

Higbee has the No. 4 seed in this year's Northwestern Tournament at Mendon and plans to play three games this year after going two-and-out last season. Bishop acknowledged that this year's tournament will

be extremely tough as always, especially when teams like Meadville are in the mix if the Tigers win their opening-round game against Bucklin.

Bishop, a Fayette resident, wrapped up his football season Friday when his referee crew worked the Class 4 state championship game in St. Louis. But you can bet come Monday, his mindset is going to be basketball non-stop for the next three to four months.

Harrisburg boys preview

(Continued from Page 15)

describes them as two different kinds of players, but they both add depth at that position.

"Shaman is more of a bruiser and a banger and can really set some great picks and rebounds the ball well," Combs said. "He does a great job of defending the post. Paul is a little longer and a little more athletic and jumps and runs really well. He doesn't have quite the size Shaman does, but they'll complement each other really well."

Combs also has a few sophomores that will round out the varsity lineup after having a 16-5 junior varsity record last season. Blake Cochran played in two games last season and will play some at the No. 4 position, but his outside range will give him a chance to work some from the perimeter as well. He will be the only sophomore that plays exclusively on the varsity level and not back and forth with the JV team. All around, Combs said he is extremely excited about his "big man" rotation this year.

Sophomore Kale Spry was another late addition to last year's roster and will be another speedy guard that fits into Combs' style of play. He was the leading scorer on the JV last season as a freshman and could pick up some big minutes this year.

Charles Roller and Jacob Rudkin are the other two sophomores that will be added to the Harrisburg varsity. Both are two more tall forwards, but Rudkin, who used to play as a guard last season, can also shoot from 3-point range as well. Junior Chris Nichols and Chris

Roberts have also earned spots on the varsity this year.

"I'm excited about these guys," Combs said. "They're all working hard and we've got some good young kids coming up behind them as well. Every day has been an open competition in practice for those (warm-up) suits, so the guys know that and they've responded pretty well."

Although last year's seniors mostly guid-

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Higbee Tigers girls basketball



Megan Bruce

Senior 5'6" Guard/Forward
Parents: Mark & Christina Bruce



Summer Carson

Senior 5'8" Forward
Parent: Tracy Carson



Shanna Clark

Senior 5'6" Guard
Parents: Robbie & Jane Clark



Tori Dillion

Senior 5'4" Guard
Parents: Gary & Dawn Dillion



Cayla Parsons

Senior 5'4" Guard/Forward
Parents: Bryan & Buffy Parsons



Alex LeGrand

Junior 5'7" Guard
Parents: Aaron & Michelle LeGrand



Abbie Michelova

Junior 5'10" Forward
Parents: Michael & Pavlina O'Toole



Abby Sinclair

Junior 5'6" Forward
Parent: Teresa Sinclair



Ashley Berendzen

Sophomore 5'9" Forward
Parents: Robert & April Berendzen



Karisa Bonuchi

Sophomore 5'4" Guard
Parents: Chris & Becky Bonuchi



Krysta Hall

Sophomore 5'6" Forward
Parents: Lee & Mary Hall



M'Kenzea Starks

Sophomore 5'10" Forward
Parents: Troy & April Starks



Savannah Thompson

Sophomore 5'2" Guard
Parents: Damon Thompson & the late Barbra Grapes



Hope Clark

Freshman 5'8" Guard/Forward
Parents: Danny & Becky Clark



Courtney Sinclair

Freshman 5'8" Forward
Parent: Teresa Sinclair



Michael O'Toole

Head Coach



**Not Pictured
Brittney Hudson**

Dillion and company ready to fix Higbee's shooting woes

Heading into his third season as head coach at Higbee, Michael O'Toole finally has a roster that is ready to be reckoned with.

The Lady Tigers have compiled 14 wins in O'Toole's first two seasons, but this year they will return 11 of 13 players from last year's roster. They also add a transfer student to the starting lineup and another freshman that will step up with the three captains he has designated for this season.

"Most of them, except for a few freshmen, all have game experience," O'Toole said.

