

Defenders set to start post-Parker era

Warrior Run will have new look this season

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TURBOTVILLE—Warrior Run head coach Garth Watson knows that Tay Parker is gone and not coming back.

But that doesn't mean he doesn't see Parker out on the practice field.

"I see Tay's fingerprints on all the younger kids," said Watson. "I just see little pieces of her in each player.

"They have all been around her and they know her and they strive to be like her."

A little bit of Parker is surely better than no Parker at all for the Defenders.

Parker helped Warrior Run to two-straight District 4 Class AA title and was a state runner-up in 2012.

"You just can't replace a Tay," said Watson. "She is the kind of kid you get a chance to coach just once in your career."



Laura Bastian

"She had this love for the sport that I see she has passed on to the rest of the team including the freshman."

With six starters gone from last season—including corner infielders Devin Nicholas and Jackie Clemens—the Defenders have a lot of replacing to do.

Charged with the job of replacing Parker will be a pair of sophomores in Jackie Vognetz and Mikayla Griner.

"Both of them worked hard all summer and winter and are ready to go," said Watson.

"Where they are from last year to this year is like they are two different kids."

But that doesn't mean the cupboard is bare for Watson.

Back are seniors Laura Bastian, Carra Rishel and Lynn Vermilya.

"Lynn, Carra and Laura give us a lot of experience," said Watson. "They have been part of what we have built here. They have played in a

state championship game.

"They are a solid core to build around this season."

Vermilya will be charged to handle the new pitching staff while the return of Rishel and Bastian up the middle make the defense solid—something that is nice when you factor in the new pitchers.

"Carra is really solid up the middle and is a rock for us," said Watson. "When Tay was pitching, Laura was like a glorified shortstop and her fielding percentage is through the roof."

The new corners for the Defenders will be freshman Maddie Beyer at third and junior Mackenzie Gardner at first.

“Maddie Beyer is comparable to Devin at her age at third,” said Watson. “Mackenzie Gardner waited her time at first and is ready.

“They say you don’t want to rebuild, you want to reload and I feel like we are doing just that at those two positions.”

Even with all the new faces, Watson is looking forward to the season.

“This year is what really makes coaching fun,” he said. “Very excited with what we have here and just ready to go.”

Warrior Run

Head Coach: Garth Watson (90-43, 7th season)

Assistant Coaches: Greg Watson, Harry Hintz, Sara Watson, Billy Parker.

Last season: 20-4, District 4 Class AA Champion.

Roster: Seniors: Laura Bastian infield, Carra Rishel infield, Mackenzie Hays outfield, Lisa Waldman outfield, Caitlin Minnick outfield, Lynn Vermilya catcher, Juniors: Amanda Bridges outfield, Noelle Bergerstock outfield, Mackenzie Bowers infield, Mackenzie Gardner infield, Sophomores: Aubrey Temple catcher, Mikayla Griner pitcher, Gabby Oberdorf outfield, Mckenna Beyer outfield, Jackie Vognetz pitcher, Freshman: Abby Bell outfield, Maddie Beyer infield, Valerie Cerrone outfield, Lauren Eurich outfield, Gabby Heiss outfield, Abby Reed outfield, Rena Shively outfield, Shania Stone outfield, Madi Welliver infield, Taylor Williams outfield.