



DGF Softball Returns With Depth And Talent

Lynae Schenck
Sports Writer



The Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton Rebels softball team is being co-coached again this season by Ron Dreschel and Tyler Dreschel. They have been co-head coaches at DGF for 13 years. Assisting them are Matt Fischer, Jess Winters, Wayne Emerson and Matt Gable. Both Ron and Tyler feel they have great assistant coaches who have experience, are great with kids and are a very valuable asset to the Rebels softball program.

The Rebels lost an experienced and talented group from last year. Replacing these players will not be easy. Megan Meyers was a first team AA All-State player. Jasmine Hanson as a pitcher made the all-tournament team in the 2017 AA State Tournament. Megan and Lexie Stebleton each played in the 2017 Minnesota AA All-Star game. Mattie Fischer was their leading runner and an excellent defensive player.

The Rebels finished with an impressive 26-4 record last season. They were Section 8AA Champions, took third place in Minnesota AA and were Heart O' Lakes Conference champions.

Returning for the Rebels are seniors Maria Pake and Natalie Steichen. Pake plays shortstop, and last year had a .435 batting average. She was named in the HOL as an All-Conference player last season and also All-Section in 8AA. Steichen plays outfield and batted .366 on the average last year. Both of these seniors will be two of three captains for the team this year.

There are also three returning juniors from last year's team: Katlyn Brenna, Morgan Tollefson and Kiarra Summers. Brenna is catcher for the Rebels and hit for



The Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton Rebels softball team members are, left to right, front row-Evelyn Moe, Isabelle Anderson, Kiarra Summers, Katlyn Brenna, Jerica Brenna, Morgan Tollefson, Natalie Steichen, Mallory Leitner; back row-Taylor Aakre, Jenna Bjelland, Alyssa Camacho, Breahna McCollum, McKenna Payne, Maria Pake and Sydney Spessand. Not pictured is Maria Watt.

an average of .374. Brenna also received an Honorable Mention Award for the HOL Conference. She will be the other captain for the team this season. Tollefson played third base and batted .279. Summers played both positions of outfield and pitcher. She had two pitching wins and no losses and averaged .327 with the bat.

There is one lone sophomore returning. Breahna McCollum played both outfield and second base and averaged .111 at the plate.

Two freshmen return for the DGF softball team. Jena Bjelland who is in the pitching position. She batted last season. Also, Maria Watt who is a designated hitter. She has a batting average of .256.

Team leaders, and there are a few according to Ron Dreschel, have many good qualities to bring to the field.

Pake is 5'8", she throws and bats right and is a three-year starter. She will be making the move from second base to shortstop, and has been a leader on and off the field.

Pake is a very good contact hitter and has the speed to get around the bases quickly.

Steichen, 5'6", bats and throws right, is a four-year starter. She adds speed and quickness to the line-up, and is a very intense and excellent defensive player. She will have an expanded role moving from left field to play center field.

Summers is 5'4" and bats left but throws right. She had a stingy 2.82 ERA in 52 innings pitched and will be expected to help in several positions this year. Summers is a very good outfielder and will be expected to be involved with the pitching rotation.

Tollefson is 5'4" and bats and throws right handed and is a third-year starter at third base. She is a very instinctive player who can hit with surprising power. She is expected to reach her next level this season.

Katlyn Brenna is 5'4", bats and throws right handed and is a two-year starter. As the Rebels catcher, she is the leader of the infield. She does a

great job reading the overall situation on defense and communication with the pitchers. Brenna played first base last year and the change in positions is expected to go smoothly. She is replacing Lexie Stebleton.

Jerica Brenna is a junior and designated hitter. She has the ability to put the ball in play and advance runners for the team.

McCollum is 5'6" and bats and throws with her right. She is a dedicated player who can play several positions.

McKenna Payne is a 5'6" sophomore. She bats and throws right handed. She will be asked to add hitting power to the Rebels' line-up.

Alyssa Camacho, 5'5" sophomore bats and throw right handed. She will be competing for playing time in the outfield.

Bjelland is 5'5" and bats and throws from the right. She will be expected to be part of the pitching rotation and also find a spot on the Rebels defense. She is a natural hitter who can hit with power.

Watt is 5'9" and is also right handed for both hitting and throwing. She will be expected to continue to be in the line-up with an expanded role on defense.

Sydney Spessard is a freshman infielder who bats and throws right handed. She will be asked to add depth to the infield.

Evelyn Moe is a 5'5" eighth grader who plays in the short stop position. She was one of the designated runners last season. Moe is a very dedicated and coachable defensive player who will be expected to help out this season.

