

Cedar Valley Christian girls face big challenge

Written by Jim Ecker

Sunday, 27 November 2011 00:18 - Last Updated Sunday, 27 November 2011 00:31



Nobody on the Cedar Valley Christian girls basketball team will be complaining about a lack of playing time this season.

There will be more than enough to go around. Too much, perhaps.

Cedar Valley Christian will begin its first season of competition in the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union Monday night at Lone Tree with an extremely limited roster.

"We've actually got six players, and we have a manager we might have to suit up," CVC Coach Craig Foote reported. "So that's kind of where we're at."

There are six girls in the entire program in the 9th grade through 12th grade, so there is no junior varsity, sophomore team or freshman squad.

This is Foote's third year as the Cedar Valley Christian head coach. He had 12 girls on the team two years ago and nine players last season, but the numbers dwindled this season.

Some players transferred to other schools and others elected not to play basketball this year. "It was kind of a perfect storm," he said. "It will be an interesting proposition."

Cedar Valley Christian left the Northern Illinois Christian Conference after the 2010-11 school year and joined the IHSAA and the IGHSAU, the governing bodies for high school sports in Iowa. Cedar Valley Christian was seeking better competition for all its teams, convinced it was the right thing for its students.

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"I think the competition will be much stiffer," Foote remarked.

The Huskies will play 18 of their 20 games on the road this season, the price for putting a new schedule together. Cedar Valley Christian will play as an independent this season, but has applied for membership in the Tri-Rivers Conference for next year.

The two home dates are Jan. 14 against Unity Christian of Fulton, Ill., and Feb. 4 against Waterloo Christian School.

Lindsey Cach, Shelby Hembera, Izzy Hoffman and Ellen Rodriguez played for Cedar Valley Christian last season. Carly Silver and Alyson Wood are new to the team. Taylor Fields is the manager who may dress for games.

"The basketball program is really about competition and teaching young people certain ideals and certain values," Foote said. "That's really not an issue, whether you have six girls or whether you have 15 girls.

"It just depends on what your goals are and what your mission is," he said. "Obviously from a win-loss perspective I wish we had more than six girls. But from a teaching perspective, it really doesn't make any difference."

Foote coached at Lisbon High School and Marion High School before coaching at Cedar Valley Christian. He accepts the challenges that undoubtedly lie ahead with a limited roster.

"With a young team and with certain limitations we really just worry about getting better every day in practice and worry about taking care of our own business, because there are certain things we can't do," he said.

"We can't press full-court for 32 minutes, we're not going to be able to do other things as well," he said. "We try to focus on the things we can do and try not to get distracted or worry about

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the things we can't do.

"We'll be a small, scrappy team," he said.