

Speed is key for Del City D

Eagles rely on speed and athleticism to slow opponents

By **Jeff Harrison**
Managing Editor

Del City coach Mike Dunn has two main aims for his defense. Get to the football.

And get to the football quickly.

The Eagles are loaded with speed and athleticism, especially on the defensive side of the ball. Dunn says those are the key ingredients in their attacking defense.

"We take a lot of pride in our defense," he said. "They're the ones that wear the black swarm jerseys. And they need to earn that by being fast, explosive and swarming to the ball."

Del City should have a solid defensive front led by Kyren Williams. The 6-foot-2, 260-pound junior has great size and quickness on the line and is also a standout basketball player. He had 39 tackles and six sacks as a sophomore. Dunn says several other young players will compete for spots on the defensive line.

"We'll be pretty young up front, but we have guys with a lot of speed," Dunn said.

Dunn also has a lot of confidence in the team's linebacking corps. Jamaree Ayers and Javon West both return after collecting nearly 90 tackles a piece last year. Sophomore Donovan Stephens could start at the Sam linebacker spot. The underclassman has impressed coaches with his abilities and commitment.

"He made every summer workout the past two years and that says something about a young kid," Dunn said. "We feel good about the future with him."



Jamaree Ayers (Above) and Greg Whittenberg (Below) will anchor the Del City defense.

The secondary remains nearly intact from a year ago. Jeff Foreman, Greg Whittenberg and Miles Wooten were all starters last year. The speedy Marquelle Lennox and the versatile Jacoby Smith will help in the secondary. Foreman, Whittenberg and Lennox ran on the Class 5A state championship 400-meter relay team this spring.

Del City allowed 25.3 points per game last year.



-File photo

Colin Liesinger is one of the Eagles most versatile receivers.

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to run the ball with **Tyus Messner**. The senior ran for nearly 900 yards and 11 touchdowns last year as part of a committee. Messner will again share time with **Myles Wooten, Jahkobie Smith** and **LJ Brown**.

The offensive line will be anchored by returning starters **Kobe Shawver** and **Tyler Morrow**. Shawver will stay at left guard, while Morrow slides over to center. Trent Owens, a state qualifier in wrestling, and **Jax Bacon**, a recent move-in, will likely fill the tackle positions. Dunn said Bacon has impressed coaches with his work ethic and dedication since moving to Del City.

"Last year, our offensive line was bigger, but this year I think we're more athletic and can do some different things," Dunn said.