



Examiner Sports

**2020 Girls'
SOCCER
Preview Edition**



Happy as Klams!

**Class AA Runner-up
Mahopac Looks to Take
Next Step; Class B State
Champ Pleasantville
Stoked for Encore; Class A
Finalist Somers Set to Jet**

All-Section Mahopac senior Mia Klammer (C) and sophomore sister Piper Klammer (R), along with All-League senior Hailey Pereira (L), give the 2019 Class AA runner-up Indians plenty of reason to smile as they look to build upon a spectacular season that ended in a 2-1 sectional title loss to North Rockland. Similarly, reigning NYSPHSAA Class B champion Pleasantville and 2019 Class A sectional runner-up Somers are also chomping at the bit as we inch closer to the start of the 2020 Section 1 girls' soccer season, which was set to begin, with COVID-19 restrictions in place, on Sept. 29... See previews inside

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTO



Sports

Mahopac, Somers, P'Ville Return as Strong Contenders

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor@Directrays

The 2019 Section 1 girls' soccer season was historic at places like Class B Pleasantville, which won its first NYSPHSAA championship, Class C Haldane, which fell in the state semifinals, Class AA Mahopac, which fell one win shy of its first sectional title, and just another run for the roses at Class A Somers where the perennial powerhouse Tuskers were also defeated in the sectional finals.

To put it succinctly, there was no shortage of high-level soccer among the Examiner-area teams from as far south as White Plains to the northern frontier at Mahopac and all points in between.

Business was booming in 2019 and the locals were set to take the pitch on September 29th in what will be anything but a normal year due to COVID-19 restrictions, which have wreaked havoc on high school-sponsored sports programs across the state.

CLASS AA MAHOPAC (16-4)

In making it to the sectional final last year, fourth-seeded Mahopac had to go through No.1 Arlington where the Indians pulled out a come-from-behind 2-1 road win to advance to the final where they lost 2-1 to North Rockland. The Indians romped through the first two rounds, going for 14 goals and none allowed against Fox Lane and Horace Greeley.

It was a banner campaign for first-year Coach Casey Carroll.

"This year, we just want to make another solid run in the sectional tournament," the coach said.

That won't be easy with nine of the 21 players on the 2019 roster having graduated, but the coach is counting on big seasons from junior center back Madison DeCola (All-League Honorable Mention) and seniors Mia Klammer (All-NYS) and Hailey Pereira (All-League). Klammer, a three-sport sensation who scored 18 goals and dished 14 assists last year, is among the finest athletes in the state while Pereria is, pound-for-pound,



RAY GALLAGHER/ROB DIANTONIO/ANDY JACOBS/BOB CASTNER PHOTOS
Mahopac M Madison DeCola's role will significantly increase in this her junior year.

one of the craftiest players around with a big leg. Joining them up top is sophomore Piper Klammer, another strong finisher, and the back line is supported by junior D Marissa McCarney, who scored the game-winning goal against mighty Arlington. The Indians play in a tough league, which includes Dutchess powers Arlington, John Jay EF and RCK, plus rival Carmel, and the road often goes through Arlington..

"Arlington is always a top team in our league and section that we look forward to competing against each year," Coach Carroll said. "And just like every year, you al-

ways look forward to playing that team that knocked you out of the sectional tournament, so a game against North Rockland would be something to look forward to. This season is definitely going to look much different to say the least with everything going on, but I am excited we are able to get back out on the field in whatever capacity that may be."

WHITE PLAINS (9-9)

Two years ago White Plains took a major step when it won the league in 2018. Last year, the record showed a steady 9-9 mark, but it was the first year that fifth-year Coach Meagan Mancini's Tigers won an opening-



White Plains' Kristan Russo (R) will be a key factor for the 2020 Tigers.

round playoff game in more than a decade, according to the coach.

With key returning players -- like Captains Shannon Larkin, Katie McAteer, Jade Palmer, and Kristen Russo -- the Tigers are hoping to take it one step farther.

