

IN | ALL SPORTS

Your NE Indiana Sports Authority

2025 HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL PREVIEW

\$1.00
kpcnews.com
2025

THE NEWS SUN | THE HERALD REPUBLICAN | The **Star**

MEMBERSHIP IS A

SLAM



DUNK

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.



PROFED
CREDIT UNION



Federally Insured
By the NCUA

Prelude to the Preview

KENDALLVILLE — Basketball has grabbed us throughout this tri-state region at many levels recently, and we are proud to add to that passion with this KPC Media/IN All Sports Basketball Preview special section.

Like many of you readers, I'm a basketball fan at many levels.

I first covered college basketball for a couple years in the mid-1990s cover NCAA Division II Oakland University for its student newspaper, the Oakland Post.

Both Pioneer teams were perennially very strong. Bob Taylor was the women's coach and one of his assistants was Suzy Merchant, who went on way down the road to have a solid run as Michigan State's head women's coach.

I saw some other coaches and players shine before they made it big, like Michigan Tech coach Kevin Borseth and a gritty guard of his by

the name of Dawn Zarling. Borseth went on to build a mid-major powerhouse at Green Bay, and also coached at the University of Michigan.



Ken Fillmore

Zarling is now married and named Dawn Plitzuweit, and she has had a strong coaching career for the past three decades. She led Grand Valley State to an NCAA Division II national championship in 2006, and is now

exchanging pointers and pleasantries with football coach PJ Fleck as the women's basketball coach at the University of Minnesota. She has been the head coach at Northern Kentucky, South Dakota and West Virginia.

I also covered a Defiance, Ohio, native in Greg Kampe about 10 years into a coaching run that is still ongoing at the very same school in the Detroit suburb of Rochester, Mich. At the time, the only good shots in his mind were beyond the arc and in the paint. Now,

he loves the zone defense as much as John Chaney did and loves making relentless non-conference schedules for paydays and lifetime experiences.

I'm glad to see Brooks Miller move up to the NCAA Division I ranks to another alma mater of mine, Central Michigan University. He is the associate men's basketball coach for the Chippewas and new head coach Andy Bronkema. I enjoyed covering him and his Trine University men's basketball teams over his 14 seasons in Angola, consistently developing quality young men as well as quality basketball players.

What's "Yes 'Cers" to many of you is "Yessirrr!" to me. The earlier phrase is an Indiana Pacers thing, and this state had very good reason to be excited about the Pacers making The NBA Finals. They lost Tyrese Haliburton with a torn Achilles while losing to the Oklahoma City Thunder in Game 7. It's been rough

SEE FILLMORE, Page A35

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Angola	4-7
Central Noble	8-11
Churubusco.....	12-15
DeKalb	16-19
East Noble.....	20-23
Eastside	24-27
Fremont	28-31
Garrett	32-35
Hamilton	36-37
Lakeland	38-41
Lakewood Park.....	42-43
Prairie Heights.....	44-47
West Noble	48-51
Westview	52-55



Jenny Ernsberger
jernsberger@kpcmedia.com
General Manager

Ann Saggars
asaggars@kpcmedia.com
Print & Design Manager

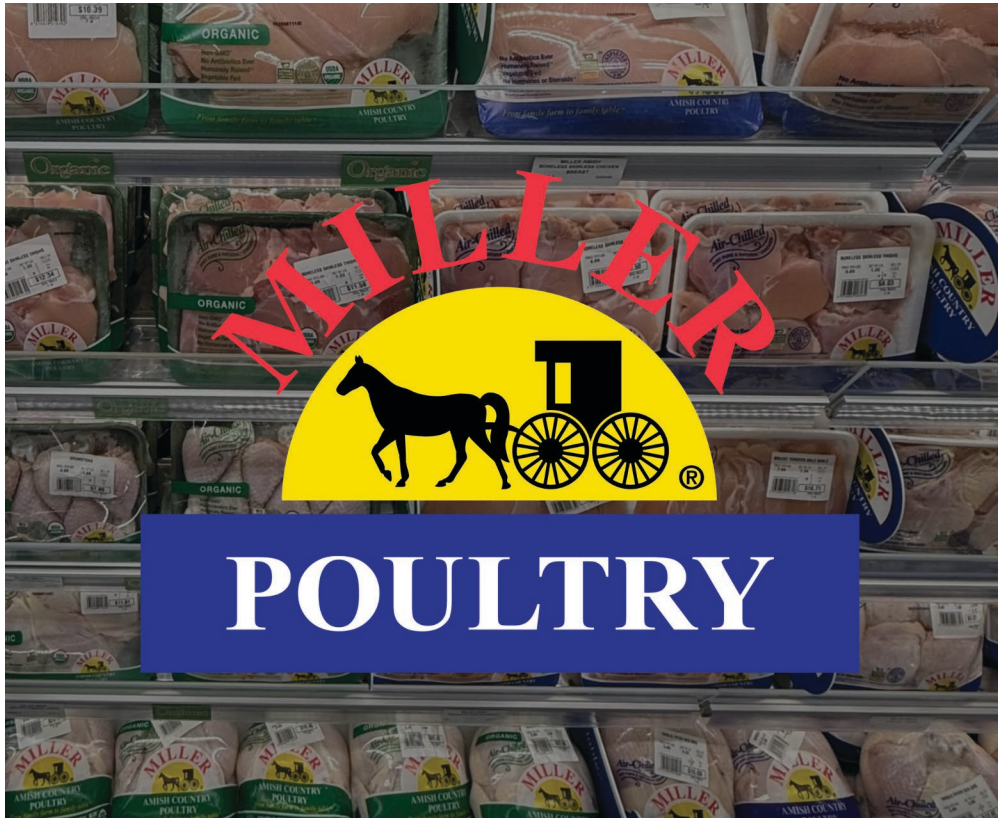
Stevie Lockridge
slockridge@kpcmedia.com
Special Sections Graphic Designer

Ken Fillmore
kfillmore@kpcmedia.com
Sports Editor

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES
Mitch Anderson
Michele Trowbridge
Machele Waid
Holly Bireley
Savannah Medina

IN All Sports: Basketball Preview is a special supplement to The Star, The News Sun and The Herald Republican, which are publications of KPC Media.
©2025 All rights reserved

All schedules are subject to change.





MARK MURDOCK

Eastside’s girls basketball team won the second regional title in school history by defeating Andrean in Class 2A regional game at Jimtown last season. Coach Mike Lortie’s Blazers finished 27-2 and were the 2A North Semi-State runners-up and won Northeast Corner Conference regular season and tournament titles.



KEN FILLMORE

Fremont High School’s girls basketball team won the Class 1A Bethany Christian Sectional last season, defeating Blackhawk Christian 61-44 in the sectional final on Buller Court in the Menno Lands. Coach Shae Thomas’ Eagles finished their season 20-7.



MATT GETTS

The Westview Warriors boys basketball team captured its third consecutive sectional title Saturday with a win over Central Noble in a 2A final game at the Warrior Dome. Coach Chandler Prible’s Warriors finished last season 18-8 and also won the Northeast Corner Conference regular season and tournament championships.



MARK MURDOCK

East Noble’s girls basketball team won its first sectional championship since 2016 with a victory over Bishop Dwenger in the Class 3A final at Concordia last season. Coach Britain Isaacs’ Knights finished 16-10 last season.



MARK MURDOCK

Lakewood Park Christian’s boys basketball team, coached by Tim Voss, captured the second sectional title in school history last season at Fremont, defeating Canterbury in a 1A sectional championship game.

ANGOLA HORNETS



Angola High School
755 S. 100E, Angola
Colors: Purple and Gold

Boys
Class: 3A

Girls
Class: 3A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 29	A	Wawasee	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	A	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	Concord	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	A	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	Elkhart	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	A	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	H	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 30	H	Mississinewa	4:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	A	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.

Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 20	A	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	H	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	A	Marshall (Michigan)	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	A	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	H	Concordia	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 14	A	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	H	Eastside	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 21	A	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 27	A	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 22	A	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 25	H	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Norwell	12:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	H	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	A	Central Noble	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 10	H	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	A	Concordia	1:30 p.m.
Dec. 18	A	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 3	A	Fremont	7:30 p.m.

Jan. 7	A	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	A	Prairie Heights	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 10	H	DeKalb	1:30 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 20	H	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	H	Churubusco	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 24	A	Dwenger	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	H	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP IS A
SLAM

DUNK

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.



PROFED
CREDIT UNION



Federally Insured
By the NCUA

Ohio imports lead AHS youth movement

BY KEN FILLMORE
kfillmore@kpcmedia.com

ANGOLA — Caela Walker found an exciting opportunity not too far away from where she grew up in Blakeslee, Ohio, and is letting the youngsters play across the state line at Angola High School.

Walker has led the Hornet girls to a 3-0 record as of last week playing primarily sophomores.

Walker is a 2007 Edon High School graduate and went on to play NCAA Division I basketball at Weber State in Utah. She coached the Bomber girls for the past eight seasons. Her husband LJ was Edon's athletic director from 2017 to 2021 and has recently been an assistant football coach for the Bombers under head coach Bob Olwin, who will be inducted in the Ohio High School Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame next year.

SEE ANGOLA GIRLS, Page A38



MARK MURDOCK

Eastside's Adelaide Elden, left, and Angola's Kendall Holman go after a rebound in Northeast Corner Conference Tournament quarterfinal game last season in Butler. Holman will be part of the Hornets' young core this season.

Seasoned Hornets to play faster

BY KEN FILLMORE
kfillmore@kpcmedia.com

ANGOLA — Going 15-8 and returning to the conversation at the top of the Northeast Corner Conference last season were apparently opening byproducts of the revival of Angola boys basketball under coach Bryan Weber.

"We'll run some new things," Weber said. "The pace we'll play will be much different than we played in the past."

"We'll be faster. We have a solid group that can get out and do that."

The Hornets will just about bring everybody back to do that. Only forward Kyler Huscher graduated from last season's squad.

However, there has been some delay due to Angola's postseason football run, which included a sectional championship in Class 3A.

SEE ANGOLA BOYS, Page A38



KEN FILLMORE

Angola guard Tommy Caswell makes a move toward the basket and looks for an outlet as he is being defended by Fremont senior Landon Jaeger during a Northeast Corner Conference boys basketball game last season at Fremont High School. Caswell returns for his senior season as part of a strong Hornet squad.

At Cameron, our ultimate focus is your health.

That's why now, it's in our name.

Cameron Memorial Community Hospital is now Cameron Health.

CameronHealth.com



CENTRAL NOBLE

COUGARS



**Central Noble
High School**
302 Cougar Court, Albion
Colors: Maroon and White

BOYS
Class: 2A

GIRLS
Class: 2A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 26	A	Woodlan	6:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	South Adams	2:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	H	Fort Wayne South	7:45 p.m.
Dec. 5	H	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 17	A	Bremen	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	A	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 30	A	Bluffton	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 2	A	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	H	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	7:30 p.m.

Jan. 23	A	Eastside	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	H	Concordia	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	A	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 2	A	Bethany Christian	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	H	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	A	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	H	Concord	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	H	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	A	Lakewood Park	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 27	A	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 22	H	LaVille	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 25	H	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	A	Goshen	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	H	Angola	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Lakewood Park	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	Westview	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 19	A	West Noble	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 27	N	Wawasee Tournament	TBA

Jan. 2	A	East Noble	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 9	H	Garrett	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 20	A	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	A	Eastside	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 27	H	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	A	Churubusco	6:00 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP IS A
**SLAM
DUNK**

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.



PROFED
CREDIT UNION



Federally Insured
By the NCUA

LORRIE GETTS
Central Noble post player Grace Swank positions herself for a shot inside against the defense of Prairie Heights' Avery Certain during a girls basketball game in Albion last season. Swank will lead a young Cougar squad in her senior campaign.



Young Cougar girls hungry to compete

BY KEN FILLMORE
 kfillmore@kpcmedia.com

ALBION — It will be the youngest Central Noble girls basketball team coach Sam Malcolm has had in his four seasons at the helm. However, he thinks his Cougars has a lot of fight in them.

"We just want to be competitive," Malcolm said. "Like Remember the Titans, we want to let other teams know that they played us."

CN went 13-11 overall last season, including 8-2 in the Northeast Corner Conference. It opened this season with a convincing 45-25 win at Bishop Luers on Nov. 8.

The Cougars only bring back a couple girls with significant varsity experience in 6-foot senior Grace Swank and 5-9 junior guard-forward Kaydintz Bales.

Swank averaged 9.7 points and 9.4 rebounds per game last season in

earning KPC Media All-Area honors.

"You can't ask for a better person than Grace Swank," Malcolm said. "The sky is the limit with Kaydintz."

The rest of the Central Noble rotation includes 5-11 senior Austen McGlothlin, 6-foot sophomore guard-forward Jaylee Slone, sophomore guard Suryha Steele and freshmen Cora Mault and Gwen Swank, Grace's sister.

Slone had 18 points in her first varsity start against Luers. She can play inside and out. Bales added 14 points in the victory over the Knights.

"The younger girls are very enjoyable to coach," Malcolm said. "Cora is a track athlete who loves basketball. She's very dedicated."

