

A transition year on the court for the Lady Gulls

By Gary Henley
Seaside Signal

Seaside girls basketball coach Mike Hawes doesn't pull any punches when talking about the upcoming season: "We're going to be thin, no doubt about it."

Seaside's best player over the last four years, their all-anything, is well on her way to a promising hoops career at Fresno State University. Maddi Utti has graduated, but life goes on for the Lady Gulls.

"Obviously this is the transition year without Maddi, and there's no way that we can replicate all the things that she did," Hawes said. "But at the same time, these girls want to establish their own identity."

And establishing any kind of identity in Cowapa League girls basketball is never easy.

The Cowapa

"Banks will be good, Astoria should be better, and you never know what Valley Catholic might have," said Hawes, while it's hard to imagine the Gulls not being a part of the state tournament, which they've played in every year for the past four years.

Over that same time span, Seaside has a league record of 35-5.

"I'm sure there's some teams out there that would happily like to get back at us," Hawes said.

The Lady Gulls

Utti graduated from Seaside as the all-time team leader in career points (1,794), assists (504) and steals (503), and season record-holder in all three.

She will be impossible to replace, and the Gulls can't even begin to try.

"We still have some kids who can shoot the ball, and we've got some quickness,"

Seaside Girls Basketball

COACH: Mike Hawes, second year

2016-17: 20-5 (9-1 league)

PLAYOFFS: Third place at state. Defeated Cascade and Marshfield, lost to Sutherlin.

ALL-LEAGUE LOSSES: Maddi Utti (MVP), Sydney Villegas

ALL-LEAGUE RETURNERS: Bryre Babbitt, Sr.; Jetta Ideue, Sr.

Hawes said. "We'll just try to play to our strengths. The idea is to have some different people who can handle the ball. Whoever gets the dang rebound — which will be a challenge, because we're really short — we can spread and go, and hopefully fire away. I'm as curious as anyone to see how we'll do."

There's still plenty of varsity experience on the roster, with seniors Bryre Babbitt, Jetta Ideue and Anesha Smart; and juniors Annaka Garhofer and Emy Kiser.

Junior Gretchen Hoekstre is dealing with a shoulder injury and hopes to be back by January, while junior Trinity Turner suffered a recent knee injury, and may be lost for the season, Hawes said.

Making the jump to varsity will be juniors Jessica Angulo-Joli, Alyssa Goin and Katie Zagata. Sophomore Ruby Davis rounds out the roster.

"We've had some injuries and sickness, so we were running about 20 players," Hawes said after two weeks. "The numbers have been challenging. It's leaving us pretty thin."



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TOP, Seaside's Emy Kiser, Gretchen Hoekstre and Maddi Utti play tight defense on Molalla. While Utti has graduated, Kiser and Hoekstre look to be team leaders. ABOVE, Cascade Cougars' Kristin Cade, left, and Seaside Seagulls' Emy Kiser battle for the ball as Seaside faces off against Cascade in the 4A State Quarterfinals at Forest Grove High School in Forest Grove. Seaside defeated Cascade 47-42. RIGHT, Senior Jetta Ideue will be one of several Seaside players looking to score.



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