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Trojans Hungry And Eager To Start Season

Tracy Hinz
Sports Writer



The Barnesville Trojans started the basketball season with only nine players taking the floor, as the football team's success of making the state championship game delayed the start of the 2018-2019 campaign.

However, a few schedule changes and some amped-up practice sessions once the entire basketball team arrived for their first practice has gotten the team ready to roll for the new season.

The Trojans are coming off a 9-win, 16-loss season, in which they lost in the first round of the playoffs to Osakis. They also lost the services of Charles Aakre, Matthew Bredman and Logan Bang to graduation.

Aakre was the team's leading scorer and rebounder, connected on the most three-point shots and was a member of the Heart O' Lakes All-Conference team. His statistical output will be hard to replace, as will his quiet leadership skills. Bredman and Bang were great defenders and outstanding leaders as well, both on and off the court. Finding athletes to replace this trio's statistical and leadership skills will be a key to a competitive and successful basketball season.

The Trojans will have some returning talent in starting point guard Adam Tonsfeldt and post player Hunter Zenzen. Tonsfeldt was named to the HOL All-Conference team in 2017-2018 and is expected to provide continued excellence and improvement on the court, while Zenzen earned significant playing time as well. Both players are expected to start this season.

Tonsfeldt is a fantastic point guard and leader on the floor. His court awareness is phenomenal, as he finds ways to score points or hand out assists. Tonsfeldt finished the season with 74 field goals in



Members of the Trojan varsity basketball team, are left to right, front row - team managers Collin Morey, Jack Bredman, Gannon Bolgrean, Jack Maesse; middle row - Logan Ernst, Jack Nielsen, Tim Walter, Noah Krause, Nick Aadland, Blake Anderson, Caleb Jablonsky, Cameron Heng, Ryan Rustad, Adam Tonsfeldt; back row - Brooks Martinson, Kellen Hinz, Kaden Zenzen, Jason Henrickson, Max Olson, Blake Torfin, Hunter Zenzen, Sam Askegaard, Grant Inniger, Sam Ross, Nick Swenson.

166 attempts, while going 24 for 65 from three-point range. He added 40 free throws in 64 attempts, 93 rebounds, 111 assists and 68 steals. His on-court leadership skills will be instrumental to help the Trojans to a successful season.

Zenzen finished the season netting 66 field goals in 180 attempts, while making 62 of 119 free throws. He added 141 rebounds with 47 coming on the offensive end, 21 assists, 29 steals and five blocked shots.

Four other players return having garnered some playing time last season. Senior Brooks Martinson tallied 42 field goals in 126 attempts, while adding 24 three-point shots in 78 attempts. He also added 27 of 44 free throws, 53 rebounds, 36 assists, 29 steals and a blocked shot.

Senior Jason Henrickson also saw significant playing time last year, netting 30 of 74 field goals

and 24 of 42 free throws, while grabbing 61 rebounds (27 offensive, 34 defensive), 20 assists and 5 steals.

Sam Askegaard finished the year making 30 of 70 field goals, 12 of 40 three-point shots, 14 of 21 free throws, netting 36 rebounds, 10 assists, 14 steals and four blocked shots. Senior Grant Inniger went 15-54 from the field, 4 of 22 from three point land, 5 of 6 from the free throw line, while adding 26 rebounds, 16 assists and 9 steals.

Senior Kellen Hinz returns for the upcoming season after missing all of 2017-2018 with a torn ACL and part of the 2016-2017 season with a broken leg. Hinz made the varsity rotation midway through his freshman season, helping the team as a sixth man to an overall record of 19 wins and 9 losses.

The team made it to the semi-finals of the Section 8AA tournament, where they lost to eventual state participant Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton by the score of 51-49.

After a freak injury during his sophomore year in football delayed his start to the basketball season, Hinz made his way back after the new year and helped lead the Trojans to a first round upset victory over that same DGF team.

Unfortunately, a torn ACL prevented Hinz from playing as a junior. Both the team and the player are hoping for a complete return to the skill set he had before the injuries. Hinz has the ability to score from both inside the paint and behind the

arc. He also can help the team with rebounding, while playing great defense and distributing the ball to his teammates on the offensive end.

Those six players will be looked at to lead the Barnesville Trojans into battle this season. Their will to win, athletic talent and team-first attitude will be instrumental in building a cohesive and competitive unit in 2018-2019.

"I am excited for the team we have coming back this season," said Head Coach Todd Henrickson. "We return an All-Conference player in Adam Tonsfeldt who is a fantastic, ball handling point guard. He can handle the ball in all kinds of situations, sees the court extremely well, gets his teammates involved and can score points. He is also a very good defensive player. He has played since his eighth grade year and is battle tested.

"Hunter Zenzen also returns, giving us an inside presence with his size and strength. He can finish around the basket and is a great rebounder. He is starting to stretch the defense with his outside shot and is a natural leader.

"Both players will lead our team into this season and will be flanked by some talented players who also contributed last season. Brooks Martinson is a very good shooter and all-around player, who is instinctive on both ends of the floor and can score from anywhere."

Jason Henrickson saw some playing time last season and has continued to develop his game over the summer. Grant Inniger and Sam Askegaard made contributions last year as well. All three players add size, length, the ability to score from three-point land or inside the paint and play great defense.

"We are also getting Kellen Hinz back after missing last year due to injury," Henrickson said. "He was our sixth man as a freshman and earned a starting spot as a sophomore. He can shoot the ball from long range and attack the basket. His athletic ability on both ends of the floor will be a nice addition to the team this season. It will be great to get him back on the court."

Other players hoping to net varsity minutes this season include seniors Nick Swenson and Nick Aadland with juniors Blake Torfin, Blake Anderson and Max Olson

eyeing playing time. Sophomores include Caleb Jablonsky, Sam Ross and Tim Walter, as well as, freshman Kaden Zenzen, Ryan Rustad, Logan Ernst, Noah Krause, Jack Nielsen and Cameron Heng.

Coach Henrickson returns for his 22nd year of coaching Trojan basketball. His overall record stands at 313 wins and 238 losses.

Tracy Hinz and Chad Suter will assist Henrickson, as both coaches enter their 13th year with the program. Jon Hodge returns to volunteer assist for another season.

Barnesville will battle in the always tough HOL Conference again this season, as well as in Section 8AA.

Joining the Trojans in the HOL will be two-time defending section champion Breckenridge, along with Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton, Frazee, Hawley, Pelican Rapids and Perham.

Breckenridge would seem to be the odds-on favorite to win their third consecutive section title as they return numerous players that have won back-to-back section championships. Perham and Hawley will field very strong and competitive teams, as will DGF, Pelican Rapids

and Frazee. This will make for a very strong and difficult conference schedule that will prepare the teams come playoff time.

"We had a little bit of a late start due to the success of our football team, which had an outstanding year," said Henrickson. "However, the practices have been very intense and competitive, which we like to see. The kids are battling each other every day, wanting to push themselves to be successful. If they continue this type of work ethic, we should be a very competitive team this season. We have a lot of talent returning and hope to build our team chemistry quickly. The players seem hungry to win and are pushing each other to get better every day. We had a very good summer of basketball. I am looking forward to watching this team develop and compete on a daily basis."

The captains for the 2018-2019 season, as voted by the team, will be Jason Henrickson, Kellen Hinz and Hunter Zenzen.

The first game will be on Friday, December 14, at Pelican Rapids.

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