

Borah aims for top spot again

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The boys high school basketball season opens Saturday with limited games, but most of the action in the Treasure Valley begins Tuesday.

Here's a look at how the teams in the 5A Southern Idaho Conference stack up:

Boise Braves

Coach: Jeff Ulrickson, fourth season
2011-12 record: 14-13, 9-9 5A SIC

Returning starters: Sam Simpson, junior, guard (9 ppg, 4 rpg, 2 apg); Alex Rant, junior, guard (5 ppg, 2 rpg, 2 apg)

Team tidbit: The Braves should have good size, with three players listed at 6-foot-5 or taller. In addition to two starters, the Braves also return three senior lettermen — Deion Hardy and twin brothers Sam and Ben Showalter.

Borah Lions

Coach: Cary Cada, 19th season

2011-12 record: 25-1, 17-1 5A SIC

Returning starters: Cody Spjute, senior, wing (9 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 2.7 apg, 1.8 spg); Isaiah Wright, junior, point guard (12 ppg, 5.1 apg, 3.2 spg, 2.7 rpg)

Team tidbit: Only three lettermen return from last year's state championship team, but



Tanner Percifield was one of four returning starters for the Mavericks.

the Lions should still be among the conference's top teams. Defense is expected to be the Lions' strong suit this season.

Capital Eagles

Coach: Paul Rush, third season

2011-12 record: 3-17, 2-16 5A SIC

Returning starters: Hunter Young, junior, shooting guard (12.7 ppg, 2 apg, 2 spg); Cam Carlsen, senior, forward (6 ppg, 3 rpg)

Team tidbit: After finishing at the bottom of the conference standings last season, the Eagles should be more competitive this year with the return of five lettermen. Capital is young, however, with just two seniors on the roster.

Centennial Patriots

Coach: Tom Aipperspach, 25th season

2011-12 record: 15-11,

5A SIC Coaches' Poll

Preseason prediction as voted on by coaches in the 5A SIC. Number in parentheses indicates first-place votes:

1. Borah (6)
2. Centennial (2)
3. Rocky Mountain (1)
4. Timberline (1)
5. MOUNTAIN VIEW
6. Eagle
7. Boise
8. Capital
9. Vallivue
10. Meridian

12-6 5A SIC

Returning starter: Daryl Robertson, senior, guard (10 ppg)

Team tidbit: Robertson and junior Collin Mabe are the only returning lettermen, but a strong group of athletic newcomers should keep the Patriots in the mix for the conference title. Aipperspach expects his team to be strong on both ends of the floor.

Eagle Mustangs

Coach: Tom Seifert, eighth season

2011-12 record: 15-12, 10-8 5A SIC

Returning starter: Braiden Shaw, senior, post (14 ppg, 9 rpg)

Team tidbit: BYU recruit Shaw will need to be a force as the only returning letterman. Seifert expects his inexperienced team to gain momentum as the

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season progresses. The Mustangs hope to dominate teams inside with the 6-8 Shaw and 6-9 newcomer Jake Stevens.

Meridian Warriors

Coach: Mike Graefe, second season

2011-12 record: 8-14, 6-12 5A SIC

Returning starter: AJ DeMond, senior, guard

Team tidbit: DeMond and junior guard

Bryson Stout are expected to be leaders as the only returning lettermen. Graefe says his inexperienced team may take some lumps early, but their natural athleticism could make them an upset threat later in the season.

Mountain View Mavericks

Coach: Jon Nettleton, eighth season

2011-12 record: 17-9, 12-6 5A SIC

Returning starters: Tanner Percifield, senior, guard (11 ppg, 2.5 rpg); Branson Trube, junior, point guard (3.1 ppg, 1.5 rpg); Randall Robinson, senior, guard (7.7 ppg, 1.8 rpg); Marcus Slocum, senior, wing (6.5 ppg, 4.4 rpg)

Team tidbit: The Mavericks have more returning starters than any other team and are coming off a runner-up finish in the 5A SIC. Nettleton hopes the team's hard work in the offseason pays off with another deep run in the postseason.

Rocky Mountain Grizzlies

Coach: Dane Roy, second season

2011-12 record: 8-12, 6-12 5A SIC

Returning starters: Matt Grooms, senior, post (9.6 ppg, 8.1 rpg); Nate Bruneel, senior, wing (4.3 ppg, 4.0 rpg); John Sherle, junior, point guard (5.0 ppg, 3.3 apg)

Team tidbit: Although the Grizzlies finished near the bottom of the conference last year, that shouldn't be the case this season with six returning lettermen. Rocky is hungry to prove itself after missing last year's district tournament as the loser of a three-way tiebreaker.



Junior guard Isaiah Wright led Borah to the 5A state title in 2011-12 and was expected to do it again this season.

Timberline Wolves

Coach: Josh Downey, fourth season

2011-12 record: 15-11, 10-8 5A SIC

Returning starters: Grant Saetrum, senior, point guard (9 ppg, 3 apg); Jake Tate, senior, shooting guard (6 ppg)

Team tidbit: With the help of four returning lettermen, the Wolves aim to advance to state for the third consecutive season. Seniors Tyler Langford (6-6 center) and Freddie Tellez (5-10 guard) join Saetrum and Tate as returners.

Vallivue Falcons

Coach: Scott Moore, third season

2011-12 record: 7-15, 6-12 5A SIC

Returning starter: Lane Sale, junior, post (4 ppg, 4.5 rpg, led team in blocks)

Team tidbit: Vallivue finished in the bottom of the league last season and the Falcons may have some growing pains ahead of them with just two lettermen back. Moore hopes senior Taylor Pedersen and sophomores Bryce Schroeder and Tanner Vogt can have an immediate impact for his young squad.