

# Warriors building for future

## Waterloo opens season at home tonight

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**WATERLOO** — The puck drops on a new season for a Waterloo Warriors team full of new faces Friday.

Returning only six players who appeared in more than 20 games last season and 14 players who appeared on the varsity roster, the Warriors will need to replace a significant chunk of their production from last season.

Head coach Brian Cook said the Warriors consist of a majority of underclassmen which could cause some growing pains early in the season.

"It will probably be somewhat of a rebuilding year with the number of younger players that will need to play on varsity and the limited number of older players — juniors and seniors — as compared to the previous years," Cook said. "Teams that are successful are usually older teams. ... We are trying to look to improve weekly as we go."

With 28 players appearing on the varsity roster for the first time this season, Cook said his players will need to adjust to the other speed of the varsity game.

He added that the physicality of the MHSHL will be another aspect his players must adjust to.

"It is a big jump from playing bantams or playing JV to varsity hockey," Cook said. "The other challenge is also relying on such a young team with how physical it is, keeping everyone healthy. ... That is my concern with such a young team. We may run into some injuries."

Behind the pipes, the Warriors have a large hole to fill after the graduation of goaltender Caleb Raisty, the MHSHL all-time career leader in save percentage with a .952 mark after three seasons as the starter. Raisty also broke the single-season save percentage record with a .959 save percentage last season.

"Those are pretty big shoes,"



CHRIS ZOELLER, COURIER STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Waterloo's Jayden White attacks the Cedar Rapids net at Young Arena in February.

Cook said. "We do not have any expectations that they would come close to what Caleb gave us the last three years. We are working out some systems that will prevent the number of shots throughout the year. We are hoping our goaltenders can stop the first shot, then we will take care of the rebound."

According to Cook, inexperience in the net — Waterloo only rosters sophomores or juniors at the position — will force Waterloo to be precise in its defensive zone.

Cook tabbed sophomore Gavin Jebbe from Waterloo West as the likely opening night starter between the pipes tonight. Jebbe appeared in three games for the Warriors' junior varsity team last season including one shutout victory.

Another option in net for the Warriors is Waverly-Shell Rock

freshman Jocelyn Endelman. While she might not be a varsity contributor out of the gate, Cook spoke highly of her potential.

"She is going to be one that probably is going to step in and play a lot of games for us whether it is at JV or varsity," Cook said. "Her work ethic is pretty good ... not shying away from anything ... We have high hopes for her in the future to win us some hockey games at the varsity level."

Up front, Waterloo lost eight of its top 10 scorers from last season, a group that accounted for 109 of the Warriors' 133 goals.

Cook said the Warriors will look to Waterloo East senior Jayden White, Columbus Catholic's Max Schuchmann and Denver sophomores Dayton Niedert and Andrew Busbaum to provide a "scoring punch."

Niedert leads all returnees with

7 goals and 13 assists in 30 games last season. Busbaum posted 7 goals and 6 assists while White added 2 goals and 2 assists.

Schuchmann returns to the Warriors after spending time playing for teams outside of Waterloo. Schuchmann played for Northstar Christian Academy 16U AAA team in the North American Premier Hockey League, scoring 4 goals and 6 assists in 24 games last season.

Cook said the Warriors are working to temper expectations after last season, take their lumps early and hit their stride at the right time.

"Our goal is to make the state tournament," Cook said. "We do not want to set our expectations too high initially. We will probably reset our expectations throughout the season. ... If we progress with our maturity and we get

## Waterloo Warriors Schedule

- Oct. 28—Ames
- Oct. 29—@Mason City
- Nov. 2—@Cedar Rapids
- Nov. 10—Dubuque
- Nov. 11—@DM Oak Leafs
- Nov. 17—@Dubuque
- Nov. 26—Sioux City
- Nov. 27—Sioux City
- Dec. 3—@Mason City
- Dec. 8—Cedar Rapids
- Dec. 9—@DM Oak Leafs
- Dec. 17—@Kansas City
- Dec. 18—@Kansas City
- Jan. 7—Quad City
- Jan. 8—Quad City
- Jan. 11—@Cedar Rapids
- Jan. 13—DM Oak Leafs
- Jan. 20—Cedar Rapids
- Jan. 21—Omaha
- Jan. 22—Omaha
- Jan. 28—@Lincoln
- Jan. 29—@Lincoln
- Feb. 4—@Quad City
- Feb. 5—@Quad City
- Feb. 10—Dubuque
- Feb. 11—Ames
- Feb. 17—DM Oak Leafs
- Feb. 18—DM Capitals
- Feb. 19—DM Capitals
- Feb. 25—@Fremont
- Feb. 26—@Fremont

better play, we may adjust that. Initially, we are looking to improve throughout the year, make the tournament and then make a splash at the tournament at the end of the year."

"Sometimes you are going to go through a year where you kind of have to struggle and have to build up some guys from the ground up. You have to keep them with their eyes on the ball that we are building also for the future along with this year."