

Team Capsules

School: Hickman

2007 Record: 8-11-4

Coach: Jeff Wallace (1st year)

Key Returners-Lauren Robb (12), Liz Gayer (12), Katie LaRue (10), Katie Lappin (12);

Starters returning: 6

2008 Outlook /Comments: I am a one-year interim coach filling in after the death of Coach Strodtman. The team was extremely close to Coach S. but they have been making a great effort to carry on. They have dedicated the season to him and are preparing in a manner that would make him proud. We have a large senior class (10) and they will be important in helping us get through a tough schedule. Hopefully, our schedule will prepare us for a very competitive district. We lost a couple of underclass starters that does affect our depth (an all-district mid-fielder and a forward.) I'm proud of our team's resilience in getting through a tough situation and we are looking forward to an exciting season.

School: Rock Bridge

2007 Record: 11-7-5

Coach: Kelly Gates (2nd year)

Key Returners: Jeanna Ross (12), Alex Litofsky (12), Kayla Hauck (10) and Beau Rieske (10)

Key Newcomers: Sarah Humphrey (9), Kelsey Whittet (10)

Starters returning: 7

2008 Outlook/Comments: The 2007 district champions are coming out looking to build on the success of the 2007 season. We lost a few seniors, however we do have 7 starters from last year returning, so the season looks to be very promising, even with a tough early schedule. We also had so many girls come out this year that we had the numbers to create three teams, a Varsity, a JV_a, and a JV_b team, so the future looks bright indeed for the RBHS program!

School: Helias

2007 Record: 12-6

Coach: Matt Hicks (1st year)

Key Returners: Caty Newbold (12), Melissa Young (12), Katie Pitts (12), Kelsey Mueller (12), Lauren Ploch (12), Brandy Jungmeyer (12), Danielle Baumgartner (11), Annie Struempf (11), Caitlin Dulle (10),

Key Newcomers: Jill Szumigala (10), Carleigh Cavender (9)

2008 Outlook: Helias returns a number of players from last year's squad. In addition to the holdovers, a few key additions could make the Crusaders a formidable foe.

School: Camdenton

2007 Record: 12-12-0

Coach: J.D. Hunter – (11th year)

Key Returners: CM Blaire Baker (12), D Maria Civitate (12), CM Latea LaRue (10), F Alisha "Girdy" Morice (12), F Meg Manzer (12).

Key Newcomers: Steffanie Kirvan (11), Kali Kuse (9), Hayley Baker (9)

Starters Returning: 8

2008 Outlook: A very solid core group of players return for the Lady Lakers, including all four starting defenders from last season. A good freshmen class added to the returning players should make for an exciting season for Camdenon.

School: Jefferson City

2007 Record: 17-5-2

Coach: Matt Stacey (1st year)

Key Returners: Kelsey Sanders (12), Katie Denning (12), Molly Cowley (10)

Key Newcomers: Mariah McClain (11) has some big shoes to fill

Starters returning: 8

2008 Outlook/Comments: We are still a young team, but are returning a good number of key players. An extremely tough district lies ahead us.

School: Moberly

2007 Record: 14-9-2

Coach: Robbie Murray (4th year at school, 4th year overall)

Key Returners: Andie Wiesner (12), Shawn Beard (11) and

Shannon Dickerson (11).

Starters returning: 10

2008 Outlook/Comments: The Lady Spartans return a core group who are looking to build off of a successful 2007 season.

School: Mexico

2007 Record: 9-12-1

Coach: Brad Ellebracht (9th year)

Key Returners: D/MF Sarah Hotop (12), MF Jenna Nelson (12), D Becca Hotop (10), MF/F Lindsay Polston (12), MF Sarah Ogar (10).

Key Newcomers: Kathryn Perll (12)... not really a newcomer, but missed last season with knee injury. She will be a welcome addition.

Starters Returning: 10

We have a good core group of players returning, but a lot of questions to answer. We are hoping to integrate some new players into the mix to build a little depth as the season goes on.

School: Southern Boone

2007 Record: 9-8

Coach: Chris Miller (1st year at school, 13th overall)

Key Returners: MF Tillie Bill (10), MF Megan Moore (12), D Lacey Berry (12)

Key Newcomers: Courtney Branch (12)

Starters returning: 5

2008 Outlook/Comments: Very inexperienced group with only 21 players total (8 freshmen). We'll be looking to show improvement throughout the season as the young players get more game experience. Very tough district awaits at the end.

School: Fulton

2007 Record: 12-7-3

Coach: Kati Wallace (4th year ?)

Key Returners:

Key Newcomers:

Starters returning:

2008 Outlook/Comments:

Class 2 District 10 Preview: The Class 2 District 10 race has arguably been the most competitive in the state and this year will be no different as each of the six teams can make a significant run at a district title. One thing that should make this district interesting – three first-year coaches and one second-year coach out of the six district teams. A note of interest: the District 10 winner will more than likely play state power Incarnate Word Academy in a sectional game. IWA won its district last year in record-setting fashion – 15-0 over Gateway – en route to a second place finish in Class 2. Incarnate returns two of the top players in the nation and was ranked nationally for the majority of 2007. (The teams are ordered below based on their preseason rank of a vote conducted by district coaches.)

