

Different cast, same goal for Jones

By Kory Oswald
Contributing Writer

Jones head coach **Dave Martin** is excited about the team's potential this season, though he is experiencing a bit of a role reversal from this time last year.

Coming into the 2017 season they were the reigning Class 3A state champs with an undefeated season the year before and many of the same athletes on the roster. Fifteen returning starters, five on defense and ten on offense. Fast forward to the end of that season and the group is 13-0 going into the state finals, an amazing accomplishment that many felt would end with a sense of déjà vu from the year before. But things didn't go the way they planned.

Suffering a defeat in the State Semi-Finals at the hands of John Marshall, the team enters the 2018 season with a fresh perspective, a few returning players and a singular goal in mind.

"We know we are going to make it to state and win state, no doubt," senior **Sam Blaine** said. "Everyone is ready to move forward and just leave the past where it is."

Blaine, a 6-foot-2, 195-pound safety and outside receiver is one of nine returning players this year, six on defense and three on offense, that lost to John Marshall last year and also played on the 2016 state championship team. He is one of the players to watch that will also help lead the team and help the younger guys find their footing, Martin said.

"A ton of experience coming back with those guys," he said.



-Staff photos by Ryan Horton

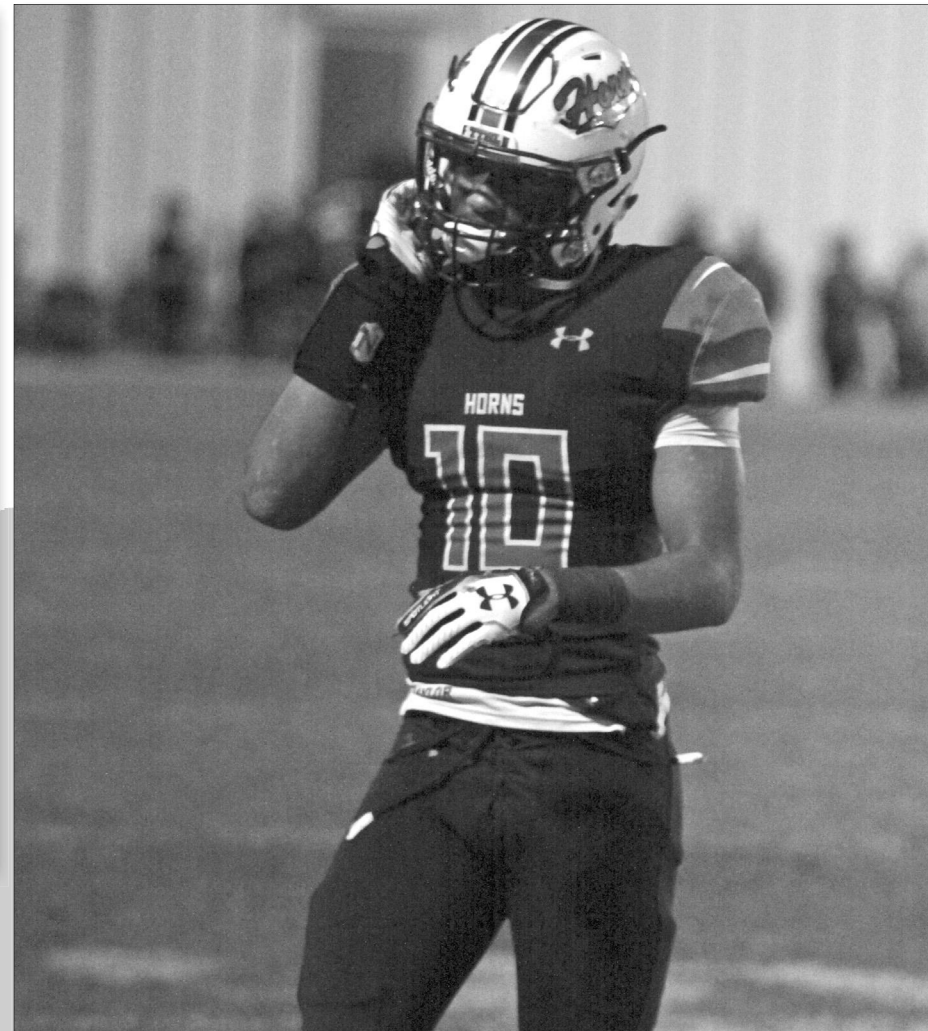
Above: Zach Nyquist reaches for a ball during a football practice at Jones High School.

Right: Sam Blaine is one of nine returning players for Jones.

"The senior class has been highly successful."

With a combined 41 wins during their career and a state championship title to their name, "successes" might be an understatement: the team has been truly dominant. Other seniors returning to the field are **Jaaren Isaacs, Parker Case, Dylan Weiher, Sam Blaine, Oakley Tubbs, Kason Cathey, Jase Farmer** and **Blake Passarella**.

Despite the returning starters being outnumbered by greener



players, Martin is confident with every one of the players' abilities and feels it is simply a matter of time before the team clicks.

"We feel like we've got the puzzle pieces to be highly successful, it just getting all those puzzle pieces in the right spots," Martin said.

Heading into the season, Jones is ranked No. 2 in Class 2A, No. 11 in the state and 850 in the nation, according to Max Preps. The season opener is Aug. 24 against Oklahoma Christian, which Jones defeated 38-6 last season.

Jones Schedule

Aug. 24 at OCS

Aug. 31 at Lincoln Christian

Sept. 7 Pauls Valley

Sept. 21 Chandler

Sept. 28 at Meeker

Oct. 5 Kellyville

Oct. 12 Holdenville

Oct. 18 at Henryetta

Oct. 26 Okemah

Nov. 2 at Prague