
Girls Lacrosse

New Albany loss sparked UA's state-title run

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The seeds for the Upper Arlington High School girls lacrosse team's Division I state championship may have been planted March 25.

It was that day that the Golden Bears took an 8-1 lead over eventual Division II state champion New Albany before being outscored 10-1 in the second half of an 11-9 loss.

"Emotions were running high after that game," senior defender Blosser said. "We all got together and said we are never going to let that happen again."

UA the won 20 of its last 21 games, including 14-8 over defending champion Cincinnati Sycamore in the final May 31 in Medina to finish 20-2 overall. It won the OCC-Buckeye Division at 7-0.

The state championship was the Bears' fourth since the move to a single-elimination format in 2001.

Sycamore, which beat UA 9-7 in the final last year, had been averaging 14.9 goals, but was held to fewer than 10 four times -- including a 14-9 loss to UA on May 3, ending the Aviators' 34-game winning streak.

"One of the things I'll remember about this team was the strength of our defense," first-year coach Lynda McCandlish said. "We could pressure teams everywhere on the field. Our defense won that state championship game."

"Beating Sycamore the first time was awesome," Blosser said.

"Before that game, Sycamore seemed unbeatable, almost inhuman. Beating them the first time showed people that it was anyone's game."

Blosser, who forced nine turnovers in the state championship game, is one of six seniors the Bears will lose, along with Samantha Ullum and Elizabeth Narwicz from the attack and Nancy Baker (42 goals, 3 assists), Lindsay Godard (78 goals, 27 assists) and Caitlin Oberlin (33 goals, 7 assists) from the midfield.

Godard, who was named as an all-American as well as first team all-OCC and all-district as well as the tournament's Offensive Most Valuable Player, will continue her career at Pennsylvania. Baker, who was honorable mention all-American, and first-team all-OCC and all-district, will play for Brown.

Oberlin (Lehigh), Narwicz (Roanoke) and Sam Ullum (Ithaca) also will continue to play. Oberlin was second-team all-OCC and all-district. Blosser was honorable mention all-district.

"The seniors defined this team," McCandlish said. "They were role models for what the rest of the team should strive to be."

In the OCC-Buckeye, the Bears finished ahead of Thomas Worthington (6-1), Worthington Kilbourne (5-2), Dublin Jerome (4-3), Dublin Coffman (3-4), Dublin Scioto (1-5-1), Hilliard Darby (0-5-2) and Hilliard Davidson (0-6-1).

Juniors Erin Junk (33 goals, 11 assists), Avery Toothman ((15 goals, 5 assists) and Rosie Knisley and freshman Adriane Ghidotti (31 goals, 5 assists) are expected to return to the attack.

The midfield should have back juniors Kelly Mason (41 goals, 10 assists), Marissa Henderson and Maggie Yerke, sophomores Megan Knoop, Lauren Hanover and Alice O'Neill and freshman Jordan John.

Sophomores Kevyn Harer (goalie), Tess Galantowicz (backup goalie), Susan Dappen and Kelly Dermott and junior Erin Williams should return to the defense.

Mason, who was an all-American, and Junk were first-team all-OCC and second-team all-district.

Williams and Knoop, the defensive MVP of the state tournament, were second-team all-OCC and Henderson received honorable mention.

At a glance

- Record: 20-2 overall, 7-0 (first) in OCC-Buckeye
- Seniors lost: Nancy Baker, Caroline Blosser, Lindsay Godard, Elizabeth Narwicz, Caitlin Oberlin and Samantha Ullum
- Key returnees: Adriane Ghidotti, Marissa Henderson, Erin Junk, Megan Knoop, Kelly Mason, Avery Toothman and Erin Williams

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