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Rough Riders

# CATASAUQUA HIGH SCHOOL

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# 2023

# FALL SPORTS & ACTIVITIES



# 'Hungry' Roughs ready to get it going

BY JEFF MOELLER  
Special to the Press

Hunger.

That was the buzzword around the Catasauqua football camp this summer.

After a last-minute loss to Executive in the District 11 Class 2A game last year, the Rough Riders are hungry for this season to begin. Over the past few months, their determination has been well noted, but these Roughies can't get enough of the message.

"I see the hunger," said head coach Travis Brett, who begins his fourth season after a 7-6 campaign last year. "They don't want to forget what happened, and they're very anxious to get it going."

"They believe we can go far, and we believe we have the pieces to do it."

Aiden Hess steps in at quarterback this fall, and he will have tailback Jyzaiah Bonilla, who rushed for 601 yards last season return in the backfield. A major factor will be fullback Hunter Reitz, whose injuries have slowed potential banner seasons

BY JEFF MOELLER  
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With Catasauqua's fall sports teams ready to begin play, the Rough Riders' cheerleading squad will play their part.

The Roughies will be led by first-year head coach Kawauna Waldron. She began as a middle school coach five years ago and then served as a varsity assistant for the past three seasons.

This season, the Roughies' varsity team will be comprised of Lauren Ruda, Kadince Wal-

dron, Caroline Rodriguez, Danika Voorhees, Maliya Walp, Jaylynn Bonilla, Anessa Rodriguez, Dakota Velas, Ariella Miller, Cianni Lafantano, Julia Harth, Alivia Kurczewski, and Jezial, Kelley.

The JV squad is Jadalynn Bradshaw, Amani Dougherty-Phillips, Isabella Sanchez, Zhariyah Bucknor, Sophia Flores, Madison Monberger, and Mylie Sanchez.

Waldron stated the teams will also participate in the town's Halloween parade later this year, and they current-

the past two years.

"Aiden Hess has seen time over the past two years, and we are excited to see what he can do," added Brett. "He has a big arm and looked good in our seven-on-sevens."

"Both Bonilla and Reitz have a lot of experience, and if they stay healthy, they can be a very good duo."

Dylan Pacheco and Chad Beller will also see time at the H-back throughout the year.

Ian Juica (25 catches for 451 yards and seven touchdowns) will be the

prime target. Jordan Bradshaw will be in the slot, and Brenden Eck, Manny Bolmer, Rodney Brodie, and Josiah Lafond all will see some time at receiver.

Brett likes the potential of his offensive line with as many as eight candidates playing in a game.

Jacob Ramos will open at center with Beller and Miles Melendez at guards. Matt Fotta will be at left tackle, and Eli Voorhees, Braeden Smith, Chris Wellington, and Davonte Boulware all are candidates for the other spot.

On defense, Melendez has been a three-year, all-league player, and he'll be joined by Ramos, Voorhees, Smith and Boulware.

The biggest strength for the Roughies is at linebacker with Reitz, Beller, Bonilla, and Pacheco. Beller led the Colonial-Schuylkill League in tackles last season with 180.

In the secondary, Juica, Bolmer, Bradshaw, Eck, Brodie, and Cadeo Estronza are all in the running for spots.

Melendez will handle the kicking duties, and Juica, Hess, Beller, Aiden Reilly all could see time with the punting duties.

Despite his team's "hunger," Brett has tempered his outlook.

"We have a bunch of kids back from last year's team who had success," said Brett. "If we can come together up front, we feel really good about our skill guys. Defensively, we have some question marks in the back end, but we return just about everybody on the defensive line and at linebacker."

"We have two really tough games to open the season, and those games will let us know where we will be. Our kids are hungry after losing the way we did in the district game. They want to get back there, but we need to take the season one week at a time and try to go 1-0 every week."

"Overall, we have a great group of kids, and if we stay disciplined and keep working hard, we should have a successful season."



PRESS PHOTO BY LINDA ROTHROCK

The cheerleaders get in an August practice before the start of football season.

ly don't have anything else by her daughter Kyra. planned. She will be assisted



C.J. Beller, left and Ian Juica combine on a tackle during a game last season. The two are key returners on both sides of the ball.



PRESS PHOTO BY LINDA ROTHROCK

The Catasauqua marching band gets in a practice before the start of the football season.

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# Freiler takes over as field hockey coach

BY JEFF MOELLER  
Special to the Press

Amanda Freiler knows what it means to play at a championship level. She was a part of Catasauqua's 2005 Colonial League championship field hockey team.

Now, Freiler is faced with the task of transferring those thoughts and actions toward her players as the head coach of the Rough Riders program this fall. Freiler takes the place of Emily Marley, who served in the role the previous five seasons. Over the past four seasons, Freiler served as the program's head middle school coach.

