

Gibson Co. Pioneers sport new uniforms

If the Gibson County football team performs as well as the players look in their new uniforms, Pioneer fans will be proud.

The GCHS football team has replaced last year's black uniforms and helmets with Columbia blue, scarlet red and white uniforms and headgear. Cody Finley, Gibson County former player and current head coach, explains his reasoning for changing uniform colors. "Being an old Gibson County guy, it just drove me crazy, when I came back and black was the primary color. I just wanted to bring a clean, fresh new look to us. It was something I thought we needed to do. The administration has kind of followed the same thing as I was thinking when I came back. Our school colors are Columbia blue, scarlet red and white, not black. I think our kids really like the colors of the new uniforms. They should be excited to be able to get out there every Friday night and look good, because we are going to look good."

Coach Finley continued, "I hope everybody comes out and checks us out this year. I don't know how many games we are going to win or lose or anything like that. I can't tell you that, but I think the guys are going to go out and play hard. I believe we will put a product on the field that our fans will be proud of."

As was the case last year, GCHS will field a roster composed of mostly underclassmen. "We are still a young football team. We have four seniors (Austin Little, Josh Samples, Josh Teddleton and Henry Todd), but the majority of the guys that have played a lot are younger guys we started last year. Last season, we started seven freshman and several sophomores," described Coach Finley.

Offensively, GCHS will



CODY FINLEY is in his second year as head coach of the Pioneers.

be a split back veer team that operates out of shotgun formation some. "I have always run the veer or some version of it. It just enables you to compete. Anytime we play teams that are better than us, we have to do something like that. You don't have to be as big or as physical. That is why the military academies run some kind of veer offense, because you don't have to block as many people. You can count on your quarterback to read guys," explained Finley.

He elaborated, "I have done that my whole coaching career. I think we can score. I can come up with ways to score. The big thing is our defense. If our defense can be good enough to hold teams to two or three scores, then we have a fighting chance."

Offensive starters are projected to be: quarterbacks – Payton Lamberson or Will Cantrell; running back – Ozzy Rico; wide receiver – Donte Holder; guards – Guy Moffett and Hayden McGuire; center – Jackson Pugh; tackles – Matt Tate and Trey Baker and tight end – Austin Fletcher. Caden Wylie and Colin Warren will alternate at flanker, and Cam

McMackin will play some receiver also.

Other players vying for playing time include: running backs – Matthew Watson, Michael McMullins, Jake Patterson, Deondre Snow, Austin Little and Austin Galimore; wide receivers – Ethan Ward, Nolen Anthony, Wyatt Hollis, Ryland McFadden and Brenton Smith; tight ends – Noah Stafford and Kaleb Johnson; guards – Aiden O'Brien, Remington Green, Josh Samples and Kylan Johnson; and tackles – Shawn Mercer, Parker Plemons, Amarion Allen, Josh Teddleton, Conner Travis, Darius Allen and Derek Record.

"Offensively, right now, we are struggling a little bit. We have several guys who can do some things, but our offensive line is our biggest problem. We are trying to play a couple of really young guys that are freshmen. They are big and they are going to be really good. They just don't know what they are doing right now. Freshmen tackles Matt Tate and Trey Baker have big upsides, because I can't coach 6'4" 275 pounds, which is what Tate is and Baker is probably 6'1" or 6'2" and 250 or 260 pounds. Our two offensive tackles have got to grow up. A lot of our season, and how we move the ball, depends on those two guys. A fan never thinks of two offensive tackles as being the whether we can or whether we can't. If those guys can come on and be serviceable high school tackles, then that makes us a lot better football team," admitted Coach Finley.

Gibson County's team strength should be defense. "We have a lot of defensive players returning from last year. My front four were all underclassmen last year, so my defensive front, my two outside linebackers are

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GCHS FOOTBALL COACHING STAFF – Members of the Gibson County Pioneers football coaching staff are (front row, from left) Neal Papich, Head Coach Cody Finley, Skylar Haley; (back row) Reggie Moffatt and Caleb Cox.

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