

Armstrong

Coach: Gregg Hedglin (3rd year)

Returning Starters:

5-11 senior setter/opposite Dylan Toy
5-8 junior libero Carter Kijowski
5-11 junior outside hitter/defensive specialist Jon Yancy
6-4 junior outside hitter Nathan Rosenberger

Freshmen to watch:

6-4 middle hitter Jackson Claypoole
6-6 middle hitter Michael Waugaman

Season Outlook:

We made it into the playoffs last year as a fifth-place finisher, so we had a taste of being in the playoffs. This year, they are only taking the top four teams, so our goal is to place fourth or higher in the section and make it back to the playoffs. Our section has some really big hitters with Hempfield, Norwin, Penn-Trafford, and Latrobe, so we have to beat at least one of those teams to make the playoffs.

Section Favorite:

It will be tight at the top. Hempfield and Penn-Trafford should be the favorites, but you can't rule out Norwin.

WPIAL Favorite:

Seneca Valley has a lot of veteran leadership back, so they should give North Allegheny a run for their money. It should be those two going neck and neck, but don't count out the top teams in our section.

Central Catholic

Coach: Grant Heckmann (1st year)

Returning Starters:

6-3 senior outside hitter Liam Coughlin
5-10 senior setter Nick Pieta
6-3 sophomore middle hitter Nick Sokorski
6-5 senior opposite Declan Reilly

Season Outlook:

It's tough to pin a record prediction on this group as I'm only a couple weeks on the job. We've got a promising balance of experience, athleticism, and size across 4 grade levels in the program. I believe we will compete/take sets off of most opponents we face and that should translate to match wins.

Section Favorite:

I hear that it's Penn-Trafford or Norwin from my players. I'm excited to face off against them as they are reputable programs.

WPIAL Favorite:

It's hard not to pick North Allegheny right? I'd love to see some parity of course at the top and eventually get the Vikings there someday.

Hempfield

Coach: John Howell (26th year)

Returning Starters:

6-5 senior opposite Sean Gordon
6-3 senior outside hitter Lane Harry
6-3 senior middle hitter Chaz Ewer
6-0 senior libero Nolan Stamford
5-10 senior safety Dominic Hipps
6-0 junior outside hitter Owen Kelley

Season Outlook:

We have a lot of experience coming back this year. This team made it to the semi-finals last year and hopes to be able to reach beyond last years successes by learning from them. Sean Knight was our only graduating starter, a big loss as a MB but we are currently in the midst of molding his replacement. We got a bit of a late start to due some of the starters being involved in basketball playoffs but things are starting to gel together well and there is a lot of chemistry between the players.

Section Favorite:

The section is always very competitive and has some great coaching. Penn Trafford, Latrobe, Norwin are always in the thick of things. Central Catholic, Armstrong, Penn Hills will have good years along the way as well. Bottom-line, you better be ready to play every night.

WPIAL Favorite:

Seneca Valley seems to have a very dominant returning line-up and North Allegheny is always in the forefront. There has been a lot of growth with other teams throughout Class 3A so you never know who might be a contender.

Latrobe

Coach: Drew Vosefski (22nd year)

Returning Starters:

5-9 junior setter Josh Havrilla
6-1 junior middle hitter Tyler Nelson
6-1 senior outside hitter Enzo Rodi
6-3 senior outside hitter Brennan Ward

Season Outlook:

We have a lot of new players in different positions. We're hoping by the third or fourth match to be on track to be competitive and challenge for the section title. The outlook is good, but but it's still a learning process for our new players.

Section Favorite:

It's always a tough section. I'd have to consider Hempfield the favorite coming into the season, but it's always a dog fight. We'll have to wait and see how it goes.

WPIAL Favorite:

North Allegheny has to be considered the favorite until somebody beats them.

Norwin

Coach: Mike Palashak (1st year)

Returning Starters:

6-5 junior middle hitter Mike Mihalov
5-11 sophomore outside hitter Troy Horvath
6-0 sophomore libero/defensive specialist Jackson Genicola
6-2 senior outside hitter Tyler Hussey
6-3 junior middle hitter Ethan Painter
6-0 senior outside hitter Michael Fleming

Two Newcomers to Watch:

6-2 senior opposite Kevin Skewers
5-9 sophomore libero Lucas Churchfield

Season Outlook:

When you consider the experienced players we have coming back, plus two key additions, our goal is to be a contender for the section title and make it to the (WPIAL) final four.

Section Favorite: Norwin and Hempfield.

WPIAL Favorite:

North Allegheny and Seneca Valley. Seneca Valley has two NCAA Division I players in their lineup.

Penn Hills

Coach: Jay Mitlo (11th year)

Returning Starters

5-9 sophomore setter Luke Hoolihan
6-2 senior outside hitter Brayden Mallory

Season Outlook:

We look forward to a much more athletic team than we've had in the past few years. We have several new players playing varsity who have been playing other sports so we'll have their desire to compete as a counterbalance to their lack of experience. Our section is very talented so we will have a tough road ahead of us but if we pass well we can surprise some teams.

Section Favorite: Norwin, Hempfield, Penn Trafford, Latrobe

WPIAL Favorite: North Allegheny

Penn-Trafford

Coach: Jim Schall (20th year)

Returning Starters:

6-2 senior outside hitter Alex Rugh
5-10 senior outside hitter Patrick Schall
6-3 senior middle/right hitter Bryce Little

Season Outlook:

Our team has some talented players and will work hard to improve throughout the season.

Section Favorite: Hempfield, Norwin, and Latrobe will have solid teams.

WPIAL Favorite: North Allegheny and Seneca Valley