

MIDD-WEST CROSS COUNTRY

Huskies

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seniors: Ian McGinnis at striker; James Wilburne and Ben Kauffman at midfield; Ben Knepp, Bret Pallotto and Tucker Bachman forming the defense; and Derek Heimbach at goalie.

Byler expects his seniors to support the team from every part of the field.

“They’ve already stepped up into leadership positions

as far as being good role models for how the guys are supposed to conduct themselves on the field and off the field,” he said.

As the beginning of the season approaches, Byler has a very positive attitude about what his team may be able to accomplish this year.

“So as long as the boys come to practice, work hard, stay tuned to what we’re telling them, and stay positive, things are going to go great,” he said.

Wildcats

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Speedy Scott Kerstetter, another all-star, also is back for a final year.

“He might be our fastest player,” Magill said. “He’s a sprinter on the track team, so he has some pretty good wheels.”

Seniors Aaron Smith and Kyle Sheaffer and juniors Cody Cauffman, Cory Losch and Garrett Byers should log plenty of minutes in the backfield. Sophomores Hunter Miller and Hunter Wirth are also competing for starting roles.

Smith and Byers may also play in the midfield, along with juniors Jarrett Fortenbaugh and Lucas Grimm and sophomore Hunter Roth.

Magill is also hoping that senior Ryan Kerstetter can jumpstart the Wildcat offense from the goalkeeper position.

“He’s learned to be pretty effective with his feet,” Magill explained of his all-star netminder. “So we can play the ball back to him and he can start the action forward and distribute the ball.”

Rounding out the Wildcats’ roster are senior Sara Barton, a midfielder; junior Curtis Mather, a defender; sophomore Abbey Korber, a midfielder; sophomore

Nicholas Kerstetter, a defender/goalie; and sophomore Raya Kellenberger, a midfielder.

Magill is high on forward Seth Ferguson, who could see some quality minutes as a freshman. That talented class also includes midfielders Adrik Woodard, Katherine Van Horn, Kevin Sheaffer, Truman Grimm and Zachery Sassaman, and defenders Jeremy Bower and Noah Schaeffer. Schaeffer can also play goalie.

“We’re going to need guys coming off the bench to give us quality minutes,” Magill said. “There’s a big contrast from the JV to the varsity level. If we can get some solid contributions from them, we could be a formidable team.”

The TVL expands to an eight-team table in 2012, including the return of Juniata and the addition of Lancaster Country Day.

“We could be contenders,” Magill said. “Our first 11 will have a good bit of experience. We need to get our young guys some playing time by the time the playoffs roll around. The fact that they do get that varsity experience is a pretty big deal.”

The schedule-makers have put Greenwood to the test early. The Wildcats visit East Juniata for their season opener on Tuesday.



Sentinel photo by BRADLEY KREITZER

Members of the Mid-West cross country team are, from left, front, Olivia Eby, Kaitlyn Plummer, Katie Sims, Kyle Webb, Amber Fawver, Kacie Bogar, Laura Steining and Janelle Peachy; back, Ben Kline, Alex Lieberman, Seth Sparrer, Jace Creamer, Kordell Bingaman and Dalton Yoder. Keith Romine also is a member.

Focus is on big meets, individuals

By **JEFF FISHBEIN**

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MIDDLEBURG — Stan Share has been coaching for most of two decades. And in that time, he has applied only one standard to cross country as a new season begins: It’s about the running, and nothing else.

Share, in his fifth year at Mid-West after a 10-year stint with Heartland Conference rival Milton, doesn’t look at meet records, only at individual results. The important runs, he said, come in larger invitationals, at the annual league meet and in the District 4 races.

So, when asked what happened a year ago, his response was curt but polite: “Last year’s record means nothing in terms of this year

AT A GLANCE

MIDD-WEST MUSTANGS

District 4, Class AA

Coach: Stan Share

team. It’s apples and oranges,” he said.

Honesty can be refreshing from a coach, even when it seems brutal. It’s not anger or negativity, Share insists, only his worldview of how distance running should be — one he says is shared by much of the world outside of high school.

“If we are to train high school runners to love the sport and have some of the better motivated ones compete at the college level, then we need to drop the obsession with leagues, wins and losses, standings, etc.,” he said. “Cross country at the

university level and in Europe doesn’t focus on those things. Neither do I.”

Working by himself, Share said he sometimes find that he’s by himself when he tries to instill that value of running into his athletes — and that, he said, combined with little exposure to his runners before practices began, means there’s nothing but work ahead.

“Last year’s teams took the summer prep work as nothing they were interested in doing,” he said, and the season, by any standard, was not one to brag about. “Since we did nothing last year and have had only one week of preseason practice, I have no significant stats or returnees to flash about.

“Our strengths and weaknesses are ironically the same,” he said. “Our weak-

ness is that both teams are young with little experience. Our strength may also be our youth, because we have no idea what we are capable of and therefore have no self-imposed limitations like some more experienced runners develop.”

The season includes five Heartland meets, none of them on Mid-West’s own course, and the NEPA Invitational, run on the same Bloomsburg University course that hosts District 4. That seems to suit Share just fine.

“I don’t really care how we perform in the league, because again those are not the memories these athletes will carry with them 10 years from now,” he said. “If they do well in the big meets, or earn a medal, or move onto the state meet, then they will have memories.”



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