

The Reporter (<http://www.thereporteronline.com>), Serving North Penn, Indian Valley and neighboring communities, PA.

Go Back

Print Page

[Sports](#) » [High school](#) »

WATER POLO: Maidens look to defend their crown

By KEV HUNTER

khunter@thereporteronline.com

Wednesday, September 5, 2012

It doesn't seem too long ago that the North Penn girls water polo team earned a thrilling 9-7 win over Wilson in the state final to earn the Maidens their fourth state title in six years.

North Penn is right back in the pool, with a squad that should be one of the best around in 2012.

"The team has the potential to compete for a league title and challenge the top teams in the state," coach Bill Bartle said.

The Maidens welcome back some quality veterans, including some big scorers from last year. Seniors Brittney Patterson (65 goals in 2011), Aspen Trautz (36 goals), and Karlie Vogt (18 goals) should give the attack plenty of punch.

Also, junior Kat Perkins returns in net for the Maidens after racking up 180 saves a year ago in the state title run.

North Penn will look to hold off challenges from Souderton Area and Pennridge as it goes for another conference championship.

"This season looks promising," Pennridge girls coach Ryan Griffiths said. "We look to build upon our second consecutive berth in the Eastern Conference playoffs and reach new heights of water polo this season. We had a very successful summer club season as well as a large team turnout at the Princeton University Water Polo Camp."

Following is a team-by-team look at the area.

Girls

North Penn

Coach: Bill Bartle (27th season overall)

Last year's record: 28-1; State Champions

Key performers lost: Brooke Else (All American); Alex Kajari (All American)

Key returners: Jenny Halcovage, Sr.; Tess O'Neil, Sr.; Brittney Patterson, Sr.; Aspen Trautz, Sr.; Karlie Vogt, Sr.; Kat Perkins, Jr.

Others to watch: Molly Flannery, Sr.; Gabby Friday, Sr.; Becca Hoch, Sr.; Emily Brower, Jr.; Emily Dunigan, Jr.; Kelly Fellmeth, Jr.; Jen Krout, Jr.

Strengths: Experience, dedication and cohesiveness

Question marks: Depth and team speed

Pennridge

Coach: Ryan Griffiths (first season)

Last year's record: 15-8

Key performers lost: Shelby Shaffer; Gabi Rinaldi; Alexis Detweiler; Deanna Maurone

Key returners: Julia Naodovich, Sr.; Rachel Pugnetti, Sr.; Morgan Allison, Sr.; Victoria Redmond, Sr.; Chelsea Weiss, Sr.

Others to watch: Jackie Cios, Jr.; Maggie Walker, Jr.; Devyn Dyer, Jr.

Strengths: A core group of players who have played high school and club water polo together for several years now.

Question marks: Team depth. With a team size of 20 total girls out this season it is going to be a question of how deep the Rams can hold on in tight games. The conditioning program has taken a step up to ensure that the squad is able to play its best when it matters most.

Souderton Area

Coach: Chris Hemmerle (first season)

Last year's record: 18-9; fourth at states

Key performers lost: Sarah Kesack; Jill Whitmire; Ann Fadden

Key returners: Alyssa Santangelo, Sr.; Laureana Zrada, Sr.; Bronwyn Smith, Sr.; Megan Furey, Sr.; Kara Stegman, Sr., goalie; Erica Witoslawski, Sr.; Kaitlyn Roberts, Sr.

Strengths: A solid group of core returners

Question marks: Overall depth

Boys

North Penn

Coach: Jason Grubb (third season)

Last year's record: 22-6; State Runner-ups

Key performers lost: Nick Poulin; Jason Deana; Kevin Dunigan; Pat Dunigan; Jeremy Smith, goalie

Key returners: Jack Morris, Sr.; Brett Else, So.; Shane Hennessey, So.; Justin Veverka, Sr.; Jon Krail, Jr., goalie

Strengths: Morris, a 69-goal scorer a year ago, gives the offense a reliable weapon

Question marks: Making up for the loss of some quality seniors, who provided the bulk of the scoring

Pennridge

Coach: Ken Vincent (second season)

Last year's record: 9-11

Key performers lost: No starters

Key returners: Josh Apple, Sr.; David Zurmuhl, Sr.; Jon Spehar, Sr.; Connor Longo, Sr.

Others to watch: D.J. Maurone, So.; Nick Spehar, Fr.

Strengths: The team now has 39 on the roster after the two weeks of tryouts and cuts.

Question marks: The team is working on improving its swimming speed and endurance as the season progresses. Many of the other teams throughout the state have a number of established swimmers and the Rams will be working to both defend against these swimming threats as well as become more of a swimming threat to the other teams.

Coach Vincent says: "The challenge for the Pennridge team is to pull together the chemistry of 39 athletes and to be able

to grow together as a team and function together as one finely-tuned machine.”

Souderton Area

Coach: Chris Hemmerle (first season)

Last year's record: 15-14; fifth at states

Key performers lost: Elliot Miller; Michael Hay; Jake Mertz; Alex Paparella; Tyler Wenzel, goalie

Key returners: Scott Jorgensen, Sr.; Kevin Callaghan, Sr.; Holden Kudla, Sr.; Matt Evers, Sr.; Nick Wieder, Sr.

Others to watch: Kevin Musterait, So., goalie

Coach Hemmerle says: “Souderton water polo is returning with a solid group of seniors and underclassmen, many of which have been training in the offseason. Both the boys and girls teams have a large number of seniors who can bring the experience needed into every big game.”

Follow Kev Hunter on Twitter @khunter10

For breaking news SMS alerts from The Reporter, text LANSPORTS to 22700 from your mobile phone. Text HELP for help. Text STOP to cancel.

Go Back

Print Page

URL: <http://www.thereporteronline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20120905/SPORTS01/120909845&template=printart>

© 2012 The Reporter (<http://www.thereporteronline.com>), Serving North Penn, Indian Valley and neighboring communities, PA.