

Kohawks hope to take next step in hoops

Written by Jim Ecker

Sunday, 15 November 2015 18:20 - Last Updated Monday, 16 November 2015 15:54



The Coe men's basketball team ended last season with Jake Timm on the bench with a sprained ankle against Dubuque in the semifinals of the Iowa Conference tournament at Eby Fieldhouse.

The Kohawks lost that game without their star point guard on the floor, but now Timm and the Kohawks have turned the page and are hoping to improve upon last year's 16-10 campaign and win the league.

Coe begins the new season Tuesday night with a doubleheader against Cornell at Eby Fieldhouse. The Coe and Cornell women play at 5:30 p.m., followed by the men at 7:30 p.m.

Timm averaged 11.2 points, 5.6 rebounds and 4.5 assists last season and could play an even bigger role this year with the graduation losses of JT Vonderhaar (14.3 ppg), Matt Daoust (13.0) and sharpshooter Max Schmarzo (9.5).

Coach Bryan Martin is counting on his three seniors - Timm, Christian Fahey and Lincoln Vorba - to set the tone as the Kohawks get started.

"It's a luxury to have a point guard like Jake returning, but also to have three quality seniors," he said. "As a coaching staff, we're really leaning heavily on those guys each day to lead us and kind of speed up that process of bringing those young guys along. They're doing a great job of

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just that."

Coe has a relatively young team with three seniors, four juniors, five sophomores and nine freshmen on its 21-man roster. The Kohawks graduated nine seniors, so there will be players in new roles this year.

"It's been good so far," said Martin. "It's always good to get back at it and get the season going.

"It's a little more challenging this year, just developing that chemistry. The guys are making great progress, but we're going to have to have some patience in terms of letting those things happen."

Martin begins his fourth year as head coach with a 42-35 overall record and 21-21 mark in Iowa Conference games. The Kohawks finished 10-4 in the league last year and Martin is not shy about stating a lofty goal for this season.

"Our goal is to win the conference," he declared.

Fahey, a 6-foot-6, 240-pound center, averaged 7.3 points and 4.5 rebounds last year. Vorba did not start any games last season and averaged only 6.6 minutes, but Martin sees him playing a bigger role this year.

Matt Vonderhaar, who averaged 7.7 points last season as a starter, could be ready for a breakout year as a 6-4 junior.

"Matt Vonderhaar has really stood out as a guy that's gotten stronger over the off-season," said Martin. "I think he's ready to take the next step in terms of being one of those go-to guys for us."

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Matt Meyer, who averaged 3.4 points as a top reserve last year, also could become a bigger scorer for the Kohawks.

Martin likes to play 10 and 11 guys in most games and plans to sort through numerous combinations in non-conference games to find a comfortable rotation.

"It's important for us to have that quality depth," he said.

Martin has arranged what he called a "nasty" schedule of non-conference games to test his players and get them ready for the Iowa Conference. The Kohawks will play at least four tough teams from Wisconsin, along with an encounter with Mount Mercy Dec. 8.

"It's going to be real challenging," he said.

Martin has penciled Timm, Vonderhaar, Fahey and Marshall Shedeck into the starting lineup for Tuesday night's opener against Cornell, with the fifth spot still to be determined.

Martin likes his depth at point guard with Timm, Wayne State transfer Trevor Haaland and freshman Evan Wadsager from Davenport Assumption. Will Reichelt, a 6-foot-6 freshman from Idaho, gives the Kohawks some needed size up front. Freshmen Lane Halupnik (Linn-Mar) and Hunter Grenier (Assumption) are competing for playing time as well, along with other talented players.

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Seniors

Jake Timm, 6-1, Mount Vernon

Lincoln Vorba, 6-2, Mason City

Christian Fahey, 6-6, Waukon

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Juniors

Josh Jirak, 6-1, Center Point-Urbana

Matt Vonderhaar, 6-4, Davenport Assumption

Marshall Shedeck, 6-6, North Cedar

Hunter Pflughaupt, 6-4, North- Linn

Sophomores

CJ Nelson, 5-8, CR Washington

Trevor Haaland, 6-0, Osage

Matt Meyer, 6-5, Mason City

Spencer Williams, 6-6, Monticello

Nic Roth, 6-3, Prince of Peace

Freshmen

Zach Schlabaugh, 5-10, Williamsburg

Connor Moellenbeck, 6-1, Davenport Assumption

Lane Halupnik, 6-2, Linn-Mar

Jesse Porter, 6-0, Arvada, Colo.

Evan Wadsager, 6-1, Davenport Assumption

Erich Schark, 6-4, St. Charles, Mo.

Hunter Grenier, 6-3, Davenport Assumption

Taylor Constable, 6-4, Indianola

Will Reichelt, 6-6, Pocatello, Idaho