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New coach greets Kennedy softball team

By Greg Kleven Apr 21, 2014



Kennedy infielder Cassie Anderson fields a throw before tagging out Hopkins runner Natalie DenHartog at second during the Eagles' 11-1 non-conference softball loss Friday, April 11, at Hopkins High School. (Photo by Mark Trockman-trockstock.com)

Kennedy's youthful softball squad has a new look on and off the field this season.

Ashley Saaranen is the Eagles' new head coach replacing Jim Hanson, who resigned that position to take over the same job at Jefferson.

"I'm really excited about this season," said coach Saaranen. "The girls are working hard and maintaining positive attitudes.

"We are young, but the girls show a lot of potential."

Sophomore third baseman Morgan Garbrecht and senior first baseman Sami Reis will serve as Kennedy's co-captains this season.

Junior Ashley Nagel returns as Kennedy's starting pitcher. Sophomore Alexa Miller will be the Eagles' back-up pitcher.

Kennedy's infield will consist of Reis at first, ninth-grader Sydney Marr at second, senior Cassie Anderson at shortstop and Garbrecht at third. The Eagles' utility infielders are juniors Kailey Witt and Lauren Sapp.

Kennedy's outfield candidates are Miller, senior Mariah Propes, junior Sarah Smallfield and senior Emma Finwall.

Senior Bridget Lotzer will be counted upon for catching duty.

"We are fundamentally strong in the skills area," said coach Saaranen. "Nagel should do a good job pitching for us.

"But offensively, we must be more aggressive."

Kennedy opened its season with an 11-1 loss to non-conference foe Hopkins April 11. Nagel scored Kennedy's lone run.

Kennedy will host Eagan at 4:15 p.m. Monday, April 21, at Kelly Field. The Eagles are home for a 4:15 p.m. game against Eastview Tuesday, April 22. Kennedy remains home to play Rosemount at 4:15 p.m. Wednesday, April 23.

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