

Mariner Girls Basketball Begin Season with More Players and Maturity

By John Sandstrom

A year ago, the Mariners were the youngest varsity team in Minnesota, starting three seventh and eighth graders, as well as playing several others. This is a different year and much has changed.

First, I have to state my bias as I am fortunate enough to be the head coach for these terrific young ladies. I am assisted by my good friend and fishing partner, Larry Otterblad and our wonderful new coach, Michele Ketola.

Co-captains for the Mariners include the lone senior, Hannah Thums, who has over six hundred rebounds during her previous four year varsity career. Joining her is junior Danika Thompson, who earned a second team spot on the Polar League all conference team last season. The Mariners were also fortunate to add a solid all around player in sophomore Izzy

Carey, who recently moved to the Silver Bay area.

Friends and family have shown me that no one really cares what coaches say, or at least what I have to say.....so I will turn it over to the experts:

Hannah Thums: "We are still a young team. We will have our ups and downs, but we are improving with each practice. As long as we put 150% into everything, we will be just fine."

Danika Thompson: "We are a lot different team than we were last year. I think we have improved a lot over the summer and even in the first week of practice."

Eighth grader Ayla Simonson: "We worked hard this summer and it should pay off. I think

we will be stronger and more consistent. We have more players this year than last year too."

The Mariners scrimmaged Denfeld, Ely, and Cook County in Silver Bay last Saturday and will open the season at Duluth Denfeld on Tuesday, November 30th. Check inside this week's issue of the Northshore Journal to find all the high school winter sports schedules.

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