"McGlothlin will be a good role player for us."

McGlothlin has been home-schooled and is a talented actress. She will play Cinderella in CN's musical.

Central Noble boys making progress

BY KEN FILLMORE
 kfillmore@kpcmedia.com

ALBION — A younger Central Noble boys basketball team has made a lot of progress in the offseason in hopes of having a second half similar last season.

The Cougars won 11 out of 12 games after playing in the Northeast Corner Conference Tournament last season, then battled Westview in the Class 2A Westview Sectional final before losing to the Warriors 52-44.

CN finished 14-11, and 5-5 in the NECC. Coach Ben Lemmon's Cougars have moved on from losing four starters from that squad.

"It'll be a tough year in the conference. But we have a chance to make surprises," said Lemmon, whose third season at the helm starts on Wednesday night at Woodlan. "I like how we play."

"We had fun this summer learning how to play together," he continued. "I think this team is pretty unselfish. I like how we move the ball."

"We have some size, but not much. We have to box out and rebound as a team."

The lone returning starter is senior guard Nick Freeman, who averaged a little over eight points per game last season. He played football for the first time this fall and had 36 receptions for 715 yards and six touchdowns.

"Nick had fun with it (football)," Lemmon said. "He showcased his skills. He can really jump and we're excited to use that on the court."

A couple other key guys had good fall seasons running cross country in seniors Kyle Knafel and Keegan



LORRIE GETTS

Central Noble's Keegan Knight looks to make a pass against the defense of Lakeland's Justin Carlson last season. Knight is back on the hardwood for the Cougars after a solid cross country season this fall.

Knight. Knafel ran in the Indiana High School Athletic Association State Finals in Terre Haute, and Knight also helped the Cougar boys qualify for the New Haven Regional as a team.

"Kyle spent a lot of time on his game and spent a lot of time shooting," Lemmon said.

Other Cougars taking on key varsity roles are senior guard Landen Burkhardt, junior guard Jerrick Deter and sophomore guard Marek Malcolm.

"Landen is a feisty guard. He gets after it defensively and can shoot it," Lemmon said. "Jerrick is a kid with a motor. He rebounds well, plays with physicality, and is a good passer."

Lemmon wants to go eight or nine

SEE CN BOYS, Page A38

THERMA-TRU® DOORS

CHURUBUSCO

EAGLES



Churubusco High School
1 Eagle Drive, Churubusco
Colors: Old Gold and Black

Boys
Class: 2A

Girls
Class: 2A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 29	H	Northrop	2:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	A	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	H	South Adams	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	A	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	A	Woodlan	1:30 p.m.
Jan. 2	A	Frankton (Central Ind.)	10:00 a.m.
Jan. 2	A	North Judson (Central Ind.)	2:00 p.m.
Jan. 3	A	Central Indiana Place Game	12:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m.

Jan. 9	A	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	A	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	H	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	A	Argos	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	H	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 10	A	Lakewood Park	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	A	Hamilton	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	H	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	H	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 21	A	Whitko	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 27	A	Eastside	7:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	H	Lakeland Christian	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 2	H	Adams Central	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 10	A	Eastside	7:00 p.m.
Dec. 12	A	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	A	Prairie Heights	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 7	A	Manchester	7:30 p.m.

Jan. 9	A	Fremont	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 20	A	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 21	H	Canterbury	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 23	A	Angola	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 30	H	Central Noble	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 31	H	Northfield	7:30 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP IS A

SLAM

DUNK

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.



EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

Federally Insured
By the NCUA

DAVID VANTRESS
**Churubusco's
Patty Wiggs
brings the
ball into the
frontcourt as
Lakewood
Park's Luca
Bontrager
defends Nov. 6
at Churubusco.
Wiggs, a
senior, is a key
returning player
for the Eagles
this season.**



Young Churubusco girls hope to improve

BY DAVID VANTRESS
dvantress@kpcmedia.com

CHURUBUSCO — Big changes are coming to the Churubusco High School girls basketball team in 2025-26 as the Eagles adjust to the loss to graduation of two longtime standouts.

Guards Bridget Timbrook and Brooklyn Sinclair were four-year starters and accounted for more than half of the Eagles 39.2 points per game last season.

Second-year coach Dawn Kock, a former Carroll assistant, is working on changing the culture in Turtle Town and has several key returning players back from last year.

Busco was 8-14 in 2024-25 (2-8 Northeast Corner Conference) and advanced to the Class 2A Sectional 35 final before losing to a loaded Eastside team that lost in

the semi-state finals to Rensselaer Central.

Senior guard Patty Wiggs returns. She averaged 7.5 points per game a year ago and will anchor the Eagle offense. Kailin Foote is the other returning senior. She was somewhat limited last season due to an injury, missing about half the year.

Key returners for the Eagles include sophomore guard Phoenix Smith, junior guard Nola Bianski and freshman guard Brynn Lortie.

"We're young and inexperienced at the varsity level," Kock said. "We'll continue to build."

This group hasn't played together, Koch added, so the development of team chemistry will be a work in progress for awhile.

Kock is assisted by Kendall Hoffman, Jorja Debolt and Cassidy Yant.

Eagle boys look to take steps forward

BY DAVID VANTRESS
dvantress@kpcmedia.com

CHURUBUSCO — As Churubusco High School head boys basketball coach Gabe Garman starts his third season guiding the Eagles, a culture change has taken root.

Now Garman and his staff want to see those changes start manifesting themselves in wins on the court.

The Eagles were 9-16 in 2023-24 and 9-15 a year ago. They advanced to the Class 2A Westview Sectional title game in 2023 before falling to the Warriors, 51-39.

The Eagles are buoyed in 2025-26 by four returning letterwinners: seniors Carson Tonkel, Manny Serrano and Christian Behling and junior Miles Pommer.

Weston Ott, a key player for the Eagles the past two seasons who provided both scoring and defensive muscle, elected not to come out for basketball as a senior.

Ott, a state runner-up in both the shot put and discus, officially signed to compete in track and field at Notre Dame on Nov. 12. He will compete in the throwing events for the Fighting Irish.

Ott provided 8.2 points and 7.7 rebounds per game last season, so replacing his scoring and rebounding will be a tall task for the Eagles.

The 2025-26 Churubusco roster also includes juniors Colt Singleton and Caiden Malcolm and



DAVID VANTRESS
Churubusco's Manny Serrano guards West Noble's Nolan Kelly during an NECC game in Ligonier last season. Serrano is one of several key returning players for the Eagles in 2025-26.

sophomores Brady Knott and Josiah Kline.

Key Losses to graduation for the Eagles included Braylon McCoy, Mason Mast, Brayden Bianski and Ethan Hartsock. The quartet accounted for 31 points per game in 2024-25. The Eagles averaged 44.7 points per contest last season.

Josiah Morales, a senior transfer guard from Carroll, will be a newcomer for the Eagles.

SEE BUSCO BOYS, Page A36

NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL PRIVATE CLIENT GROUP

PROUD SPONSOR OF
INDIANA
HIGH SCHOOL
BASKETBALL

Kevin J. Bontrager
CLU®, ChFC®, AEP®, WMCP®, CAP®

SUMMIT
FINANCIAL GROUP

P. 260.432.5152
SUMMIT.NM.COM

INDIANA
Fort Wayne • Angola • Marion
Indianapolis • Mishawaka • Wabash

ILLINOIS
Oak Brook

DEKALB BARONS



DeKalb High School
C.R. 427, Waterloo
Colors: Red, Black and White

Boys
Class: 4A

Girls
Class: 4A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 26	A	Tippecanoe Valley	7:45 p.m.	Jan. 20	H	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	H	Eastside	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 24	H	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	H	Fort Wayne North	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 28	H	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 11	A	Canterbury	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 31	H	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	Dwenger	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 5	A	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	A	Norwell	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 7	A	Luers	1:30 p.m.
Jan. 2-3	H	DeKalb Tournament	TBA	Feb. 13	H	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 10	A	New Haven	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 17	A	Concordia	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13	H	Carroll	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 20	A	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 16	A	East Noble	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 24	A	Heritage	7:30 p.m.
				Feb. 27	H	Northridge	7:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	H	Northrop	7:30 p.m.	Dec. 27	H	Dwenger (DeKalb Holiday)	1:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Lakeland	3:30 p.m.	Jan. 6	H	Eastside	7:00 p.m.
Dec. 2	A	Carroll	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 9	A	New Haven	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	A	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 10	A	Angola	1:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Concordia	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 15	A	Goshen	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	H	Leo	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 17	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	H	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 21	H	Bluffton	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 18	A	Tippecanoe Valley	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 23	A	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	H	Norwell	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 30	A	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 26	H	Fort Wayne South (DeKalb Holiday)	5:00 p.m.				

MEMBERSHIP IS A
SLAM DUNK

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.

MARK MURDOCK
DeKalb's Kyla Kjendalen, right, and Luca Bontrager of Lakewood Park fight for the ball as Baron Reese Schmidt looks on last season. Kjendalen and Schmidt will be part of DeKalb's core for new coach Mark Pixley this season.



Baron girls starting fresh with Pixley

BY MARK MURDOCK

mmurdock@kpcmedia.com

WATERLOO — Mark Pixley expects to see a very different DeKalb team at the end of the season.

What the new coach for the Lady Barons sees now isn't bad with the season just beginning.

"As the season progresses, this team will continue to grow and improve each week," Pixley said. "By the time sectionals arrive, we'll be a completely different team."

Pixley is starting his 14th season as a head coach. He guided Bishop Luers to the 2024 Class 2A state title.

The Barons will already have a different look. Thousand-point scorer Ashley Cox is gone, and DeKalb will rely heavy on juniors Abbie Harris and Reese Schmidt. Harris averaged 10.8 points and

earned second-team All-Northeast 8 Conference recognition, and first-team KPC Media Group All-Area honors.

They'll get plenty of help from several younger players who were thrown into the fire as freshman a year ago as DeKalb went 14-10.

That group includes sophomores Ellington Sparkman, Kyla Kjendalen, Tiegan Jordan, Mac Rice, Ella Nixon and Mollee Sonnenberg.

Freshmen Kolbie Oliphant, Rain Freed, Cami Able and Riley Hartsough are also hoping to pitch in.

"Our strong sophomore and freshman classes are ready to compete at the varsity level and showcase the hard work they've been putting in," Pixley said.

"We have a young team but many of our girls gained valuable varsity experience last season."

New coach Ervin wants to maximize Barons' athleticism

BY MARK MURDOCK

mmurdock@kpcmedia.com

WATERLOO — New DeKalb boys basketball coach Austin Ervin won't be working with specialists.

Several of the basketball Barons were active on successful fall sports teams. Ervin is looking for the confidence and experience to carry over.

"Our football team had success this fall," Ervin said. "Success can carry over from sport to sport and season to season. If we can build off that it always helps."

"We have a lot of experience. We have guys who are really hungry and they really work at it. Once we get some momentum rolling we'll be able to carry that throughout the year. There's a lot to be excited about."

Ervin isn't concerned about his players not focusing completely on basketball.

"The fall's been unique with so many dual-sport guys, which is awesome," he said. "I played three sports in high school myself."

"They're staying in shape, they're staying competitive. They're keeping their bodies where they need to be."

This year's Barons will face some of the same challenges. They won't be exceptionally tall.

"We're going to be a little bigger," Ervin said. "Guys have matured and they've worked at it in the

SEE DEKALB BOYS, Page A36



MARK MURDOCK

DeKalb's Brady Culler, center, splits two Concordia defenders to attempt a shot during a game last season. Culler, now a senior, will be a part of an experienced, athletic team for new Baron coach Austin Ervin this season.

COLOR MASTER

Colorants | Specialty Compounds | PVC Compounds | Distribution

*We are very proud to support our communities
in Butler and Kendallville, Indiana*

800-643-3323 • www.color-master.com

EAST NOBLE KNIGHTS



**East Noble
High School**
901 S. Garden St., Kendallville
Colors: Royal Blue and Gold

Boys
Class: 4A

Girls
Class: 4A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	A	West Noble	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 14	A	Snider	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 16	H	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	A	Carroll	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 20	A	Fort Wayne North	7:00 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Northrop	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 24	A	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	H	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 31	H	Norwell	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 23	H	Goshen	11:30 a.m.	Feb. 5	A	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 27	H	Woodlan (Max Platt)	11:30 a.m.	Feb. 11	H	Dwenger	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 27	H	Concordia or Garrett	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 13	A	New Haven	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 2	H	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 17	H	Homestead	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 6	A	Westview	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 24	A	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	A	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 27	H	Wawasee	7:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 22	A	Fort Wayne North	6:00 p.m.	Dec. 27	H	Garrett (Max Platt)	10:00 a.m.
Nov. 25	H	Carroll	7:30 p.m.	Dec. 27	H	SB Riley or Eastside	6 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Whitko	1:30 p.m.	Jan. 2	H	Central Noble	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 2	H	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 7	H	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 4	A	Northridge	7:45 p.m.	Jan. 10	H	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	New Haven	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 17	A	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Northrop	6:00 p.m.	Jan. 23	H	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	H	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 27	A	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	A	Columbia City	2:30 p.m.	Jan. 30	A	Norwell	7:30 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP IS A
**SLAM
DUNK**

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.



