

2017-2018





















Pictured (First Row, L-R) are USM Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach William Prince, Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach Cody Stout, Head Strength and Conditioning Coach SaJason Finley, Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach Michael Brinson, Nutritionist Natasha Hansen, (Second Row, L-R) Graduate Assistant Perry Turner, Graduate Assistant Cam Willis, Graduate Assistant Marc Makovicka and Graduate Assistant Todd Makovicka.

Turner helping Golden Eagles prep for season as part of USM's strength and conditioning staff

Special to the Herald

There are workouts, and then there are college athletics workouts. Leakesville resident Perry Turner, a 2013 GCHS graduate, knows all too well the importance of those workouts after playing collegiate baseball for four years at JCJC and Mississippi College. Now Turner is getting to help other student athletes reach their goals as a member of the University of Southern Mississippi strength and conditioning staff. Turner is a graduate assistant coach for USM and has spent much of his time lately working with the Golden Eagle football team.

The college football season can run up to 15 games, but there's one staff that's with the players all year long: strength and conditioning.

"They are with us about 90

percent of the time throughout the year," head strength and conditioning coach SaJason Finley said. "Football coaches have them for four months, but the guys are with us for the other eight. It's a lot of development all-around."

There are multiple examples of how the strength and conditioning world has evolved. For one, it is also equally mental as it is physical when the studentathletes are in the weight room or on the grass. Another aspect is simply how people train physically.

"Everyone's seeing that in order to play the game, you have to be able to move," Finley said. "Sport is movement and not just about being the strongest. You won't be efficient on the football field or basketball court if you're strong and can't move."

Finley faces a unique chal- Kentucky.

lenge that is also shared amongst every one of his counterparts around the country. As the lead person, he has to oversee every other sport's program as well, and that includes a daily and highly-calculated report from the training staff that details every player's injury, what their limitations are and also how hard they can or cannot be pushed in each of those aspects. As for football, one can see where Southern Miss gets its reputation for toughness.

"The big challenge of football is definitely making sure guys are conditioned and ready to go before camp," Finley said.

Mornings, nights, weekends and weeknights. The grind never stops for the USM strength and conditioning staff. The Golden Eagles open the 2017 season at home Sept. 2, at 3 p.m. against SEC opponent

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