Senior Tori Dillion is already one of the leading candidates to vie for the Cooper County Activities Association MVP. Dillion nearly averaged a triple-double last season and against Malta Bend, she recorded a rare quadruple-double in one of her team's few wins. O'Toole said she has indicated she would like to play basketball beyond her high school career.

"She has the possibility of also scoring 1,000 points for her career, which would be a plus for her," O'Toole said. "I look for her to do more and she also has more people to go to this year."

Cayla Parsons will be one of the starters Dillion can turn to this season. The senior forward was the second-leading scorer behind Dillion last year, even though it took her a while to get started.

"Last year she came alive," O'Toole said. "She's definitely a hustler and the fastest girl on the team. Plain and simple, she doesn't feel pain."

The third captain, junior Alex LeGrand, solidified herself as someone who plays bigger than her size. At just 5-foot-5 last year, she averaged more than eight rebounds per game and is now two inches taller this season. LeGrand still has time to mature with two seasons to go.

"I look for her to be a more significant player than she has been in the past, just because of her age," O'Toole said. "She's got the jitters out and will become a legitimate varsity player."

Senior Summer Carson, the transfer, is a player O'Toole has been very impressed with this preseason. She will take one of the starting forward positions and has adjusted well to the program, O'Toole said.

"She's very athletic and has adapted well to the program," O'Toole said. "She

really wants the ball and she's a senior. She doesn't have much playing experience for anyone else, but she will get it here."

Freshman Hope Clark will add versatility to this year's team. She'll work mostly as a forward, but her outside shot will draw her to the perimeter on offense.

"She can drive and she can also post up, which makes it very hard for defenders because when she steps out, she can shoot it," O'Toole said. "She can also go inside and take it to the hole."

O'Toole said he wants to see senior Shanna Clark step up this season as one of the first players off the bench. Her shooting percentage was right around the team average last year, just under 30 percent, and her scoring could improve past her 3.3 points per game last season. In addition, sophomore Ashley Berendzen will see additional time on the court this year after getting some minutes on varsity as a freshman. Another sophomore, M'Kenzea Starks, will be another threat in the post as the tallest player on the roster at 5-foot-10.

"She averaged about seven rebounds a game as a freshman," O'Toole said of Berendzen. "She didn't get in as many

games as the other players, but she still managed to be one of my top five rebounders. M'Kenzea Starks is coming off a (knee) injury in the summer, but it's a very slight injury compared to what we thought it would be. She's going to come back with a vengeance and I think she's going to be a valid player inside."

Megan Bruce is a senior who took a year off last season before returning to the Lady Tigers. O'Toole said she still has to find her groove on the court. Junior Abby Sinclair had significant minutes last year and was the fourth-leading scorer. She'll be another post player that has developed a nice little bank shot. For the most part, O'Toole will go with 10 players on the varsity level and the rest will play with the JV.

O'Toole said the team chemistry is better this season than it was last year and players appear to be mixing better. After a rough December last year — aside from a 44-4 win over Missouri School for the Deaf — the Lady Tigers were much more competitive during the second half of the season. But there was one aspect of their game that

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Area High School Basketball Preview

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cost them in several close games, particularly in a 2-point loss to Bucklin: free throws.

Higbee made just 97-of-273 shots from the charity stripe for a dismal 36 percent. If there's anyone looking at where the improvement needs to start for this team, they don't have to look any further than its performance at the free-throw line.

"It has to be above 50 percent for us to be successful," O'Toole said. "We've worked harder on that this year and we also have some better shooters, so that's going to help."

This year, Higbee will be geared to run more of a motion offense and will also play more full-court pressure on defense before falling back into a man-to-man.

"I've mostly played zone in my years, but I want to gear the defense to be more aggressive against their offense," O'Toole said.

Dillion's play drew several double- and triple-teams last year, so it won't bother O'Toole if opponents go with that strategy again this year. While Dillion accounted for about one-third of her team's scoring,

that should allow for other players, such as Parsons or LeGrand, to benefit from those mismatches.

"I'm going to lose her (after this year), so if I'm too dependent on her this year, I have nothing for next year," O'Toole said of Dillion. "We're going to start going more to a team offense and will incorporate her skills into that. I think that will make us better."