Federally Insured
By the NCUA

Experienced Knight girls ready to take next step

BY DAVID VANTRESS

dvantress@kpcmedia.com

KENDALLVILLE — For any basketball coach, it doesn't get much better than having your entire team back.

That's precisely the enviable position third-year East Noble girls basketball coach Britain Isaacs finds himself in as the 2025-26 season gears up.

A talented group that has been together since they were freshmen are now juniors. And after winning a Class 3A sectional championship — the Holy Grail of prep basketball in the hoops-crazed Hoosier State — the Knights are hoping to take the next step and win a regional title and hopefully beyond.

East Noble won the Class 3A Sectional 21 championship 59-51 over Bishop Dwenger in the regional round.

The Knights will have three seniors this season: forward Addison Deming, (9.0 points and 3.6 rebounds per game) and guards Kate David (6.8 ppg), Makenna Strohm (3.6 ppg) and Shaye Ritchie (4.1 ppg, 2.8 rpg).

The rest of the Knights' returning core is made up of juniors Averi Amstutz (11.3 ppg., 2.7 rpg and 3.5 assists and 2 steals per game), Rian David (10.4 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 1.6 apg, 1.4



DAVID VANTRESS

East Noble guard Averi Amstutz prepares to launch a shot as she is guarded by a Bishop Luers defender in the championship game of the Max Platt Ford Holiday Shootout at the Big Blue Pit last season. Amstutz will be one of the leading players for the Knights this season.

spg) and Elli Will (8.8 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 1.3 apg, 1.3 spg).

A pair of freshmen are on the
SEE EAST NOBLE GIRLS, Page A37

Bentley returns to prep scene with EN boys

BY DAVID VANTRESS

dvantress@kpcmedia.com

KENDALLVILLE — A sudden vacancy in the boys basketball head coaching position at East Noble High School created an opening for a highly experienced local coach to get back into the high school ranks.

Ed Bentley spent the past couple years as an assistant under former Trine University head men's basketball coach Brooks Miller, helping guide the Thunder to the 2024 NCAA Division III national championship.

Bentley was named to the East Noble job last month after former coach Brandon Durnell was terminated by the East Noble School Corporation Board of Trustees in late September.

Bentley is a veteran of northeast Indiana prep boys basketball, with prior stops at Westview, Eastside and Angola.

With the special, less-than-ideal circumstances and timing of the East Noble opening, time has been short for Bentley to put together a staff and a roster.

Mason Treesh, a mainstay of the Knight backcourt the past couple of seasons, is still undecided on whether or not to play basketball as a senior. If he elects not to play, Treesh will leave a huge pair of basketball shoes to fill. Treesh averaged 8.2 points per game for East Noble last seasons.



MARK MURDOCK

DeKalb's Dalton Cox, left, attempts a shot against Mason Treesh of East Noble during last season. Treesh, now a senior, has stood out for the Knights in basketball and football for the past couple of years.

But a mix of youth and experience will characterize the Knight roster in Bentley's inaugural season in Kendallville.

Junior guard Alex Scott is back after scoring 5.8 points per game last season.

Other returnees include senior guard Keegan Derry (0.7 ppg in 2023-24), senior guard Evan Cope (2.6 ppg, 2.3 rebounds per game), junior guard Nathan Potts and junior guard Jacob Fox.

Newcomers include junior guard Luca Benedict, senior transfer guard Jaion Richards from Las Vegas,

SEE EN BOYS, Page A38



Connection means more here.

LOCAL, RELIABLE FIBER INTERNET & PHONE

(260) 894-7161

LIGTEL.COM

CONNECT TODAY!

EASTSIDE BLAZERS



**Eastside
High School**
603 E. Green St., Butler
Colors: Kelly Green and White

Boys
Class: 2A

Girls
Class: 2A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 29	A	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 23	H	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 1	A	Edgerton (Ohio)	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 27	H	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 3	H	Smith Academy	7:00 p.m.	Jan. 30	H	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Canterbury	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 5	A	Hamilton	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 10	A	Lakeland Christian	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	H	Lakewood Park	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 13	H	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	A	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 14	H	Adams Central	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	A	Edon (Ohio)	4:30 p.m.	Feb. 17	A	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 3	A	West Noble	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 20	A	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	A	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 27	H	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	7:30 p.m.				

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	A	Luers	7:00 p.m.	Dec. 27	A	East Noble or Garrett	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 2	H	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.	Dec. 30	A	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	A	Garrett	7:00 p.m.	Jan. 6	A	DeKalb	7:00 p.m.
Dec. 10	H	Churubusco	7:00 p.m.	Jan. 9	A	Fairfield	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 12	A	Prairie Heights	7:00 p.m.	Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 16	H	Lakewood Park	6:00 p.m.	Jan. 20	H	West Noble	7:00 p.m.
Dec. 20	H	Lakeland	7:00 p.m.	Jan. 23	H	Central Noble	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 27	A	South Bend Riley (EN Platt)	1:00 p.m.	Jan. 29	A	Westview	7:00 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP IS A
**SLAM
DUNK**



Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.





Federally Insured
By the NCUA

Eastside girls want to pick up where they left off

BY JEFF JONES

jjones@kpcmedia.com

BUTLER — While three of the team's scoring leaders graduated from a record-setting season, the cupboard is far from bare as far as Eastside girls basketball coach Mike Lortie is concerned.

Naturally, when your graduation losses include Sydnee Kessler, Lily Kreischer, Paige Traxler and Avery Wilson — Kessler and Kreischer are playing college basketball — from a team that finished 27-2 a season ago, there's bound to be concern.

The Blazer girls not only swept through the Northeast Corner Conference regular season, they

added conference tournament, sectional and regional championships, and advanced to the Class 2A north semi-state championship game to be one of the final four 2A teams remaining.

Kessler now plays at Indiana Tech and Kreischer now suits up for Grace College.

Lortie welcomes back seven letterwinners from that 2024-2025 team, including returning starters in juniors Lucy Kitchen and Taylor Mack.

Also back are seniors Adelaide Elden, who scored a career-high 21 points in Eastside's Nov. 6

SEE EASTSIDE GIRLS, Page A37

New Eastside coach eager to get started

BY JEFF JONES

jjones@kpcmedia.com

BUTLER — It would be an understatement to say there's been quite a bit of turnover within Eastside's boys basketball program.

Now, one of its own former players is looking to change that.

Former Eastside standout Austen Brow becomes the fifth head coach since the 2020-2021 season. While in his first year as head coach, Brow has coached in the Blazer program at various levels for seven years.

As a player, he was a key part of the program's last sectional championship in the 2009-2010 season. Brow ranks fifth on Eastside's all-time boys scoring list with 929 points.

While he's optimistic, he's also not expecting miracles in taking over a program that finished 1-22 last year

under Will Lewis and didn't have enough players to field a separate reserve team.

Brow's first team features 12 players, and half of those are freshmen.

Back for his senior season is Nolan Baker, who earned honorable mention to the All-Northeast Corner Conference team as a junior.

Baker was Eastside's leading scorer a season ago, averaging 8.8 points per contest.

Also returning from last year's team are junior letterwinners Evan Elden, Micah Miller and Bryce Strong. They'll be counted upon to show the way for the new players.

Elden averaged nearly 4 points per contest and was second in made three-point field goals with 19.

SEE EASTSIDE BOYS, Page A36



Multimatic

201 R.E. Jones Road • Butler, IN • 868-1000

Go Big Green!

EASTSIDE BLAZERS

BUTLER



Mill Services



SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR ENVIRONMENT®

260-868-5123

FREMONT EAGLES



**Fremont
High School**
701 W. Toledo St., Fremont
Colors: Red, Black and White

Boys
Class: 2A

Girls
Class: 2A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	A	Smith Academy	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	H	Elkhart Christian	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	A	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	H	Hamilton	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	Lakewood Park	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	H	Fort Wayne HomeSchool	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	A	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 30	A	Oak Farm Montessori	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 2	H	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.

Jan. 9	H	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	A	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	A	Eastside	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	H	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	A	Adams Central	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 7	A	Canterbury	1:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	H	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	A	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	H	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 27	H	Bethany Christian	7:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	H	Wayne	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 28	H	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 4	H	Edon (Ohio)	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	Fort Wayne North	4:00 p.m.
Dec. 11	H	Fairview (Ohio)	7:00 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 18	A	Westview	7:30 p.m.

Dec. 31	A	Luers	1:00 p.m.
Jan. 3	H	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	H	Churubusco	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 22	H	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 24	A	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	H	Garrett	7:30 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP IS A
**SLAM
DUNK**

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.





Federally Insured
By the NCUA

Formidable starting 5 in place for FHS girls

BY KEN FILLMORE

kfillmore@kpcmedia.com

FREMONT — Grace Scharlach and Mya Turner are back for their junior seasons to lead the Fremont girls basketball team this season. They will have a largely new supporting cast that will look to help make last season's efforts even better.

The Eagles went 20-7 last season, including 6-4 in the Northeast Corner Conference, and won a Class 1A sectional championship before falling to a young, rising Elkhart Christian squad 41-36 in a regional contest.

Fremont graduated a 1,000-point career scorer in Addy Parr along with role players Claire Foulk and Brayleigh Moss.

Also back with Scharlach and Turner is versatile senior Hailey Heller, who signed to play basketball at Aquinas (Mich.) College.

Heller is in her second varsity season with the Eagles after averaging 4.5 points, 2.4 rebounds and two assists per game last season. She spent her sophomore season largely on the junior varsity team after transferring from Adams Central.

Heller will be needed more in the post at FHS, but has guard skills. She will play more as a guard or wing at the college level. "She's just buying in more to our program," fourth-year Eagle coach Shae Thomas said.

"This has to be a team effort. We need balanced scoring. Grace and Mya can't score all the points."

Scharlach averaged 14.9 points, 4.4 rebounds, 2.8 steals and 2.6 assists per game last season. Turner averaged 12.1 points, 5.1 rebounds and 2.7 steals per contest. They are both receiving a lot of college interest at the



KEN FILLMORE

Fremont sophomore guard Grace Scharlach attempts to drive past Blackhawk Christian freshman Desi Pope during the second half of Class 1A Bethany Christian Sectional final girls basketball game last season. Scharlach is drawing small college interest and will lead the Eagles this season.

NAIA level.

"They have both stepped up to be leaders and are doing a better job keeping the other girls mentally and physically on track," Thomas said.

Juniors Mallorie Hufnagle and Chloe Verdin will move up from reserve roles to starters. They have risen to leading roles on Fremont's softball and volleyball teams over the past year.

"Mallorie is just athletic and wants to work
SEE FREMONT GIRLS, Page A38

Young Fremont boys look to have fun

BY KEN FILLMORE

kfillmore@kpcmedia.com

FREMONT — Fremont's boys basketball team enters this season as inexperienced as it has been in a long time.

The Eagles went 3-20 last year after early personnel issues, then were hit by some injuries down the final stretch.

Fremont has a competitive core at its foundation, largely led by guys coming off one of the Eagles' best football seasons in a long time. Those players include Brant Bressler, Jaret Laughlin and Talon Rowe. Junior Taylor Rodriguez will play high school basketball for the first time.

Bressler, a junior, and sophomore Braxton Beeman are basketball players with the most varsity experience returning. Beeman played in the final three varsity games last season while Bressler was slowed by a sprained ankle.

Sixth-year Fremont coach Josh Stuckey wants to make this season the best experience possible for his guys.

"I had a lot of reflection and I was miserable last season," Stuckey said. "I want this to be fun and less about winning and losing."

"My only goal is to see how good we can get by sectional. I'm looking at the finish line and not at the hill that is right in front of you," he added. "The first few games aren't going to be pretty. But we need to keep the same mindset and build our fundamentals."

"This takes me back to when I was coaching seventh grade. None of the guys have much of an ego. They are all ears and willing to learn. They get along. Healthy competition is a strength of ours."

Senior Devlin Smith is providing great leadership.

Another newcomer expected to contribute is junior guard Amari Stigler, a transfer from Heritage.

Fremont will open its season with a unique doubleheader on Tuesday at Smith Academy in Fort Wayne. The eighth-grade game will be played at 6 p.m., followed by the high school varsity contest.

Have A Great Season!

BEAMS
FUNERAL HOME
FUNERALS • CREMATIONS
Dignity

200 W. Toledo St.
Fremont, IN
(260) 495-2915
www.beamsfuneralhome.com



Jon R. Thornton
Funeral Director



Jeanie Eichler
Office Manager

GARRETT RAILROADERS



**Garrett
High School**
801 E. Houston St., Garrett
Colors: Maroon and Navy Blue

Boys
Class: 3A

Girls
Class: 3A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 26	H	Heritage	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	H	Prairie Heights	8:00 p.m.
Dec. 2	A	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	A	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	H	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	H	Bluffton	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 27	A	Concordia (EN Platt)	3:00 p.m.
Dec. 27	A	East Noble or Woodlan	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	A	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	7:30 p.m.

