Mount Mercy Softball Looking to Take the Next Step

Last season the Mount Mercy Softball team posted a league record of 7-1 but lost in the semi-finals of the Monsignor Martin Playoffs. With ten returning players from last year’s team, including eight starters, Doug Webster, in his seventh season as coach, is hoping for an even more successful season in 2017.

Much of the team’s success will hinge on the right arms of returning First Team All-Catholics selections Laura Gregory (Buffalo) and Allison Rogowski (West Seneca). The two juniors return to the mound, giving the Magic a formidable pair of pitchers. In addition to pitching, both players are strong hitters and play multiple positions when they are not pitching. Gregory finished with a 3-1 record on the mound during the regular season, pitching 24 innings. She gave up 16 hits and 7 runs while striking out 37 batters. She had an ERA of 1.88. She also posted a batting average of .464 with 13 hits, including two doubles and a triple. She drove in 16 runs and finished with an on base percentage of .607. Rogowski posted a 4-0 league record while giving up 24 hits and ten runs in 24 innings. She struck out 19 and had a 3.0 ERA. Rogowski had a .500 batting average and an amazing .722 on base percentage. She amassed 9 hits, including two doubles, a triple and a homerun. She finished with 9 RBIs.

Chloe Manikowski (Cheektowaga), another of the team’s talented juniors, is also a returning All-Catholic. Manikowski, the team’s shortstop, led the team in runs scored and was a top defensive performer. She had a .483 batting average with 14 hits, including two doubles and seven runs batted in. She had a .621 on base percentage which helped contribute to her team high 15 runs scored.

Webster also expects a big year from junior Emily Lewandowski (East Aurora). Lewandowski is able to play many positions for the Magic and her versatility will be an asset. Lewandowski was limited by an injury last season.

Also returning to starting roles this season are seniors Mallory Ashe (Buffalo) and Beth Hughes (Orchard Park) and juniors Mary Bala (West Seneca) and Taylor Hoch (East Aurora). Ashe will play first base for Mount Mercy and Hughes, a four year starter, returns to centerfield. Bala will be behind the plate for the third year, catching for Gregory and Rogowski. Hoch will switch from third to second base this season.

Also returning to the team is third year junior outfielder Fiona Danahy (Buffalo) and second year player sophomore Megan Cycon (West Seneca). Cycon will also play the outfield. Depth will be provided by varsity newcomers junior Madalyn McCarthy (Buffalo) and freshmen Molly Shanahan (West Seneca) and Christina Zambron (Lackawanna).

As with all fast pitch softball teams, Webster feels the team’s success this season will depend on strong pitching, hitting and fielding. He feels that defending champion Nardin, along with Mount Saint Mary and Sacred Heart will be the team’s toughest opponents. Mount Mercy opens its 13 game slate on Tuesday April 4th against Akron. The team’s first home game is scheduled for April 22nd against Rochester Mercy at 1 PM.