

Lacrosse
Girls coach set for first Academy game

Wednesday, April 8, 2009 1:24 PM

By PAUL BATTERSON, ThisWeek Staff Writer



By Lorrie Cecil/ThisWeek

The Golden Bears' Molly Groza (left) and Hilliard Darby's Brooke Loughridge battle for control of the ball April 2.

It hasn't taken long for first-year coach Kim Rocheleau to learn about the rivalry between the Upper Arlington High School girls lacrosse team and Columbus Academy, which will visit Friday.

"We definitely let her know about it," senior Erin Junk said. "There's a lot of extra energy when we play Academy. We enjoy playing each other because we both know both teams are good and we have to bring everything we have."

The biggest challenge for the Vikings might be slowing down the Bears. After losing its opener to Olney (Md.) Our Lady of Good Counsel 14-4 on March 21,

UA scored 19 and 22 goals in its next two games. The most impressive statistic, according to Rocheleau, is 16 players have scored at least one goal.

"Everyone is a threat," Rocheleau said. "If you try to face-guard one or two girls, there are going to be four other ones who will step up and shoot. We're doing a very good job in spreading things out."

"(Rocheleau) has set up this motion offense and the core of it is being unselfish," Junk said. "It takes awhile to develop that field vision and to recognize a good opportunity from a not-so-good opportunity. Spreading the ball around like that shows our maturity."

Junk said the seniors have instilled that attitude into the younger players. So far, four of the five freshmen have scored, but Rocheleau said more often than not the freshmen are bypassing an opportunity to score to set up someone who has a better chance.

"The biggest surprise so far is how well we're playing together," Rocheleau said. "You can talk about (playing selflessly) all the time, but it's been a great pleasure to watch it develop."

•The **boys** team will play Wednesday at Dublin Coffman, which beat Medina 18-7 last Saturday to improve to 2-2, with the losses to Towson (Md.) Loyola-Blakefield 17-4 on March 23 and Severn (Md.) Spalding 16-4 on March 24.

"Obviously they have some very talented attackers," coach Ted Wolford said. "Coffman is much better than it was a year ago and coach Marc Carlson is doing a good job over there. They're going to push (defenders) Phil Gross and Mark Crawford to communicate that much more on defense."

The Bears, who also play Wooster on Saturday, opened with an 11-6 victory over Toledo St. John's on April 2.

"So far what we've seen out of our team is a lot of inexperience, but that's kind of what we thought we'd see," Wolford said. "We have a lot of good athletes with a lot of good skills, but we need to get them some experience. We haven't solved all of our issues, but we have to be patient."