

Northwest is Optimistic About Patience, Ball-Control Attack

By Jeremy Rutherford
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For 16 long seasons, Northwest High soccer coach Azim Anwary has tried to teach patience. And wouldn't it figure that in his final year as the Lions' head coach, he has found a team that is excited about sitting back and waiting for the right opportunity.

"Usually, (the players) mature by the time they're seniors and learn that soccer is a game of ball control," Anwary said. "This group realizes that. They like passing the ball instead of kicking and chasing it."

Anwary, who recently announced that this would be his final season at Northwest, has 10 seniors on his 17-player roster.

Matt Anderson, a forward, is the top scoring threat for the Lions after scoring 19 goals as a junior last year. Sophomore Danny Mauer and junior Danny Reitz will also help at forward, as will senior Kyle Fontenot, a transfer from Texas.

"They are quality players up front," Anwary said. "Anderson is our designated goal-scorer. But he'll be double-teamed a lot, so he's going to have to dish it off and let those other guys finish."

Northwest lost 2-1 to Marquette in overtime Tuesday, but Anwary saw good defensive play from Dave Brown, a junior sweeper, and twin brothers Brian and Andrew Roberds, who are seniors.

"Those guys are going to help us out a lot," Anwary said. "They are tough guys to go by."

The Lions will use second-year starter Steve Kuczka in goal. He is a former midfielder, but at 6 foot 2, he expects to be solid in the nets. The team has six players on its roster who are 6-0.

"We're big and physical," said Anwary, who also expects big things this season from Matt Nichols, Dave Willis and Bobby Peters.

In order to win its district tournament, though, Northwest will need contributions from all areas. The Lions lost to Fox in the districts last season, 2-1.

However, after watching his team come together toward the end of last year, Anwary feels that his team returns a quality balance of players.
