



Globe Gazette file photo  
Mason City's Jake Nonnweiler.

## MOHAWK HOCKEY CLUB

# Mohawks done with growing pains

## After year of infusing youth, hockey team looking up

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**MASON CITY** — With only three seniors lost to graduation and a strong nucleus returning, the Mohawk Hockey Club expects to see a lot of improvement from last year's team that finished with 11 points and a 5-26-0-1 record in the Midwest High School Hockey League last season.

"We have high expectations this year," Mohawk Hockey Club coach Mark Hicks said. "We've had the same team basically for the last two years now, so it's time to step up."

"We're excited to start the season, get out there, play and see where we're at. I think we'll be improved from last year. We still have a lot of hard work ahead of us but I think we could have a good season."

One of the reasons for optimism is in numbers.

Forced to play freshmen and sophomores at the varsity level last season, those players are a year older.

Add in some new faces and the Mohawks' roster sits at 34 members entering tonight's season-opening game at Sioux City.



Nonnweiler

"Having more people to choose from really helps out a lot," senior Jake Nonnweiler said. "It's not that we don't have to use a freshman on our varsity team just because we need a break. The more people you have the more time off you can have and it also allows us to put the best people in the best position."

Hicks added that the group of 34 is one of the biggest he's coached in recent years.

"It's nice to have a big group of kids," the coach said. "We have 34 this year, one of our biggest numbers the last few years, and we have a lot of

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## HOCKEY

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experience coming back."

That experience starts with a line of Nonnweiler, Cody Malsby and Joe Burgmeier.

Burgmeier was third in the league in points with 54 (24 goals, 30 assists), Malsby was eighth with 46 points (19 goals, 27 assists) while Nonnweiler added 17 goals and 11 assists.

"They all finished strong last year and they're probably one of the top two or three lines in the league this year," Hicks said.

The Mohawks will look to develop depth behind its high-scoring line, something that Nonnweiler is confident will be the case this season.

"Our second line is going to be good this year," Nonnweiler said of Luke LoCascio, Alex Ritzert and Carter Kline. "Those guys go against myself, Cody and Joe every day in practice and them going against us is only going to make them better."

Defensively, Nonnweiler says the team is still a work in progress as Lucas

### 2012-13 MOHAWK HOCKEY CLUB SCHEDULE

#### NOVEMBER

2 - at Sioux City Metros; 3 - at Sioux City Metros; 10 - vs. Des Moines Capitals; 15 - at Des Moines Oak Leafs; 17 - at Des Moines Capitals; 21 - at Ames Little Cyclones; 23 - at Kansas City Jets; 24 - at Kansas City Jets; 30 - at Des Moines Oak Leafs.

#### DECEMBER

1 - vs. Des Moines Oak Leafs; 7 - at Des Moines Capitals; 10 - vs. Des Moines Oak Leafs; 14 - vs. Ames Little Cyclones; 18 - vs. Waterloo Warriors; 22 - at Cedar Rapids RoughRiders.

#### JANUARY

4 - vs. Omaha Jr. Lancers; 5 - vs. Omaha Jr. Lancers; 12 - vs. Cedar Rapids RoughRiders; 17 - vs. Waterloo Warriors; 19 - at Ames Little Cyclones; 25 - vs. Lincoln Jr. Stars; 26 - vs. Lincoln Jr. Stars; 30 - vs. Ames Little Cyclones.

#### FEBRUARY

2 - at Des Moines Capitals; 8 - at Dubuque Devils; 9 - at Dubuque Devils; 15 - vs. Quad City Blues; 16 - vs. Quad City Blues.

Mariner recovers from a knee injury, but there's experience on the blue line.

"We're missing one of

our better players on defense," Nonnweiler said. "Austin Thoms and Sam Spear return and both of those guys have a lot of experience. They'll help us out a lot."

The Mohawks also return goaltenders Connor Moorman and Anthony Piscopo.

Moorman, a junior, appeared in 15 games while Piscopo, a sophomore, played in eight at the varsity level last season.

"We have plenty of confidence in our goaltenders," Hicks said. "We have guys that got plenty of games under their belts so I think we're good to go this year."

While the Mohawks are

excited about the season, they'll have another change in divisions this year as the MHSHL, which had two divisions of six teams last season, will move to three divisions of four teams this year.

"To make the tournament this year is a little different but you still have to win games," said Hicks, whose team is in the Central Division with the Ames Little Cyclones, Des Moines Capitals and Des Moines Oak Leafs. "We either have to win our division or finish in the top eight in points. Basically you just have to win hockey games and pick up points."