Taylor Aakre is a 5'5" freshman outfielder and pitcher. She is a right handed player who helped out the team as a designated runner last season. She is a very good defensive leader and will be expected to expand her role as one of the pitchers.

Mallory Leitner, 5'10" eighth grade pitcher and first base. She is a right handed player who will push the older girls for pitching time and can also play first base.

Skyler Spessard is a seventh grade catcher. She is a right handed player and will add an additional catcher to the Rebels roster.

The pitching will be a combo effort as there are many pitchers listed on the roster. Ron is hoping for Summers, Bjelland, Leitner and Aakre to replace Jasmine Hanson from last year.

Team goals for the Rebels are to have fun, play well and be competitive during tournament time. It will be somewhat of a learning year for the team. Some of the returning players are in different positions and the younger kids will be asked to fill those open spots. How well those players develop and adjust to varsity level softball will determine how far they go this year.

Ron notes that they have excellent senior leadership to begin with this year. Also, he believes they have the right amount of experience and core players coming back from

last year's team to be an asset. They have younger talented kids as well competing for playing time that have shown the desire to learn and play.

As far as teams to beat in the HOL Conference, Ron feels that all the teams in the conference have an opportunity to compete.

"It is always a very fun and competitive conference," he said.

One of Ron's favorite things about coaching softball is getting to go outside and to play a game after the winter season. It also offers an opportunity to build relationships with players, coaches, parents and the community. More than anything it is a spot that exposes an athlete's heart and the love a certain activity. Softball is not an easy sport to play. There are weather, skill and athletic issues that are different from other sports.

"It's a game where it is important to be a team player and have the ability to offer and accept support from others during practice and contests," says Ron. "As a coach, that is a fun thing to watch and experience."

With the loss of quality experience at key spots that included pitching and catching, the Rebels will see what this season brings. The ability to put the ball in play and run the bases should be key for them. The chemistry developed between the kids last summer, especially with the infield, will be a strength. Also the experience of the younger kids watching and playing in the state tournament should be a positive for the team. They will be expected to step up and challenge for key playing time.

"We have a team that has heart and enjoys the game of softball," concludes Ron. "Our goal is to play well and develop memories with teammates and the sport. We play in a very competitive section and with a positive and learning regular season we hope to be involved during tournament time."

DGF Returns Depth And Experience For The Season

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Sports Writer



The Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton Rebels baseball team will be led by second-year head coach Bill Ibach. Assisting him will be Bryant Bergeson, Matt Peck and Brant Mickelson.

Last season the Rebels finished 6-6 in the Heart O' Lakes Conference. They also had a pretty good finish in the Section 8AA tourney. They finished third there, but could not get past a strong Perham team.

Returning members of the Rebels ball team are seniors Andrew Oberg, pitcher/infield; Taylor Irwin, pitcher/outfield; Nick Lund, pitcher/outfield; Ryan Castor, pitcher/infield; Ethan Giesinger, outfield/catcher; Logan Beilke, pitcher/outfield; and Tyler

Heagley, pitcher/first base. Juniors returning are Jacobe Stetz, infield/outfield; Nathan Leitner, pitcher/first base; Adam Weatherly, catcher/outfield; Jimmy Phillips, catcher/outfield; Brayden Johnson, pitcher/infield; and Tanner Tahrn, pitcher/outfield.

Sophomores returning are Carter Kohler, pitcher/infield, and Jacob Strand, infield.

Team captains this season are Oberg and Irwin. Ibach sees them as leaders on the team. They have both been starters since they were freshmen and have a lot of experience in regular and post-season games. Both Oberg and Irwin were a part of teams that finished first, second and third in the past three Section 8AA tournaments.

The goals for the Rebels' team never change. They hope to get better every day and want to be playing their best baseball at the end of May. Ibach considers the team's best assets this year to be experienced players and great senior

leadership. "We did not have any seniors on the team last year, so this group should be able to build on a good finish last year," said Ibach. "Our

conference and section are tough, so that only makes us better and more prepared in the long run."

As far as who to look out for in the HOL Conference, Ibach sees

Barnesville as one to watch. They are defending champions, so they are the team to beat.

"The guys on our team amaze me every day with the hard work they

put in and the character they show on and off the field," concluded Ibach. "I love seeing kids 10, 20, 30 years later and they still call me 'Coach.' That always makes me smile."



The Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton Rebels baseball team members are, left to right, front row-Carter Kohler, Ryan Castor, Nick Lund, Jimmy Phillips, Ethan Giesinger, Jacobe Stetz, Jay Greuel; back row-Logan Beilke, Nathan Leitner, Andy Oberg, Taylor Irwin, Tanner Tahrn and Carter Bohn.

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"Best wishes to all area teams in 2018!"

Representative Paul Marquart

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