"My number one goal for this coaching season is to get these girls back on the field to play the sport they absolutely love," Mancini said. "I know that playing on the turf brings my girls so much joy, and I just want to be able to give them that this year. Safety and injury prevention will be my top priority

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With a chunk of the 2019 team returning for 2020 season, Section 1 Class AA runner-up Mahopac hopes to take next step this fall.

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White Plains' Shannon Larkin should be a strong force for the 2020 Tigers.



Somers senior Dahlia Pepe will be a major factor in Tuskers' chase for Class A crown.



White Plains' Sofia Andrade gives Tigers a presence up top.

coming off of several months being unable to train."

The Tigers have set their sights on dominating league foes Ossining, Fox Lane and Port Chester.

"A team goal is to win the league again like in 2018," the coach said. "The teams in our leagues have definitely stepped it up since 2018, so we have our work cut out for us."

CARMEL (4-12-1)

The 15th-seeded Rams were bounced by eventual section 1 champion North Rockland, 7-1, in the opening round, but this year they have eight returning seniors, who saw plenty of time, including Haley Glassman, Angelina Primiano, Holly DeFeo, Melanie Klammer, Liz Delgado, Abigail Taormina, Alexa Ramirez and Isabelle Andreo.

Glassman could be a top standout this year after missing last season due to an injury.

"She is a talented player and we expect exciting things from her this season," second-year Rams Coach Ashley Heis said.

All-Leaguer Taormina is also a standout, as is D/M Klammer, a 2019 All-Section earner.

"As a team, our goal this season is to effectively adapt to the changes the past few months have presented and show gratitude for the opportunity to compete," Heis said.

"We are all immensely thankful to be able to come together as a team and community."

"This season is going to be a different approach than those in the past and despite the changes and challenges we still expect to see a high level of competition from our competitors," she added. "Mahopac and Arlington are always strong competitors and we want to learn from our mistakes last season and grow."

OSSINING (8-9)

The Pride were eliminated by Greeley in the opening round.

FOX LANE (7-9-1)

The 13th-seeded Foxes were eliminated by Mahopac, 8-0, in the opening round.

CLASS A SOMERS (16-3-1)

In 2014, Somers Coach Paul Saia, in his first year as Tusker boss, hoisted the program's only NYS title, and from that point forward Somers has maintained its stance as a perennial powerhouse, but family health concerns have forced Saia to say goodbye, leaving former Concordia Coach Kelci Hegg as the new sheriff in town.

"It was a very difficult and heart wrenching decision, but I thought that it was time," Saia said. "The kids mean the world to me, but I did not feel that I would be able to com-

mit to the job because of some family health issues."

Hegg, after seven years at the helm of Concordia, takes over a unit stacked with talent. Hegg, a native of Charlotte, N.C., was a key member of the Vanderbilt University team from 2002-05, leading the team in goals and points during her senior season while ensuring a 16-3-3 record in 2005 and an NCAA Tournament berth.

She inherits a club with a ton of tournament experience, including 13 seniors and a junior with plenty of soccer pedigree in M/F Victoria Righetti. Joining her are seniors G Natalia Rukaj, M/F Angelina Hurtado, M/F Danielle Accocella, M/F Claudia Farina, D/M Alexa Vanga, versatile Kayli McMorrow, M/F Caroline Russell, M/F Isabella Viscovich, M/F Emma Hay, F Ilaria Adornetto, M/D Noelle DeMarinis, M/F Dahlia Pepe and M/F Ella Kittredge, who has an interesting perspective on the upcoming year, which due to COVID-19 restrictions will be unlike anything NYS student athletes have ever seen.

"All I have to say about this season is that it will be filled with uncertainty," said co-captain Kittredge, a filthy finisher around the cage. "However short or long it may last we have to make the most of every practice and game because it could end at any given

moment. My teammates and I are extremely excited for this upcoming season and I know we are all anxious just to start playing with each other again. Sectionals is always a great goal to set for ourselves, but, more importantly, having a family atmosphere has always made Somers soccer so special to me."

