

"We've had a great season so far, " said Austin High School Lady Eagles Coach Jared Petersen.

The Lady Eagles were generously given what is considered one of the toughest schedules in Class AA basketball. But the girls got the job done. They have a winning record of 14-3 with a no. 6 ranking in the state.

Four season games were left when Coach Petersen gave this interview. For the 2013 Sectional Team, he determined that he was going to have freshmen Meagan Hollan and Hailey Misamore, sophomores Holli Reynolds and Kaitlin Embrey and juniors Megan Smith, Taylor Jeffries, Brenna Riley and Cassidy. This roster is subject to change, advised Coach P, if injuries or poor health take a toll. Sophomore Liz Vires is next in line for a Sectional Team seat.

The four leaders of the Eagles are seniors who "get along" and are "smooth sailing," according to their coach. They are Jessie Davidson, Kourtney Mace, Brenna Oeffinger and Kamry Howard.

"They are four great seniors who have been very important to our program. They all mean a lot to me as players and people," he said about his graduating players.

Each of the seniors began their high school basketball careers being members of a State Championship team. "We plan to end their careers with another run at the title. I'll miss them dearly after this season," stated Petersen.

The teams competing against Sectional favorite Austin February 5 to 9 are North Decatur, Brown County, Southwestern, defending sectional champions and hosts South Ripley, Switzerland County and Milan.

Decatur is sized up as the stiffest competition Austin will meet in the sectional at Versailles. Brown County's record is 7-6 so far. Southwestern was defeated by Austin by a 13-point margin in seasonal play. South Ripley has lost all of its dynamic players who captured multiple sectional crowns.

Petersen acknowledged the competition that any sectional presents to participants, but he was optimistic concerning the Eagles' chances of bringing home the crown on the evening of February 9.

If - when - they do take all the marbles, The Eagles' roughest competition will probably be in the regional. Assuming team winners turn out as planned, the ladies will face a determined bunch from Paoli, ranked no. 2 in 2A. Coach Petersen said, "The Lady Rams are tough, they really are, but I think we could beat them if we play hard and as a team."

After that battle, the ride to a state title should be fairly smooth for the Lady Eagles.

The coach ended his thoughts by saying, "My team has worked hard at our post season goal: To get back to a state championship and bring it home."