

Moses eyes Dr. Tom's formula at Prairie

Written by Jim Ecker

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If the Cedar Rapids Prairie boys basketball team has a successful season this year, the Hawks might want to thank former University of Iowa coach Tom Davis.

Prairie Coach James Moses played for Dr. Tom in the 1990's and might use a few of his former coach's tricks this season.

Prairie has a balanced squad with numerous guys battling for playing time. Moses wants to keep them working hard and trying to improve.

"We are capable of going about 12 or 13 deep," he said. "It kind of reminds me of the times when I used to play for Coach Davis. You just never knew who was going to get into his top-8 or top-10.

"Players need to take ownership when the lights come on and it's time to perform," he said. "It creates opportunities for other players and we feel that we have that."

Prairie struggled to a 6-17 record last year, but Moses feels the club has the talent to turn things around.

"We feel we have a lot of similarities to the team we had two years ago," he said. "We feel we

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have better basketball IQ going into the season, but we are young and we're trying to mature."

Moses has five seniors, 11 juniors and two sophomores on the 18-man roster. He thinks many of them are capable of helping this season. "We have an awful lot of depth," he said.

Kentrel Smith is the top returning scorer at 9.4 points per game. JoJo Simpson contributed 4.2 points last season and Mike Mims was at 3.7 points. Moses thinks all three of those players could be key contributors.

Moses also thinks junior Bryce Meeker, who has been on the varsity since his freshman year at Prairie, is capable of doing big things. "We think Bryce is capable of a double-double, but he has to take ownership," the coach said.

Moses mentioned Nick Benson, Austin Fisher, Mitch Lorenz, Drew Yanacek, Coen Brown, Cal Clark and Jalen Rima as other players who could help the ballclub.

"There's lots of minutes that are up in the air," he remarked. "We're going to be a team by committee, where you may never know who may come out."

Prairie will play Jefferson in the Metro Sports Report Classic on Saturday, Nov. 30 at 11 a.m. at Johnson Hall on the Kirkwood Community College campus. The Hawks open the regular season by hosting Davenport West on Tuesday, Dec. 3.