HORACE GREELEY (11-5-2)

The fifth-seeded Quakers blanked No. 12 Ossining in the opening round before falling to Mahopac, 6-0, in the Class AA quarters. Greeley, which comes down to Class A this season, will have to find a way to replace the scoring punch on Maryland-bound Sammi Forster, who accounted for over half of

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Carmel senior D Melanie Klammer (9) has been a steady force along Rams' back line for several years now.



Carmel returns eight seniors to a veteran lineup in 2020.

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Greeley's Ally Forster (R) is poised for a monster senior year.

Horace Greeley's goals last season, racking up 14 goals and nine assists.

The player Coach Erin Tracy is counting on to replace that firepower is All-Section CM Abigail Hanlon.

"She is a smart dynamic player," Tracy said. "Abigail uses her tactical awareness and technical ability to be more of a playmaker."

Edson Ramsey, a sophomore, and Jillian Gordon, a junior, are impactful underclassmen, who will take on additional responsibilities.

"Jillian has poise and control and Ramsey

is a flourishing player who dribbles with ease through tight spaces," the coach said.

HEN HUD (10-7-1)

The 13th-seeded Sailors gave Somers fits for a half before falling 5-1 in the opening round, but with 15 experienced returning players, 13 of which are seniors, the arrow is pointing up on the Sailors and sixth-year Coach Bill Pagel. Ten of those seniors have starting experience, including All-Section,



Somers senior wing Ella Kittredge will be tough for opposing defenders to contain.

record-setting striker Kira Varada, who broke the Sailors' single season record for goals in 2019 with 27 (Melissa Ribas scored 24 in 1998).

"Kira is one of the top goal scorers in the section," Coach Pagel said of the three-sport star, who will likely rank in the top five all-time athletes at Hen Hud should she stay



Greeley sophomore Ramsey Edson showed serious potential as a freshman and should only improve in 2020.

healthy and finish as she's started.

"She finished 2019 with 27 goals and four assists, which is pretty incredible," Pagel said.

Joining her up front and looking to add scoring punch will be junior Sabrina Byrne and senior Evelyn Zninin. Seniors Liz McDowell (All-League), Maddy O'Hara (All-League), Parker Piccolo, Jessinia Morocho and G Iliana Done will anchor the defensive back line.

"We will have a deep and talented midfield with several key seniors," the coach said, noting Hannah Stout (All-League), Maddy Gough, Megan Abatamarco, Salena Salameh, Allie Simonetti and Molly Gibson all playing significant roles.

Key newcomers include sophomore Katherine Couch, who saw some playing time on the varsity last year after she was called up mid-season.

"This year we expect Kat will contribute even more with her skill and versatility to play multiple positions," Pagel said. "We have good chemistry, a lot of experience and strong leadership, so we think we'll have a positive season if we stay healthy. Given the current circumstances we'll focus on savoring each moment a little more and being grateful for each opportunity we get to play. Although it will be an unconventional season, we think it will be one we enjoy."

LAKELAND (7-7-1)

The 17th-seeded Hornets failed to crack the field of 16 when they were eliminated by No.16 Brewster. The Hornets are expecting a much

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Lakeland CM Linda Daly is a legit two-way threat for the Hornets.



Lakeland senior Ava Pagliaro should provide the Hornets some scoring punch.

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Hen Hud senior Kira Varada should rewrite the Sailors' all-time record books this season.



Hen Hud's Madison Gough (L) and Somers' Ella Kittredge will return for what should be big senior seasons in 2020.



Hen Hud senior M Allie Simonetti will be a two-way force for Sailors.

better outcome in 2020 with 14 veterans returning, including eight seniors and six juniors.

Seniors F Francesca Gerbasi, wing Ava Pagliaro, MF Amanda Cole, CB Sidney Nivar, MF Juliana Moscati, F Aisha Bhakta, GK Sarah Pinkowsky and F Nicole Haughney all saw major run last year, and juniors Nadia Parisi and Linda Daly are a couple of slick center mids Coach Shawn Sullivan expects big things from.

