

First-year coach Enke optimistic about AU women's soccer team

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ALFRED, NY With all but three players returning from last season, Alfred University women soccer coach Jennifer Enke is counting on experience and team unity to bring the Lady Saxons success in 2005. "We have a great bunch of girls that are ready to work together and are striving to be successful in the Empire 8," Enke stated. "Our major team goal is to achieve what we'll need to be successful: team cohesiveness, constantly striving to do better, having set goals for practice and to always play our best as a team." Last season Lady Saxons posted a 5-8-3 (1-4-2 in Empire 8 Conference play). This year the team is looking to make it to finish among the top four teams in the Empire 8 and qualify for the school's first-ever conference championship tournament, the winner of which earns an automatic berth in the NCAA Division III championships. Among the returning players are top scorers Chelsea Hall (Elmira, NY/Elmira Free Academy), a junior forward who scored 20 points on nine goals and two assists last season; and sophomore forward Sarah Guest (Cohocton, NY/Wayland-Cohocton) who scored 10 points on four goals and two assists. Hall, who possesses great playmaking abilities and attacks the goal well, will be looked upon to carry the ball and make plays. Guest, who also has a nose for the goal, will be counted on to provide scoring punch as well. Also competing for time up front is junior Ann Hines (Grove City, PA/Grove City). Hines returns to the team after taking last season off. She is a striker and has explosive speed. Enke stated that "Anne has a 'I am going to score' kind of attitude," which will help the Saxons with their offense. Enke plans on improving her offense by possessing the ball more than in previous seasons. Junior forward/midfielder Triona Moynihan (West Newbury, MA/Pentucket Regional) and sophomore midfielder Mara Limoncelli (Elmira, NY/Elmira Free Academy) will look to help control the ball while looking for scoring opportunities. Moynihan has the ability to score and is also a solid distributor of the ball. Limoncelli, who possesses a strong shot, is also adept on the defensive side of the ball. Senior Adrienne Egglinger (Amityville, NY/Amityville Memorial) returns to the midfield a year after scoring a goal and adding one assist. Egglinger is a solid defender who is also a threat on offense. Adding depth to the midfield will sophomore Nicole Thompson (Rochester, NY/Aquinas) and freshmen Okaley Okai (Providence, RI/Rocky Hill), and Kathryn Northup (Canandaigua, NY/Canandaigua Academy). Thompson, a member of the AU track and field team, has great speed. "Even though she is the smallest on the team, she is the toughest player," Enke stated. AU has experience on its side when it comes to defense. Senior Morgan Pierce (Schoharie, NY/Schoharie), a starter her first three years, is a strong defender who the Saxons will count on for leadership. Pierce will be relied on to mark some of the opponents' best players. Junior Kristin Klein (Middletown, NY/Goshen) will see time as a center defender or a midfielder. She has a great work ethic and sees the field well. Sophomore Brittany Higgins (Johnstown, NY/Johnstown) will play as an outside defender. The team will count on her for her excellent communication skills and depend on her to start attacking from the back. Sophomore Yaicha Winters (Cambridge, NY/Cambridge) will be the starting central defender. Adding depth and experience on defense are sophomore Megan Schumacher (Cohocton, NY/Wayland-Cohocton) and junior Kristen Rasey (Allegany, NY/Allegany-Limestone). Both saw considerable playing time last season. Schumacher is a great athlete that plays sound defense and is solid in getting the ball to the offense. A junior transfer from Erie Community College, Alyssa Monfuletho (Eden, NY/Eden), will be a great addition to this year's team. Enke is looking to her to play tough, hard-nosed defense. Freshman Anna Dieslin (Brooklyn, NY/Poly Prep) is a freshman who will add depth to the Saxon's defense at the outside back. Junior Rebecca Pociask (Henniker, NH/John Stark Regional) returns as the starting goalkeeper. She took over the starting job midway through the 2004 season and finished with a 1.16 goals against average, three shutouts and a .843 save percentage. "Rebecca is able to take any ball from any place, high or low," Enke said. "We will look to her to make big saves to keep us in and help us close out close games." Enke is confident in her team's ability to be successful. "I love soccer and am very enthusiastic and I see that in my players as well. They are just as excited as me and want the same success I do for this program," she said. "We have been working hard this preseason so we are ready to be successful right off the bat. We are not waiting for someone to step forward, we are going to be the ones to take control."