

Soccer Season Kicks Off Monday At Brunswick County High Schools

BY DOUG RUTTER

Brunswick County high school soccer enters its third season next week, and this year's expanded schedules should reveal how the local teams stack up against the rest of the region.

As always, West, North and South will battle each other four times this fall to determine a county champion. New this year are more matches against established high school programs outside the county.

"I want to play schools better than us so we can improve," West Brunswick Coach Teak Hemphill said last week. "That's the only way we can see what we're up against and where we need to move to."

The Trojans, who breezed to the county championship last fall with a 7-0 record, are scheduled to open the season Monday at Flora McDonald Academy, a private school in Red Springs.

West Brunswick will host Flora McDonald in October and also will play two matches each against Topsail, Dixon and Wilmington Christian Academy.

"We know how good Dixon is," Hemphill said, alluding to West's 9-1 loss to the Bulldogs in last year's state playoffs. "Other than that we hope to do well. We hope to be competitive."

Hemphill said goals for this year's team include winning the county championship and returning to the playoffs for a second straight year. "I'm looking for good things to happen," the coach said.

Veteran players for the Trojans include Chris Payne, who led the team with 11 goals last year, and Cameron Kinlaw, who attended soccer camp this summer at Appalachian State University.

Also back from last year's club are Steve Varnam, John Branning, Gabe Cooper, Andy Russ, Ashley Ware, Jamie Arms and Jeremie Varnam. The Trojans are young, with only one senior.

Jay McRoberts is expected to play goalie this year. "He's aggressive and he'll help us out," Hemphill said.

The Trojans will be without several key players from last year's team, including exchange student Al Villa who has taken his fancy footwork back to South America.

Also gone is Keane Bellamy, who was perhaps the best playmaker on the 1992 team, and Caleb Steedly, who scored seven goals last season but moved this summer.

"I need to recruit a few more players. Right now I have 18 and I need 22 so we can scrimmage with 11 per side," Hemphill said. "Once school starts we'll get more into the swing of things."

West Brunswick's new soccer field isn't ready for play, so the Trojans will continue playing home matches at Shallotte Middle School.

"Our field isn't quite ready. It's going to be a good one," Hemphill said. "We ran into some snags last year and this summer with the drought. There's not enough grass on it to play."

After its road trip to Flora McDonald on Monday, the Trojans will host North Brunswick next Friday in the first intra-county match of the year.

After a one-year leave of absence, Coach Keith Moore has returned to guide the Scorpion soccer team. Moore also will return to his position as head baseball

coach next spring.

Although North Brunswick is a member of the newly-created Three Rivers 1A/2A Conference, the Scorpion soccer team will compete in the Coastal Plains 1A Conference this fall.

"We've been thrown to the dogs because those guys can play up there. It's going to be tough," Moore said Monday.

"I just look at this year as a learning experience. Going into this conference is a big step," Moore added. "There's not any pressure on us to win because we're not expected to win. We may surprise a few people."

The Scorpions could get a boost from Andre Luiz, an exchange student from Brazil. Moore said he has been amazed by his soccer skills.

"It's like the ball is an extension of his foot," he said. "I had to do a double take on some of his passing techniques."

The N.C. High School Athletic Association will consider West Brunswick and South Brunswick as a two-member 3A conference for the purposes of soccer. One of the two teams will qualify for the state playoffs.

Brunswick County Soccer Schedule

Date	Match	Time
Aug. 23	West at Flora McDonald	4:30 p.m.
	Topsail at South	4:30 p.m.
Aug. 27	North at West	4:30 p.m.
	Flora McDonald at South	4:30 p.m.
Aug. 30	Topsail at West	4:30 p.m.
	South at North	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 1	Dixon at West	4:30 p.m.
	South at Topsail	7 p.m.
Sept. 7	West at Topsail	7 p.m.
	North at South	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 8	South at Lejeune	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 9	West at Dixon	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 13	West at North	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 15	North at Dixon	7 p.m.
Sept. 16	South at West	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 20	North at Swansboro	7 p.m.
Sept. 21	Wilm. Christian at West	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 22	Richlands at North	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 23	West at South	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 27	East Carteret at North	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 28	South at Wilm. Christian	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 30	North at West	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 4	North at Topsail	7 p.m.
Oct. 6	Southwest Onslow at North	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 7	Flora McDonald at West	4:30 p.m.
	South at North	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 11	West at Wilm. Christian	4:30 p.m.
	Dixon at North	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 13	Swansboro at North	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 14	South at West	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 18	North at Richlands	7 p.m.
Oct. 20	North at East Carteret	7 p.m.
Oct. 21	North at South	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 25	North at Lejeune	7 p.m.
Oct. 26	West at North	4:30 p.m.
	South at Flora McDonald	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 27	Topsail at North	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 28	West at South	4:30 p.m.
Nov. 1	North at Southwest Onslow	7 p.m.