Juniors CB Mikayla Gustavson, M Kate MacDonald, F HaiLian Rowan and FB Jordan

Pepaj will bolster the squad. Sullivan needs more time to assess his key newcomers

"We're unsure of the key newcomers as of now," the coach admitted. "We're looking forward to seeing what the new players bring on the first day (9/29). We're excited about some younger players entering the program, and we want to improve upon last year's record and be a top team in our league. We hope to improve each day and be playing our best soccer in late November and early December."

Sullivan expects Somers to be the team to

beat in the league and noted John Jay CR, Pearl River, Albertus Magnus and Rye as some of the top Class A contenders.

YORKTOWN (6-9-2)

The 15th-seeded Huskers had a rare down year and suffered a 4-0 loss to No.2 Pearl River in the opening round of play-offs. That should not last long, though, with seniors Chayce Buono (All-Section HM), Caitlin Ward, Sophia Spallone (All-League) and Abby Passarella all returning at midfield. The defense has a veteran presence with seniors Sammy Paglino and Grace Pearce (All-

League) in front of junior GK Erisa Krasniqi, who gained experience from last season and will continue her growth this year, according to Coach Rich Armstrong.

Katelyn Tomeny will add strength to the back line as well. Sophomores ready to make a serious impact include Emily Ward, Juliana Vano, Alyssa Lassen, Kristin Linahan and Olivia Lucas. The unit hopes to challenge in a league that includes sectional runner-up Somers and an improved Lakeland club.

WALTER PANAS (3-11-2)

Despite a subpar 2019 season in which

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Yorktown senior Chayce Buono will be a tough one to contain.



Panas co-captain Alex Sudol is set up for big doings this fall.



Panas co-captain Amanda Cohen will be a driving force for Panthers this fall.

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Pleasantville senior Analiese Picart was among the top defenders in the section last year.



Pleasantville senior D Katie Moses is one of the best on-ball defenders in the conference.



Peekskill's Hannah Hidalgo will make an impact this fall for the Red Devils.

they did not make the playoffs, Panas Coach Kyle Pierce sees reason for optimism in 2020 with a slew of top returning players, including senior captain M Amanda Cohen (Honorable Mention All-League), junior F Kayle Guevara, who led the Panthers assists and was second in goals, sophomore F Molly Muller, who led the team in goals, senior G Natalia Londono (Honorable Mention All-League), senior captain and sweeper Alexandra Sudol (Honorable Mention All-League) and junior D Ella Yeager (Honorable Mention All-League).

Pierce was unaware of any key newcomers with teams unable to practice until Sept. 29.

"We're looking forward to seeing what the new players bring to our first day, and we're excited about some younger players entering the program," said Pierce, a former star QB at Panas.

"We want to improve upon last year's record, qualify for sectional play and advance," he added. "Beating rival Lakeland is always a goal. We always strive to keep a positive, hardworking, never give-up attitude while continuing to improve as a team after each practice and game."

Somers has been the team to beat in the league in recent seasons, and that's not expected to change this year.

PEEKSKILL (3-12-1)

Third-year Coach Troy Lepore and Assistant Coach Stephanie Potts (Lakeland soccer alumni, played at New Paltz) are hoping to make the playoffs this year after failing to do so last year. The Red Devils lost three All-League players and two team captains (Yeymily Conde Lopez, Berlin Jerez Coc, Nataly Macas) but return nine players from

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Pleasantville senior G Lila Donohue returns as one of the top keepers in NYS after winning states in 2019.

last year. Hannah Hidalgo will be Peekskill's catalyst and most skilled player.

"She is truly a great kid," Coach Lepore said. "A hard worker, plays club ball and

helped me organize a Google Classroom for social distant workouts and communications starting in mid July. This group of young women best exemplify what Peekskill High



Westlake D Gianna Eglauf and Briarcliff M Samantha Franks both return as key components for 'Cats and Bears, respectively.

wants all our student athletes to be like: dedicated, responsible, hard working, and respectful. Our record cannot represent the type of character and people these girls have become in the two years I've had the honor to be around them."