Jan. 24	A	Warsaw	2:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	H	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	H	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	H	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 10	H	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	A	Eastside	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 14	H	Tippecanoe Valley	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	A	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	H	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	A	Fort Wayne North	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 27	A	West Noble	7:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	A	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	H	Prairie Heights	6:30 p.m.
Dec. 4	A	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	Eastside	7:00 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	H	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 18	A	Concordia	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 23	H	Dwenger	7:30 p.m.

Dec. 27	A	East Noble (Max Platt)	10:00 a.m.
Dec. 27	A	SB Riley or Eastside	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 6	H	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	A	Central Noble	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 13-17	H	NECC Tournament	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 23	H	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	A	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	A	Lakeland	6:30 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP IS A
**SLAM
DUNK**

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.



Federally Insured
By the NCUA

Garrett girls developing for new coach

BY MARK MURDOCK

mmurdock@kpcmedia.com

GARRETT — Garrett's girls will be smaller and less experienced, but new coach Wade Hantz liked what he saw in the preseason.

"The girls have been very coachable and they're buying into what we're teaching them," Hantz said. "They're playing the right way. They're playing extremely hard."

"The girls we have are a great group of girls. They're fun to coach. I'm excited for this season and seeing the progress we can make."

Hantz spent the last six years at Angola. The last two seasons he coached the eighth grade and then the junior varsity.

The Railroaders will be small in numbers. They will not have a junior varsity squad.

Garrett hopes to use quickness and athleticism to make up for a lack of size.

"We can make up for that with the way we play," Hantz said. "We're going to try to play very physical. We have some very quick, athletic girls. We're going to try to use our team speed to our advantage."

Garrett hopes that leads to some easy baskets which will help out its top returning scorers, senior Sarah DePew and sophomore Emma Coffman. DePew was first-team All-Northeast Corner Conference and KPC Media Group All-Area last season, and Coffman earned All-NECC honorable mention.

"We're going to rely on those two a lot," Hantz said. "They've been very good leaders for our younger group. They know the expectation and have done



JEFF JONES

Garrett's Sarah DePew, left, attempts to block a shot by Lakeland's Zoey Bowman in a game at Garrett last season. DePew, a senior, will lead a young Railroader girls basketball team this season.

well leading by example and by voice as well.

"We're going to expect more from them. They can both attack off the dribble, they can both shoot it at a high level."

Charlotte Lemen was a part-time starter last year. Freshmen Hailey Jacobs and Avery Leech will fill out the rest of the starting five.

"Physically they look the part, they're strong kids. They're quick learners," Hantz said. "There's still going to be an adjustment period."

"Eighth grade to varsity is a big jump but there's no better teacher than playing the game."

Lucy Hefty is another freshman who will see action.

"She just seems to have a nose for the ball," Hantz said. "She tracks it very well rebounding and has a knack for coming up with the ball on defense."

SEE GARRETT GIRLS, Page A37

Garrett boys want to grow from breakout season

BY MARK MURDOCK

mmurdock@kpcmedia.com

GARRETT — Basketball teams know a stretch of adversity will hit them at least once during the season.

Garrett's boys team has gotten a head start after its top player, 6-foot-5 junior Isaiah King, suffered a severe knee injury in the spring and could miss the first two months of the season.

"We've got a lot of young hungry guys," second-year coach Logan Traylor said. "He's one of the better players in our area. It's adversity."

"That's not in our control. What's in our control is our response to that adversity."

The Railroaders still have high hopes for the season with several players back from last year's 19-7 club. Garrett wants to take strides.

"We want to put ourselves in position to compete for championships consistently. Last year was a good year

with 19 wins, but out of those 19 wins we didn't get one trophy.

"The goal going into this year is we're in pursuit of a championship. If we consistently chase the best versions of ourselves every single day, we like where we're at."

The Railroaders are more battle-tested.

"The experience last year playing in two championship games (East Noble holiday tournament, Northeast Corner Conference Tournament) and the sectional semifinal, we hope the experience pays off," Traylor said. "The moments were too big for us. They were new to us, we'd never been there."

"Our guys are hungry for it. They know there are expectations, but we've told them that pressure and expectations are a privilege and not a right. These guys understand that and they need to strive for that."



JEFF JONES

Carter Coffman (22) will lead a Garrett boys basketball team hungry to take championship steps this season

Junior Carter Coffman is also a key player coming back.

"He's shooting it better," SEE GARRETT BOYS, Page A37



Good Luck
to all area teams!

**Garrett
StateBank** SINCE 1893
MEMBER FDIC

Main Office

120 West King Street, Garrett, IN 46738 • (260) 357-3133

South Office

1341 S. Randolph, Garrett, IN 46738 • (260) 357-6680

Pine Valley Office

811 Mill Lake Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46845 • (260) 637-5045

Ashley/Hudson Office

302 West State Street, Ashley, IN 46705 • (260) 587-3593



garrettstatebank.com



HAMILTON MARINES



**Hamilton
High School**
901 S. Wayne St., Hamilton
Colors: Royal Blue and White

Boys
Class: 1A

Girls
Class: 1A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 26	A	Fayette (Ohio)	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	A	Elkhart Christian	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	Lakeland Christian	2:30 p.m.
Dec. 11	H	Edon (Ohio)	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	A	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	N	Oak Farm Tournament	TBA
Dec. 20	A	Hilltop (Ohio)	2:30 p.m.
Dec. 30	H	Union (Modoc)	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 6	A	Smith Academy	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 7	H	Oak Farm Montessori	7:30 p.m.

Jan. 10	H	Trinity Greenlawn	3:00 p.m.
Jan. 13	A	Lakewood Park	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 17	H	Career Academy	1:30 p.m.
Jan. 24	A	Bethany Christian	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	A	Clinton Christian	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	A	Canterbury	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 3	H	Elwood	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	H	Eastside	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 7	A	Southern Wells	1:00 p.m.
Feb. 13	H	Chrubusco	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	A	Smith Academy	6:00 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 22	H	Career Academy	12:00 p.m.
Nov. 24	H	West Noble	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 5	A	Elkhart Christian	2:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	Lakeland Christian	1:00 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	St. Thomas More	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 22-23	N	Lakeland Christian Tournament	TBA
Jan. 2	H	Edon (Ohio)	6:00 p.m.

Jan. 3	A	Hicksville (Ohio)	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 6	A	Fort Wayne North	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 10	H	Trinity Greenlawn	1:30 p.m.
Jan. 13	A	Lakewood Park	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 16	A	Canterbury	6:15 p.m.
Jan. 24	A	Bethany Christian	7:00 p.m.
Jan. 27	A	Clinton Christian	7:30 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP IS A
**SLAM
DUNK**

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.

Federally Insured
By the NCUA

Marine girls look to build competitiveness

BY MARK MURDOCK
mmurdock@kpcmedia.com

HAMILTON — Hamilton’s girls are trying to build up their basketball program.

Second-year coach Kris Tadsen is stressing that they need to do that together.

“My biggest thing is intensity throughout the whole game. I want to see the hard work and dedication throughout the whole game,” Tadsen said. “I want the girls to come together as a team and be a big family.”

The coach hopes that belief can help the Marines improve on last season’s 3-15 finish and have them playing their best basketball at the end like last year, when they scored a victory in sectional play.

Hamilton has a deeper roster with 12 players this year. An early injury left the Marines with seven a year ago.

That helps since the Marines had little opportunity for offseason work. Several players had other obligations over the summer months and many are three-sport athletes.

“We got off to late start. Conditioning, we’re a little bit behind,” Tadsen said. “The girls who are returning from last year are picking up the pieces and continuing.”

Senior point guard TeigAnn Freed is back to do a lot of the ball handling for the Marines and provides energy.

“I’m anxious to see what she has this year,” Tadsen said.

Another senior, Marissa Mercer, played basketball for the first time last



Hamilton’s Marissa Mercer (4) defends a West Central (Ill.) player during a game last season on Dec. 21, 2024, at Hoosier Gym in Knightstown. Mercer is a leading player for the Marines this season as a senior.

season.

“This year she’s full of confidence. Her leadership has stepped up tremendously,” Tadsen said.

Senior Tristen Creager will lead the Marines’ inside game.

“She’s put in a lot of effort trying to learn about post moves. I’m excited for her to grow in that area,” Tadsen said.

The coach wants to see a stronger compete level from his team.

“The biggest thing with Hamilton athletics is that the culture was set up for so long with ‘It’s OK, it’s OK.’ All the athletes got that same attitude,” Tadsen said.

“I want to get that competitiveness

back. The will to win. Don’t worry about what the scoreboard says, just continue to fight for your team, fight for your school and try to improve yourself one day at a time, one play at a time.”

Defense is critical for the Marines who aren’t a high-scoring squad.

“A lot of my focus is defense and intensity,” Tadsen said. “We have to be strong on defense because we’re still kind of weak offensively. A lot these girls haven’t picked up a basketball in a long time or it’s just their first or second year of playing.

“I’m focusing on going 110% the whole game and making sure we’re doing everything we can on defense.”

Marines to field a young boys team

BY MARK MURDOCK
mmurdock@kpcmedia.com

HAMILTON — Most opponents present a big enough challenge, scouting you in advance and coming up with a plan to beat you.

The Hamilton boys basketball team has found that you don’t need to give them any help. Unfortunately for the Marines, an excessive amount of turnovers has had them playing from behind.

“That’s why teams go on runs against us,” third-year Hamilton coach Chase Holden said. “We give them too many easy layups.

“When we get back and play defense we’re fine. We run a good offense, it’s just one bad pass.”

Holden hopes to improve the situation with a young lineup. Only one player with varsity experience is back. Several more will move up from the junior varsity.

“Out of the guys coming we’ll see who wants to come and play,” Holden said.

The less experienced Marines will get thrown into the fire right away.

“We have to play a better game and handle the basketball,” Holden said. “We’re going to get pressured.

“We also have to get better shots and knock down some shots. That will help with our confidence.”

NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL PRIVATE CLIENT GROUP



PROUD SPONSOR OF
INDIANA
HIGH SCHOOL
BASKETBALL



Kevin J. Bontrager
CLU®, ChFC®, AEP®, WMCP®, CAP®

SUMMIT
FINANCIAL GROUP

P. 260.432.5152
SUMMIT.NM.COM

INDIANA
Fort Wayne • Angola • Marion
Indianapolis • Mishawaka • Wabash

ILLINOIS
Oak Brook

LAKELAND LAKERS



**Lakeland
High School**
805 E. C.R. 75N, LaGrange
Colors: Columbia Blue,
Red and White

Boys
Class: 3A

Girls
Class: 3A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	H	Fort Wayne HomeSchool	12:30 p.m.	Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 20	A	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	H	Fremont	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 23	H	Elkhart Christian	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	A	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 30	H	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	Bethany Christian	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 31	A	Wawasee	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	Westview	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 5	A	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	H	Eastside	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 10	A	Goshen	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 30	A	SB St. Joseph	10:00 a.m.	Feb. 13	H	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 30	A	Goshen or Portage	8:00 p.m.	Feb. 17	A	Northridge	7:45 p.m.
Jan. 3	A	Jimtown	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 20	A	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	H	West Noble	7:30 p.m.	Feb. 27	H	Angola	7:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	A	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.	Dec. 30	A	South Bend St. Joseph Tournament	10:00 a.m.
Nov. 29	H	DeKalb	3:30 p.m.	Jan. 2	H	Heritage	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	A	East Noble	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 6	A	Lakeland Christian	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 8	H	Career Academy	6:00 p.m.	Jan. 9	H	West Noble	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 12	H	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.	Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	Bethany Christian	6:00 p.m.	Jan. 20	H	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	Westview	6:00 p.m.	Jan. 22	A	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 18	H	Angola	7:30 a.m.	Jan. 30	H	Garrett	6:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	A	Eastside	7:00 p.m.				

MEMBERSHIP IS A
**SLAM
DUNK**

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.

Federally Insured
By the NCUA

More mature Lakers look to move forward

BY MARK MURDOCK

mmurdock@kpcmedia.com

LAGRANGE — A blend of experience and some promising young players has Lakeland optimistic it can improve this season.

"We return seven of our top 10," third-year coach James Benson said. "A bunch of them were freshmen last year that got bits and pieces of varsity experience."

"It's kind of a nice mix of experience and exciting newcomers."

The Lakers have four veterans back who have been at least part-time starters the past three seasons.

Guard Dulce Canedo leads that group. She averaged 11.7 points a game and is sixth all-time in threes for the Lakers.

"Dulce is almost like having another coach on the floor because she's been through the battles,"

Benson said.

Katelyn Ryan is back with experience. Juniors Zoey Bowman and McKenzie Carlson got a late start in basketball after the Laker volleyball team reached the semi-state in Class 2A. That caused Lakeland to reschedule its season opener against DeKalb.

"The success they had bleeds into other sports," Benson said. "They know what it takes to make it to semi-state."

Lakeland lost much of its size and will likely play a quicker game this year.

"We're going to be more aggressive defensively just because of who we have," Benson said. "We'll be losing our size and experience from last season. We gain in quickness and athleticism."

