

## MIFFLIN COUNTY FIELD HOCKEY

# 2013 field hockey squad has a legacy to live up to

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### AT A GLANCE

#### MIFFLIN COUNTY HUSKIES

District 6, Class AAA

Coach: Tish Maclay, assisted by Chelsea Zook, Courtney Kanagy and Ashley Suydam

2012: 11-8, 9-5 Mid-Penn Commonwealth Division

LEWISTOWN — Regardless of how any Mifflin County athletic team performed in the school's first two years of existence, each year was not without its defining moment.

2011 will always be remembered as the year Lewistown and Indian Valley came together to form Mifflin County High School, while 2012 took its form as the school's maiden voyage into the Mid-Penn Conference.

However, 2013 offers a new challenge.

All external molds are gone, meaning the year will be defined by performance alone. And as the teams hit the field in preparation for the 2013 fall sports season, perhaps no group will be as thoroughly challenged nor as capably equipped to chip out its own place in the annals of the girls on the field hockey pitch.

The challenge lies in matching or surpassing the team's past success — the first District 6 title in school history in 2011 and a winning record, both overall and against Mid-Penn Commonwealth Division opponents — in the school's debut in the venerable league. Only one other team was able to make that claim by the end of last school year.

There also is a void left by a strong graduating class. However, even without the presence of last year's Commonwealth Division all-stars Sam Peters and Whitney Strohecker or a slew of others with valuable varsity experience, coach Tish Maclay and the team

has set some lofty goals for this season as it attempts to continue the string of success with which the program has come to be associated.

"We want to be district champion again, and we're going to work hard to make that happen," Maclay said without hesitation when asked about team goals. "And we want to advance in the state tournament — we want to keep playing in November."

To play into November the team will need to replace last year's seniors — a challenge the team has overcome many times in years past — and while Maclay acknowledged that this year's Huskies are more youthful and inexperienced than before, she thinks the girls are excited about making their own mark.

"The girls are excited for the opportunity to step up and make their own mark on Mifflin County field hockey history," she said. "I think they were in the shadows of some players before that aren't here any longer, and I think that a defining time for this team will be to see them play as a total team out there. ... They're excited to see what they can bring and what they can offer."

Some of the returning girls with varsity experience include Kezia Loht, keeper Jordan Myers, all-star Grace



Sentinel photo by BRADLEY KREITZER

Members of the Mifflin County field hockey team are, from left, front, Allison Sheetz, Hannah Kerstetter, Maddie Rutherford, Jordan Myers, Brooke Cherry, Katey Cramer and Ann Bielski; second row, Gabby Minck, Rylie Phillips, Abby Minck, Marina Smith, Camryn Warnick and Allisyn Emel; third row, Ali McCurdy, Anne Harshbarger, Brenna Shilling, Kelly Fox, Jenna Cramer, Selene McCaffrey, Renee Grill, Sara Neff and Samantha Morningstar; fourth row, Madyson Kuhns, Kelly Hain, Karilyn Elder, Rachel Neff, Grace Wagner, Nikita Edmiston, Maria Fowler, Marissa Nyler, Kezia Loht and Emma Aumiller.

Wagner, Renee Grill, Sara Neff and Nikita Edmiston, so this year's team is not without experience. Maclay said the team has also been working hard during the off-season, so the drive for success is certainly present.

"I think the girls do a lot of work in the offseason," Maclay said. "This year we played a lot more competitive field hockey in the summer and traveled to do that, and I think the girls are really committed to their off-season workouts."

The Huskies also have some players moving up from last year's JV team,

and Maclay said she expects Marissa Byler, Madison Kuhns and Selene McCaffrey to be potential impact players.

And impact is exactly what the Huskies will need to confront the always-tough Commonwealth Division and to continue the rivalry that has developed with District 6 opponent State College.

"We're in a tough conference, but we love it. It's competitive, it gives our kids more exposure and we get to play on turf a lot more. So we really like being in the Mid-Penn Con-

ference," Maclay said.

The team to beat in the Commonwealth Division is Central Dauphin, which is not only the two time defending Commonwealth

champion, but which was a District 3 Class AAA runner-up to eventual state runner-up Penn Manor in

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