

Power in the Dual County League again

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The Dual County League has long been home to many of Eastern Massachusetts' top boys soccer programs.

The race for the top spot in the DCL this fall will be filled with contenders as Concord-Carlisle, Acton-Boxboro and Lincoln-Sudbury enter the season as the teams to beat, with Westford Academy, Bedford and Wayland not far behind.

Acton-Boxboro only has two starters returning, Dewey Schunk and Jay Hayward, from a club that checked in with a 16-3-1 record.

Midfielder Theo Terris, who scored 10 goals and added 14 assists last season, will spearhead Concord-Carlisle's bid for the crown. The Patriots peaked in the postseason last November, winning the Division 2 State Championship.

With Ben Mangan leading the way in goal, Westford should be the thick of things.

Bedford will be looking to secure another state tournament berth, while newcomer Tyngsboro, which is making the switch from the Commonwealth Athletic Conference, will be looking for offensive production from Ross Kendall, who netted 25 goals last season.

In Merrimack Valley Conference Division 1, Andover and Haverhill, which has moved up from MVC Division 2, are the preseason favorites, but Lowell and Dracut should be in the running for league honors.

Leading the way for Lowell will be midfielder Matheus Candido and defenders Peter Theodoros and Ryan Ahearn.

Dracut's Jimmy Tully is a proven goalscorer. Tully potted 14 goals last season.

Marc Teal of Dracut and Daniel Caruso of Tewksbury are among Central Catholic's seven returning starters.

In MVC Division 2, Chelmsford, which moved down from MVC Division 1, and Billerica should be in the thick of the pennant chase.

With 12 players returning with starting experience, Tewksbury could be one of the most improved teams in the MVC.

Wilmington keeper Vinny Papageorgiou, who registered 8 shutouts and had a 0.60 goals-against-average last year, will spearhead a defense that should help the Wildcats in the Cape Ann League hunt.

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