"We should be able to push the tempo a lot more, which is exciting

SEE LAKELAND GIRLS, Page A36

Lakeland boys trust in their defense

BY MARK MURDOCK

mmurdock@kpcmedia.com

LAGRANGE — Would coaches like anything better than having a team that plays solid man-to-man defense in the half-court?

TJ Schneider is happy Lakeland will hang its hat there again as he begins his second season as coach.

Lakeland allowed only 45.8 points per game last season, the second-best average in school history. With five letterwinners back from last year's 15-9 squad, Schneider is upbeat about the start of the new season.

"That will be a baseline for us. We know we can play good half-court, man-to-man defense," Schneider said.

"We have a lot of three-sport athletes who excel in three sports. That should be a strength. These guys know how to complete.

They've been competitors for four



DAVID VANTRESS

Lakeland guard Keyan Arroyo brings the ball up the court as he is guarded by Kobe Carpenter from Centreville (Mich.) last season. Arroyo will lead the Lakers at the point as a senior this season.

years. We shouldn't have to look for leaders."

Lakeland may have the potential
SEE LAKELAND BOYS, Page A37

**PROUD TO BE THE #1
SPONSOR OF ALL
LOCAL ATHLETES!**

**GOOD LUCK THIS SEASON.
*We're always on your team!***

888.492.7111 / WWW.GoFSB.com

Farmers State Bank



LAKEWOOD PARK PANTHERS



**Lakewood Park
Christian School**
5555 C.R. 29, Auburn
Colors: Columbia Blue,
Black and White

Boys
Class: 1A

Girls
Class: 1A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	H	Southern Wells	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	H	Bluffton	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	A	Dwenger	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	Edon (Ohio)	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Heritage	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	A	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	Eastside	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 2-3	N	DeKalb Tournament	TBA
Jan. 9	A	Smith Academy	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 10	H	Whitko	7:30 p.m.

Jan. 13	H	Hamilton	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 16	A	Canterbury	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 19	A	South Adams	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 29	A	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	A	Lakeland Christian	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 7	H	Elkhart Christian	2:30 p.m.
Feb. 10	H	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	A	Bethany Christian	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	H	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	H	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 27	H	Adams Central	7:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	A	Fort Wayne North	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 2	A	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 4	H	New Haven	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 9	A	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	Blackford	2:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	Eastside	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 18	H	Lakeland Christian	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 3	A	Leo	7:30 p.m.

Jan. 6	H	Woodlan	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 8	H	Bethany Christian	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 13	H	Hamilton	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 15	A	Whitko	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 20	H	Heritage	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 24	H	Blackhawk	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	A	Wayne	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 29	A	South Adams	7:30 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP IS A
**SLAM
DUNK**

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.

PROFED
CREDIT UNION

Federally Insured
By the NCUA



Lakewood Park's Luca Bontrager, right, keeps the ball away from Tenley Hendricks of Adams Central during a game on Nov. 13 at Lakewood Park.

MARK MURDOCK

Evertts to lead Lakewood Park girls

BY MARK MURDOCK
mmurdock@kpcmedia.com

AUBURN — Some holdovers from Lakewood Park's record-setting team ever give new coach Andrew Evertts plenty to work with this season.

A boys head coach for 10 seasons, Evertts will guide the Lady Panthers, who went 16-7 for the most regular-season wins in school history last season. He was previously head boys coach at Garrett.

The Panthers' scoring will have to

come from a different source, with 1,000-point scorer Ava McGrade graduated.

The Panthers return two seniors, Riah Johnson and Luci Young. Junior Gracelyn Martin is back after averaging 8.1 points and 5.6 rebounds a year ago. Sophomore Luca Bontrager fills several roles. She averaged 4.7 points, 2.8 steals and 2.1 assists. Another sophomore, Carigan Treesh, is also back.

Senior Hannah Jacquay will move up from the junior varsity, and freshman Gracie Dock also hopes to add depth.

Estep to lead LPC boys after sectional title run

BY MARK MURDOCK
mmurdock@kpcmedia.com

AUBURN — Jared Estep will look to build success with another Lakewood Park Christian basketball program.

Estep guided the Panther girls to a 16-7 mark and a school record for regular-season victories. Now he's making the move to take over the boys team, which is coming off a Class 1A sectional championship.

"I'm really looking forward to coaching this group and watching them grow," Estep said. "They seem to be a close-knit group who want to learn and put in the work."

"We had a strong summer and a really solid fall. We have to understand that there may be bumps in the road playing an entirely new system with some new roles. We need to stay the course and stay together."

The Panthers will build around senior Avery MacFarlane, who averaged 18.8 points and 12 rebounds a game for last year's 7-17 squad. He had 18 double-doubles and set a school record with 282 rebounds.

Two other seniors, William Nolot and Madden Knox, also return. Juniors Garrett Black, Andrew Nixon and Noah Carnahan all lettered last season. Junior Caleb Shirar, sophomore Kobe Marquardt and freshman Cohen Johnson will look to add depth.

"We have some depth which



DAVID VANTRESS

Lakewood Park's Avery MacFarlane is tightly guarded by Eastside's Connor Johnson during a game last season at Lakewood Park. MacFarlane is one of the area's top players this season as a senior after averaging a double-double in points and rebounds per game last season.

really excites me," said Estep, who went 51-41 in his four years of leading the Panther girls. "We need to learn how to string together some stops on the defensive end that can lead to a quick pace on offense."

"I really do like and enjoy this group and can't wait to get started."



800-292-9098

**NOBLE
COUNTY
DISPOSAL**

www.NCDisposal.com

**Residential
& Commercial**

**3, 4, & 6 yard
Clean Up Containers**

**Electrical
& Fluorescent Bulb
Drop off location**

PRAIRIE HEIGHTS PANTHERS



**Prairie Heights
High School**
305 S. C.R. 1150E, LaGrange
Colors: Red, White and Black

Boys
Class: 2A

Girls
Class: 2A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	A	Jimtown	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Garrett	8:00 p.m.
Dec. 5	H	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Elkhart Christian	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	A	Eastside	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 17	A	Career Academy	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	H	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 23	H	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	H	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 10	A	Wawasee	7:45 p.m.

Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 20	H	Bethany Christian	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 24	A	Whitko	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	A	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	A	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 10	A	Canterbury	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	H	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	A	Lakewood Park	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	H	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	H	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 28	A	Trinity Greenlawn	7:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 29	A	Garrett	6:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	H	Lakewood Park	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 4	A	Bethany Christian	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	A	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	A	Canterbury	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	H	Eastside	7:00 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	H	Churubusco	6:00 p.m.

Dec. 23	H	West Noble	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 6	H	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	H	Angola	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 22	A	Blackhawk	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 24	H	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	H	Concord	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	A	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP IS A
**SLAM
DUNK**

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.



PROFED
CREDIT UNION



Federally Insured
By the NCUA

Panther girls rebuilding under new coach

BY KEN FILLMORE

kfillmore@kpcmedia.com

BRUSHY PRAIRIE — The Prairie Heights girls basketball is undergoing a rebuild under new coach Daniel Barnett.

The Panthers have some experience back in post players Maddison Certain and Avery Certain and guards Bailee Godsey and Peyton Gibson. But the graduation of KPC Media All-Area standout Emily McCrea puts an emphasis on building the program up as a whole.

While developing the girls basketball program, Barnett understands being at a smaller school he will be sharing girls with other sports. He has focused on making the most of his time with his players this past summer and has seen tremendous growth over the past few months.

Prairie Heights has 18 girls playing basketball this season. So it will also field a junior varsity team.

"We need to improve the commitment level," Barnett said last week. "The girls have great work ethic. I have seen progression.

"We don't lack athleticism. But

the girls just got to be disciplined," he continued. "We can compete with any team in our conference.

"I love the culture we are developing. We're coming along."

Heights was 7-17 last season, including 2-8 in the Northeast Corner Conference. It started 1-3, 0-2 in the NECC, through games played last Saturday.

Senior guard Jenna Park also returns for the Panthers.

PH will integrate young players in the mix. Freshman Allie Hardy and sophomore Addison Taylor will play at point guard along with the senior Gibson. Junior Sydney Lehman is new to the varsity and is one of the Panthers' better defenders.

Barnett said defense was a key in the Panthers' lone victory so far, 47-43 at Wawasee on Nov. 8.

Barnett said seniors Gibson, Park and Maddison Certain have taken on the leadership roles well.

"Seeing a difference in their mindset and the will to want to win has been so refreshing from June ball," Barnett said. "This program is taking a big turn for the best and I'm very excited to be a part of the process."



JEFF JONES

Eastside's Lily Kreischer lunges for the basketball as Prairie Heights player Peyton Gibson tries to maintain control during first-half action at Butler last season. Gibson will lead a young Panther girls basketball team this season.



KEN FILLMORE
Cade Bachelor (2) attacks the basket for Prairie Heights against West Noble last season in Ligonier. Bachelor will be a varsity regular for the fourth straight season this winter.

PH boys want to build on winning vibes

BY KEN FILLMORE

kfillmore@kpcmedia.com

BRUSHY PRAIRIE — Prairie Heights' boys basketball team learned how win last season, making a seven-win improvement from the previous campaign of 2023-24.

With the sense of urgency being high for a few seniors, the Panthers want to make bigger statements.

"This group is well connected and bought in," fifth-year Heights coach Delmar Bontrager said. "The senior group has matured in the last few years and understands what is at stake this season."

The Panthers were 9-14 last season, including 2-8 in the Northeast Corner Conference. The biggest highlight was a 49-46 home triumph over defeating Class 1A state champion Canterbury on Feb. 11.

PH has six seniors this season in forwards Cade Bachelor and Caston Day and guards Leo Hare, Keegan German, Brady Strater and Sean Bontrager. Bachelor, Day, Hare, German and Strater are returning letterwinners.

Bachelor is beginning his fourth season as a varsity regular and earned KPC Media All-Area and All-NECC honors last season despite never being at full strength. He rolled an ankle the day before the season opener last season and was never really right.

"Cade slimmed down and had a great offseason," Coach Bontrager said.

"Leo Hare is one of the better

defenders in the area. Strater shoots it well from 3. Keegan has a high basketball IQ and is a great leader for us."

Day (9.1 points and 4.2 rebounds per game last season) has developed into a stretch-four. He's a physical defender inside and is capable of shooting from long range.

"This class is a close-knit group, in and outside of school," Bontrager said. "They push each other."

The Panthers' growth in competitiveness goes hand in hand with the development of junior point guard Jake Stoy, who had 6.6 points, 3.6 rebounds, 3.3 assists and 1.7 steals per game last season.

"Stoy is a fast guard, pesky defender and has a high motor that can take over a game on both ends," Bontrager said.

Bontrager likes the depth on his team. A few guys from last season's junior varsity team that won 15 games will compete for varsity time, including Bontrager, sophomore Callen Helmuth and juniors Connor Sizemore, Carson Bentley and Reed Dempsey. Helmuth was the JV point guard last season.

Sizemore will help Heights inside, but will miss the early part of the season after having a procedure done on one of his knees. Bentley, the son of new East Noble boys basketball coach Ed Bentley, had a solid summer of offseason training, according to Coach Bontrager.

Rebounding, ball security and how the younger guys will mesh with the lettermen will determine the Panthers' ceiling this season.

WEST NOBLE CHARGERS



West Noble High School

5094 N. U.S. Hwy. 33, Ligonier
Colors: Red, White and Blue

Boys
Class: 3A

Girls
Class: 3A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Bethany Christian	6:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	Wawasee	7:45 p.m.
Dec. 10	A	Concord	7:45 p.m.
Dec. 13	A	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	H	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 23	A	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 3	H	Eastside	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	A	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	7:30 p.m.

Jan. 23	H	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 28	A	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	H	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	A	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 7	H	LaVille	2:30 p.m.
Feb. 10	A	NorthWood	7:45 p.m.
Feb. 14	A	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	A	Elkhart Christian	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 21	H	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	H	Goshen	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 27	H	Garrett	7:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 22	H	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 24	A	Hamilton	6:00 p.m.
Nov. 28	A	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	H	Wawasee	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 4	A	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	A	Goshen	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	H	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	Whitko	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	H	Central Noble	6:00 p.m.

Dec. 23	A	Prairie Heights	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 6	H	Concord	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 9	A	Lakeland	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 20	A	Eastside	7:00 p.m.
Jan. 23	A	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	H	Fairfield	6:00 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP IS A
**SLAM
DUNK**

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.



PROFED
CREDIT UNION



Federally Insured
By the NCUA

Wiktorowski to shepherd WN girls program into future

BY KEN FILLMORE

kfillmore@kpcmedia.com

LIGONIER — After four decades of coaching basketball, Steve Wiktorowski wants to get West Noble girls basketball right at all levels.

He will just have a varsity team to worry about at the high school with only eight girls on the roster.

“We will be a very young team again this year,” Wiktorowski said. “Our sophomores are our biggest grade and they will be counted on heavily as they are actually our most experienced group.”

“We have some good young talent that can eventually develop into a very solid team on both ends of the floor if we play hard and limit mistakes,” he continued. “Our goal is to be a more offensive team that shoots and takes care of the ball better. We will use a variety of defenses that will hopefully make us difficult to play against.”

