

Mohawk Hockey Club set to drop the puck

Mohawks begin season today at the Des Moines Capitals



Globe Gazette file photo

Mason City's Joe Burgmeier (left) controls the puck.

JEREMY KOENIGS

jeremy.koenigs@globegazette.com

MASON CITY — Several key pieces return for the Mohawk Hockey Club as its 2013-14 Midwest High School Hockey League season, consisting of 28 games, begins today with a road contest against the Des Moines Capitals.

Leading the push to improve on a 15-12-1-0 record last season will be forward Joe Burgmeier, defenseman Lucas Mariner and goaltender Anthony Piscopo.

"I think we did some good things last year and we return some great

leadership with 11 seniors," said Mohawk Hockey Club coach Mark Hicks, whose team will compete with the Capitals, Des Moines Oak Leafs and Ames Little Cyclones for the Central Division crown. "I think first place is an obtainable goal. We want to be the top team in our division and get that automatic bid. We're excited to get things started."

Burgmeier, a 6-foot-2, 205-pound senior, tied for the team lead with Cody Malsby with 65 points last season, tallying 32 goals and 33 assists. The 65 points were tied for second in the MHSHL behind

Kansas City's Logan Lopicka's 69 points.

"Joe is a leader on our team and is one of the top players in the league," Hicks said.

Meanwhile, Lucas McKinnon added 10 goals and 16 assists as a freshman and gives coach Hicks a solid one-two punch again this season.

"Lucas McKinnon, as a freshman, did an outstanding job," Hicks said. "I think he can be one of the top players in the league. Hopefully he's up to the challenge."

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However, no other player for the Mohawks had more than seven goals, meaning Hicks will be looking for contributions in the scoring area from a number of players who have varsity experience.

"After Joe and Lucas we need some guys to chip in points," Hicks said. "We have guys with experience and it's nice to have some depth."

That experience comes in the form of seniors Austin Thoms, Luke LoCascio and Carter Kline while Hicks also has juniors Ernie Miszewski and Spencer Hadacek at his disposal. Thoms recorded seven goals and three assists, Miszewski had two goals and five assists and Hadacek recorded a goal and three assists.

Charlie Johnson, Brennan Dondlinger, Alex Ritzert and Ethan McHenry also are expected to provide offensive production after seeing action in more than 20 games at the varsity level last season.

McHenry, Johnson and Dondlinger combined for 57 points at the junior varsity level last season.

While Hicks searches for more offensive production, his blue-liners are a veteran group.

Mariner returns for his senior season after recording a goal and 11 assists while Spencer Wihlm (three assists) and Erik Floden (one assist) all played in over 20 games at the varsity level last season.

"Lucas Mariner and Erik Floden are two of the most consistent guys we have on the blue line along with Spencer

Wihlm," Hicks said.

Behind them, the Mohawks return Piscopo, Connor Moorman and Parker Dondlinger in goal.

Piscopo, a 5-foot-9, 160-pound junior, posted 14 wins with a goals against average of 2.74 and a .912 save percentage with two shutouts last season.

"We went with Anthony a lot down the stretch last year," Hicks said. "We have good depth and experience with Anthony, Connor and Parker."