

# Newcomers to make major contributions



KENDALL SCOTT/THE ROCKET

Sophomore Brooke Hinderliter drives to the hoop during a game against Mercyhurst last season. Hinderliter averaged 10.5 points and 4.8 rebounds last season.

*Continued from Page A-1*

Division I Saint Francis (Pa.), and junior Morgan Henderson. But McGraw said there is also a lineup that consists Hinderliter, Johnson, Patterson and seniors Mallory Heinle and Krista Pietropola that could also start a lot of the games.

With Lexi Carpenter graduated, McGraw said that his team will look to give the ball to Patterson in pressure filled situations.

"Right now, if we had to put the ball in someone's hands when we are down a point with 15 seconds left, it would be Ciara Patterson," McGraw said.

Patterson didn't appear in a game last season, and McGraw said people forget about the damage she did to teams two years ago. During the 2015-2016 season, Patterson recorded 354 points (12.6 per game), 58 assists, and 88 rebounds.

"[Patterson] had 26 points against IUP," McGraw said. "She had 15 in the first half against Duquesne, who happened to be #22 in the country for Division 1 women's basketball, and she averaged 13 points per game. So yeah, if we were down a point with a few seconds, the ball would be in her hands."

Hinderliter is also expected to improve immensely from her impressive rookie season, McGraw said. McGraw said that Hinderliter was "robbed" by the conference by not winning the "PSAC West Freshman of the Year" award. However, instead of "hanging her head" about it, Hinderliter has worked twice as hard in the offseason, he said. McGraw said Hinderliter will start the season being The Rock's primary point guard.

McGraw said that Pietropola is expected to continue being a three-point threat to opponents. She enters the season 15th in program history for three-pointers made with 62. McGraw continued by saying Pietropola had a fantastic summer because she came back this year in the best shape he has seen her in yet.

"Krista Pietropola is hands down one of the best shooters in the PSAC," McGraw said. "She just needs reminded of that sometimes. She can really light it up when she gets rolling and we need a big contribution from her this year if we wish to accomplish what we want to accomplish."

The Rock brings in two transfers to their team this year. Johnson, who was mentioned above as transferring from Saint Francis University, is joined by Kasich Harris from Harford Community College in Maryland. McGraw said that Harris has suffered a knee injury and will likely be out for most of the season.

"We expect all of the transfers to make huge impacts for our team this year in some way," McGraw said

McGraw also introduces four freshmen to The Rock. Aujanane Givner, Lex Perry, Kaylee Young and Skyla O'Conner all bring "unique" talent to SRU, McGraw said. McGraw continued by saying that he expects O'Conner to receive a lot of minutes this season and will be a force on the court for her team this year.

McGraw said one of the biggest positives he sees in his team this year is the senior leadership by the veterans on the team.

"Mallory Heinle has been with me for four years now, Sierra Fordham has been with me for four years, Krista Pietropola has been with me for three years, Patterson has been here for three years," McGraw said. "This is the most seasoned team I have had."

Slippery Rock will open up their 2017-2018 season this weekend when they travel to Richmond, Virginia, to take part in the annual "PSAC-CIAA Challenge." Last year at this tournament, The Rock won both games they played in. They beat Johnson C. Smith University in a narrow 80-79 final score and took down Fayetteville State University 67-58. The first of the two games will be this Friday against Virginia State University (22-8 last season). Tipoff is scheduled for 7 p.m.

The second game will be the following day against Lincoln University (9-20 last season). Tipoff for game two is scheduled for 1 p.m.

# St. Francis transfer looks to make immediate impact

**By Stephen Cukovich**

Assistant Sports Editor

After appearing in 22 games for Division I St. Francis University as a true freshman and redshirting the following year, redshirt sophomore guard Madison Johnson will make her SRU debut when the team kicks off their season Friday at Virginia State University.

"Madison Johnson probably has the chance to make the biggest impact," SRU women's basketball head coach Bobby McGraw said regarding first year players on the team.

In the 2015-16 season Johnson recorded 45 points, with 18 coming in her first collegiate contest against the University of Cincinnati to earn her Northeastern Conference (NEC) Rookie of the Week. Johnson was a 38 percent field goal shooter and a 26 percent shooter from three point land during her time at St. Francis. She was able to tally five rebounds, six assists, three steals, two blocks, while compiling a total of 108 minutes during her freshman season. When it comes to differences between SRU and St. Francis, Johnson says she is more personally accountable for getting outside practice and reps with the Green and White than at St. Francis.

"You get out of it what you put in," Johnson said. "Definitely hard work is needed and getting extra shots off on your own, that's the main difference."

The Knox, Pa native attended Keystone High School where she lettered four times in basketball and three times for volleyball with all-state honors for basketball her junior and senior years. She helped lead her team to a District 9 title in 2012, while also earning District 9 Rookie of the Year honors her freshman year, Player of the Year her junior season, and a three time All-Conference honoree.

"She's a great teammate, which only goes so far if you're not skilled, but she's highly skilled," McGraw said. "She has a tremendous work ethic and she is hands down in the best physical shape on the team."

The newbie to the team will get immediate playing time alongside fellow sophomore



JACK LINDEY/THE ROCKET

Sophomore Madison Johnson joins The Rock after spending two years at Saint Francis University.

guard Brooke Hinderliter. Over the past few weeks Johnson has been able to become more familiar with her new teammates and coaches which comes with the territory of being a transfer, but Johnson says she has been welcomed nicely to the SRU family.

"It's been very awesome meeting new teammates and getting a chance to play with them," Johnson said. "We are really clicking and playing well together. I'm really excited just to see how everything works out."

For Johnson, transferring to The Rock wasn't a hard choice being that it is closer to home for her and she still gets that same competitive atmosphere she had during her time in Division I.

"Slippery Rock has always been a school I've watched throughout the years," Johnson said. "The PSAC I know is a very competitive conference and so I just thought that Slippery Rock was fitting for me."