Despite losing all three games in last year's CCAA Tournament, the Lady Tigers finished with two conference wins in the month of February. O'Toole said Otterville and Pilot Grove are the favorites in the conference again this year, but Higbee won't get its usual easy victories this year against Malta Bend, which won't field a girls basketball team this year, dropping the conference down to six teams. As a result, the Lady Tigers picked up two varsity games against Christian Fellowship School out of Columbia in a home-and-home series.

"I think we have a shot this year," O'Toole said. "Last year we split with Jamestown and they're a tough team, but we were able to beat them on the road. That's a plus for us. For me, it was one of my better

HIGBEE LADY TIGERS



2010-11 RECORD: 6-16 overall, 2-3 in Cooper County Activities Association (5th place)

PLAYOFF RESULT: Lost 67-18 to La Plata in Class 1 District 11 Tournament quarterfinals

TOURNAMENT RESULTS: 6th place — Northwestern Tournament; T-7th place — Marceline Tournament; 6th place — CCAA Tournament.

KEY LOSSES: Amanda Derboven (3.1 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 0.6 spg); Chanel Fisher (1.5 ppg, 2.3 rpg, 1.0 spg).

KEY RETURNERS: Tori Dillion: sr., 5'4" (11.1 ppg, 7.5 rpg, 6.7 apg, 5.4 spg); Cayla Parsons: sr., 5'4" (4.7 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 3.2 spg); Alex LeGrand: jr., 5'7" (4.3 ppg, 8.2 rpg, 3.0 spg, 2.6 apg).

victories for the team."

The Lady Tigers also drew the No. 6 seed in the Northwestern Tournament at Mendon and played the host school in the first round. Win or lose, O'Toole would like to play Bucklin in the next round because it's a team the Lady Tigers were able to compete with last season. Overall, he would like to come away with two victories in the

first week heading into the Missouri School for the Deaf game in the home opener.

"My first goal would be to get to the .500 mark and my second goal would be to get to double digits in wins," O'Toole said. "We'd also like to get past the first round of districts. We usually draw the bigger seed and it's hard to move on when you draw the No. 1 team."

Harrisburg girls preview

(Continued from Page 17)

success is going to depend if they can find guards, because they lost two pretty good guards. Our ability to compete with Hallsville is to affect their guards, because their posts are pretty good. Southern Boone is always a tough competitor and only lost one or two players. North Callaway has a very good young team that can play and South Callaway has a new coach again. But they're all going to be tough games."

Harrisburg will play another No. 1 team during the season, defending Class 1 state champion Marion County, as the only girls game in this year's MFA Oil Shootout at Mizzou Arena. The Mexico matchup has also

been moved back to January, one week before the Marion County game, and will be in the Gary Filbert Classic.

Bachmeier pointed out that, although his teams have been 52-5 over the past two seasons, the five losses were not good losses, unlike the six defeats from the 2008-09 season.

"I didn't like the losses," Bachmeier said. "Is there ever a good loss? No, but I can tell if we're at least competing. If we lose a few this year and they're good losses, I'm not going to panic. I just don't want to go out there and not get effort."

There wasn't much question as to which team would get the No. 1 seed in this year's Glasgow Tournament. Harrisburg top the top honor and is favored to win its fourth con-

secutive Glasgow Tournament, but last year's title didn't come easy in a two-point victory against Cairo.

One thing that will remain constant this year is Bachmeier will continue to be vocal on the sideline. For most coaches, observers can tell they are frustrated when the jacket comes off. With Bachmeier, that applies only when he takes off his tie.

"I still have to chew them out because they're young kids and young kids need to be chewed out," Bachmeier said with a laugh. "Psychologists say young kids need discipline and need to be told what's unacceptable. This team won't let any drama affect them, hopefully."

Anything can happen over the course of

the next three months, and much can be said about that same thought during the one week of district tournament play. Once again, Harrisburg's district is going to be loaded, with programs like Sturgeon and Salisbury returning good teams and New Franklin and Fayette on the rise as well.

