

CITRONELLE WILDCATS

WILDCATS: CHS learns to be a winning squad

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“The confidence has carried over a great deal,” he said. “We’re having good practices and the kids are showing up and I’m not having to worry about whether they are there or not. Everything has been good. The difference between – you can’t replace Bruner or Roberts, Roberts was a phenomenal linebacker that no matter what was going to find the football. The difference between this year and last year is the depth factor.”

“Last year if we had an injury to a back or a receiver we were up the creek. This year those things are not a major factor. We’re three-deep varsity-wise and I don’t mind playing any of those three, in the skill positions. We’re ahead in that respect.”

But there’s still a tough road to be negotiated on the quest to return to the playoffs. The Wildcats’ schedule includes region standouts Vigor, St. Paul’s and Jackson, as well as non-region opponents B.C. Rain, Leroy, Satsuma and Washington County.

“It’s going to be challenging in the beginning,” Funk said. “We start off with B.C. Rain. They came close to making the playoffs last year in 6A. It will be tight for us. There’s a good possibility we’ll be back in 6A (next year after reclassification) so we’ll find out what that’s like again by starting out with them. Then after B.C.

Rain we go against Vigor, which won our region last year, and I believe they are probably going to be much improved. The thing is though, we could have beat Vigor and probably should have beat Vigor last year and they probably overlooked us. I guarantee you they aren’t going to overlook us this time. And then we play Leroy, which has a good program.

“I think we can compete. The thing last year was to compete and get the No. 4 (playoff) spot (out of Region 1) and make the playoffs. And we reached that goal. This year we’re not satisfied with that goal. We’ll take No. 4 if we can make the playoffs again, that’s great, but we’ve set our goals a little higher than that. We want to move up in the rankings. That’s the deal.”

And don’t forget the confidence factor.

“You look at the 5A rankings and the Top 10 and I look at some of them and I say, ‘Yeah, we can play with them,’ and we’re not even one of the schools that are mentioned, so that’s good; we’re the classic underdog,” Funk said.

“I’m a firm believer that in this 5A region, just like in the 6A region, the ones that make the playoffs are the ones who have battled it out. Maybe we can have some success early, make a little noise and get some recognition for Citronelle.”

‘Close race’ for QB

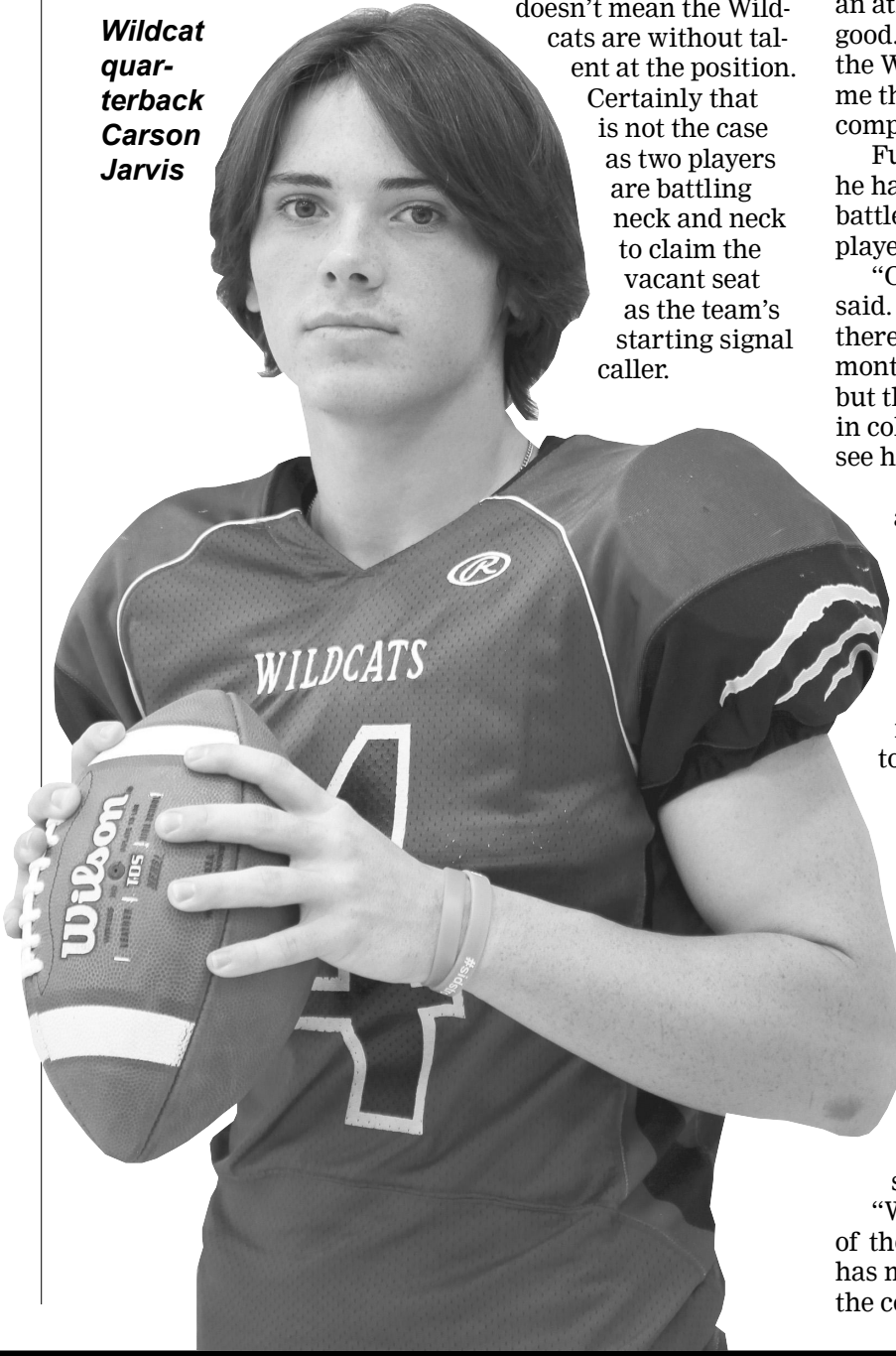
Jarvis says passing the ball is his strong point

