

Warriors look to piece together another winner

■ Waterloo opens season against Ames Friday at Young Arena

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WATERLOO — The Waterloo Warriors return a solid nucleus of proven forwards for the 2013-14 Midwest High School Hockey League season.

They'll have to light the lamp often early this season as a young and largely new group of blue-liners and goaltenders settle in at the varsity level.

"The biggest difference will be on the back side of the puck, at goalie and on the defensive side," says head coach Doug Dietz,



Jacob Sessler

I think we've got enough scoring ability and some upperclassmen who will carry the load for us when needed."

That offensive punch begins with veterans Cameron Pries (19 goals, 21 assists), Jacob Sessler (19 g, 20 a), Sam Richter (18 g, 15 a) and Lee Jensen (7 g, 14 a). Dietz is also looking for Austin Kugler to make an impact, while Kyle Schott

whose team is coming off a 20-7-0-1 campaign. "We'll be really young in those two areas.

"Up front,



Doug Dietz

Trevor Katz 22 at the junior varsity level a year ago.

The defensive group is a work in progress. Dietz says Jordan Messerer-Mettlin and Sam Metcalf are battling for the starting goalie position.

"We're kind of waiting to see which one of them steps forward," says Dietz. "It's going to be interesting. It's nice to have a challenge at the position instead of knowing who is going to

and Lake Powell have a chance to contribute in their first varsity seasons. Joshua Almaraz scored 26 points and

2013-14 schedule

Nov. 1 — Ames, 6 p.m., Nov. 14 — Dubuque, 6 p.m., Nov. 16 — at Omaha, 5 p.m., Nov. 17 — at Omaha, 10 a.m., Nov. 22 — at Des Moines Oak Leafs, 8 p.m., Nov. 23 — at Cedar Rapids, 6 p.m., Nov. 30 — at Dubuque, 6 p.m.

Dec. 5 — at Des Moines Oak Leafs, 8 p.m., Dec. 7 — at Quad City, 4:30 p.m., Dec. 8 — at Quad City, 8 a.m., Dec. 13 — Cedar Rapids, 6 p.m., Dec. 14 — at Cedar Rapids, noon, Dec. 17 — Mason City, 6 p.m., Dec. 21 — at Des Moines Capitals, 8 p.m.

Jan. 4 — Kansas City, 6 p.m., Jan. 5 — Kansas City, 7:45 a.m., Jan. 10 — Mason City, 6 p.m., Jan. 17 — Ames, 6 p.m., Jan. 18 — at Des Moines Capitals, 8 p.m., Jan. 23 — at Dubuque, 6:30 p.m., Jan. 24 — Quad City, 6 p.m., Jan. 25 — Quad City, 6 p.m.

Feb. 1 — at Lincoln, 8 p.m., Feb. 2 — at Lincoln, 10 a.m., Feb. 8 — Cedar Rapids, 6 p.m., Feb. 15 — Dubuque, 6 p.m., Feb. 22 — Sioux City, 6 p.m., Feb. 23 — Sioux City, 7:45 a.m.

be your goaltender, but on the other hand it's kind of stressful not knowing who it's going to be."

In front of them, Conor Luck is the top returning defenseman after scoring

six goals and 17 total points a year ago. Beau Cook, who chipped in 31 points last season, is playing for a AAA Midget team in Omaha, Neb., this season.

Regardless who ends up

on the ice for the Warriors, they head into the season with high expectations.

"We've put some lofty goals on this year's team again," notes Dietz. "We want to win our division, and if we can win the league, that'd be great. Obviously, once we get into the state tournament the goal is to win three straight games and win that thing. Our goal again is to go to nationals.

"One of the things these older guys need to figure out is leadership. Right now, we don't have somebody just stepping to the forefront. They need to figure this out real soon, or we'll just be a mediocre team, I think."

The Warriors host Ames Friday at 6 p.m. in their season-opener.