

## BELLEVILLE MENNONITE FIELD HOCKEY

# Low numbers, inexperience will test stick squad

By **GREG WILLIAMS**

*Sentinel correspondent*

**BELLEVILLE** — You could see the relief on the face of Belleville Mennonite coach Glenna Young as her team went through field hockey drills on the opening day of fall sports practices.

For much of the summer, Young, who is beginning her 11th season at the helm, worried how the Trojans would even field a varsity team in 2012. With the graduation of six starters and leading scorer Tori Byler opting not to come out, BMS was left with 12 players - one above the minimum number required.

"We have our work cut out for us," Young said. "There's no doubt about it. We just have to continue to work hard and ask the girls that we do have to step up."

As Young spoke about her squad, there was a sense of concern in her voice. In recent years, the Trojans have remained successful on the field as the number of players has dwindled due to a decline in the number of girls enrolled at the small, private school.

Typically, Belleville Mennonite fields varsity and JV squads with 20-24 players. Last year, that number dipped to 15. Now, Young finds herself staring at a roster with numbers at an all-

### AT A GLANCE

#### BELLEVILLE MENNONITE SCHOOL TROJANS

District 6, Class AA

Coach: Glenna Young,  
assisted by Brittany  
Yoder

2011: 10-8

time low — and that represents three-quarters of the school's PIAA population of girls, which was measured last October.

"We have no depth," she said. "This is the lowest number I've had since I've been coaching."

Coming off a season in which Belleville Mennonite captured its third district title and advanced to the PIAA playoffs, she admits the lack of numbers makes it difficult to practice.

"We can't scrimmage," Young said. "So we've been working on drills to get our passing to be more accurate and get that down."

Despite the loss of Byler's scoring punch, the Trojans do have senior Hannah Templeton and junior Meredith Spicher back. Both Templeton and Spicher racked up four goals and six assists a year ago.

A wing, Templeton's great asset is her aggressive nature, Young said.

"With her speed, she takes the ball down the right side and really looks to score. The same is true with Meredith. She's really developed into a strong player at center front," said Young, who believes putting the ball in the back of the cage could be one of her team's strengths.

"We seem to do pretty well with moving the ball down the field," the coach added.

The key to making that happen is senior Rachel Anders, who returns at midfield.

"She is a really strong defender and has really nice drives," Young said.

The Trojan coach will rely on her six returning players to carry the team.

"We need them to step up and be good leaders and keep the communication strong," she said. "They need to direct and enforce where the new players should be on the field."

Young will also rely on the game experience that twins Hannah Yoder and Rebekah Yoder gained last season. The juniors and must anchor the defense this year.

"We lost a lot of numbers on defense as far as our starters were concerned," Young said. "We need to regroup and work hard."

Keeping the ball in the offensive zone also takes the pressure of a young defense and goalkeeper. The Trojans



Sentinel photo by BUFFIE BOYER

Members of the Belleville Mennonite School field hockey team are, from left, front, Amber Pennepacker, Rebekah Kauffman, Mollie Morgan, Sydney Renninger and Meredith Spicher; back, Grace Peachey, Bekah Yoder, Rachel Anders, Hannah Templeton, Hannah Yoder and Tori Gallaway. Hyojae Jung also is a member.

must replace Alycia Hoyer and will look to do so with either sophomore Becky Kauffman or freshman Mollie Morgan.

Kauffman saw a lot of playing time in practice last season, while Morgan served as the goalie for the junior high team this past spring.

"Either way we'll be breaking in somebody for the first time," Young said.

Along with Morgan, freshmen Amber Penepacker,

Grace Peachey and Sydney Renninger all came up through the ranks of the junior high program. Penepacker should play fullback, while Peachey is a midfielder and Renninger should be at home on offense.

"This might be their first year of playing at the varsity level, but they're not new to the game," Young said. "I think they'll get their feet wet and come along quickly. It could definitely be a rebuild-

ing year with only six returnees."

Rounding out the roster are sophomores Tori Gallaway, a first-year varsity player who came out of the junior high program, and Hyojae Jung, an exchange student. Gallaway should find a home on defense, while Jung has yet to arrive from Korea.

BMS starts the season with five home games, including Tuesday's opener with Juniata.

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