"I think it all depends on how great we are as a team," Bachmeier said. "We'll see. In the past, I've always look at every game as being important. But I think I really have to stress to these girls that every minute of every game is important to me. I've never done that in the past. We cannot waste a minute, whether we're up 10, down 10, up 20 or down 20. This is important because it's something we need to carry over from now to districts."

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Area High School Basketball Preview

Fayette boys preview

(Continued from Page 3)

Lewis, Davis Valencia and Ethan Harper. I don't like throwing freshmen into the gauntlet of running the point against some of those teams we play, but you never know. Maybe they'll step up and prove they can handle it."

Kendrick's varsity roster will be loaded again this season with 14 players. Junior Landon Ball will be a contributor off the bench at a variety of positions. Kendrick said Ball reminds him more and more of his older brother, Logan, as he has grown and matured.

"He's always had the passion to play, but he's finally getting coordinated and understands what he's supposed to do and where he's supposed to be," Kendrick said. "He has a confidence about him that he didn't necessarily have those first two years."

Adding depth at the forward position will be juniors Ben Harris and Rashad Jackman. Kendrick said Harris finishes really well around the rim and jumps well, taking an understanding of his role. Jackman can shoot well for a forward from the outside

and plays very similar to Jheryll Summers from last season, Kendrick said.

Kendrick hopes to make the addition of senior Bradley Bishop to the roster in the second semester. Bishop could be a huge impact player with a top-notch skill set. Sophomore Collin O'Connell will also come off the bench as a guard and plays much like Gilmore as a shooting guard and should get his first varsity minutes this year.

Things will look different for Fayette this year in addition to some of the new faces. In the past, Kendrick has had his teams play full-on man-to-man the full length of the court, but the Falcons will fall back into a half-court or zone defense more often this season. Kendrick said his team will shoot a lot of layups, but they may come in a different fashion this year.

The focus of the offense will also change with the additional exposure of Marshall at the post. The three-point attempts were in excess last season and that number will decline, even for Marshall. Kendrick said his team will focus on the higher-percentage shots as opposed showing off its perimeter

shooting, its strength in years past.

"It's going to take extremely consistent play and better defense than we've ever played in a half-court set," Kendrick said. "That will be the biggest change out of us. When we play better in a half-court defense, we will in turn rebound better and that will in turn lead to better results."

The Lewis & Clark Conference will be loaded again this season. The Falcons had an 8-2 record last season, one win better than the previous year when they won a conference title, but powerhouse Salisbury won the Lewis & Clark. Kendrick said the Panthers are the favorite again this season, returning the Wyatt twins and Austin Francis at forward.

"I'd like to think we fall in right behind them, but that's going to take us going out there and playing good basketball," Kendrick said. "Hopefully we'll take care of business against the rest of the conference. Marceline is improved and has a new coach, so you know their kids are going to be hungry. Paris has some nice skill players back and you never know when the next Jon Gilliam

is going to roll through. Slater has that group of sophomores they didn't throw into the fire last year and they'll be much improved. And Coach (Scott) Humphrey and Westran has a culture of winning."

This year's team may have a new look, but it's well aware of last year's disappointing finish in the "District of Doom" semifinals, losing to Sturgeon. Both Salisbury and Sturgeon enter the season ranked No. 6 and No. 7, respectively, in the Missouri Basketball Coaches Association preseason poll, so the district's difficulty appears it will be high again this season, including other strong programs such as Harrisburg.

"I think this is a very intelligent group and if we're playing consistent basketball and learn over the course of the season, we can corollate that to if we're playing in the New Franklin Tournament or the Slater Tournament, all the way to the district tournament," Kendrick said.

Fayette knows it will have to work its way back to the top this season, but don't count the Falcons out because of their inexperience. That would be a rookie mistake.

Fayette girls preview

(Continued from Page 5)

James said the strategies on offense and defense won't really change much this year, other than tweaking it a bit by trying girls at different positions. One of the main struggles over the past few years has been breaking a full-court press, which led to an extremely high number of turnovers and very few trips down the court when Fayette was able to execute its offense.

