

MIFFLIN COUNTY GIRLS SOCCER

New coach has high expectations for skilled youth

By **SARAH WHITESEL**

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LEWISTOWN – Young and skillful.

Those would be two words to describe this year's Mifflin County girls' soccer team. They are two words, at least, that keep coming up for first year coach Steven DeArment as his team prepares for its second year of existence at the new Mifflin County High School.

"We're a very young team, but in those young players we seem to have a lot of skill," said DeArment, who explained that his team has a strong core group of sophomores, some of whom not only got varsity playing time last year, but can expect to play crucial rolls on this year's team as well.

Two of those sophomores in particular are midfielders Haley Predix and Kaitlyn Eckley.

"They're both sophomores, but they're tremendous skill players," DeArment said.

And despite their youth, DeArment has high hopes that they will lend to the team's overall success as they anchor the team from the midfield.

"I think we'll need them to control the field pretty significantly," DeArment said.

DeArment realizes the potential this group of underclassmen holds for the future, and he's also glad to be working as a first year coach with a group of girls who will be around in the years to come.

"I have a big core of girls that are going to be here for two years, and some will be here three or four years," DeArment said.

And in that regard, he's



Sentinel photo by BUFFIE BOYER

Members of the Mifflin County girls soccer team are, from left, front, Allison Besch, Kiara Noland, Breanna Cline, Taylor Dietrich, Blake Yoder, Kelsee Russler, Brooke Wilson and Maggie Wilson; middle, Rebecca Peachey, Alexis Kibe, Megan Becker, Bryce Papp, Haley Predix, Erika Shawver, Ellee Harpster and Halle Fisher; back, Kelsey Spicher, Hannah Winters, Kaitlyn Eckley, Kali Hunter, Michaela Wagner, Sage Heckendorn, Mackenzie Swetizer and McKenna Smith.

AT A GLANCE

MIFFLIN COUNTY HUSKIES

District 6, Class AAA

Coach: Steven DeArment, assisted by Dan Schomaker
2011: 4-11

excited to see what type of program he might be able to build in the future as he has a foundation of girls who will be around in the years to come.

"You can establish some routines, and you can establish some relationships that are going to last a couple of

years," DeArment explained.

But, as excited as DeArment is about the future of his team, he reserved comment about how he thinks it will fare this year until he has more time to see the girls in action. This hesitation comes from the fact that not only is his team young and largely untested, but he's also unsure what the competition will be like as Mifflin County completes its transition from a pair of Mountain League schools to one in the Mid-Penn Conference.

"I don't think any of us really have an idea what we're getting into with the Mid-

Penn (Conference)," DeArment said, explaining that he is largely unfamiliar with what the level of competition will be. "I think we're just going to play it by ear and see what we come into."

DeArment also said the state's move to consolidate girls soccer as a fall sport could have an impact on teams in the Mid-Penn, which is rooted in District 3, where most girls teams played in the spring prior to this year.

But regardless of DeArment's uncertainty about how his team will measure up in the Mid-Penn, one thing for certain is that he has

a highly skilled group of players.

One player in particular who he said stands out is senior Erika Shawver, who like Predix and Eckley, plays the midfield. DeArment ex-

pects that she will be a great contributor to the team.

"She's one of our top players, and she's also a true leader in every sense of the

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