

Lady Rams young but good

BY MARK R. KENT
mkent@thecallnews.com

MOBILE — The Lady Rams softball team at Faith Academy is familiar with success. In the past two seasons, Faith has taken its talented lineup through the regionals and on to the state tournament in Montgomery before ending its season short of the championship round.

Last year it was Alexandria that put an end to Faith's season at the state tournament at Lagoon Park, winning 6-4.

But Faith was a young team a year ago and lost two seniors to graduation. This year, they're young again (one senior this year in Tempest Hebert), but youth and experience are not a bad combination. The Rams' top nine players are a senior, a junior and seven sophomores, with several freshmen expected to contribute as well.

And under the tutelage of head coach Rae Dennis, look for this team to make a mark once again.

The designated pitching ace this year will be Rycca Hinton, who came unto her own a year ago and is expected to be a team leader. Hebert will also get her time in the pitching circle.

Many of the starting positions appear to be locked down already. Look for Taylor Felton to catch and Gracie Willis to play first base. Mattie Evans will be a regular at second base, but Hinton will be there on days she does not pitch. Hebert, when she's not pitching, will be at shortstop.

Gabby Stagner is expected to play third base, while the



Faith's ace
Rycca Hinton

outfield will be a combination of Mattie Evans, Peyton Rickett, Kennedy Terry and Allie Bender.

Unlike the boys, whose baseball team has jumped up a classification to 6A this season, the Lady Rams will remain in Class 5A in an area that includes Satsu-ma, LeFlore, Vigor, St. Paul's and Faith. The Lady Rams in recent years have made it through the area tournaments with ease, leaving their chances of making state to the regionals.

"We definitely have some big shoes to fill with the two girls we lost from last year (Lacey Fincher and Taylor Robinson), but we have a lot of talent with our sophomore class and the junior and senior that we have left," Dennis said.

"I feel like we definitely have a great chance of doing well in regionals as well as in state if we keep everybody healthy."

Dennis noted having a young squad is something she's dealt with before. "We typically don't have more than two or three seniors at a time," she said. "We're used to having young teams to develop and we have some really good young talent."

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