

Plenty of new faces to make mark for Central Plains football squad

By MIKE COURSON
Undeclared state champions in 2014, and a squad ranked No. 1 most of 2015, last year's graduating class helped the Central Plains football team to a 24-2 record over the past two seasons. Both of those losses came last year, and both came against state champions in Victoria and Spearville.

With just four offensive and three defensive starters back Oiler Coach Chris Steiner now has to fill some big shoes.

"We have to stay healthy," he said. "We want to continue to improve each week and win games on both sides of the football. We need some young kids to step up to fill some positions and create depth that was depleted by graduation."

The list of missing players and their accolades is extensive. Braedan Crites was a standout quarterback and defensive back. Hunter Ingham was a first-team all-league defensive back. Trustin Kreft was a unanimous first-team all-league selection on the offensive line, and ranked No. 9 among sacks in 8-man last year. Cody Price was an all-league linebacker and ranked No. 16 in tackles among 8-man players.



2016 Oiler Football: Front row, from left: Dillon Wimmer, Mgr., Lawson Oeser, Kade Beck, Bryce Miller, Ethan Hubbard, Mason Wimmer, Aaron Schneweis, James Radenberg, Dalton Beck, Trey Schulte, and Jacob McAtee. Back row: Anthony Oberle, JJ Heredia, Grant Heldstab, Brett Liebl, Devin Ryan, Alex Barton, Lee Letourneau, Phillip Donecker, Alex Hickel, Kealy Burris, Brett Thompson, Gus Bain, and Dylan Lemieux. Not Pictured: Jerred Bieberle, Juan Vasquez, John Ross Moran, Mgr, and Mason Cox, Mgr.

The list continues. Michael Ryan was a first-team all-league defensive lineman and a notable tight end. As kicker, he was a big piece of the Oiler special teams. Jacob Warnken was a first-team all-league linebacker and second-team all-league utility back. Brady Rugan was an all-league honorable mention out of the backfield.

Sophomore Devin Ryan will get the nod at quarterback. A standout basketball and tennis player his freshman year, Ryan (5-11, 148) had limited touches on offense last year with just three four pass tries and three carries. Defensively, Ryan returns to the cornerback position

where he had 21 tackles and three interceptions last year.

Junior Dalton Beck and sophomore Alex Hickel will lead the ground attack. Beck (5-9, 160) carried the ball 11 times for 22 yards and a score last year.

Junior Alex Barton (6-3, 177) returns as a big target for Ryan. Last season, Barton was second on the team with 17 receptions for 246 yards and five touchdowns. Senior Bryce Miller (5-10, 142) caught nine passes for 103 yards and a pair of touchdowns last season.

Senior Trey Schulte (6-0, 224) and junior Phillip Donecker (6-1, 182) will play on the offensive line with senior

James Radenberg (5-11, 248) at center. Sophomore Brett Liebl (6-2, 177) gets the nod at tight end.

Defense has been a staple for the Oilers in recent seasons. Last fall, Central Plains blanked six opponents and held four more to two touchdowns or less. Only eventual state champion Spearville was able to score more than two touchdowns.

Steiner will be missing most of his defensive line and linebackers from a year ago. Schulte returns with 72 tackles and one sack last year.

Barton and Ryan return to the secondary. Barton had 78 tackles, three interceptions, and seven pass deflection

at his safety position in 2015.

Schulte will be joined up front by Donecker and junior Lee Letourneau (6-5, 188). Hickel and Dalton Beck fill in the linebacker spot, and junior Kade Beck (6-0, 165) will complete the

secondary. Kade Beck will also assume punting duties.

Central Plains and Victoria have dominated the Central Prairie League in recent years. This year, Steiner expects strong tests from Ness City and Otis-Bison as well. Ellinwood and St. John will be district opponents as well as league foes.

The Oilers have made the playoffs in four out of five seasons since Claflin and Quivira Heights consolidated. This year, 8-Man, Div. I, District 5 could be more wide open as Little River returns most of its team, and Ellinwood looks to replace Solomon as a playoff-bound team. Goessel, with six players back on each side of the ball, will also be in the hunt.

