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Photo by Tracy Dreslinski

Bloomfield Hills Marian senior captain Anina Cicerone, a Bloomfield Hills resident, looks for an opening during a March 31 2-1 win over Pontiac Notre Dame Preparatory. Since the vamping up their offense this season they've seen positive results, posting a 3-0 record at press time.

Kicking it up a notch

Marian soccer looks to increase offense, relies on senior leadership

By Sue Teggart
C & G Sports Writer

BEVERLY HILLS — Bloomfield Hills Marian girls soccer coach Barry Brodsky admits that he's always been a defensive-minded coach.

But after a four-year state championship drought, he's decided to switch things up a bit.

"I'm a defensive coach; I always have been," Brodsky said. "For me, this year, it's a little bit of a change that we're trying."

Some added offensive players, along with a new formation, could be just what Brodsky needs to take the Mustangs back to the big game.

"We lost to Lahser 1-0 both years," Brodsky said of falling to Bloomfield Hills Lahser last season in the district opener and the year before in the state semifinals. "We're working hard to be effective offensively."

"We've got a lot of good offensive players. We've got a lot of forwards, more than I've ever had on a team, so we're trying to take advantage of those good, offensive players."

Marian, which in the past played with two forwards in its formation, has switched to three. Brodsky said the aim is to get more players on the attack and into the goal box while still playing effectively on defense.

So far, the Mustangs have executed the new scheme very well, beating Lahser 2-0 and Livonia Ladywood 5-0 in their first two games.

Like the offense, the Mustangs' roster has changed quite a bit this season, as well.

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Marian returned just four seniors — captains Whitney Sarkis of West Bloomfield, Courtney Andries of Rochester, Casey Ayeres of Farmington Hills and Anina Cicerone of Bloomfield Hills — and welcomed seven newcomers to the program.

Ayeres said despite the infusion of youth, the Mustangs still have a bevy of talent.

“We’re definitely very strong offensively,” she said. “We have a solid defensive line, as well.”

“In the past, the players seemed to need more guidance, but these new girls know what they’re doing, and it helps us a lot,” Sarkis added.

With Sarkis at keeper, Ayeres anchoring defense, Cicerone patrolling the midfield and Andries powering offense, the Mustangs have experienced players at key positions.

“We’ve put all of our experiences together to make one leadership unit,” Sarkis said. “We’ve got all general areas of the field covered,” Ayeres added.

Brodsky said his seniors welcomed the role of leader.

“They set a very good example,” Brodsky said about his seniors. “They’ve all been playing tremendously.”

With two wins already under their belts, the Mustangs’ expectations remain high.

“I think the first few games actually said something about the rest of the season,” Sarkis said. “I think we can only get better.”

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