

Kats to deal with new district, new quarterback for 2016 campaign

By MIKE COURSON
Over the past two seasons, John Wellman's football teams have posted an 18-2 record and won two district championships. Big changes are on the way. Chase graduated some serious talent, and a tougher schedule in 2016 will make things interesting.

"We currently have a leadership void with the graduation of Brendon Clark, Riely Munoz, and Kyle Kizzar," Wellman said. "Our guys are very experienced, but none of them ever had to be the vocal leader for the team. Someone needs to step up and fill that role."

At quarterback, Clark had been one of the area's statistical leaders over each of the past two seasons. Last year, he accounted for nearly 1,900 yards and 47 touchdowns on offense. Defensively, he was the leading tackler on the squad.

Kizzar led the team with 224 receiving yards last year, and Munoz was a force up front on both sides of the ball, finishing last season with 49 tackles.

So who will quarterback the Kats in 2016? Brayden Moore is a candidate. "Brayden has great size at 6-3, 230 pounds, and is a capable passer," Wellman said. "He lacks the ideal quickness for our quarterback run game-based offense. If he can run with a physical style, we will be very hard to stop."

"Justin Oberle is also taking snaps. He has extreme shiftiness and would excel in this offense, but he does struggle throwing the ball

and prefers to play wide receiver."

Clark rushed for 1,391 yards and 33 scores last year. Oberle rushed for 133 yards and three touchdowns on 25 attempts, and Moore carried the ball just 11 times for 15 yards.

If Wellman is undecided at quarterback, he's excited about his group of running backs. Senior Kebren Julian (5-4, 145) will be a fourth-year starter. Last season, he rushed for 531 yards and 14 touchdowns on 64 attempts.

"He hits the hole with great quickness," said Wellman. "He has won state powerlifting the last two years so he has a lot of power packed into his small frame. We expect big numbers from Kebren this year."

At fullback, senior Conner Hill (5-9, 175) will be another fourth-year starter. Playing mostly tight end last year, Hill was a big-play back with 209 yards and three touchdowns on just 12 carries (17.4 yards per carry). He also caught five passes for 70 yards and a pair of scores. "Conner is a physical player and his running style will be very effective in our veer option," Wellman said.

If not in the backfield, Oberle (5-5, 150) will bounce out as the big-threat receiver. Last season, he caught just three passes but all three went for scores totaling 118 yards (39.3 yards per catch).

"We didn't pass the ball much because we didn't need to," Wellman said. "He will be a focal point of our offense this season. Justin will also



2016 Chase Kats: Back row from left: Asst. Coach Mitch Light, Conner Hill, Brandon Enfield, Brayden Moore, Jason Joyner, Kyler Millar, Dalton Rose, and Coach John Wellman. Front row: Dylan Miller, Sergio Lambert, Hunter Cavender, Justin Oberle, Kebren Julian, Johnathon Kloxin, and Lance Hinderliter. (photo by Mike Courson)

spend some time at quarterback. We must get him more touches."

Teamed up with Hill, Julian, and sophomore Lance Hinderliter, Wellman feels he may have his best group of receivers during his time in Chase.

The running game will be helped with four-year starter Brandon Enfield (5-10, 185) on the line. Junior Dalton Rose (5-11, 195) returns as a third-year starter at center.

"Brandon does a great job getting to the second level and blocking linebackers," Wellman said. "He has a great motor. Dalton is a very solid center and he just keeps improving. He's very reliable and consistent with his shotgun snaps."

Also vying for spots on the offensive line are freshman Dylan Miller (5-9, 185) and sophomore Jason Joyner (6-3, 220). Kylor Millar is a 5-11, 185-pound senior who has not played since his fresh-

man year but has showed promise as a tight end.

Last season, the Kats dominated on both sides of the ball en route to a second-straight 9-0 regular season. Chase blanked two opponents and allowed just seven touchdowns in the other seven regular-season games.

Four-year starters Julian and Hill will lead the defense out of the linebacker position. Hill may also move back into a safety role. Oberle will be the primary safety as a three-year starter. Hill and Oberle each had two interceptions last season.

Wellman will have plenty of talent on the defensive line with ends Rose and Enfield. Enfield recorded 80 tackles and 8.5 sacks last year and will be shooting for all-state considerations this fall. Rose is three-year starter who recorded 37 tackles and two sacks a year ago.

Wellman has yet to pick a kicker and punter,

but with shiftiness out of his returners, expects good things on that end of the kicking game.

Chase will see tougher opponents in 2016. That starts in week one as Beloit-St. John comes to town. The Jays went 6-3 last year and return seven on offense and six on defense.

Changing districts, the tough schedule will continue throughout the season. Heart of the Plains teams South Barber

and Pretty Prairie will be the teams to beat. South Barber went 6-3 last year and returns seven on both sides of the ball. Pretty Prairie is a perennial power that went 7-2 last season.

"I expect us to compete for the district title," said Wellman. "We have some tough early-season matchups with St. Johns Beloit and Rock Hills. South Barber returns seven starters and will be a tough district opponent."

Chase football 2016

Sept. 2	BELOIT-ST. JOHN
Sept. 9	@Wilson
Sept. 16	ROCK HILLS
Sept. 23	@Sylvan-Lucas
Sept. 30	@Stafford
Oct. 7	@South Barber
Oct. 14	BUCKLIN (HC)
Oct. 21	@Pretty Prairie
Oct. 27	ASHLAND (Sr. Night)

Lady Kats return key pieces

By MIKE COURSON
Several Lady Kat volleyball players are back for another season. The goal: improve upon last year's 4-28 record.

Coach Brent Clark loses just two seniors from a year ago in Cheyenne Weatherman and Jessica Torres. Both played in all 67 sets last season, and Weatherman's 288 kill attempts were second on the team. Weatherman led the team with 30 service aces, and Torres had 23 aces and 81 digs on the back row. Weatherman led last year's squad with 122 digs.

Leading the charge in 2016 will be senior Taytem Patton. She paced the Lady Kat attack last year with 409 kill

attempts and 112 kills. She was second on the team with 27 aces and third on the team with 87 digs.

Another key returner this season will be junior Mackenzie Oberle. She finished second on the squad last year with 105 digs, and is also a service threat with 22 aces. She was one of just three Chase players to play in all 67 sets last fall.

Senior Katelyn Potter returns after putting down 24 kills and coming up with 47 digs last year.

Sophomores Kirsten Wood and Jasmine Weatherman should have more prominent roles in 2016. Wood played in 52 sets and had 21 aces last year.



2016 Chase Lady Kats: Back row, from left: Jasmin Savage, Audrey Clark, Jasmine Weatherman, Coach Brent Clark, Katelyn Potter, Shae Brown, Andrea Aguilera, Adison Miller, Rachel Janda, Makaila Enfield and Maddie Long. Front Row: Marissa Casey, Kirsten Wood, Taytem Patton, Maggie Schneider, Mackenzie Oberle, Taylor Lattimer, and Jayden Harrington. Not pictured is Jasmin Sotelo. (photo by Ryan Carlson)



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