

Mohawk hockey club looking forward to first-division finish

MASON CITY — The rebuilding may be over.

Last year, the Mason City Mohawk hockey club couldn't match its state championship of 1987, finishing fifth in the seven-team Iowa High School Hockey League while West Des Moines Valley/Dowling took the tournament title.

This season, Mohawk coach John Lloyd said the foundation is there for another shot at the top with a long list of experienced forwards.

"The way it looks, we should be in the upper division of our league," Lloyd said. "The experience of our forward lines is the reason."

Only three forwards were graduated from last year's 7-14 team, and the Mohawks picked up foreign-exchange student Nick Hudin of Sweden.

"He is a very fine hockey player," Lloyd said of Hudin. "His puck-handling skills are outstanding. His skating is outstanding."

Hudin will be part of a first line which includes Jeremy Scheetz, a returning first-team all-state pick from last year, and Mark Peterson, who switched from defense to a forward late last season.

"This line should be able to skate with anybody, even when we venture up into Minnesota," Lloyd said.

Scheetz, 5-foot-6, 139 pounds, led the Mohawks in scoring last year.

"He's small but very quick," Lloyd said. "That's mainly his strength, his skating ability."

The second line the coaches call the "meat-and-potatoes line" because "they just get out there and work," Lloyd said, but also because they are large by hockey standards.

Derrick Johnson (6-1, 185) improved by going to hockey camp and has considerable strength. "His wrist shot is devastating," Lloyd said. "I've never seen a wrist shot like that from a kid in Iowa."

Also on the second line is Chris Peterson and 185-pound Jeff Perkins.

The third line has freshman



Linemates: Jeremy Scheetz (left) and Mark Peterson will be two of the forwards on the Mohawks' No. 1 line

Casey Holck and seniors Jeremy Chamberlain and Jason Baskerville.

Four seniors are back on defense, led by 6-4, 210-pound Brian Bahnsen. Aaron Laaveg, Danny Nelson and Chris Hasselman also return with some experience.

"The defensemen haven't had too much varsity time, but they played very, very well and made few mistakes (in the season-opening scrimmage)," Lloyd said.

Returning at goaltender is senior Pete Ackerman, who also improved by going to hockey camp.

The Mohawks, who tied Waterloo Columbus and beat Dubuque in a six-team scrimmage which opened the season last weekend in Mason City, will play more than 35 games this season.

Mason City travels to Des Moines for a midget tournament (age 17 & under) this weekend and open the league schedule Saturday, Nov. 19 at home against Waterloo Public.

With Dubuque returning to the league, there will be eight teams in two divisions. Mason City is joined by Dubuque, Waterloo Public and Waterloo Columbus in one division. Ames, Urbandale, Valley/Dowling and Sioux City are in the other division.

Lloyd said Valley/Dowling looks good enough to repeat as state champion again this year.