

Amherst girls hoops season ends in prequarters

Amherst Central had an early exit in the Section VI Tournament as the Lady Tigers, seeded tenth in the A-1 bracket, lost 48-34 to seventh-seed Starpoint, in the A-1 prequarterfinals.

Amherst coach JoAnna Fildes said her team struggled on offense, including only two points in the third quarter, and turned the ball over several times.

"Going into the biggest game of the year without two starters (seniors Mollie Lang and Elizabeth Reid), made it a tough go against a strong defensive effort from Starpoint," Fildes added. "We had some key underclassmen (juniors Daisy Timlin, Amy Simon, Jennifer Newhouse, and Elana Korn) step up when called upon. It is always a positive when you see the young talent compete after working so hard all season."

Senior Jodi Battaglia led Amherst with 10 points. Junior Daisy Timlin added six points.

Amherst finished 8-11 overall and 6-6 in ECIC Division II.

Final stats

Coach Fildes said there are some big shoes to fill for next year with this year's group of graduating seniors — Battaglia, Reid, Lang, Shannon McGuire and Stephine Woods.

Battaglia led the team in scor-

ing (10.2 points) and also averaged five rebounds and four assists.

"Jodi has been an integral member of our basketball program for the past four varsity seasons," said Fildes. "She has been our key ball handler for four years and has worked under the basket for the past two seasons grabbing numerous rebounds and using her strength to finish baskets under the boards. Her career stats of 644 points, handing out a career total 370 assists and grabbing 426 rebounds says a lot about the total all-around athlete that she is."

Right behind Battaglia in scoring this season is Reid, who averaged 9.5 points and five rebounds per game. She was second on the team in blocked shots (21).

"Liz had the best season of her three year varsity basketball career," said Fildes. "She had stepped up into a dangerous threat under the basket with her signature turn around jump shot. With a season ending injury in our final league game, we realized the strength and knowledge she brought to the court each and every day."

Lang averaged 5.5 points per game and led the team in steals with 37.

"She always works hard during games with her good ball handling skills and taking on pressure situations and making the most of them," said Fildes. "Mollie is one of those kids that can play anywhere on the court. We really missed her in our final game versus Starpoint as she is traveling to Italy on a student-exchange program with Amherst High School."

McGuire was the team's best outside shooter, hitting 50 percent of her three-point attempts. She also led the team in free throw percentage (89 percent). She averaged five points per game this season.

"Shannon is a mature, hard-worker that always takes care of the simple things on the court," said Fildes. "She really stepped her game up for her best season to date. We will really miss her smooth shooting and boxing out abilities next year."

Woods averaged three points per game and forced many turnovers with scrappy defense.

"She is one of the quickest players on the court for us allowing her to pick up 19 steals this year," said Fildes. "Her encouragement

and vocal presence on the court will be missed next year."

Underclassmen

Leading Amherst's underclassmen is 6-foot-1 center Jennifer Newhouse, who Fildes said started to come alive in the paint in the second half of the season. She averaged five points per game and was second on the team in total rebounds, grabbing 92. She led the team in blocked shots with 30.

"She really had a presence for us under the basket, using her athleticism and strength to score many big points for us," said Fildes. "She has a knack for being in the right place for rebounds and her long arms can block shot after shot."

Junior forward Elana Korn will also be back.

"She plays great defense and makes tough layups look easy," said Fildes. "We look forward to her senior year playing a forward/guard mix."

Fildes said also stepping up this year was junior Daisy Timlin.

"She has built up her confidence to drive to the basket and play an integral role in the guards," said Fildes. "She has be-

come rather comfortable in distributing the ball during the second half of the winter. We see her being a key returning starter for her final year next season."

Juniors Casey Martin and Amy Simon were two other key players during the season, Fildes said.

"They both have great outside shots and are very athletic which have helped us shut down the key opponents' strengths," said Fildes. "Simon was third on the team in steals leading to many fastbreak buckets. We look forward to both of them stepping up into key guard/forward jobs next year."

Fildes said the seniors have been great leaders for the underclassmen, who have pushed the seniors for starting jobs all winter.

"I think the team unity was one of the strongest I have coached through such a long season," she added. "The hard work and passion each of these teammates had to compete showed through on a daily basis. They worked hard all season at accomplishing goals and striving to become better all around student-athletes."

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCOREBOARD

Amherst Central

Boys Basketball — Section VI Class A-1 quarterfinals — def. Riverside 80-76

Girls Basketball — Section VI Class A-1 prequarterfinals — lost to Starpoint 48-34

Sweet Home

Boys Basketball — Section VI Class AA quarterfinals — def. Lockport 67-44

Girls Basketball — Section VI Class AA prequarterfinals — def. Ken. West 53-49, quarterfinals — lost to Lancaster 56-27

Williamsville East

Boys Basketball — Section VI Class A-1 prequarterfinals — def. Iroquois 55-45, lost to McKinley 84-70

Girls Basketball — Section VI Class A-1 prequarterfinals — def. W.S. East 53-29, quarterfinals — def. McKinley 62-25, semifinals — def. Hamburg 36-27

Williamsville North

Boys Basketball — Section VI Class AA prequarterfinals — lost to Clarence 47-45

Girls Basketball — Section VI Class AA prequarterfinals — lost to Clarence 54-49

Hockey — Section VI Western New York Varsity Hockey Federation final — lost to St. Joe's 5-2

Williamsville South

Boys Basketball — Section VI Class A-1 quarterfinals — def. Hutch-Tech 59-48

Girls Basketball — Section VI Class A-1 prequarterfinals — lost to Iroquois 65-37

Sacred Heart

Girls Basketball — def. Mt. Mercy 68-51, def. Nardin 57-47 (3OT)

Sports briefs

Steve Rois, an Amherst resident and Amherst Central High School graduate, had a great showing for the Rochester Institute of Technology's men's swimming team at the 2007 Upper New York State Collegiate Swimming Association Championship.

The freshman distance swimmer earned second team All-Empire 8 accolades in the 500-yard freestyle and was fourth in the event in 4:47.50. He was fifth in the 200 free (1:45.58), sixth in the 1650 freestyle (16:55.05) and helped the team's 800 free relay take third (7:08.31) and the 400 relay place fourth (3:12.33).

Joe Wooley, an Amherst resident and Sweet Home High School graduate, won the triple jump (13.59) for Buffalo State College's men's indoor track team at the recent New York State Championships.

Matt Santasiero of Amherst helped Erie Community College's men's distance medley relay team win at the indoor track and field regional meet at Hudson Valley Community College on Feb. 17-18. It was ECC's first relay victory at the event in more than five years.

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