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KILLEEN, GALLO, WEBER ADD SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Raider Lady Softballers Will Not Be Starting from Scratch

By **DAVID B. CORBIN**
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Several returning starters plus another season of maturity from two young pitchers could indicate that this year's Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School softball team will not be starting from scratch.

Last year, with number of girls experiencing the varsity level for the first time, the Raiders spent the season searching for the right mix.

"They have been throwing well so far. I think they are going to be a lot more consistent. One of the things that we talked about last year, just cutting down the walks, and already in pre-season, they have done just that. We are looking forward to having a solid 1-2 pitcher. It's just which is going to be which? It may change from day to day," Coach Hulnik said.

Senior veterans Liz Gallo and Sara

a little bit. We are waiting on the return of Amanda. She's taking small workouts right now," Coach Hulnik said.

Junior first baseman Lindsay Wilkinson, according to Coach Hulnik, "is starting to hit the ball really well, and newcomer senior Sarah Weber has been doing OK at third."

As far as offense goes, Coach Hulnik said, "I think Arielle is going to hit the ball really well. Amanda Schroeder when she comes back, and Amanda Raphael and Amanda Marcus have made some solid contact. Obviously, you can always hit better no matter who you are."

Once on the bases, Marcus, Schroeder and Zauro may be the leading speedsters.

As of March 26, several positions have yet to be determined, but Coach Hulnik has been getting a clearer view from her scrimmages.

"We had our first scrimmage about a week after we started, so I still had some questions to answer about who is going to be on varsity and who was going to be on JVs. In our scrimmages, we are trying to get some of my younger sophomores and some of my newer possible varsity members some time to play, so I can judge them a little bit better. I used our scrimmages to put some of our younger kids up to bat first, rather than worrying about a batting order," she said.

When not on the mound, Marcus and Raphael may play in the outfield. Junior Hannah Greaney could also play the outfield. Sophomore Mary Coloney could see time at first base.

The Raiders opened with Somerville at home on April 2, then traveled to play Governor Livingston on April 3. The Raiders face host Elizabeth today, Thursday, April 5, at 2:30 p.m.



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
VETERAN EXPERIENCE...In their second year as a varsity team, the young Raider boys lacrosse team will look to seniors Dan Lynch, left, and Dan Nizolak, center, and junior Tyler Haack for guidance.

NIZOLAK, LYNCH, HAACK SELECTED TEAM CAPTAINS

Raider Boys Believe Lacrosse Program is a 'Sleeping Giant'

By **DAVID B. CORBIN**
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Two years as a varsity program may not attract too much attention from opponents, but this year's Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School boys lacrosse team may turn out to be a sleeping giant.

"This program is a sleeping giant. Last year was our first year, but I tell the guys, 'I don't think we are going to sneak up on anybody.' In the town, it is one of the most popular sports. In the program, we have over 200 kids playing from second grade on," first year Raider Head Coach Nick Miceli said.

Last year in its inaugural varsity season, with only four seniors on the squad, the Raiders gained needed

experience and finished with a respectable 6-12 record.

Coach Miceli's background and experience may also help the young Raiders understand how to develop the winning ways.

I played lacrosse at Ward Melville High School, which is one of the top programs in the country. It was nationally ranked and still is. I went on to play at Kean University. I came to Union County and never left. I coached at Kean for two years, and then I got the job in Scotch Plains. I want to be a part of building a new program and turn it into a top contender," he said.

Coach Miceli certainly will have the chance to build a program from

the ground up. "We are very young. We have eight sophomores on the varsity team, who will be putting in valuable time. The future is bright. We have our first senior, who is committed to playing college ball. Danny Nizolak is going to Stevens Tech," he said.

As an attacker last year, Nizolak, a co-captain, led the team with 34 goals.

But strong defense can keep a team within striking distance, and co-captains Tyler Haack, a junior, and senior Dan Lynch, and junior Sam Brouse certainly have the stubbornness to frustrate the opposition. Last year, Haack scooped 54 ground balls, while adding a goal and three assists.

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David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
NOT STARTING FROM SCRATCH...This season, the Raider softball team expects to field a more experienced team. Pictured, left to right, are: Sarah Weber, Sara Killeen and Liz Gallo.

"I think we are going to be much improved over last year. We are so far ahead of where we were last year. We have eight or nine players, who all saw starting time. We are not starting from scratch. I am excited about going in with a semi-veteran team," Raider Head Coach Jessica Hulnik said.

Additionally last year, the two sophomore pitchers, Amanda Raphael and Amanda Marcus, struggled a bit when it came to walking batters, but now with a year of maturity, the two Amandas appear to be heading in the right direction.

Killeen are expected to provide solid defense in the outfield.

"They have looked very good out there so far. They will help the freshmen outfielders. They know the game. They know what to do when the ball comes to them," Coach Hulnik said. Junior Kelly Lapham has the ability to play several infield positions.

Sophomore Arielle Zauro may assume some responsibilities at the catcher's position, at least until junior Amanda Schroeder returns from illness.

"Arielle looked pretty good behind the plate, and we had her in the infield

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