Freiler is confident

the transition will be a smooth one. First-year assistant coach Ashley Labar was her high school teammate.

"I thought it was a good opportunity, and I know a lot of girls from middle school," she said. "There is a relationship there, and it will be a matter of stepping it up to the next level."

Over the past five years, the program has won six games. Yet, Freiler was impressed with the enthusiasm of the girls during their summer workouts, which saw a regular amount of approximately 20 girls apiece involved in the high school and middle school programs.

"The girls were excited to see that I was coming aboard," she said. "I can see that they have already grown. They are very interested and willing to work. There is a lot of structure being put in place."

Freiler will look to seniors Abby Antipas, Jordan Soltis, Kaitlyn Lawton, and sophomore Shelby Haldeman as the core group to help form a foundation. Fellow senior Sophie Becker is back in the nets.

The first-year head coach also has been impressed with the nine freshmen, all of whom have helped form some solid team chemistry.

Freiler is optimistic her team's strong

summer work ethic can transfer its effects to the fall. She has set a high bar for the season.

"We spent our summer working together working four days a week with games on tow of those days in the Whitehall and Becahi summer leagues," she said. "In those leagues, we faced many opponents that we do not play in our regular-season games. They were more difficult, and helped us prepare for our season."

"My minimum goal is to make districts this postseason, but I am shooting to get this team into the league playoffs as well."



Sophia Becker will be back between the pipes for the Catty field hockey team in 2023.

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# Boys soccer looks to overcome senior losses

BY JEFF MOELLER  
Special to the Press

In regard to wins and losses, Catasauqua's boys' soccer team isn't necessarily going to set the bar high this coming season. The Rough Riders lost 11 seniors from last year's team, and they finished with an overall 4-12-2 season.

Yet, head coach Josh Inman has remained optimistic that his team in transition can make an impact. His team has registered four wins in their past two seasons.

"We have a younger team with less experience than in the past few years, but that was to be expected after our large graduation last year,"

said Inman. "We have a few returning starters that will prove to be important to our team."

Incoming senior Jonah Arancibia will be expected to provide a strong presence and senior leadership to a maturing group.

Returning starters junior Jonathan Cordon-Pinto and sophomore Jayden Olivencia are expected to be impact players.

"These are our big-time players that are returning and will be perennial starters again this season," beamed Inman. "We have to see how everything evolves during the season."

Inman also will look to newcomers freshmen

goalkeeper Liam McGinley and senior Eric Vasquez.

"Liam has shown a lot of growth already," said Inman. "We cannot wait to see how he keeps progressing. I wish Eric would have come out a little sooner, but as a senior, we will get a lot out of him this season. He puts forth a great effort and has been a great motivator for our younger players."

Yet, it will come down to how the team matures along the way.

"We have a lot of newcomers and are excited to see how productive and helpful they can be to the varsity team," stressed Inman. "We are really hoping to have a

full JV team this year to help with development of the less-experienced players to get them involved with the varsity as soon as possible."

However, Inman understands the parameters of the year.

"This will be a season of growth for us," he stressed. "We have gained a lot from last year's senior class, and the foundations that they have set for us will help us to hopefully develop into a team with great possibilities moving forward."

"We may have some growing pains throughout the year, but the players already are showing a ton of effort. I'm excited to see the



Jonah Arancibia, right, will be one of the key returning players for the boys soccer team.

outcomes from the season against Kutztown Aug. 21, and then opened their regular season with Nativity BVM Aug. 26.

The Roughies had their lone scrimmage

# Girls soccer optimistic about upcoming season



Julie Harth returns to the girls team.

BY JEFF MOELLER  
Special to the Press

After a 2-16 season last year, Catasauqua girls' soccer team certainly is looking upward. They did open last season with a 2-1 victory, but they then spiraled downward with 13 consecutive losses.

Still, third-year head coach Kayla Cunningham has continued to bring the same unbound enthusiasm for the program when the former Whitehall High and Temple University product was hired two years ago.

With an initial four-win season under her belt and a two-win campaign last year, Cunningham is still optimistic about her team's chances this fall.

Cunningham likes the potential of her returning core of players Kelsea Warren, Caroline Rodriguez, Maya Osorto, Faith Daku, Mia Gomes, Julia Harth.

"I am expecting big things and have high expectations for our talented junior class."

Jaylianna Martinez and Brooke Barna will be backs in the nets for the Rough Riders.

"Kelsea Warren is our senior field player that will be playing center mid and forward. She is a tremendous player for us and an outstanding captain on and off the field. Caroline Rodriguez is another returning captain who works hard everyday from the time we start to the time we finish."