After going 3-20 last season, the Chargers are 1-3 so far this season.

Sophomore volleyball standout Elyse Mead has emerged as leading player for the Charger basketball team. She can play point guard or a wing.

Sophomore post player Ava DeLong and sophomore forward Ella Limerick will also be key players for West Noble.

But those youngsters can not do it alone if West Noble is going to improve.



Wiktorowski

The roster also includes seniors Cloie Ulrey and Leah Pruitt, freshman guard Brooklyn Barden, and sophomores Addison Burns and Natalie Gow.

“It’s a whole new system for them,” Wiktorowski said after the Chargers’ 58-44 loss at Blackhawk Christian on Nov. 8 in Fort Wayne.

“They’re trying to catch up, which is why we’re not as consistent as we want to be. But that’s to be expected. Currently, they’re playing hard and trying to adjust. That’s all I can ask.”

“We’ve got some balance. Our two post players (DeLong and Pruitt) are getting better all the time — they’re working to rebound and defend inside.”

“I’m very positive about where we stand,” Wiktorowski added. “We’ve got to get our confidence up so we’re ready to go right from the start and land that first punch instead of taking it.”

Wiktorowski also has plans to develop the feeder program. That will help improve the current lack of numbers at the high school before too long.

Dean Jackson contributed to this story.

West Noble to field a deep boys team

BY KEN FILLMORE

kfillmore@kpcmedia.com

LIGONIER — Ethan Marsh has a solid group of athletes for his West Noble boys basketball team looking to improve on last season’s 8-15 finish.

Key returners include senior guard Nolan Kelly, senior forward Trevor Steele and junior guard Aiden Replogle. Kelly made the All-North-east Corner Conference and KPC Media All-Area teams last season after averaging 11.1 points and 2.7 assists per game and making 79% of his free throws.

West Noble will also have some football players coming out, including seniors Trey Shisler and Mason Taylor, junior Caleb Saggars and sophomore Xy’Mire Barnes-Bridges. Shisler is a first-time basketball player at West Noble after being the Chargers’ quarterback the last two seasons. Taylor played right tackle on the gridiron and is coming back from injury.

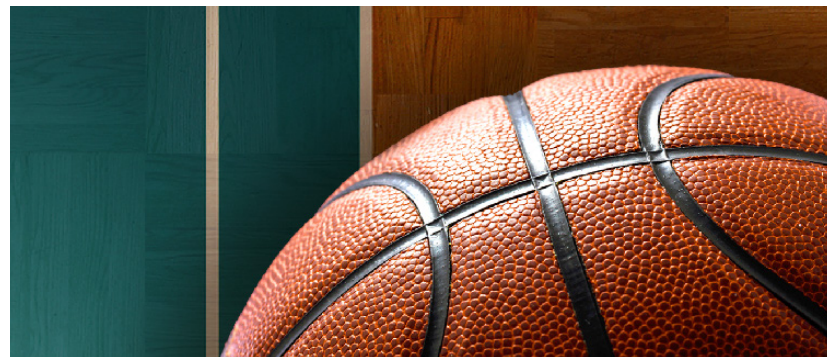
Barnes-Bridges is among some junior varsity cagers who will be moving up competing for varsity time. Also in that mix are junior Trevor Martin and sophomores Ryan Glick and Cameron Eash.

“This is one of the deepest teams I’ve had,” said seventh-year Charger coach Ethan Marsh. “We have 10 to 12 guys fighting for minutes. That creates a good atmosphere. There’s accountability there. If someone is not willing to do something, someone else will.”

“The football guys will help us rebound,” Marsh added. “If we stay connected defensively, everything will fall into place.”

Kelly is in his third year as a starter. Replogle nearly made 50 three-pointers last season. Shisler and Barnes-Bridges will help West Noble on the defensive end. Steele can defend multiple positions.

Marsh also likes the potential of 6-foot-2 freshman swingman Brody Mast.



Connection means more here.

LOCAL, RELIABLE FIBER INTERNET & PHONE

(260) 894-7161

LIGTEL.COM

CONNECT TODAY!

WESTVIEW WARRIORS



**Westview
High School**
1635 S. 600W, Topeka
Colors: Scarlet Red and Old Gold

Boys
Class: 2A

Girls
Class: 2A



BOYS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	A	Bethany Christian	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Northridge	7:45 p.m.
Dec. 2	A	LaVille	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	H	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 11	H	NorthWood	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	A	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	H	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	H	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 30	H	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 6	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.

Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	A	Fairfield	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	A	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	A	Eastside	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	H	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 7	H	Blackhawk	2:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	A	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	H	Wawasee	7:45 p.m.
Feb. 20	A	Goshen	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	A	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 27	H	Concord	7:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHEDULE

Nov. 25	A	Bethany Christian	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 4	H	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	A	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	A	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	A	Central Noble	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 16	H	Lakeland	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 18	H	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 3	A	Elkhart Christian	7:30 p.m.

Jan. 5	H	South Bend St. Joseph	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 8	H	Jimtown	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 20	A	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	A	Fairfield	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 27	H	NorthWood	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 39	H	Eastside	7:00 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP IS A
**SLAM
DUNK**

Banking with Us Is a Slam Dunk!

Scan the QR code or
Visit profedcu.org to learn more.

Federally Insured
By the NCUA



DAVID VANTRESS

Westview guard Olivia Bontrager brings the ball into the frontcourt during an NECC game at the Warriordome last season.

Warrior girls want to take next step

BY DAVID VANTRESS

dvantress@kpcmedia.com

EMMA — Last season was a pretty good one for the Westview High School girls basketball team.

The Warriors took some major steps forward, improving from 5-19 in 2023-24 to 11-12 a year ago.

Warrior coach Ryan Yoder, in his sixth season, has his entire team back and is optimistic about the 205-26 campaign. Westview was off to a 2-1 start at press time.

The Warriors lost just two seniors off last year's team: Morgan Riegsecker (3.6 points per game) and Karis Weinberg (6.9 ppg).

Westview returns a good, solid core in 2025-26, led by junior forward Maddie Grossman (8.9 ppg last season), senior forward Bre Cory (8.6 ppg), senior forward Janissa Lehman (7.5 ppg), senior guard JJ Whetstone (5.7 ppg), and junior guard Olivia Boontrager (5.7 ppg).

"We have a level of experience we haven't had in the past," Yoder said. "This past summer looked a little different because we already knew a lot of what we were doing, so we were able to start making adjustments."

The Warriors will have inside

depth with Grossman and Cory. Having two posts is going to be a new experience for Yoder, but it's one he's ready to embrace.

"They work well together, both pass and rebound well," Yoder said.

Cory is averaging about 13 points per game early and Grossman is scoring about 10 points per contest.

Cory can step out and knock down a jumper when called for, Yoder said.

"We also have some girls who can get to the basket," Yoder said. "That's the dance we're figuring out right now."

Morgan Grossman, a sophomore and Maddie's younger sister, is a key newcomer who will see significant minutes off the bench, as will sophomore guard Gloria Miller.

Yoder said the key thing for his team to figure out is how to knuckle down in the closing minutes of games.

"It comes down to a couple of key possessions late," Yoder said.

The Warriors were 5-6 in the Northeast Corner Conference a year ago, so Yoder would like to see his team improve that mark and get into the top tier of the league with teams like Eastside, Angola and Central Noble.

Westview boys loaded for another run

BY DAVID VANTRESS

dvantress@kpcmedia.com

EMMA — For prep basketball excellence and consistency here in our little corner of northeast Indiana, it's hard to beat the Westview Warrior boys.

The Warriors have won three sectional titles under current head coach Chandler Prible, who's now entering his fourth season guiding the Warriors. Prible is 55-23 in Emma.

Not a bad start to a career for any Indiana high school boys basketball coach — let alone a Westview coach.

Prible's Warriors look to be primed for another run in 2025-26, with a key core back from last season, including senior guard Daniel Yoder, junior guard Austin Schlabach, senior forward Kaden Grau, junior forward Kaine Reinhold and senior Brett Springer.

Schlabach is the Warriors' leading returning scorer.

Pierce Yoder, a junior forward who primarily saw junior varsity minutes a year ago, will be in the mix as well. He's a good shooter and has the size to play pretty much any position on the floor.

Senior Austin Troyer, a guard who also saw mainly JV floor time in 2024-25, will provide depth as well. Prible said the Warriors will sport a roster of about 10 guys, going eight deep most nights. A few players will split time between the varsity and JV.

Hudson Yoder, a sophomore guard, will be one of those guys along with freshman guard Bryce Yoder. Cooper Schwartz, a freshman guard, will be another player who will split time.

"We're in a really good place right now," Prible said. "We want to build on that this year."

Winning a regional is a major goal this season for the Warriors, who fell to Jimtown 56-40 in the Class 2A Triton Regional last season.

Prible likes this year's Warrior squad's balance.

"We're guard heavy," Prible said. "But this is probably the best combination we've had of guys who can attack the basket and guys who are good shooters."

Defense will be an area for the guards to work on, Prible added.

As far as the Northeast Corner Conference, the Warriors were 9-1 to go with their 18-8 overall mark last season, winning both the regular season and conference tournament hardware.

Prible said he expects Fairfield and Garrett to both be strong, along with Angola.

"We'd like to think we're going to be in that mix to compete for another conference championship," Prible said.

The Warriors open the 2025-26 season Wednesday night in their annual lidlifter with Bethany Christian at the Menno Lands just outside of Goshen.



DAVID VANTRESS

Westview guard Austin Schlabach looks to drive to the basket against a Fremont defender during a game last season.

BELLMONT BRAVES BOYS  1000 E N Adams Dr, Decatur Colors: Blue and Red Class: 3A			
Nov. 26	A	Carroll	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	H	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	A	Concordia	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	Canterbury	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	Heritage	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	A	New Haven	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 29	A	Delta	12:00 p.m.
Dec. 29	A	Delta Tournament	5:00 or 8:00 p.m.
Dec. 30	A	Delta Tourney Place Game	TBA
Jan. 2	A	Adams Central	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 10	A	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 16	H	Norwell	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 21	A	Northrop	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 24	A	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	H	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	A	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 14	H	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	H	South Adams	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	H	Bluffton	7:45 p.m.
Feb. 21	H	Luers	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	A	Dwenger	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 27	H	Jay County	7:30 p.m.

BELLMONT BRAVES GIRLS  1000 E N Adams Dr, Decatur Colors: Blue and Red Class: 3A			
Nov. 22	A	Heritage	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 25	H	Adams Central	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 28	H	Homestead	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	H	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	Marion	12:30 p.m.
Dec. 11	A	Luers	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	A	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	H	Carroll	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	H	New Haven	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 30	H	Eastside	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 3	A	Bluffton	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	H	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13	H	Northrop	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 17	A	Norwell	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	H	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	A	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 28	H	Warsaw	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	A	Leo	7:30 p.m.

CARROLL CHARGERS BOYS  3701 Carroll Rd, Fort Wayne Colors: Blue and Gray Class: 6A			
Nov. 26	H	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Penn	4:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	H	Concordia	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	A	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	H	Wayne	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	H	Warsaw	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 26	A	Zionsville (Homestead)	5:30 p.m.
Dec. 27	A	Homestead Tourney	10:00 a.m.
Dec. 27	A	Homestead Place Game	4:00 or 5:00 p.m.
Jan. 9	A	Dwenger	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13	A	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 17	H	New Haven	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	A	Fort Wayne South	7:45 p.m.
Jan. 24	A	Fishers	4:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	H	Snider	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	H	Yorktown	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	H	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 10	A	Fort Wayne North	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	H	Northrop	7:45 p.m.
Feb. 20	A	Homestead	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	A	Norwell	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 27	H	Luers	7:30 p.m.

CARROLL CHARGERS GIRLS  3701 Carroll Rd, Fort Wayne Colors: Blue and Gray Class: 6A			
Nov. 22	H	Carmel	1:30 p.m.
Nov. 25	A	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Penn	3:00 p.m.
Dec. 2	H	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	A	Homestead	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	A	Northridge	2:30 p.m.
Dec. 10	H	Warsaw	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	H	Concordia	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	H	Wayne	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 26	N	NorthWood (DeKalb)	1:30 p.m.
Dec. 26	N	Chesterton (DeKalb)	6:45 p.m.
Dec. 27	N	Kokomo (DeKalb)	11:45 a.m.
Jan. 6	A	Norwell	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	A	Dwenger	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 10	H	Hamilton Southeastern	2:30 p.m.
Jan. 16	H	Luers	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	A	Fort Wayne South	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 27	A	Fort Wayne North	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 30	H	Snider	6:00 p.m.

FAIRFIELD FALCONS BOYS 67530 US-33, Goshen Colors: Navy Blue and Gold Class: 3A			
Nov. 25	H	Wawasee	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Goshen	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	A	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	A	NorthWood	7:45 p.m.
Dec. 20	H	Jimtown	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 3	H	Concord	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	H	Eastside	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	H	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	H	Mishawaka	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	A	West Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	H	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	A	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 11	H	Bethany Christian	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	A	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 14	H	Elkhart Christian	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	H	Bremen	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	A	Churubusco	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	A	Northridge	7:45 p.m.
Feb. 27	H	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.

