

# Columbus, Warriors hockey teams debut this weekend

By **DOUG NEWHOFF**  
Courier Sports Writer

Waterloo's two high school hockey teams begin a quest to return the state championship to its home this weekend as the 1986-87 Iowa High School Hockey League season opens.

Waterloo's Warriors, last year's state tournament and regular-season runners-up, debut at 7:30 p.m. Friday when they host Valley-Dowling at McElroy Auditorium. Columbus travels to defending champion Ames Sunday afternoon in its opener.

Both Columbus and the Warriors

have a nucleus of veterans back, but balance may be the operative word in the IHSHL this season.

"I think we're gonna have some good hockey this year," says Warriors Coach Dave Swick, who has seen all the teams play.

Leading the offense for the three-time champion Warriors are seniors Marc Gillard and Del Donaldson. Gillard was the league's third-leading scorer a year ago with 51 points and Donaldson was eighth with 30 points.

They'll be on a line with Chad McFarland while Swick's second unit

will feature sophomore Tom Meyer (17 points) centering juniors Rob Dietz and Scott Carnes.

The Warriors' strength early may be the defense where most of the players were regulars a year ago. Scott Smith and Reece Bixby are one pair along with Brandon Bunger and Rob Hall and Matt Smith and Jeff Schake.

Scott Ames saw some action last year in goal and returns with newcomer David Richardson expected to split time there.

"We do have an experienced defensive crew," says Swick, "and if

Marc, Del and Tommy repeat what they did last season, we could have a good shot."

Mike Brown is looking for more scoring from his Columbus team, which finished with 28 goals in 18 IHSHL games a year ago.

"We've gotta put the puck in the net," says Brown.

Brown's top line consists of Warriors transfer Brian Wehr (19 points) along with Columbus' leading returning scorer, Neal Lanigan, and Sean Wirtjes who is temporarily ineligible. The next shift features David Dutkowski, freshman Jason

Bloom and Jeff Wiedner. All but Bloom were regulars last season.

Pat Lanigan and Jason Hedican are the goaltenders and Lanigan has two years' experience. Defensively, veterans Craig Becker and Marty Morgan are one pair with Magnus Nilsson and Scott Jasper as another set. Nilsson is an exchange student from Stockholm, Sweden, while Jasper is an ex-forward making the transition to defense.

The Sailors have lost two players until around Christmas with broken arms — Warriors transfer Andy MacLennan and Tom Ritchie.