

Several returning starters look to lead Little River back to playoffs

By MIKE COURSON

Even in a rebuilding year in a loaded district, the Redskin football team managed a winning record in 2015. With a much more experienced team back for the 2016 campaign, seventh-year coach Paul Dold will be looking for a return to the 8-man, Div. I playoffs.

"(We) will have quite a bit of returning experience as we had to play a number of underclassmen last season," Dold said. "With luck, we will hopefully build on that experience for a winning season. Some new teams and tough district teams make for a difficult 2016 schedule."

Little River used a large and talented senior class to win a playoff game in 2014. With many new faces at the varsity level, the Redskins posted a 5-4 record last season. Three of the four losses came against district opponents Central Plains, Solomon, and Ellinwood. The fourth loss was a sea-

son-opening loss to Rural Vista, another team that made the Div. I playoffs.

Little River has been a run-first team, posting 1,512 rushing yards last year compared to just 670 yards in the air. Dold will have virtually all of his running game back. Junior Levi Swenson led the team with 501 yards and 10 touchdowns on 68 carries. Right behind him, junior Peyton Harvey rushed for 435 yards and five scores on 81 attempts. Senior Josh Dold had limited carries last season, running the ball just 37 times for 187 yards and four scores.

Clay Zeller made a splash at quarterback last year as a junior. The senior returns after completing 41 of 88 passes for 659 yards with nine touchdowns and just two interceptions. Zeller also rushed for 309 yards and six scores on 116 carries.

Zeller will be minus his favorite target in Damien Martinez, who led the team with 220 yards on 11 receptions

despite playing in just five games. Swenson returns as the leading receiver with 163 yards and two touchdowns on 12 catches. Senior Jeb Sauer returns with 139 yards and a touchdown on 11 receptions. Harvey was the big-play receiver, catching just four passes but finishing with 98 yards and two scores. Dold caught two passes for 42 yards and a touchdown.

Senior Dusty Page is the fifth-returning senior for Little River. He played on both sides of the line last season.

Defensively, Dold returns several of his top producers from last year. Zeller paced the defense with 56 tackles, closely followed by Harvey with 48 tackles, and Swenson with 42 tackles. Zeller and Harvey each had three interceptions to account for six of the team's eight picks. Sauer also had an interception.

On special teams, Dold returns as the kicker, and Swenson, Harvey, and Zeller were



2016 Little River Redskins: Back row, from left: Dusty Page, Clay Zeller, Jonah Nelson, Jake Wright, Kody Hawkinson, Bryce Sears, Jordan Moffett, Josh Dold, Bronson Rains, and Brady Stephenson. Front row: Dillinger Page, Justin Porter, Tyler Dingman, Zane Kratzer, Peyton Harvey, Braden Sears, and Ethan Schafer. Not Pictured: Hunter Thomas and Andrew Lehman. (photo by Mike Courson)

each reliable return men in 2015.

Little River will see a slightly different district schedule this fall. Back in District 5 is a Central Plains team that has posted a 22-2 record over the past two seasons. Solomon, last year's district runner-up, has been replaced with a St. John team that enters the season with a 15-game losing streak. Solomon will remain on Little

River's schedule.

Little River will also play Bennington, a school that posted a 5-4 record in 11-man football

last season. Ellinwood finished third in District 5 last year and Centre made the playoffs out of a mild district in Div. II.

Little River football 2016

Sept. 2	CENTRE
Sept. 9	@Bennington
Sept. 16	@Wakefield
Sept. 23	SOLOMON
Sept. 30	GOESSEL
Oct. 7	@Central Plains
Oct. 14	CANTON-GALVA
Oct. 21	ELLINWOOD
Oct. 27	@St. John

Two letter winners back for Lady Redskin volleyball team

By MIKE COURSON

Little River once again has good numbers out for volleyball. Coach Karen Hull is once again dealing with inexperience. With just two returning letter winners on the squad, 2016 could be another rebuilding year.

"With only two returning letter winners, we will depend on them to provide leadership to a young and inexperienced team at the varsity level," Hull said.

Senior Allie Peters returns as a setter and middle blocker. Junior Melanie Renken returns as an outside hitter and middle blocker. Both returners earned an all-league honor-



2016 Little River Lady Redskin volleyball team

able mention last season.

"Allie and Melanie are our mainstays in the front row and will continue to improve as well as Allie being one of our setters."

Top newcomers include: senior Brenna Fuller as a defensive specialist; junior Shannon Hudson as a middle blocker, though she will be coming

off some major surgery; sophomore Kylie Eller at setter; sophomore Roylin Brillhart will hit from the

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