1. Last year's champ, **Rock Bridge** (11-7-5), got hot late in the season and won its first district title since 2001 by pulling off three consecutive 2-1 decisions on its home turf in the playoffs. The Bruins survived a scrappy Camdenton team in the opening round and then rallied for a come-from-behind OT win over Helias in the semifinals. Rock Bridge claimed a 2-1 win over top-seeded Jeff City in the championship game despite having only one second half shot. St. Joe's Academy ended the Bruins run in the playoffs with a 2-0 win at Hickman Field. Rock Bridge will have to survive a brutal early schedule (nine games in ten days – eight on the road), while also carrying the “district champ” target on its back. Second-year coach Kelly Gates will rely on senior MF workhorse Alex Litofsky and senior D Jeanna Ross for leadership and control of the central part of the field, while sophomore F Kayla Hauck will look to provide offensive punch. The Bruins will have the most depth as witnessed by the high player turnout, and they will need it with their demanding schedule.

2. **Helias** (12-6) was minutes away from making its second consecutive title appearance in 2007, but dropped a tough OT game to Rock Bridge in the semifinals. In 2006, Helias nearly won its first Class 2 district in the now infamous final where a game-winning goal was disallowed and the Crusaders went on to lose in PK's. First-year coach Matt Hicks probably has the most athletic and experienced group in the district. Seniors Melissa Young, Katy Newbold, Katie Pitts and Kelsey Mueller form a solid nucleus in the middle of the field and junior F Danielle Baumgartner is one of the highest skilled players in the district. Helias has all the tools to win a district championship in its last year against the big schools.

3. **Jefferson City** (17-5-2) started 2007 with three straight close losses in the Bi-State shootout, but then went on a 17-1-2 tear before dropping the championship game to Rock Bridge. First-year coach Matt Stacey will have plenty of offense to work with and a quality group of youth, as well. Senior F Kelsey Sanders has led the team in scoring all

three years and sophomores Molly Cowley and Kelly Strobe combined for 17 goals last year. Senior MF Katie Denning may be one of the most overlooked players in the district. The Jays' biggest question comes in the goal where four-time all state GK Jessie Sanderson has graduated. Junior Mariah McClain looks to fill her shoes. Another tough replacement for Stacey is replacing D Rashonda Stanley, a three-year all district performer.

4. Hickman (8-11-4) was a bounce or two away from reaching its umpteenth district championship game in a row, but fell to JC 1-0 in the semifinals in what proved to be coach Jon Strodtman's last game. Strodtman passed away this winter after a long battle with cancer and the Kewpies will be led this year by two veteran faces – Jeff Wallace (former Hickman boys coach) will be the head coach and Sandy Paulsen (former Hickman girls coach) will assist. Hickman has the best player in the district back, Mizou signee Liz Gayer, but will be without all-district MF Edith Lopez, who decided to play club. Hickman certainly has the tradition, and the addition of Wallace and Paulsen as coaches will do nothing but improve them. However, scoring was a key issue last year and may be this year, unless sophomore F Katie LaRue can continue to find the net like she did at the end of last year.

5. Smith-Cotton (14-7-2) has evolved from district doormat to title contender in three years under coach Shawn Cairer. Last year, the Tigers lost a battle to Hickman in the first round, but was playing well enough at the end of the season to have won it all. SC returns almost everyone and will host this year's tournament, as well. Junior F Jessica Greer returns up front, while senior MF Stephanie Paul holds down the middle. First-team all district D Amanda Azan will anchor the defense. The Tigers will definitely be the district dark horse – not much recent tradition and may be overlooked, but definitely a team that could compete for the district championship.

6. Camdenton (12-12) gave Rock Bridge all it could handle in last year's first round and the Lakers return a solid core that also defeated Kickapoo last season. Coach J.D. Hunter is the dean of the district coaches as he enters his 11th season. Sophomore MF Latea LaRue is a hard-working playmaker and is complemented by seniors Blaire Baker and Megan Manzer. The Lakers also return all four defenders from a group that improved over the season, but will have to replace GK Danielle Taylor and leading scorer Lindsey Sinclair.

Class 1, District 10 Preview: Defending champ Moberly has all the ingredients to repeat. The Spartans return 10 starters from the team that knocked off upstart Mexico 3-1 in last year's final after Mexico had surprised defending champ Hannibal in the semifinals. Moberly MF Shawn Beard is one of the smoothest players in the area and she will have plenty around her to work with as coach Robbie Murray will try to repeat his successful fall season. Mexico MF Sarah Hotop will lead Brad Ellebracht's rapidly improving Bulldog team. Fulton had its best season in school history, but will lose the area's leading scorer in Jessica Martin. The Hornets do return 1st Team NCMC players F Ashley Russell and D Caitlyn Guerrant. Kirksville played everyone tough, but also loses key field player Rebekah Blankenship. The Tigers return 1st Team NCMC GK

Mackenzie Kelly who has the ability to keep her team in any match. Southern Boone and second-year team Canton round out the district for one more year before both teams head to Class 1 next season. Southern Boone's sophomore MF Tillie Bill will lead a young Eagles team that should also benefit from the addition of senior Courtney Branch, who is playing her first year of soccer. Hannibal lost a solid group of seniors, but will return F Elise Bensman and GK Whitney Voepel to a team that has shared conference and district dominance with Moberly over the past few years. The district winner will more than likely face defending Class 1 state champ St. Dominic in the sectional game.

Preseason All Area Team

GK – Annie Streumph (Helias)

D – Liz Gayer (Hickman), Caty Newbold (Helias), Jeanna Ross (RB), Caitlyn Guerrant (Fulton),

MF – Alex Litofsky (RB), Shawn Beard (Moberly), Melissa Young (Helias), Latea LaRue (Camdenton), Sarah Hotop (Mexico), Tillie Bill (SBC)

F – Kelsey Sanders (JC), Ashley Russell (Fulton), Lauren Kelly (RB), Andie Wiesner (Moberly)

Honorable Mention: Blaire Baker (Camdenton), Danielle Baumgartner (Helias), Molly Cowley (JC)