

## **Pitching puts Marion at top of Metro**

Written by Don Taylor  
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Marion is coming off of a 27-17 season in 2011 with a trip to Des Moines for the semifinals of the state tournament.

While they lost some important seniors who figured heavily in their success, they return virtually their entire pitching staff. Led by senior second team all-stater Tyler Hedtke (11-3, 2.69), the Indian mound crew will be tough to deal with.

Joining Hedtke will be junior Levi Lochner (6-1, 1.72), senior Joshua Davila (4-2) and junior Nic Connolly (3-5). Cale Cannoy (1-1), who Coach Steve Fish considers his No. 1 pitcher, will also return having recovered from last year's early season injury.

Throw in sophomores Christian Stekl and Quinn Cannoy, who contributed a win apiece last summer, and Marion returns every pitching victory from the 2011 season. This staff will provide a formidable rotation for the Wamac Conference to contend with.

### **Key Losses:**

"We lost a special group of seniors that provided a big part of our offense. More importantly, their leadership will be difficult to replace," said Fish.

First team all-state second baseman Kasey Semler leads the list of players who are not returning. The list also includes all-district shortstop Zach Nielsen, four-year starter Dusty Albaugh as well as outfielders Andrew Charipar and Byron Fish.

This group of seniors supplied more than 60 percent of the hits and RBIs for the Indians in 2011.

### **Key Returning Players:**

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The entire pitching staff is not all that is coming back for the upcoming season. Figuring to lead the offense is all-conference senior infielder Mitch Wagner. He looks to build on a junior season that included 39 RBI, four homers and a .384 average.

Senior Addison Johnson will be returning for his third year as the starting catcher and will support those pitchers with a familiar steady performance. Junior Trev Biery, a starter for his third year, will be playing first base. Biery's experience should bode well to blossoming into one of the city's most consistent hitters.

Josh Davila (.350) will man the outfield when he is not on the mound and will supply some offensive punch. Others looking to increase their varsity playing time are seniors Hedtke and Cale Cannoy, as well as juniors Alex Charipar, Lochner and Connolly. Sophomores looking to break into the lineup are Stekl, Quinn Cannoy, Jeremy Schnieders, Trevor Hardman and Logan Fuller.

### **Outlook:**

It appears that Marion is on the cusp of a very solid season. Its entire pitching staff is back, which puts them developmentally ahead of most other teams.

They have a core of solid position players and seem to have good competition for starting positions. They may be a little slow out of the gate as they are replacing critical middle infield and centerfield spots, but it appears they have adequate replacements that will grow with experience.

Last year, Coach Fish jokingly accused me of jinxing his team early because I picked them to be very good. With that said, this prediction may not be welcome.

Despite the tough competition in the Wamac Conference, I believe this pitching staff will catapult Marion into a top-10 Class 3A team in Iowa. I think the Indians will post the best record

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in the Metro area this summer.