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## A special youth movement

**Without one senior, Adams girls basketball team has played beyond its age**

By Mike Moore  
 C & G Sports Writer

ROCHESTER HILLS — Like most coaches, Fran Scislowicz likes working with an experienced team of senior leaders.

The Rochester Adams girls basketball coach was blessed with that scenario a year ago, leading his veteran squad to a 17-4 overall record, included a 15-1 start, and an Oakland Activities Association White Division title.

A year later, though, the makeup of his team has changed, drastically.

The winning, however, has not.

Despite graduating all five starters, not having one senior on the current roster, returning only one player who saw significant time and saying goodbye to 90 percent of last year's scoring, the Highlanders were 7-5 at press time and sitting in third in the OAA White with a 4-3 mark,

"The youth of this team — the way they've prepared and the way they've played — has been something pretty special," Scislowicz said last week. "This has been one of the most coachable groups I've been able to work with in a very long time. I love these kids."

His appreciation for these players — seven juniors, two sophomores and one freshman — doesn't come just from the fact that they're winning.

"The attitude is what I love," he boasted. "They come here to work and to get better every day. What more can I really ask for?"

Still, that winning has come as somewhat of a surprise for the longtime leader.

With junior Jocelyn McDougal as the lone player back who saw significant time a year ago, Scislowicz, understandably, expected the maturation process of the other nine girls to take some time, especially, he said, "due to the complex offense we run." But things seemed to come together almost instantly.

The Highlanders won four of their first six games, including the title at the Bishop Foley Holiday Tournament.

"I think we're all a little surprised, to be honest," McDougal said of the season thus far. "We were picked to finish near the bottom of the league, but we've been trying to prove people wrong. Everyone has stepped up and played well. The juniors have led, and the younger girls have done great in their roles."



Photo by Tracy Dreslinski  
 Karissa Roverda is one of two sophomores on a Rochester Adams basketball team that doesn't have a single senior. The Highlanders were 7-5 at press time.

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"It's a team of girls that are very dedicated to each other," junior Kelly Quinlan said. "We seemed to mesh right away. We played well right off the bat and haven't looked back."

When asked if she thought she and her teammates were too young to understand the difficult road ahead when the season began, Quinlan laughed.

"I don't think so," she said. "Right when things got going, we felt pretty confident in what we could do. There was that sense of the unknown, playing with a team without any seniors, and we knew we'd be at a disadvantage with how young and inexperienced we were, but we also rallied on the fact that we'd have to work harder than anyone else."

"It's a very intelligent group, and that counts for something on the basketball court," Scislowicz boasted, adding that his team has a combined 3.72 GPA. "They're very dependable girls in the classroom, and that transfers to the games. So far, it's worked pretty well."

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