FAIRFIELD FALCONS GIRLS 67530 US-33, Goshen Colors: Navy Blue and Gold Class: 3A			
Nov. 22	H	Jimtown	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 25	A	NorthWood	7:45 p.m.
Nov. 29	H	Concord	2:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	A	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	A	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	Fremont	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 30	H	Warsaw	8:00 p.m.
Jan. 6	A	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	N	Eastside	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 13-17		NECC Tournament	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 20	A	Central Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	A	Westview	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 26	H	Bethany Christian	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	H	West Noble	6:00 p.m.

HUNTINGTON NORTH VIKINGS BOYS 450 Macgahan St, Huntington Colors: Red, White & Black Class: 4A			
Nov. 26	A	Northfield	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Mississinewa	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	A	Warsaw	2:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	Manchester	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	A	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	A	Marion	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 29	H	Toledo Central Catholic (Ohio)	12:45 p.m.
Dec. 29	H	Mishawaka Marian	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 30	H	South Bend Adams	3:30 p.m.
Jan. 2-3	N	Plymouth Tournament	TBA
Jan. 9	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 16	A	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 17	H	Fort Wayne North	1:30 p.m.
Jan. 24	H	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	A	Fort Wayne South	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	A	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	A	Carroll	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 7	H	New Haven	2:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	H	Norwell	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	H	Luers	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	H	Tippecanoe Valley	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 27	A	Kokomo	7:30 p.m.

HUNTINGTON NORTH VIKINGS GIRLS 450 Macgahan St, Huntington Colors: Red, White & Black Class: 4A			
Nov. 25	A	Fort Wayne South	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Hamilton Heights	2:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	H	Luers	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	A	Norwell	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Manchester	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	H	New Haven	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	A	Marion	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 17	H	Dwenger	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	H	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 27	A	Mississinewa	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 3	H	Huntington North Classic	TBA
Jan. 10	A	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 14	H	Wayne	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 17	H	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	A	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 24	A	Indianapolis Cathedral	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	H	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.

 LEO LIONS BOYS 14600 Amstutz Rd, Leo Colors: Purple Class: 4A			
Nov. 26	A	Concordia	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 3	A	Wayne	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	A	Heritage	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Fort Wayne South	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	Northrop	7:45 p.m.
Dec. 19	H	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 22	H	Homestead	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 30	A	Westview	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 2	A	Tippecanoe Valley	10:00 a.m.
Jan. 2	A	Tipton or FW South (TV Tourney)	2:30 p.m.
Jan. 10	A	Norwell	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 16	H	New Haven	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 20	H	Lakeland	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 24	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 26	H	Fort Wayne North	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	A	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	H	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	A	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	H	Dwenger	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	A	Snider	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	A	Blackhawk	7:30 p.m.

 LEO LIONS GIRLS 14600 Amstutz Rd, Leo Colors: Purple Class: 4A			
Nov. 25	A	South Adams	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 1	H	Concordia	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 4	H	Garrett	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 10	A	Angola	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	A	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 17	H	Fort Wayne North	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	A	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 3	H	Lakewood Park	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 6	A	Prairie Heights	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	H	Norwell	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13	H	Canterbury	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 17	A	New Haven	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	A	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	H	Dwenger	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	H	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.

 NEW HAVEN BULLDOGS BOYS 1300 Green Rd, New Haven Colors: Purple and Gold Class: 4A			
Nov. 25	H	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	H	Northrop	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	H	Blackhawk	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 10	A	Wayne	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	H	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	H	Concordia	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 29	N	South Bend Riley (Kokomo)	4:15 p.m.
Dec. 29 or 30	N	Lawr. North or Charlestown	TBA
Dec. 30	N	Kokomo Tourney Place Game	TBA
Jan. 2	H	Dwenger	11:00 a.m.
Jan. 6	A	Snider	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 10	H	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13	H	Luers	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 16	A	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 17	A	Carroll	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 24	A	Norwell	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	H	Homestead	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	A	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 7	A	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	A	Heritage	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 21	A	Noblesville	3:00 p.m.
Feb. 26	A	Fort Wayne South	7:30 p.m.

 NEW HAVEN BULLDOGS GIRLS 1300 Green Rd, New Haven Colors: Purple and Gold Class: 4A			
Nov. 22	A	Dwenger	6:00 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Fort Wayne North	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 1	A	Wayne	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	A	Bluffton	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 4	H	Lakewood Park	6:00 p.m.
Dec. 6	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Adams Central	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	H	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	H	Marion	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 17	H	Fort Wayne South	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	A	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	A	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 12	H	Luers	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 17	A	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 21	H	Norwell	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 21	A	Heritage	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	A	Columbia City	7:30 p.m.

NORWELL KNIGHTS BOYS  1100 US-224, Ossian Colors: Old Gold and Navy Class: 3A			
Nov. 26	H	Northrop	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	A	Adams Central	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	A	Mississinewa	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	A	Oak Hill	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	H	Dwenger	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	H	Concordia	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	H	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 27	A	Bluffton	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 6	A	Wabash	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 10	H	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13	A	Wayne	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 16	A	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 24	H	New Haven	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	H	Luers	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	A	East Noble	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 7	H	Columbia City	1:30 p.m.
Feb. 10	H	Heritage	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 13	A	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	H	Jay County	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	H	Carroll	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 27	A	Homestead	7:30 p.m.

NORWELL KNIGHTS GIRLS  1100 US-224, Ossian Colors: Old Gold and Navy Class: 3A			
Nov. 22	A	Indianapolis Cathedral	2:30 p.m.
Nov. 25	A	Concordia	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	H	Angola	12:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	H	Huntington North	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	A	Columbia City	7:45 p.m.
Dec. 16	A	Woodlan	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	A	DeKalb	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 22	N	Plainfield (Hall of Fame)	12:30 p.m.
Dec. 22	N	Warsaw or Ev. Central (Hall of Fame)	6:00 or 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 27	N	Valparaiso (Noblesville)	11:45 a.m.
Dec. 27	N/A	Snider or Noblesville	6:00 or 7:45 p.m.
Jan. 6	H	Carroll	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	A	Leo	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 14	H	Dwenger	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 17	H	Bellmont	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 20	A	Jay County	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 21	A	New Haven	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 30	H	East Noble	7:30 p.m.

FILLMORE

FROM PAGE A2

for the Pacers thus far without Haliburton and Myles Turner moving on to Milwaukee.

“Yessirrr” is something 2004 World Champion Detroit Pistons guard Richard “Rip” Hamilton said as the “Goin’ To Work” Pistons rose to greatness in the NBA.

The Pistons have risen again, led by a Motor Cade, one of the best players in the world in Cade Cunningham. Trajan Langdon, the Alaskan Assassin from Duke, is the Pistons president of basketball operations building a championship team with coach JB Bickerstaff.

Basketball is beautiful all over, whether it be at Charleswood Court in Hamilton, the Warrior Dome in Emma, the MTI Center in Angola, Mackey Arena in West Lafayette, Simon Skjodt Assembly Hall in Bloomington or Gainbridge Fieldhouse in Indianapolis. And I’m trying to bring Mastodonia Mania to life in northeast Indiana for you Purdue Fort Wayne fans.

The high school girls basketball season has just tipped off a couple weeks ago and the prep boys will get started on Tuesday. We are excited to see our teams in action and how they progress over the course of the

next few months.

We appreciate the help of our basketball coaches for adjusting to our schedules and our deadlines to inform us about your teams. We need to complete these preview stories not long after the boys basketball teams officially started practices.

Thank you to veteran reporters Mark Murdock and David Vantress for their hard work. Doing 10 preview stories or more over a couple of weeks or so can be exhausting on top of our regular duties. And, yes, Fall All-Area teams are in the back of our minds as we start up winter sports.

Thank you to a couple of our daily newspaper editors, Matt Getts at the News-Sun and Jeff Jones of The Star, for covering some ball games on occasion as part of their really busy schedules. They love sports as much as we do.

Special sections graphic designer Stevie Lockridge is the anchor behind the scenes that consistently makes this section look good year after year. Bless you!

We encourage you to visit our website, kpcnews.com, to follow our coverage on game nights.

Happy basketball season everybody!

*Ken Fillmore
KPC Media Sports Director*





DAVID VANTRESS

Churubusco's Carson Tonkel (10) tries to block West Noble's Trevor Steele's route to the basket during an NECC game in Ligonier last season. Tonkelo is one of several key returning players for the Eagles in 2025-26. Also helping on defense is the Eagles' Brayden Bianski, right.

BUSCO BOYS

FROM PAGE A9

Lack of varsity playing experience and size will be challenges for the Eagles this season, Garman said.

"Players will need to learn and adjust to the speed and physicality of the game quickly," Garman said. "However, 'Busco Boys Basketball will stay true to our core values and will

display great work ethic, have great attitudes, and be a great teammate."

Garman is assisted by Dave Oyer, Brad Martin and Blake Oliphant.

The Eagles open their 2025-26 season next Saturday with a 2:30 p.m. matinee contest at home against Northrop. The Bruins were 10-14 a year ago and are coached by Shane Merryman, also in his third season.

LAKELAND GIRLS

FROM PAGE A23

because it's the style I like to coach. This group definitely fits the way we want to play."

To accomplish that, the Lakers will have to value the basketball.

"While our defense would be good if we were set, we gave up a lot of points off those turnovers," Benson said.

Rebounding will also be a key if the Lakers are to limit the opponent's easy opportunities.

"We don't have the size we did last year all the way through," Benson said. "Making sure we're boxing out and getting rebounds, and limiting second chances for who we play against will

be important," Benson said.

Benson feels the Lakers can be more competitive than last year's 4-19 edition.

"There were games last year where we'd play really good with a team for a half or a quarter," he said. "Then we'd have a stretch where we'd play really bad basketball and go from a two-point deficit to 20 really quickly."

"We're very talented, and it's just playing a full 32 minutes. We have the talent to compete with the top half of the NECC, it's just putting it into action. With the experience we have, and if we can bring the sophomores and freshmen along, we're going to be a tough out in January and February."

DEKALB BOYS

FROM PAGE A11

weight room. That will help overcome the height.

"A lot of them played football for the first time in a while. That's going to carry over some of that physicality which will help. We have the athletes, we have the physicality, we have the attitude and the work ethic to figure it out."

Shooting has been another rough spot for DeKalb. Opponents the last few years have taken to forcing the Barons to beat them from the perimeter.

"We've got guys who can really shoot it coming back," Ervin said. "Shooting is a funny thing. If it's not going in it can be hard for high school kids to turn the page and move on to the next shot and knock it in."

"We've made a conscious effort to give these guys some positive feedback that they are good shooters."

They've got to start to believe again that they are good shooters. As they start to believe, that's going to carry over to them making more shots."

Ervin also hopes to have the Barons play a quicker game, which will be fueled by defensive pressure.

"We're going to pressure like crazy, we're going to fly around, we're going to try to use our athletes and our physicality and try to speed people up and get out and run a little bit," Ervin said. "There will be some growing pains with that."

"I firmly believe this group can do it. We have some length, we have some physicality, and hopefully we can force them into a tough shot and get out and run."

Strong depth will help the Barons take the more intense approach.

"This group has great athletes and great depth. We're going to use it," Ervin said. "We're going to pressure like crazy. We've

got reinforcements ready to come in."

The faster pace may create different ways to score.

"We have the size and physicality to get downhill," Ervin said. "We've got to shoot more free throws. We've got to play a little faster to give us more possessions and more open-shot opportunities."

"Player movement and ball movement create open opportunities in the paint or on the perimeter."

Ervin was an assistant at Manchester University the last three years and at IU-South Bend the three years before that. He's anxious for his first chance at being a head coach.

"I've dreamed about this for a long time and wanted this as long as I can remember," he said. "To have an opportunity to give these kids the best experience possible and to help them grow as young men is really what I'm passionate about."

EASTSIDE BOYS

FROM PAGE A15

Strong averaged nearly 5 points per game and also had 19 three-pointers. Miller averaged just over 2 points per contest.

New to the program is senior Ethan Barnes, who, like Baker and Miller, was a member of Eastside's highly successful football team. Also on the roster is junior newcomer James Muzyka.

They'll be joined by freshmen Jaxson Dale, Quentin Dickerhoff, Ezra Fuentes, Leroy Ruckman, Gavin Strong and Cash Warstler.

In high school, Brow played for Scott Hudson, one of the best coaches in program history. Hudson's philosophy was process-oriented, and Brow is following that approach.

"We have a great combination of returning, veteran players as well as young athletes that will make a contribution for us," he said.

"We have to be a process-oriented group and not a result-oriented group," he said. "If we can attack each day with the mentality of 'rent is due,' then the results will come."

"I am excited to go to war each and every day with this group," Brow said.

Assistant coaches this season are Andy Tharp and Mike Krafft.

The Blazers begin the 2025-2026 season with road games at DeKalb on Next Saturday and at Edgerton, Ohio, on Monday, Dec. 1.



