

# Warriors open prep hockey season tonight

MASON CITY — Waterloo skates into the 1996-97 Iowa High School Hockey League season tonight when it visits defending regular-season champion Mason City.

The Mohawks went 22-3-1 a year ago and scored a whopping 220 goals, but suffered heavy graduation losses. Leading scorer Jason Anderegg is back after a 64-point season, but seven others who tallied at least 30 points are gone, along with No. 1 goaltender Ty Paape.

The Warriors, meanwhile, are looking to improve on a 5-21 season. Ten letterwinners return while two other

1995-96 regulars have decided to play in more prominent leagues this winter. Goaltender Steve Cak is in Casper, Wyo., and forward Luke McCarty is playing in Green Bay, Wis.

"That just creates an opportunity for another kid to step in there and produce," says head coach Mike Brown. "I don't see that as a negative at all. It's good when some of our guys get the opportunity to go to other places and play."

Brown is building his team around veterans Brian Schaefer, Wes True, Travis Jones, Rick Reicherts, Matt

Dray, Jason Boller, Graham Towler-ton, Jason Verbraken, Ben Kutz and Curt Shaw. Kutz, Boller and Verbraken scored in double digits a year ago when Waterloo ranked ninth among the league's 10 teams in scoring. Reicherts was among the league's junior varsity scoring leaders.

"I think we'll score goals this year, which in the past, we haven't done," says Brown. "I don't know if we'll defend as well as we have."

The Warriors play their first three games on the road before their home opener at Young Arena Nov. 23.