West Volleyball Team Rebuilding After Consecutive League Titles

BY DOUG RUTTER

After two straight Waccamaw Conference championships and 36 wins in the last two years, West Brunswick's high-flying volleyball team may be coming back down to earth this fall.

Coach Brenda Council, who has built winning programs in volleyball and girls' basketball at West, will need some young players to mature quickly if the school is to continue its recent dominance on the volleyball court.

"We are very young, very inexperienced," Council said last Wednesday after the first full week of practice. "This is definitely going to be a rebuilding year."

Nine of the 14 members of this year's squad are freshmen and sophomores, many with limited experience. "We just have a lot of work to do right now, fundamental things," Council said.

While the team is short on experience, Council said the players' attitudes have been great.

"This is a good group of girls. They are really working hard and are eager to learn and improve," she said. "We're going to give it our best shot. They just have a lot to learn."

Despite the youth, Coach Council has nine players back from last year's team that was 12-0 in the conference and 17-5 overall. However, only four of them saw much playing time in 1992.

Nicole Norris, Amy Mintz and Christy Thorpe are the three seniors on this year's club. Other members include juniors Rebecca Hughes and Madonna Gause; sophomores Michelle Long, April Mintz, Felicia Morgan, Shayne Nott and Jessica Winfree; and freshmen Shanna King, Benita Sapps, Ashli Smith and Kelly Tripp.

Coach Council expects Norris and Gause to be two of the Lady Trojans' top hitters this year.

"Nicole's come along well. She's probably going to be one of our big, powerful hitters," she said. "Madonna, once she gets her timing down, she'll be another one. She has a real good vertical leap."

West Brunswick Volleyball Schedule

Date	Opponent
Aug. 24	at Hoggard (4:30)
Aug. 26	at South Columbus
Aug. 31	at Pender
Sept. 2	at Whiteville
Sept. 6	at North Brunswick
Sept. 7	East Columbus
Sept. 9	at West Columbus
Sept. 13	North Brunswick
Sept. 14	Hoggard
Sept. 16	at South Brunswick
Sept. 21	South Columbus
Sept. 23	Pender
Sept. 28	Whiteville
Sept. 30	at East Columbus
Oct. 5	West Columbus
Oct. 12	South Brunswick
Oct. 14	New Hanover (4:30)

*Matches start at 5 p.m. unless noted.

Hughes and April Mintz are expected to serve as the two primary setters. "I'm having to train a couple others. We're having to work on that," Council said.

The Lady Trojans started practice Aug. 2, but have yet to play in their home gym. New wooden floors are being installed at all three county high schools, and the work

in Shallotte is behind schedule.

As a result, West Brunswick will play its first five matches on the road, starting next Tuesday at Hoggard. The girls won't play their first home match until Sept. 7 against East Columbus.

Council said the Lady Trojans have been practicing at Shallotte Middle School and Waccamaw Elementary School. "It's been inconvenient. I just hope it's finished before classes start."

Coach Council said she isn't sure what to expect out of the reshuffled Waccamaw Conference. The Lady Trojans will be one of three 3A teams in the league, which also will include four 2A squads.

North Brunswick, South Robeson, East Bladen and Fairmont have been dropped from the Waccamaw Conference. East Columbus, South Columbus and Pender have been added.

Council doesn't know much about the new Columbus County schools, but said she expects good matches out of 3A Pender.

"Pender always has a strong volleyball program," she said. "I'm sure they will be strong this year because they have a good feeder program."



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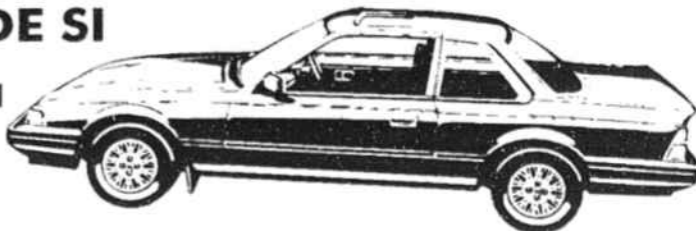


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