

Windover envisions continued progress from 2003 women's lacrosse team

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ALFRED The 2003 Alfred University women's lacrosse team will use a blend of solid veterans and talented new players as it seeks to improve on last season's 7-9 record (4-3 Empire 8). Third-year head coach Anne Windover is optimistic the team has enough talent to overcome the loss of six starters, including her top two scorers. The team's success will hinge on the chemistry developed between the returning players and a host of youngsters. "We have a strong group of athletes who demonstrate outstanding individual skills," Windover said. "Initially we need to focus on developing and coming together as a team." Leading the Lady Saxon attack will be senior captain Katie Sedgwick (Manlius/Fayetteville-Manlius). Sedgwick tallied 25 points on 18 goals and seven assists and had 25 groundballs in 13 appearances last year, and will be expected to further increase her scoring output. Juniors Chris Sanford (Bowdoinham, MD/Mt. Ararat) and Kelly Farrell (Meriden, NH/Kimball Union Academy) also return to the frontline after solid performances in 2002. Sanford earned all-conference Second Team honors led the Lady Saxons in goals scored with 51, including seven in the team's season finale. "Sanford will be our go-to player who establishes and leads our attack," expects Windover. "Chris was on top of her game at the end of the 2002 season, and will hopefully pick up where she left off." Farrell stood out as well, scoring 15 points on seven goals and eight assists while adding 18 groundballs in 13 contests. Junior Megan Swanson (Orchard Park) will also be expected to compete for playing time at attack. Returning to lead the midfield will be senior captain Kimberly Fank (Farmingville/Sachem). Fank appeared in only five games last season before a knee injury prevented her from returning to the field. Also at midfield, freshmen Erin Pavane (New York/Hyde), Emma Pope-Welch (Southwest Harbor, ME/Mount Desert Island), and Jessica Sundberg (Acton, MA/Acton-Boxboro Regional) prepare for their collegiate lacrosse debuts. Junior Katie Ratchuk (South Buffalo/Mt. Mercy) also makes her first action in an AU uniform. "These girls possess a variety of different talents, having had previously played sports at Alfred," Windover stated. Pope-Welch and Sundberg were letterwinners on the soccer team last fall, while Ratchuk was a key member of the volleyball team. "I am looking forward to seeing the skills that these girls display on the lacrosse field." The AU defense will be paced by senior Rachel Shapiro (Wooster, OH/Wooster). Shapiro started all 16 games last season and picked up 17 groundballs. Alongside Shapiro will be sophomore Melissa Stephens (Portville/Portville) a two-year letterwinning soccer player making her lacrosse debut. Freshmen Rosemary O'Sullivan (Cold Spring Harbour/Cold Spring Harbour) and Charise Pastor (Rochester/Eastridge) will be expected to step in immediately and add support to the Lady Saxon defense. Windover also her top two goaltenders from 2002. Junior Jessica Dunster (Auburn/Auburn) started 13 games for the Lady Saxons and managed 152 saves while allowing 133 goals. Meanwhile, senior Anora Burwell (Rochester/School of Arts) collected 57 saves and allowed 63 goals. Newcomer Jessica Giuricich (Blairstown, NJ/Blair Academy) will compete for playing time as she improves and gains experience. "We have many new faces on the field this season, but once we become more comfortable as a whole, I expect significant accomplishments," Windover concluded. "I am confident that we will make the necessary adjustments and have a successful season."