

Ready, Willing and Able

The 2010 Aviators Will Be Young, But Capable

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If the old adage "competition breeds success" proves to be true, look for the Aviators to have another banner season in 2010. With a roster full of new names, the first order of business for veteran head coach Trent Dues will be to replace the seven graduated seniors from last year's sectional championship team. The surplus of versatile, young talent on this year's roster should make for some interesting position battles. "We have a lot of unanswered questions that the scrimmages will help answer", said Dues.

Returning seniors Dillon Bell and Trey Clements will add stability for the Aviators as they return to shortstop and left field respectively. Bell is coming off of another solid season, in which he was named First Team All GWOC North and also represented the Aviators in the annual Bob Ross Classic. Clements is poised to have a solid season, his third at the varsity level. Tied for the school single season record in steals, the senior outfielder's speed will again make him a threat on the base paths.

After Bell and Clements, the field is wide open....literally. "The only real returning position spots we have is shortstop with Bell and left field with Clements", Dues said. "All of the other spots seem to be question marks at this time." Juniors Alex Henry, Chris Mayhill and Chase Goulette will hold down the "hot corner" at third. Goulette, a First Team All GWOC North outfielder last season will also share duties at second base with senior Matt Radominski and junior Zach Tateman.

In addition to playing third, Mayhill will also spend his third season at the varsity level anchoring first base with juniors Ryan Keeler, Vinnie Jackson and sophomores Austin Craine and Taylore Cherry. Exactly who will be playing the position and when will be determined by the pitching and catching assignments for that particular game.

Along with Clements, the outfield will be manned by the versatile Goulette, juniors Nathan Barlow, Ryan Keeler, Vinnie Jackson, and sophomores Dan Link and Austin Craine.

On the mound, the Aviators return senior pitcher Nick Hansman, jack of all trades Chris Mayhill, and Taylore Cherry. Cherry, the youngest of the returning trio, is coming off of a freshman season that provided him with a great deal of experience at the varsity level. "Cherry got quality innings last year and provided a big spark towards the last half of the season", said Dues. Trey Hafer, Alex Henry, Dan Comes and Dillon Bell will also be vying for quality innings on the hill this season for the Aviators.

Missing behind the plate this year will be Special Mention All GWOC North catcher Lance Straley. The bruising sophomore is recovering from Tommy John surgery and will not be available to catch for the 2010 season. Dues is optimistic that Straley will still be able to contribute for the Aviators this season. "We may be able to use his bat and glove at first base depending upon his rehab", Dues said.

The catching duties will be shared between Keeler, Jackson and sophomore Colin Pratt. Called up to varsity last season, Keeler stepped in and showed a great deal of promise as a sophomore.

The competition between teammates will be fierce in 2010, but the young Aviators are rising to the challenge. "There is a lot of competition and the cream usually rises to the top", said Dues. "So we will see."