

Experience key to Cougars' season

Written by Jake Koolbeck

Sunday, 20 May 2012 18:08 - Last Updated Sunday, 20 May 2012 20:06

Kennedy returns a vast majority of its team from last season. The returning experience will be huge for the Cougars, who look to improve on last year's 9-32 campaign.

Kennedy Coach Katie Bova believes the Cougars' experience provides a positive outlook on the coming season.

"The amount of varsity experience coming back should be our advantage," Bova said. "Everyone who is returning had a starting role at some point in last season therefore the outlook is a positive and bright one."

With pitchers returning and some very good sticks still in the Cougar lineup it could be a good year for Kennedy. The Cougars will have to find a way to put it all together to see significant improvement, but the experience is there and will be the key to how the Cougars' season goes.

"I think we are ahead of where we have been in the past but it comes down to utilizing," Bova said. "The girls need to take the experience they have and run with it and compete."

Key Losses:

Cassi Nunnikhoven was a key leader for the Cougars' pitching staff. Nunnikhoven (7-14, 4.30 ERA) wasn't spectacular, but her experience and leadership will be missed.

Junior Taylor Sohn (1-16, 3.73) and freshman Maddy Crist (1-1, 2.63) will toe the slab.

"We lost a leadership role, however, Taylor Sohn and Maddy Crist will do a fine job stepping up and taking on that role and they are both ready," Bova said.

Experience key to Cougars' season

Written by Jake Koolbeck

Sunday, 20 May 2012 18:08 - Last Updated Sunday, 20 May 2012 20:06

Key Returning Players:

Kennedy returns everyone beside Nunnikhoven and should have plenty of talent to work with.

Offensively, the Cougars return their top 11 hitters from last year and should have plenty of options when it comes to finding hits and runs. The Kennedy attack will be led by senior sluggers Amanda Gaffey (.344) and Allie McQuiston (.324) who combined for 65 hits, 33 runs, 32 RBIS, and five homers.

Sophomore power hitter Erin Coker (.340, 34 hits, 19 RBI, 2 HR) adds a dangerous stick to a team with Gaffey and McQuiston in the middle of the Cougar order.

Outlook:

The Cougars have some good talent and an abundance of experience going into the 2012 season.

“As a team, we should be competitive, definitely in the middle of the pack or better,” Bova said.

Looking at this team and the competition around them I don't think the middle of division is an unreasonable spot to think the Cougars will attain by the end of the year. With all the talent in the MVC I don't see them being much better than that middle area, though.

The team had reasonable goals and I believe that they are all achievable. Kennedy should be improved this year and will likely make the MVC an even tougher conference.

“As a team we have set realistic and obtainable goals for the upcoming season: to continually work as a team, be competitive, take it one game at a time, have fun, and work hard, always,”

Experience key to Cougars' season

Written by Jake Koolbeck

Sunday, 20 May 2012 18:08 - Last Updated Sunday, 20 May 2012 20:06

Bova said. "There is no reason in my mind why these cannot be achieved."