BYRAM HILLS (9-7-1)

The 11th-seeded Bobcats were eliminated by No.6 John Jay CR, 3-1, in the opening round.

BREWSTER (7-9-1)

The 16th-seeded Bears were no match for top-seeded Rye in a 6-0 opening-round setback after Brewster knocked off Lakeland in the out-bracket round.

CLASS B PLEASANTVILLE (20-1-2)

An insane NYS championship season will be tough to replicate but the Panthers and NYS Coach of the Year Christopher Osterhoudt are ready for an encore. When the curtain lifts on the 2020 campaign, Pleasantville will be ready for role call. The

Panthers didn't stop until the powers that be were all dethroned, including defending state champion Chenango Forks. O'Neill, Greece Olympia, and, finally, Central Valley Academy were also bumps in the road en route to the state title. The final bump was a doozy, but All-NYS junior Katie Moses scored the winning goal with just four seconds left in regulation for a 3-2 NYS title triumph. The Panthers finished with a 20-1-2 record en route to the team's first-ever state championship.

Shutouts were the norm during each of Pleasantville's first three state playoff games behind returning four-year senior Lila Donohue. Overall, the Panthers held their opponents scoreless in 15 of their 23 games throughout the year. Pleasantville returned to the Section 1 Class B finals to snag its first section title since 2003 in a 3-0 shutout of Bronxville.

"Last year was an amazing season with an unforgettable finish to it," the coach said. "A great thing about 2020, though, is that we have 18 returning players and nine starters."

So, yeah, Pleasantville is the clear-cut favorite in Class B this season, and not just Section 1. The Panthers had three players earn All-NYS honors, with two of them, F Moses and D Analiese Picart, returning.

"Our team goal going into this year would be to get back to the sectional final," Osterhoudt said. "I think an advantage we have had over most teams we have faced the last few years has been our depth. We look to have great depth again this season as well.

So many of our key returners contribute to our success."

Those members include key defenders Analiese Picart, Julia O'Reilly, Carolyn Lee, Riley Vavolizza and Summer de Luca, who are poised to continue to string out clean sheets.

Additional key returning midfielders are Amber Nanaj, Grace Capko, Mary Grace O'Neill, Lauren Mathews and Eliza Murphy. Scoring punch will come from key forwards Moses, Izzy Kapoor and Maddie Braverman, who is coming back from injury last season.

The coach also noted that Bronxville and Briarcliff are two challengers, who are always at the top of the discussion when it comes to competing for a section title. P'Ville will have to get used to life without Allison Portera, one of the top players in NYS last year.

WESTLAKE (9-3-6)

The third-seeded Wildcats shutout No. 14 Edgemont in the opening round and were stunned by Briarcliff, 1-0, in the quarters. Say what you will about the way things ended, but the Wildcats were the only team in the state to knock off Pleasantville last year, which bodes well for the future.

BRIARCLIFF (9-7-2)

The sixth-seeded Bears cruised to an 8-0 opening round win over Hastings and advanced to the Final 4 with a 1-0 win over Westlake before falling to Bronxville, 3-0, in semis. The tradition-rich Bears will need to replace the scoring punch of departed Maya Celaj. Key returning seniors include D Caitlyn Dornau and D Ally Labick, who lock down the back line for senior GK Emma Watchel, as well as junior middies Arianna Vizcaino and Samantha Franks.

PUTNAM VALLEY

The Tigers were winless last season and did not qualify for playoffs.