By TOMMY HICKS
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There is an obvious void in the Citronelle offense this season with the graduation of quarterback Ryan Bruner, who helped lead the Wildcats from a struggling team to a playoff team last season.

Bruner’s departure doesn’t mean the Wildcats are without talent at the position. Certainly that is not the case as two players are battling neck and neck to claim the vacant seat as the team’s starting signal caller.

**Wildcat
quarterback
Carson
Jarvis**



One of the candidates is 6-foot-0, 185-pound Carson Jarvis, who hopes his passing ability, mixed with success as a runner and his hoped-for chance to lead and direct the offense, will earn him the starting nod for head coach Rusty Funk.

“It’s been a close race,” Jarvis said of the competition with Jamarcus Robinson for the quarterback job. “He’s an athlete so we can use him in different spots. I feel good. I think passing is my biggest asset. He can get in the Wildcat at any time and then we can come back with me throwing it, or he can do anything. It’s been a good competition.”

Funk said he likes what Jarvis brings to the table and he has been happy with the competitive nature of the battle, which he said he believes has helped push both players in their quest for the starting role.

“Carson is getting better every day at practice,” Funk said. “I’ve been happy with the fact that he’s been out there competing. I had somebody call me probably a month and a half ago, and I don’t remember who it was, but they asked me what level would I rank Carson Jarvis in college? Is he this or that? And I said, ‘I think I want to see him start a high school football game first.’”

“It’s one thing to compete in 7-on-7s and to do this and do that, but let’s go and compete in games and see how we’re leading the team and the decisions we’re making and what-not. But he’s a great kid and we’re proud to have him. I think he’s going to win the quarterback spot, but it’s not guaranteed.”

That of course is Jarvis’ goal, but the main wish is for the Wildcats’ offense to remain productive and to increase that productivity this season.

“It won’t be much different,” Jarvis said of the Cats’ offensive approach compared to the style of play employed last season. “There will probably be a little more throwing because (Bruner) was more of a running quarterback. He was powerful.”

When the Cats do take to the air, Jarvis said there are several talented, playmaking receivers ready to catch those throws.

“They are coming along good, but they’re young and they can catch and they’ve got all the fundamentals down,” he said. “We can throw and we can catch and do all those things.”

But first, someone has to claim the starting spot. The competition continues.

“We always compete against each other,” Jarvis said of the battle between himself and Robinson. “I think it has made us better. Whoever it goes to, it goes to. That’s the coach’s choice. There’s nothing I can do about it.”



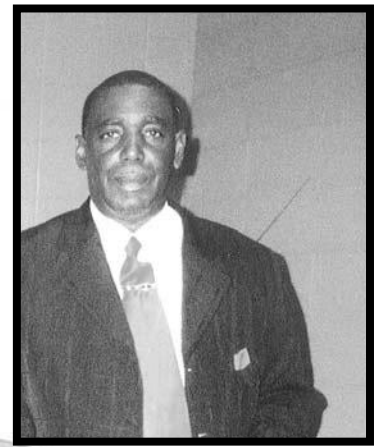
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