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## Lady Trojans Return Youthful Squad This Basketball Season

Tracy Hinsz  
Sports Writer



A new era has arrived in Barnesville for the upcoming 2018-2019 girls basketball season that will see a youthful look from years past.

Graduation took the talents of five-year veteran Nicole Herbranson, along with four-year player Emma Nielsen, and three-year athlete Andria McIntyre. Two of those athletes have moved on to their college basketball careers, with Herbranson at MSUM and Nielsen at NDSCS. Add in the losses of Grace Mulcahy and Bobbi Lewis, the Lady Trojans will have a lot of holes to fill in the upcoming season.

But with those key losses from last season comes opportunities for others to step up and gain valuable playing time and experience, as the team looks to fill those roles from other players.

So far, 23 players are out for the basketball team, with four seniors, three juniors, four sophomores, 12 freshmen and two foreign exchange students grinding up and down the court in the early going.

Seniors Elora Passa, Claire Meyer, Wylie Lewis and Kaitlyn Maesse will suit up for their last year of varsity basketball. Passa will man the interior as a forward, as will Lewis and Maesse, while Meyer will hold down a guard spot. All four seniors were named captains for the 2018-2019 basketball season.

Passa averaged 5.1 points and 4.2 rebounds per game last year, making the Heart O' Lakes All-Conference team. She finished the season making 63 of 146 shots and 18 of 32 free throws. She also grabbed 117 rebounds (57 offensive, 60 defensive), while adding 27 assists, 16 steals and 11 blocked shots.

Meyer chipped in 5.6 points and 2.3 rebounds a contest, netting 54 of 172 baskets and 18 of 67 three-point shots, while adding 30 of 56 free throws. She chipped in 65 rebounds (15 offensive, 50 defensive), 34 assists, 39 steals and four blocked shots.

Lewis netted 2.1 points and 1.4 rebounds per game, making 21 of 74 field goals, two of seven three-point shots and 16 of 27 free throws. She added 38 rebounds (12 offensive, 26 defensive), 12 assists, 15 steals and a blocked shot.

Passa, Lewis and Meyer have all seen significant playing time over the last few years and will be looked upon to help lead this young team in the early going of the season.

Other players looking to see the court, earning rotational minutes for the Lady Trojans include junior forward Lily Rutherford; sophomore guards Samantha Passa and Kim Maesse, and forward Olivia



The members of the Barnesville Trojans basketball team are, left to right, front row - Kimberly Maesse, Kaitlyn Maesse, Samantha Passa, Wylie Lewis, Lily Rutherford; middle row - Olivia Sorenson, Lauren Halverson, Claire Meyer, Lexi Bolgrean; back row - Head Coach Ryan Bomstad, Emily Bredman, Elora Passa, Assistant Coach Alli Skogen and Assistant Coach Aaron Schindler.

Sorenson; with upcoming freshman in forwards Emily Bredman and Lauren Halverson, and guard Lexi Bolgrean.

All of these players will be expected to make up for the losses from last year's senior squad with hustle, grit, determination and statistics.

Leading the Barnesville Lady Trojans for his seventh season is Head Coach Ryan Bomstad, who has an overall record of 104 wins and 59 losses leading the Lady Trojans. His overall record stands at 208 wins and 128 losses.

Bomstad led last year's team to a record of 22 wins and six losses, losing in the sub-section semi-finals to the eventual state runner-up, the Roseau Lady Rams, in a hard fought battle by the score of 61-53.

The Lady Trojans won the HOL Conference title for the second consecutive season with a record of 10 wins and two losses. They also won the Pequot Lakes Holiday Tournament.

Joining Coach Bomstad for the upcoming season will be Aaron Schindler, who will return to coach the junior varsity squad for the second straight season, as will freshman basketball coach, Alli Skogen.

"We will have a much different look this year compared with the last two years," Bomstad said. "We lost our second 1,000-point scorer for the second straight year to graduation in Nicole Herbranson. She was the ultimate team player. A once in a lifetime player that could do it all, and she was a fabulous leader who will be hard to replace. We will have to find a few different players to take up some of the statistical categories that she handled on her own."

"We also lost our sharp shooting, three-point specialist in Emma Nielsen, who was also a fantastic defensive player, and Andria McIntyre, who could score from inside and out, played great defense and had a nose for the ball. Add in the losses of Bobbi Lewis and Grace Mulcahy, our team has some gigantic holes to fill."

"But we know this happens every year, and it is exciting to see which girls will step up and take advantage of the situation they are in. We have had some outstanding battles in our preseason practices and some players are starting to show what they are capable of doing for this team. It will be interesting to see how things will take shape as the regular season gets

started."

The Lady Trojans will once again participate in Section 8AA and the HOL Conference for the 2018-2019 season. The conference and section seem to have talented teams that will make for an interesting season.

Roseau returns the Borowicz sisters and have won the last three section championships. They will be the team to beat until someone knocks them off.

Hawley also returns a lot of young talent with a Hall of Fame coach. Park Rapids, Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton, Perham, East Grand Forks, Crookston and Frazee return significant players who will help their teams push for a section championship.

"We will be a young team this year with a lot of potential," said Coach Bomstad. "These girls seem to really get along well on and off the court. This team will continue to grow as the season goes on. The Heart O' Lakes Conference is always so difficult to play night in and night out. The conference is so balanced. It prepares you for all kinds of styles of play that you will see in the post season. Hopefully, with a little luck and good health, we can be in the mix come late February and early March."

WISHING THE TEAMS GOOD LUCK THIS SEASON!

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