JEFF JONES

Eastside's Nolan Baker takes aim at the basket during first-half action against Lakeland Christian last season. Baker will look to lead a young Blazer squad this season.

A Dec. 3 contest against Smith Academy begins a stretch of four straight home games, with Canterbury, Prairie Heights and Lakewood Park to follow. A Feb. 10 road game with Lakeland Christian at Winona Lake replaces Heritage on the schedule.

EAST NOBLE GIRLS

FROM PAGE A13

varsity roster but may split time between the junior varsity and the varsity: point guard Bella Lemmon and center Sydnee Hiller. Sophomore guards Kylie Parks and Avalynn Schache round out the Knight roster. Isaacs said the experience of the core group has will be a major plus this season.

"We're focused on our defense, but trying to get better all-around," Isaacs said.

The Knights struggled in the Northeast 8 Conference last season, finishing just 2-5.

The conference should be tough again with defending

Class 3A state champion Norwell, as well as Columbia City, which lost to Norwell in the Class 3A Northern Semi-State final. Belmont is also among the top tier of the conference.

Isaacs wants his Knights to join that top tier. So far, so good. As of press time, East Noble was off to a 2-0 start, with wins over Westview (65-34 Nov. 8) and Bishop Dwenger (71-47 Nov. 11).

Eliminating mental mistakes and disrupting passing lanes to create turnovers will be major focuses in 2025-26, Isaacs added.

GARRETT GIRLS

FROM PAGE A13

Avery Traylor is a transfer from Carroll. Taylor Miller is moving up from the junior varsity. Mady Stevens-DeWitt has returned to basketball after not playing since middle school.

Garrett will have to be patient as the team meshes and younger players gain

experience.

"We want to be playing our best basketball at the end of the season. We know it's not all going to be smooth sailing. There's going to be bumps in the road," Hantz said.

"How we respond to handling adversity is a big thing we talk about. As long as we continue to work, we can overcome a lot of those things."

GARRETT BOYS

FROM PAGE A13

he's handling it better," Traylor said. "We've challenged him defensively to be more physical and put more pressure on our opponent's guards."

Another junior, Dawson Hedges, will also be a key in the backcourt. Jake Gonya, whose season was cut short by injury last year, is back as a senior as are Gabe Armstrong and Ari Hippensteel.

Traylor feels the Big Train can be better offensively.

"We have to shoot the ball better, especially in big moments," Traylor said. "If we have more guys confident enough and consistently knock down open shots for us, we like where we're at."

Garrett hopes to be strong

in the areas it can control.

"A staple for us is being relentless in everything we do defensively," Traylor said. "We need to continue to rebound the basketball at a high level. Those are things we can control."

"We're good at those, we've got to sharpen those up a little bit, but at the end of the day we've got to put the work in to get the result we want."

Last season's success opened the door to some big potential.

"We created a foundation last year," Traylor said. "It's our job to continue to add on to that foundation and make sure our culture is putting us in a position to have an advantage against everyone we play."

"All offseason we talked about how we can get better and chase the best versions of ourselves every day."



MARK MURDOCK

Eastside's Lucy Kitchen brings the ball upcourt against two Whitko defenders at the girls semi-state at Logansport during the 2024-2025 season.

EASTSIDE GIRLS

FROM PAGE A15

season-opening game, and Addison Moughler, plus juniors Carly Carnahan, Rylan Moughler and Payton Reycasa. Lortie is also counting on sophomore MacKenzie Dawkins to make contributions at the varsity level.

"We look to continue that success," Lortie said of expectations of the 2025-2026 team. "Everyone asks us about

what we lost to graduation, but we are excited about who we still have here, and we are ready to get things going with this group of young ladies.

"We may look a little different, but everyone will see that we can adjust and maintain the willingness to play for each other that has been the staple of our program for the past few years with drive, determination and discipline."

Lortie became Eastside's wins leader in girls basketball, having won his 100th

game last year and is in his seventh season as head coach.

Returning assistant coaches are Kaci Yoder, Mandy Dale and McKenna Hoffelder.

Eastside will play in the Max Platt Invitational at East Noble on Saturday, Dec. 27. The Blazers will face South Bend Riley in the first-ever meeting between the schools. East Noble and Garrett will also play each other.

LAKELAND BOYS

FROM PAGE A23

to score in different ways.

"We didn't hold the ball but we made sure we took great shots," Schneider said. "That obviously helped our defensive average. We would like to defend even better, and not allow teams to shoot higher percentages inside or outside."

"We're also going to try to get some easier shots this year. Last year we worked hard every offensive possession. This year we want to get easier shots through sets, through new offenses and maybe we'll be able to transition a little better."

All-Northeast Corner Conference point guard

Keyan Arroyo has gotten stronger and has the ability to score inside and outside, Schneider said. Kyle Hartsough fought through injuries last season, and hopes to regain his outside shooting touch.

Levi Cook guards the other team's top threat and also is the Lakers' top rebounder. He was an All-NECC honorable mention pick a year ago.

Keegan Merrifield is effective with his length inside. Cole Riehl will contribute extra ball handling and could be a point guard on many other teams, Schneider said.

That group should provide some versatility. "We were very guard-ori-

ented. We ran a dribble-drive offense," Schneider said. "We shot a very high percentage. Even shots we missed, we were getting good shots. Sometimes we were a little too small and not as physical as we needed to be to finish in the paint. That will be a little different this year."

"Finding ways to score easier or finishing plays at a higher rate. If we can do that and keep our defense where it was last year, I think we're going to be successful."

Schneider hopes the Lakers can be part of a mad scramble at the top of the NECC.

"The top half of the conference is very deep," he said.

FREMONT GIRLS

FROM PAGE A17

hard,” Thomas said. “Chloe energizes us. She is on full gas from start to finish and does what’s best for the team.

“They understand what their role is in order to make us successful.”

The Eagles were 3-0 as of presstime before a key Northeast Corner Conference home with Eastside on Nov. 14. They swung the ball around with pop, played well

on the defensive boards and made defensive stands late in opening the season with a 66-62 victory at South Bend St. Joseph on Nov. 4, then won by lopsided scores at home over 1A sectional rivals Canterbury and Lakewood Park.

Fremont will try to develop a bench over the course of the season. One reserve who has emerged into a big varsity role for the first time is senior forward Willow Towers (formerly Whittaker).

ANGOLA GIRLS

FROM PAGE A5

Edon plays in the Buckeye Border Conference, whose schools have student enrollments that range from just under 100 to near 300.

“I’m excited about the bigger challenge,” Caela Walker said. “There’s room for growth.”

The Hornet returning with the most experience is senior guard Aspen Sutton, who had 7.2 points, 2.5 rebounds and 1.2 steals per game last season.

Center Kendall Holman and guard Stella Stockamp played more of a regular role off the bench late last season in their freshman campaigns as injuries mounted for the Hornets. They went 12-11, 7-3 in the Northeast Corner Conference.

Sophomore guard Ella Savick will join classmates Holman and Stockamp on the varsity after being the leading scorer on the Hornet junior varsity team last season. Savick will help the Angola varsity push the pace this season.

“Ella is a ball of energy,” Walker said.

In the earlygoing,

5-foot-10 sophomore guard Kendall VanderWal has given Angola a jolt. Through the first three games, the daughter of new Trine University men’s basketball coach Jon VanderWal has averaged 22 points and 14.3 rebounds per game.

Kendall was a leading player as a freshman on a Marietta (Ohio) High School team that went 20-3 and won a conference championship last season.

“Kendall can score in all three phases and she wants to get her teammates involved,” Walker said. “The other girls have embraced her.”

Walker will also be looking for contributions from sophomore guard Hadleigh Pocock and senior forward Savannah Bixler. Bixler, who has primarily played volleyball for AHS, joined the AHS basketball team in late in October. Walker likes the potential of her freshman girls, too.

“We have great chemistry and interchangeable parts,” Walker said. “There’s opportunity to learn and grow.”

The Cougars added Allen County Athletic Conference teams Woodlan, South Adams and Bluffton to their schedule in place of Canterbury, Wawasee and Bishop Dwenger. South Adams is the second game of the season next Saturday afternoon after the opener with Woodlan.

EN BOYS

FROM PAGE A13

senior forward Hunter Shire, a football player who’s out for basketball for the first time, and junior guard Salah Ali, younger brother of former East Noble standout and Butler/Akron guard Ali Ali.

Bentley said he’s happy for the new opportunity of coaching in the Northeast 8 Conference.

The Knights will be a work in progress for awhile as they, along with their new coach, figure things out on the fly.

“We’ve got a lot of questions to answer,” Bentley said. “We’re going to hang

our hats on defense.”

Job No. 1 for Bentley and his staff at this point is identifying players’ strengths and then crafting roles for them.

“All of our guys have to shore up some practice habits and shore up expectations, things like that,” Bentley said. “It’s not about how good you are at the beginning, it’s about how good you are when sectionals come around. We’re building every day, and I think we’ll be pretty competitive.”

Bentley is 170-90 overall in 11 seasons — eight of which were spent at Angola. He led the Hornets to Class 3A sectional championships in 2016, 2018 and 2019.

ANGOLA BOYS

FROM PAGE A5

The Hornet gridders traveled to Knox for a regional game on Nov. 14 when this basketball preview section went to press. Senior Tyler Ruple and sophomores Niles Knox and Cru Weber are significant contributors on the football and varsity basketball teams.

Knox was one of the area’s best basketball players last season as a freshman, averaging 13.8 points and 6.9 rebounds per game and shooting 51% from the floor.

Ruple (4.5 ppg, 2.3 rpg and 1.7 steals per game last season) meshed quickly with Angola after transferring from Delta, Ohio. Weber, Bryan’s son, developed into a steady role player off the bench, averaging 3.1 points and 2.5 rebounds per game.

Senior point guard Ryan Stuckey is also back for the Hornets along with classmate and backcourt mate Tommy Caswell (6.3 points and 1.7 assists per game last season), athletic 6-foot-3 senior forward Ben Thomas (4.6 ppg, 1.7 rpg, 1.7 apg) and senior guard Landon Leach (5.9 ppg, 2.5 rpg).

Stuckey and Knox made the KPC Media All-Area team last season. The 6-4 Stuckey averaged 9.4 points, 5.1 rebounds, 2.9 assists and 1.4 steals per contest.

“We had 10 different guys lead us in scoring this summer,” Bryan Weber said. “We want to be more fluid offensively

“We also want to clean things up and add on to our defense.”

Angola has made some adjustment to its schedule.

His son Carson, a junior shooting guard, plays at Prairie Heights.

Bentley will be assisted by current assistants Josh Treesh, a former East Noble boys and Central Noble girls coach who led the Cougars to a Class 2A state championship in 2018.

Treesh will retain his role as junior varsity coach. Former Trine University forward and East Noble graduate Brent Cox, a member of the Thunder’s 2024 national championship squad, will coach the Knights’ C team. Current assistants Josh Deming and Brandon Nichols also return.

The Knights open the 2025-26 season Tuesday at West Noble.

Out are Bishop Dwenger, Northridge and Leo. In are Elkhart, Mississinewa and Marshall (Mich.).

The Hornets host Elkhart on Dec. 13, host Mississinewa between the holidays on Dec. 30, travel to Marshall on Jan. 30. One of Weber’s best friends is Mississinewa Community School Corporation assistant superintendent Steve Quaderer, a 1998 AHS graduate.

Weber added an assistant coach to his staff in his brother-in-law Duane Gaerte. Gaerte is a Fremont High School graduate who played basketball at Tri-State University. Gaerte is the father of leading Notre Dame volleyball player Morgan Gaerte.

Duane Gaerte joins John Berger and Ross Kinsey on Weber’s coaching staff.

CN BOYS

FROM PAGE A7

deep on the varsity. CN has 19 boys playing basketball overall.

“We want to be a tough team at the end of the year like we were last year,” Lemmon added.

Let’s Shoot for a WINNING SEASON!



St. Joe Valley

Conservation Club



ONE OF THE LARGEST SHOTGUN SHOOTING FACILITIES IN THE MIDWEST

One Round of Trap or Skeet FREE for first-time visitors

**Featuring 13 skeet
fields, 8 trap fields
and 4 lighted fields**

**Wednesday
10AM-4PM**

**Saturday
10AM-4PM**

St. Joe Valley Conservation Club

5871 C.R. 60 • St. Joe, IN 46785

(260) 337-1011

www.stjoevalleytrapandskeet.com

MEMBERSHIP IS A SLAM



DUNK

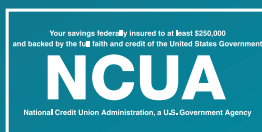
ProFed's been in the starting lineup for more than 90 years, helping members make all the right moves—from saving for the win to financing their next big play.

With a member-centric, local service that goes the full court and a team that knows what it means to show up for our community, we're here to help you score your financial goals—season after season.

Visit any of our 13 Northeast Indiana locations and experience what it means to get game-day treatment, every day.

**Join Us.
It's a Slam Dunk!**

**Scan the QR code
or visit profedcu.org
to learn more.**



Federally Insured by the NCUA

PROFED
CREDIT UNION