

Hawk ready to lead Giants in soccer season

By Sean Douglas

With a new coach at the helm and with a roster full of talented, promising players, the Marion Giants anticipate building on a solid seven-win 2019 season.

Ben Hawk, who was elevated to head coach during last fall’s sectional tournament, had the interim tag removed earlier this year, and will enter his first full season at the head of the program this coming fall. Hawk has been around soccer all of his life, growing up with the game during his years in central America as the son of missionaries. Upon his return to the United States and subsequent graduation from college, Hawk coached at Lakeview in various roles and also spent time at Oak Hill before taking a teaching position at Marion.

Last season, Hawk served as an assistant under former Head Coach Jacob Boggs, before being given the interim tag heading into postseason play last year.

Now that he is running the show, he is excited to get started.

“You can expect to see a lot of hard work,” Hawk said about his group. “We are going to be a hard-

working team this year. We are going to be a team that doesn’t quit and doesn’t give up.”

With the COVID-19 restrictions, the Giants have had to adjust their off-season plan. Hawk and the team communicated throughout April, May, and June using Remind, a communication platform designed to enable teachers and students to conference remotely. Most would agree that it has been a challenging adjustment.

“The biggest thing is not being able to have contact with each other,” Hawk said. “With soccer, it’s about [gaining] game-type experience for all of that to be able to translate, and really, all we’ve been able to do is passing drills and conditioning.”

However, since off-season workouts began at the beginning of the month, the Giants have diligently focused on running and sprinting, individual ball work, and agility.

“For the most part, they were ready for it,” Hawk said. “They received the conditioning plan pretty well.”

With the season beginning in a few short weeks, the Giants have several holes to fill with the departures of striker Taylor Kitts



Taylor Kitts putting a shot on net against Oak Hill last season.

(22 goals), defender Ellie Vermilion, together with Alex Riggs and Claire Hendricks. Junior Larielle Cox (six goals) and sophomore Kaylin Burke (two goals) both had solid seasons last year but will have to take on a more advanced role this season. Incoming freshman Talia Alsup is a raw, but gifted prospect who will look to make her mark.

While the Giants suffered several key losses, this year’s seniors, including goalkeeper Olivia Lindsay and midfielder Aliya Willhide, have become vocal leaders, taking the younger players under their wings and providing a positive influence for them to follow.

“Our seniors have really stepped up once we started

meeting,” Hawk said. “They stepped up, took charge, and led the newer girls. I’m really excited about that.”

With an uncertain season on the horizon, Hawk is not focusing on wins and losses. Rather, he is looking to give his players an exciting, and enjoyable, soccer experience.

Marion will begin their season on the road against South Adams on Tuesday, August 18.

“I’m not really focused on wins and losses,” Hawk said. “It’s not something in any of my coaching positions that I’ve truly been focused on. My focus is on the athletes, and my goal is to provide students with a positive experience with the game of soccer.”

Grant County

sports schedule 2020-21

Monday, August 3

12 pm—GG—Oak Hill @ Harrison Invitational

Tuesday, August 4

8 am—GG—Marion @ Huntington North Invitational
8 am—GG—Oak Hill @ Huntington North Invitational

Wednesday, August 5

9 am—GG—Eastbrook @ South Adams Invitational
5 pm—GG—Eastern @ Madison-Grant

Thursday, August 6

4 pm—GG—Madison-Grant @ Southwood
5 pm—GG—Marion @ Manchester Invitational

Friday, August 7

4:30 pm—GG—Marion/Mississinewa @ Madison-Grant
4:30 pm—GG—Oak Hill @ Frankton

Monday, August 10

4:30 pm—GG—Madison-Grant @ Pendleton Heights
4:30 pm—GG—Southern Wells @ Mississinewa

Tuesday, August 11

5 pm—GG—Bluffton @ Eastbrook
5 pm—GG—Blackford @ Oak Hill
5:30 pm—GG—North

Miami @ Marion

Wednesday, August 12

4:30 pm—GG—Kokomo @ Madison-Grant
5 pm—GG—Oak Hill/Southwood @ Marion

Thursday, August 13

4:30 pm—GG—Daleville @ Mississinewa

Friday, August 14

4:30 pm—GG—Mississinewa @ Elwood

Saturday, August 15

9 am—GG—Eastbrook @ Wabash Invitational
9 am—GG—Madison-Grant @ Wabash Invitational
9 am—GG—Marion @ Lapel Invitational
9 am—GG—Mississinewa @ Wabash Invitational
9 am—GG—Oak Hill @ Wabash Invitational

Monday, August 17

4:30 pm—GG—Madison-Grant @ Wes-Del
5:30 pm—GG—Kokomo @ Marion

Tuesday, August 18

5 pm—GG—Eastbrook @ Norwell/Southern Wells
5 pm—GG—Oak Hill @ Maconaquah

Get the latest COVID-19 information from the Indiana State

Department of Health at <http://www.statehealth.in.gov/>

Answers for Crossword and Suduko puzzles

1	4	9	8	7	6	5	3	2
7	3	2	1	5	4	9	6	8
8	6	5	3	9	2	1	7	4
3	1	6	4	2	8	7	9	5
9	7	8	5	6	3	4	2	1
5	2	4	7	1	9	3	8	6
4	9	1	6	8	7	2	5	3
2	8	3	9	4	5	6	1	7
6	5	7	2	3	1	8	4	9

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			B	R	E	A	S	T				D	Y	E				