Mia and Eva Gomes along with Julia Harth are also back in the fold.

"We have some returning sophomores who played last year, and they made a big impact on the field," said Cunningham. "We looking for them to take the next step."

Cunningham also is excited to have new assistant coach Maddy

Warren on board.

"Maddy Warren is Kelsea's older sister," added Cunningham. "I am glad she has come back to the field this time. I am very excited to coach with her this year and happy she gets to join Kelsea for her senior year."

With a strong returning core, expectations

will be higher for the Roughies on the field. Cathy will open with Notre Dame Aug. 31

"I think our team made a lot of improvements from last year," said Cunningham. "I am excited to see them play on the field this year. I am very excited for the season and proud to be their coach."

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# Volleyball looks to take the next step

BY JEFF MOELLER  
Special to the Press

As his team prepares to begin the season, Catasauqua head volleyball coach John Cesanek wonders what his girls can do for an encore?

Last year, the Rough Riders won more games (six games) than they did in the previous six seasons combined and also secured a district playoff berth for the first time in 16 years.

"I have to wonder how I can top that," said Cesanek. "It is my biggest challenge as well as my biggest fear."

"When I first had signups in May, there were more than 50 names on the list. We were fortunate to have open gyms throughout the summer, and the girls practice and hone their skills playing in the North Catty league."

Cesanek also stated that he and assistant coach Edward Popa had to make cuts, which was a difficult situation.

"In August, we had the list down to 33, as we

went into tryouts and testing," he added. "Just watching these girls improve over the last two months through open gyms has been amazing and has given us high hopes for the fall for the varsity and junior varsity."

Cesanek will look to seniors Amanda Hunsberger, Ardriana Paola, Molinary Villanueva, Delanie Popa, Delaney Troxell, Jane Armbruster, and Lauren DeLong to help set the pace. Freshman Kira Kiel has been a pleasant surprise.

Also, sophomores Malia Walp and Madison Monberger are expected to be major contributors. Cesanek noted that Monberger has been dealing with the effects of a concussion, while Walp and Armbruster have ailing shoulders.

Despite any injuries, Cesanek sees his team on the radar.

"We have had a few early bumps with the injuries, but they are healing nicely," added



Jane Armbruster is one of several seniors back for the team this season.

Cesanek. "I think we are going to be one of the sleeping giants, or we're going to be taken for granted. We proved many of them wrong last year."

"This group of girls has the potential to truly do and go as far as their hearts and minds desire. The talent is there and, in some cases, more than they know. The



Delanie Popa and Delaney Troxell are two more seniors on the volleyball team.

only thing that can stop them is letting the ball control them instead of them controlling the ball.

"I'm excited to see what they do this fall."

I think our opponents will be in for a couple of surprises, and we'll see what the season holds."



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# Harriers return a strong group this fall season

BY JEFF MOELLER  
Special to the Press

With a core of returnees, always-optimistic Catasauqua head cross country coach Kyle Rusnock is looking forward to another successful season.

Last year, the Rough Riders boys team had six wins and the girls team had three.

"We are looking to finish somewhere in the middle of the pack this year," said Rusnock, who will begin his 10th year. "We lost some people, and our girls numbers were low.

"But we have some younger runners, and we'll watch how they develop."

Alivia Bear finished ninth at districts last season, and she advanced to states. Rusnock sees an-

other banner year for his senior.

"She is all about hard work," said Rusnock. "Alivia ran a fantastic race at states and all of her hard work and dedication paid off. We are very proud on how she has progressed over the past three years, and we expect her to do very well this season."

Bear is looking forward to furthering her mark.

"It was exciting to go to states last year," she said. "Districts was a tough race, but I was happy to come away with a medal and advance to states. Now, I know what I have to do to get back there.

"We all believe we can have a good year ahead."

Along with Bear, Ava Smith, who was 24th at districts last year, and Caroline Rodriguez and Delanie Popa will set the

pace. Freshman Uyen Ly can make an impact.

"Alivia is a state qualifier, and Ava Smith will make a push to qualify this year," said Rusnock. "We think our girls can be consistent."

On the boys' side, the unit of William Aguirre, Mikhail Hartranft, Jonathan Rizzo, Evan Reed, Peter Lapointe and Cassius Estronza is expected to lead the pack.

"Peter and Cassius are newcomers and will help our team a lot," added Rusnock. "I'm looking forward to seeing Evan Reed compete this year. Our boys have the potential to be better than last year."

Overall, Rusnock expects to see his team grow.

"The kids are pretty confident," he said. "Everyone is maturing and working."



Alivia Bear has high hopes for this coming season.



Ava Smith is also back for the Rough Riders this year.



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