If Fayette breaks the press, they'll work the offense to try to get at least one touch inside to the post every trip down the floor. Depending on how the defense reacts to that over the course of the game, James said then they will try to take open looks from the perimeter.

"We're not going to try to force anything," James said. "We're going to take

what the defense gives us, with the idea that we're going to work from the inside-out. We want to post to touch it first to probe the inside of the defense and see if we can't find a weakness there. If we can score early inside, it usually opens up for your guards quite a bit."

Size will be a definite strength for this year's team with three forwards standing at 5-foot-9-inches or taller. While that may not sound like much, it's an improvement compared to the past three or four years. James said there's the possibility he could put five girls on the floor who are 5-foot-7-inches or taller, yet they also can go with a small, quick lineup if necessary. On the other hand, the guard play will also be an improvement from last season, should everyone stay healthy and avoid injury this season.

The obvious weakness against Fayette

is its inability to close out on top in close games, namely because they've rarely been in that situation the past two years. In the first win of the 2010-11 season against Keytesville, Fayette rallied with a huge second half, but very few games were decided by single digits. This year, that should be more common, but not having big-game experience may pose a problem in the first half of the season.

"I think there's going to be a lot of tight games this year," James said. "No. 1, can we take care of the basketball? No. 2, can we have quality shots? And No. 3, can we mentally be tough enough to pull out close ballgames? If things are going well, I think you're going to see us in a lot of close games that will come down to execution."

Even though he doesn't want to get ahead of himself, James said he would be tickled

if this year's team reached the 10-win plateau, something Fayette hasn't done since the 2007-08 season. This year's seniors have only been a part of seven varsity wins and this year could be the start of the cycle that heads in the upward direction.

"I would be thrilled for our seniors because they've endured a lot of bad seasons, yet they keep their heads up and continue to come back and work, work, work," James said. "They deserve it and I think it's going to happen. For us, we've got to crawl before we can walk and walk before we can run. We have got to get to that. 500 mark and get that step before we can start talking about conference titles and district titles."

"I think we have a group this year that, if things go really well, we might surprise everybody. But we have to win early and that, to me, is the key to this season."

Harrisburg boys preview

(Continued from Page 19)

led the team down the stretch, Combs said having these returners watch their team battle late in games should make a big difference heading into this season. After all, many of them hadn't been a part of a varsity roster that had seen success, taking into account the team's 5-20 finish in the 2009-10 season.

"We've had slow starts the past two years and we really had to battle back," Combs said. "We were 2-5 at Christmas time last year and ended up at 15-9. We need to have a good start, although our schedule is tough at the beginning of the year. We have the Glasgow Tournament and go right into Moberly before we start conference play. But we just want to build toward that end."

Heading into the final season of the Mid-Missouri Conference, Harrisburg will be looking to defend its conference title, along with co-champion Southern Boone. Both of Harrisburg's conference losses were by five or less and both teams are once again at the top of the five-team conference, each wanting to take the title in back-to-back years.

"Southern Boone has everybody back, so I'm going to put them as the favorite right now," Combs said. "We want to give them a good battle in the last year of the Mid-Missouri Conference and it would be nice to win the last one."

Combs easily pointed out that depth is going to be his team's biggest strength. The hard part will be — much like the Fayette boys encountered last season — how to match up the

right players on the court in certain situations.

"We probably don't have that clear-cut superstar as we did with Tyler Rasmussen, but we've got a lot of guys who can really play basketball," Combs said. "They've logged a lot of minutes over the years and we're hoping we can get back to where we just compete, compete, compete."

With Rasmussen gone, Combs said he still has to work out who he will go to down the stretch of a close game. For now, he said he has a whole host of characters that are vying for that spot and it could just come down to who has the ball in their hands at the end.

Harrisburg's defense will apply even more pressure this year, Combs said, which made a difference in the second half of the year against teams that couldn't keep up with

the Bulldogs. Since this team is deep, Combs will substitute players freely when they go with their run-and-go option.

