

Bishop State softball finds dedication on and off the diamond

By Press-Register Correspondent

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Two years ago Bishop State's softball team went winless.

In 2009, the Wildcats went 1-27.

Obviously, there's nowhere to go but up, but things are looking better for the Wildcats -- in terms of leadership.

Despite a very young squad that has only two sophomores, coach Keith Locke said this year's group is more dedicated, both in the classroom and on the diamond.

"For the first time in two years we have true student athletes," he said. "The girls are making good grades. They want to be here and get that degree. They come here with a purpose."

"A couple of them got upset because they were just a couple of points from making the Dean's List or the President's List. They do well in the classroom, and it carries over to the field, and vice versa."

Locke said he did a lot of recruiting outside the state, and coupled with the players he has from the Mobile area, thinks the talent is stronger this year.

"We feel that we have good talent from Mobile and out-of-state," he said. "Of the 12 players on the roster, we're split down the middle on out-of-town players and players here at home. We're hoping for some good things this year."

Locke said there are several standout players, but the one he wanted to concentrate on was Mobile native and sophomore Katie Blue.

"Katie played a lot of travel ball, and that's a big thing in her favor," said Locke. "She's the team captain and she should be backed up by strong defensive play. Our practices have been good. With the dedication our girls have had so far, they've come ready to play. What has helped us so far is stressing fundamentals and technique -- we work on that every day."

Bishop State opens the season Feb. 6 against Chattahoochee Valley at Texas Street Park.

Here is the 2010 Bishop State softabll schedule. All home games are at Texas Street Park.

FEBRUARY: 6 vs. Chattahoochee Valley CC, 12 noon; 9 vs. Marion Military Institute, 1 p.m.; 18 at LSU-Eunice; 19 vs. Judson College, 1 p.m.; 20 vs. Judson College, 11 a.m.; 24 vs. Meridian CC, 1 p.m.; 26 at Chattahoochee Valley CC.

MARCH: 3 at Jones CC; 8 vs. Robert Morris, 1 p.m.; 10 vs. Hibbing CC, 11 a.m.; 11 at Faulkner State; 24 vs. Jeff Davis, 1 p.m.; 26 vs. Wallace-Dothan, 1 p.m.; 30 at Meridian CC; 21 vs. Jones CC, 2 p.m.

APRIL: 1 at Alabama Southern; 9 vs. Enterprise-Ozark, 12 noon; 16 at Enterprise-Ozark; 17 at Wallace-Dothan; 19 vs. LSU-Eunice, 2 p.m.; 21 vs Alabama Southern, 2 p.m.; 24 at Jeff Davis CC; 27 vs. Faulkner State, 2 p.m.

(This report was written by Press-Register Correspondent Arthur Mack.)