Central Plains football 2016

Sept. 2	@Victoria
Sept. 9	NESS CITY
Sept. 16	@Otis-Bison
Sept. 23	KINSLEY
Sept. 30	CANTON-GALVA
Oct. 7	LITTLE RIVER
Oct. 14	@Ellinwood
Oct. 21	ST. JOHN
Oct. 27	@Goessel

Macksville football continues uphill climb in 2016

By MIKE GILMORE
The uphill climb continues for Macksville football coach Chet Skinner in his third season with the Mustangs.

In his first year as coach in 2014, the South Gray standout took over the Mustang program at the bottom of a three-year skid, when the Mustangs scored just 12 points all season.

The point production ballooned last season to 112, but that's not enough to win consistently in the eight-man dominant Central Prairie League. The Mustangs did record a 36-14 win against Stafford County rival St. John, to finish 1-8 on the season and 1-4 in their Class 2A district.

This season, Skinner is hoping that 2015 transfer Jacob Rein, now a 6-1, 155-pound junior, will do for the Mustang grid-ders what he did for the basketball team last winter and the track program in the spring.

As a newcomer to the Mustang football roster, Rein "is a good athlete that will look to help stretch the field at the quarterback position," Skinner said.

Skinner noted that cross country dual sporters Karson Waters, a sophomore, and Brigdon Russell, a two-year veteran harrier as a junior, will give Rein a couple legs up each toward the Mustangs' passing game as receivers.

The rest of the Mustangs' success in 2016 relies "on the returning players," Skinner noted. "We have a solid core group of guys that have been starters for multiple years now. Our athleticism will look to stretch the field and give defenses trouble with both the run and the pass. A strong summer weights program and off-season conditional will be vitle for the Mus-

tangs to improve on their 1-8 record."

Returning as starters for the Mustangs include: Jesus Saavedra, 5-6, 160 junior RB/CB; Luis Saenz, 5-8, 180 jr. RB/CB; Taylor Rodriguez, 5-9, 180 senior OL/LB; Kreed Parr, 5-9, 140 junior RB/LB; Chris McMullen, 5-9, 170 junior WR/CB; Nate Brandyberry, 5-7, 135 junior WR/CB; Adalberto Miranda, 5-8, 195 senior OL/DL; Clayton Cross, 6-0, 205 junior OL/DL and Bryce Casper, 6-1, 170 senior RB/CB.

The Mustangs open on the road Sept. 2 in Ness City, then host a Brady Dinkel-less Victoria squad the next week in Macks-

Four out for CPHS XC squad

By MIKE COURSON
Central Plains has been a sports powerhouse since consolidation five years ago. Rhiannon Becker is trying to get the Oiler cross country team and up running. This year's squad will have just three girls and one boy.

"While we have a small roster this year, I am excited to have athletes who are enthusiastic about the sport and who work hard to improve each day," Becker said. "They are also a fun group to work with. Quality over quantity!"

The Lady Oilers will have a pair of seniors in Jade Wissing and Emma

Williams. Sophomore Katie Gunder will also run on the squad. Sophomore Paxton Hammeke will carry the torch for the Oiler boys.

The 2016 will continue to be one of improvement for the

Central Plains runners.

"We were a young team last year," Becker said. "I hope we can continue to build on the foundation we built and improve our times and performances this year."

Central Plains XC 2016

Sept. 3	@Hoisington
Sept. 8	@Hesston
Sept. 15	@Stafford
Sept. 22	@Larned
Sept. 29	@Ness City
Oct. 6	@Sterling
Oct. 13	CPL@Kinsley
Oct. 22	Regional
Oct. 29	State @Wamego

Macksville football 2016

Sept. 2	@Ness City
Sept. 9	VICTORIA
Sept. 16	@Kinsley
Sept. 23	ST. JOHN
Sept. 30	@South Central
Oct. 7	KIOWA COUNTY
Oct. 14	@Skyline
Oct. 21	ARGONIA-ATTICA
Oct. 27	@Fairfield



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