

PREP HOCKEY

Warriors visit D.M. for opener

WATERLOO — A year ago, the Waterloo Warriors enjoyed one of their best high school hockey seasons, posting a 28-6-2 regular-season record and finishing third in the Midwest High School Hockey League standings and postseason tournament.

Tonight, the Warriors begin the 2008-09 campaign with high expectations once again. They'll face off against the Des Moines Capitals, one of the MHSHL's traditional powers, at 7:30 p.m. in Des Moines.

With the return of Jake Irey, Dawson Kuhlmann and Brian Dobes, Waterloo has three of the league's top players.

Irey, a senior from Waterloo West High, finished second in the MHSHL scoring race a year ago with 47 goals and 38 assists for 85 total points. Kuhlmann, a junior from Sumner, contributed 22 goals and 48 total points. Meanwhile, Dobes was a fixture in the net, playing every game and 1,651 total minutes. He led the league in shutouts with nine while ranking third in goals-against average at 1.72 and third in save percentage (.925).

That trio of standouts leads a group of 10 returning letterwinners who will be expected to step into more prominent roles this season with the graduation of five productive regulars from a year ago. West junior Will Becker, West sophomore Jordan Sheeley, East senior Michael Thompson, West juniors Jeremy Wright and Spencer Warren, Cedar Falls junior Tucker Schweer and Union Community of La Porte City's Damon Powell are the other varsity veterans.

Des Moines is coming off a 25-8-1 season.