CLASS C HALDANE (11-6-3)

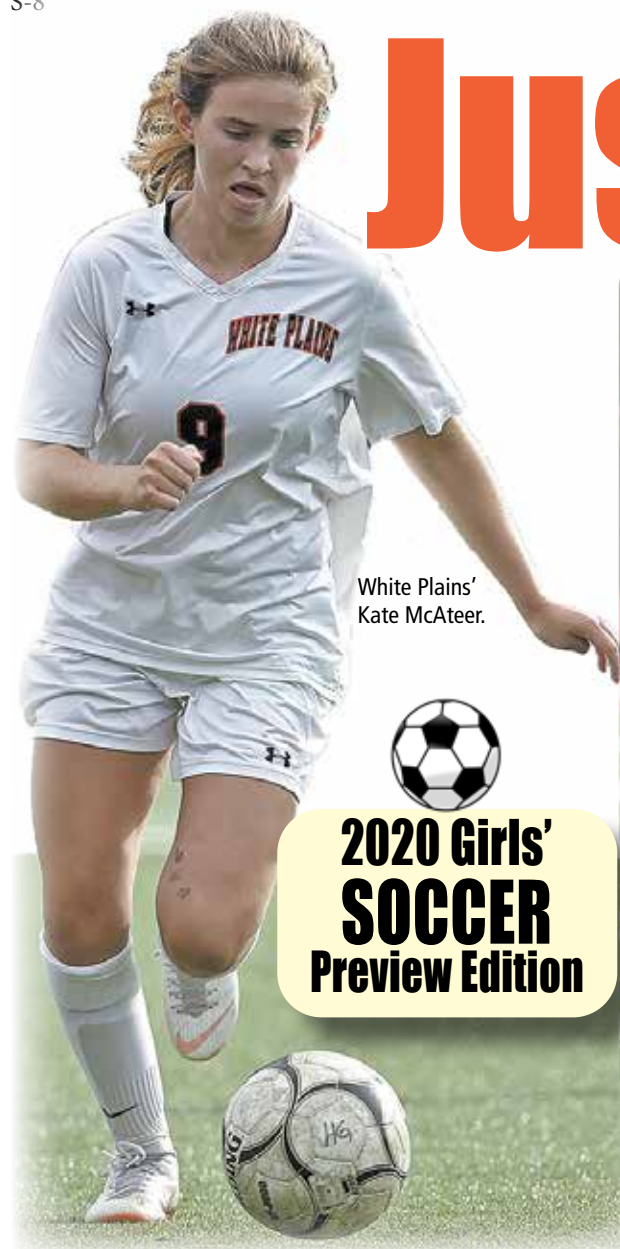
The second-seeded Blue Devils secured yet another sectional title last season before falling on PK's in the NYSPHSAA semifinals. Another savage run through the post-season saw the Blue Devils win their ninth-straight sectional title.

Blue Devil sophomore Chloe Rowe, who scored the game-winning goal in the Blue Devils' 3-1 Section 1 title win over top-seeded Leffell, is back for a potential 10th-straight Class C title. Clutch sophomores Sara Ferriera and Liv Vilella also return for Haldane Coach Steve Schweikhart, who will need to find a scorer who can replace the 19 goals scored by graduated Jade Vilella.

All Examiner-area girls' soccer coaches and/or AD's were contacted via email for preview information. Please hit up raygallagherports@gmail.com with stats and comments by Sunday morning each week for inclusion in our weekly soccer notebooks.



Just for Kicks!



White Plains' Kate McAteer.



2020 Girls' SOCCER
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Hen Hud's Kira Varada



Somers' Ella Kittredge

Pleasantville Looks to Repeat as Class B State Champs; Mahopac, Somers Appear Strong in Class AA, A

RAY GALLAGHER/ANDY JACOBS/ROB DIANTONIO PHOTOS

From Westchester's Class B Pleasantville to Class AA's White Plains, to Northern Westchester's Class A Somers and Putnam Counties Class AA Mahopac, Section 1 soccer fields will be lit this fall with several strong challengers looking to stake their claim as Section 1 girls' soccer champions when the season kicks off on Sept. 29 ... **See Sports**



Defending NYS Class B champion Pleasantville is ready for another run for the roses in 2020



Pleasantville's Julia O'Reilly