Right now, Combs is focused on trying to secure a winning record going in the Christmas break, something Harrisburg hasn't done the past two seasons. The Bulldogs earned the No. 3 seed in the Glasgow Tournament, but they know just as well as anyone that doesn't guarantee two wins in the first week.

"We talked about this earlier in the year, that we need to be consistent every day," Combs said. "We need to be consistent with our practice habits and consistent with our off-the-court habits. We need to make sure that we're doing the right thing and keep on working hard. The big thing is if we can do that, hopefully we can get off to a good start."

Area High School Basketball Preview

Fayette High School

2011-12 Basketball Schedule

| Date | Opponent | Time |
|----------------|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Nov. 28-Dec. 3 | Glasgow Tournament | TBA |
| Dec. 5 | Centralia (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 6 | @ Slater* (JVG/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Dec. 8 | Marceline (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 13 | Westran* (JVG/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Dec. 15 | Smithton (JVB/VG/VB) | 5:30 p.m. |
| Dec. 19 | @ Hallsville (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 27 | vs. Stover^ (VG/VB) | Noon |
| Jan. 2-7 | New Franklin Tournament | TBA |
| Jan. 9 | @ Marceline* (JVB/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Jan. 10 | Slater* (JVB/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Jan. 12 | Hallsville (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 13 | @ Salisbury* (JVG/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Jan. 16 | Harrisburg (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 17 | @ Slater (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 19 | @ Fr. Tolton Catholic (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 23-28 | Slater Tournament | TBA |
| Jan. 30 | @ Harrisburg (JVG/JVB, A&B) | 5 p.m. |
| Jan. 31 | Marceline* (JVG/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 2 | @ New Franklin (JVB/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 7 | @ Paris* (JVG/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 10 | Salisbury* (JVB/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 13 | Salisbury (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 17 | @ Westran* (JVB/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 20 | Columbia Ind. (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 21 | Paris* (JVB/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 24 | @ Centralia (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |

Home Games in Bold

* — Lewis & Clark Conference Game

^ — Holiday Shootout @ State Fair Community College

New Franklin High School

2011-12 Basketball Schedule

| Date | Opponent | Time |
|----------------|-------------------------|--------|
| Nov. 28-Dec. 3 | Glasgow Tournament | TBA |
| Dec. 5 | @ Pilot Grove (JVG/JVB) | TBA |
| Dec. 6 | @ Keytesville* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 9 | Brunswick* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 12 | Slater (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 13 | Cairo* (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Dec. 14 | @ Harrisburg (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 2-7 | New Franklin Tournament | TBA |
| Jan. 9 | @ Slater (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 10 | Pilot Grove (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 13 | @ Sturgeon* (JVG/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Jan. 17 | @ Glasgow* (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Jan. 19 | @ Westran (JVB/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Jan. 20 | Madison* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 23-28 | Keytesville Tournament | TBA |
| Jan. 31 | Sturgeon* (JVB/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 2 | Fayette (JVB/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 3 | @ Salisbury (JVB/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 7 | Keytesville* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 10 | Glasgow* (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 14 | @ Cairo* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 15 | Pilot Grove (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 17 | @ Madison* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 21 | @ Brunswick* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |

Home Games in Bold

* — Central Activities Conference Game

Harrisburg High School

2011-12 Basketball Schedule

| Date | Opponent | Time |
|----------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| Nov. 28-Dec. 3 | Glasgow Tournament | TBA |
| Dec. 1 | Madison (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 6 | Moberly (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 9 | Fr. Tolton Catholic (JVG/JVB) | 5 p.m. |
| Dec. 13 | Southern Boone* (JV/V) | 5 p.m. |
| Dec. 14 | New Franklin (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 16 | South Callaway* (JV/V) | 4:30 p.m. |
| Dec. 20 | @ Sturgeon (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 3 | Salisbury (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 5 | @ Hallsville (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 7 | Brookfield (VG/VB) | 2 p.m. |
| Jan. 9-14 | South Callaway Tournament | TBA |
| Jan. 10-11 | Harrisburg JV Tournament | TBA |
| Jan. 12 | @ Sturgeon (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 16 | @ Fayette (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 17 | Fatima (JVB/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 19 | @ Hallsville* (JVG/VG) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 20 | @ Hallsville* (JVB/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 21 | @ Mexico^ (VG) | TBA |
| Jan. 23 | @ Westran (JVG/JVB, A&B) | 5:30 p.m. |
| Jan. 24 | Centralia (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 26 | @ California (JVG/VG) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 29 | vs. Marion County+ (VG) | 11:40 a.m. |
| Jan. 30-Feb. 4 | Southern Boone Tournament | TBA |
| Jan. 30 | Fayette (JVG/JVB, A&B) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 2 | @ Glasgow (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 6 | @ North Callaway* (JVG/VG) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 7 | @ North Callaway* (JVB/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 10 | @ Southern Boone* (JV/V) | 4:30 p.m. |
| Feb. 14 | @ South Callaway* (JV/V) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 16 | Frederick Douglass (VB) | 7:30 p.m. |
| Feb. 18 | @ Santa Fe (JVB/VB) | 2 p.m. |
| Feb. 20 | Hallsville* (JVG/VG) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 21 | Hallsville* (JVB/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 23 | North Callaway* (JVG/VG) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 24 | North Callaway* (JVB/VB) | 6 p.m. |

Home Games in Bold

* — Mid-Missouri Conference Game

^ — Gary Filbert Classic @ Mexico High School

+ — MFA Oil Shootout @ Mizzou Arena

Glasgow High School

2011-12 Basketball Schedule

| Date | Opponent | Time |
|----------------|----------------------------|--------|
| Nov. 28-Dec. 3 | Glasgow Tournament | TBA |
| Dec. 5 | Slater (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 6 | Brunswick* (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Dec. 12 | @ Marceline (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 13 | Madison* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 15 | @ Westran (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Jan. 2-7 | Marceline Tournament | TBA |
| Jan. 10 | @ Sturgeon* (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Jan. 12 | @ Salisbury (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 13 | @ Cairo* (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Jan. 17 | New Franklin* (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Jan. 19 | Salisbury (JV/VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 20 | Keytesville* (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Jan. 23-28 | Slater Tournament | TBA |
| Jan. 31 | Braymer (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 2 | Harrisburg (JVG/JVB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 3 | @ Brunswick* (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 7 | Cairo* (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 9 | @ Madison* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 10 | @ New Franklin* (JV/VG/VB) | 5 p.m. |
| Feb. 14 | @ Meadville (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 17 | @ Keytesville* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 21 | Sturgeon* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |

Home Games in Bold

* — Central Activities Conference Game

Higbee High School

2011-12 Basketball Schedule

| Date | Opponent | Time |
|----------------|----------------------------------|--------|
| Nov. 28-Dec. 3 | Northwestern (Mendon) Tournament | TBA |
| Dec. 6 | Mo. School for the Deaf (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 9 | @ Madison (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 12 | Christian Fellowship (VG) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 13 | @ Bunceton (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Dec. 16 | @ Jamestown (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 2-7 | Marceline Tournament | TBA |
| Jan. 10 | @ Malta Bend (JVB/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 13 | @ Atlanta (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 17 | Prairie Home (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 19 | Frederick Douglass (JVB/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 20 | Columbia Ind. (JVB/VG) | 6 p.m. |
| Jan. 23-28 | CCAA Tournament (@ Otterville) | TBA |
| Feb. 2 | @ Christian Fellowship (JVB/VG) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 3 | @ Pilot Grove* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 6 | Bucklin (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 7 | Jamestown* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 10 | Bunceton* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 14 | Malta Bend* (JVB/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 17 | @ Otterville* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 21 | @ Prairie Home* (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |
| Feb. 23 | Keytesville (VG/VB) | 6 p.m. |

Home Games in Bold

* — Cooper County Activities Association Game

Postseason Schedule

Class 1 and 2 District Tournaments — Feb. 25-March 3

Class 1 and 2 Sectionals — March 6 & March 7

Class 1 and 2 Quarterfinals — March 10

Show-Me Showdown (Final Four) — March 15-17

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