

HELMICK TAKES OVER AS TUCKER COUNTY GIRLS' BASKETBALL COACH

By Chris George

TuckerCountySports.Com

Back in the early summer, Tucker County Girls basketball coach, Jimmy Ambrose and boys basketball coach, Dave Helmick got together and decided, hey lets switch things up a little bit next year. That switch quickly became a reality as Jimmy Ambrose was introduced as the new boys head coach while coach Helmick takes over a position, where he once served as a very successful assistant as the brand new coach of the Tucker County Lady Mt. Lions.

At his disposal this year, coach Helmick has four talented seniors that will lead the team in 2017-2018. Back once again is 1000 plus point scorer, Sydney Nestor. She will be joined by fellow seniors, Sydney Moore, Cecily Strawderman and Dominique Meadows. Coach Helmick says all four of these young ladies bring something special to the court this season. "All four of these ladies have really put in the time in the offseason and the weight room so they can have a strong senior season." In fact the entire team has really worked hard both on the floor and in the gym. "With these four seniors, I believe we have a solid chance to achieve everything we want as a team."



Tucker County High School Girls' Basketball Seniors (L-R): Cecily Strawderman, Dominique Meadows, Sydney Moore and Sydney Nestor

A total of 18 girls will make up the rosters this year for the Lady Mountain Lions varsity and junior varsity teams. There is also a lot of experience and talent with the underclassmen that return as well. Back with experience is sophomore forward, Terra Kuhn and junior forward Kelcee James. Another pair of junior's back with experience and that will help at the guard

position is McKinley Murphy and junior Riley Evans. There will be a pair of juniors that will also join them this year in Anna DiBacco and Aliyah Plum. Sophomore Katie Surguy will look to get some varsity action also this season for the Lady Mt. Lions. All three of these players saw limited varsity time a year ago, but they really impressed on the junior varsity team last season. Coach Helmick feels this group can all contribute and help in many ways. "All of these young ladies will help us at some point this season, they all have different skill sets and are good athletes that should be able to contribute to winning a lot of games this season."

Last year the Lady Mt. Lions fell short in the first round of the Class "A" State Tournament. Coach Helmick understands that the goal is not only to get to Charleston but once there, win the state championship. "Getting to Charleston is a very important goal, but it's time that once we get there that we have one plan in mind and that is bring home the state championship." Coach Helmick also stated that the ladies have really worked hard and improved their overall game both on and off the floor. "The girls have really improved and gotten stronger in the weight room, plus on the floor they are doing a better job of taking the ball to the basket and the overall shooting seems to have improved."

Coach Helmick will once again rely on the normal tough, hard-nosed man to man defense that has made Lady Mt. Lions basketball what it is today. "Besides the man to man, I also want to mix in some full and half court pressure." "I believe we have the type of athletes that can be successful at both."

In order for Tucker County to be successful in achieving their goals, they must complete a very tough and challenging schedule, one that may be the toughest in the state in Class "A". "Every year, we go into this thinking we need to challenge our girls and play the best competition possible, so once we get into the playoffs we know what we need to do as a team to win games and will not be phased by the competition we may see in Charleston." "Playing good tough teams like Wheeling Central, Summers County, Frankfort, Martinsburg and Lincoln all on the road will get us ready for March."

Coach Helmick will not be the only new face on the staff. He will be joined by lead assistant, Shane Eakle, who once served as lead assistant for former Tucker County Boys' head coach, Tom Gutshall. Also serving as an assistant this season will be former 1000 plus point scorer and Tucker County alum, Amber Evans. Coach Helmick had some glowing remarks about his two new assistant coaches. "Coach Eakle really does a good job motivating the girls both on the floor and in the weight room and he will help a lot with our overall defense." "Amber brings a ton of things to the table also, as she is just out of the game and knows a lot of the girls on the team and they all look up to her."

While preseason practice is still ongoing. This past Tuesday, Tucker County scrimmaged Grafton at home and the next scrimmage will be a very solid test at Class "AAA" Buckhannon-Upshur on Tuesday November 28th at 6pm.

The entire girls' basketball schedule can be found on wvssac.org and also on TuckerCountySports.Com. The Lady Mountain Lions will also be broadcast on 94.7 WELK and TuckerCountySports.Com all season long. The complete broadcast schedule can also be found on TuckerCountySports.Com, so please tune in and listen to these special girls on their road back to Charleston and what we all hope is a State Championship in 2018.



Tucker County High School Girls' Basketball Team - Front Row(L-R): Gracie Rapp, Amber Price, Abbie Eakle, Anna DiBacco, Addie Buckley, Karlee Smith, Alena Lambruno, Katie Surguy, Back Row(L-R): Riley Evans, Aliyah Plum, McKinley Murphy, Cecily Strawderman, Sydney Nestor, Dominique Meadows, Sydney Moore, Terra Kuhn, Kelcee James and Kandace Nestor