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# Trojans Ready To Tackle 2018 Football Season



The Barnesville Trojans football team members are, left to right, front row-Jacob Morgan, Jackson Poepping, Kellen Hinz, Grant Inniger, Luke Audette, Preston Snobl, Gabe Dent, Sam Askegaard, Nick Detloff, Brooks Martinson, Chase Brenner; second row-Jaron Poepping, Daxton Strand, Jacob Strand, Tyler Friesen; third row-Stats Jaycie George, Aaron Baker, John Roller, Peyton Pauna, Adam Tonsfeldt, Connor Erickson, Carter DuBord, Logan Ernst, Wyatt Roller, Brady Dollison, Bryce Krueger, Brody Gray, Stats Madi Sossa; fourth row-Stats Callie Krause, Tate Inniger, Jonny Robideau, Travis Affield, Hunter Anderson, Tim, Walter, Jackson Wahl, Eric Ackerson, Dalton Rutherford, Tanner Kadmas, Ryan Martinson, Spencer Schumacher, Brett Koppelman, Stats Mattea Gardner; fifth row-Noah Krause, Cameron Heng, Cole Swenson, Matt Samuelson, Mason Moen, Kason Sytsma, Connor Morse, Aaron Schiefert, Joey Mark, Nolan Rick, Toby Elliott, Marcus Paul, Leif Enstad; back row-Cheer Micayla Walters, Alyssa Lien, Becca Johnson, Kylee Engel, Sidney Engel, Brady Kroll, Kaden Zenzen, Hunter Zenzen, Max Olson, Caroline Redding, Jaclyn Keller, KayLea Berg, and Maura Herberg.

### Tracy Hinz Sports Writer



The Barnesville Trojans come into the 2018 football season as two-time defending Section 8AA champions and state participants, with their eyes on trying to make it back to the section championship game.

The Trojans have been very successful over a 10-year stretch, thanks to the leadership of Head Coach Bryan Strand.

Strand has been at the school for 14 years and has an overall record of 104 wins and 37 losses. He has been named conference or district coach of the year on seven occasions and won section coach of the year four times.

Last year's squad surprised many people by winning 10 games and another section championship. They finished with an overall record of 10-2 and were 5-1 in the Midwest District-White Division, making it to the state quarterfinals, where they eventually lost to a very strong and talented Paynesville team.

"Last year was a ton of fun," Strand said. "We shocked many people by knocking off Hawley in the section finals. The kids improved and worked hard all season long and made it back to the state tournament. However, we did not play our best game against Paynesville. Turnovers doomed us on that night and Paynesville took advantage. Things like that happen and hopefully we have learned from that game. I believe it has motivated many of our boys to work very hard this offseason. They seem ready to

get after it. We had a great camp and have looked very good in our first week of practice."

Strand will once again have the services of a talented group of assistant coaches, many of whom have been with the program for numerous years.

Offensive coordinator Phil Trowbridge returns for his 19th season as an assistant to the Trojans football program with Nick Paur and Nathan Strand teaming up to lead the junior varsity and freshman teams. Paur will enter his second season while Strand returns after a one-year hiatus as a volunteer coach.

Volunteer coaches will include Scott Snobl, Ace Gregg and Dain Biewer. The junior high will be coached by Matt Askegaard, eighth grade, Scott Amundson, seventh grade, and Tracy Hinz, 7/8 grade assistant.

The Trojans will be looking to replace some key losses to graduation as Jonny Kletsch, Brady Tweeton, Brady Martz, Caleb Stetz, Jack Trowbridge, Matt Bredman, Alex Jenison, Jalen Plath, Robert Mark, Joey Marquart, Tyler Stage and Tristan Elliott will not return in 2018.

However, Barnesville does return many players that saw significant playing time last year. The offensive line returns senior Jackson Poepping, center/defensive tackle, along with juniors Connor Morse, guard/linebacker, and Matt Samuelson, tackle/defensive tackle.

Junior Hunter Zenzen returns to play both end positions, as does senior Preston Snobl, who can also shift out to linebacker, and senior Brooks Martinson, who will play tight end and linebacker.

The Trojans return two running backs with plenty of experience in junior Jackson Wahl, who will also play linebacker, and senior Chase

Brenner, who mans a corner spot on defense.

Sophomore Adam Tonsfeldt has been slotted to start the season at quarterback while also playing corner, as the Trojans look to replace two-year starter Caleb Stetz. Tonsfeldt has a world of athletic talent and is extremely intelligent, making him a great fit to lead the team at that position.

Three senior players, who return after not playing last season, have high hopes of helping their teammates to a successful season. Kellen Hinz is back to lead the defense at the safety position and helping out anywhere possible on offense. Gabe Dent will be filling in a spot on both lines. Nick Detloff takes over the fullback spot and helping out on the defensive line as well.

Other players hoping to see playing time in the upcoming season include seniors Grant Inniger, Jacob Morgan and Sam Askegaard. Juniors wanting a taste of Friday night lights include Tanner Kadmas, Graham Abar, Leif Enstad, Hunter Anderson, Max Olson and Gage Decker; with sophomores Brady Kroll, Connor Erickson, Joey Mark, Aaron Schiefert, Toby Elliott, Nolan Rick, Marcus Paul, Mason Moen, Eric Ackerson, Wyatt Roller and Carter Dubord wanting their chance as well.

Freshman on the 2018 roster include Kaden Zenzen, Travis Affield, Logan Ernst, Ryan Martinson, Peyton Pauna, Dalton Rutherford, Noah Krause, Brady Dollison, Bryce Krueger and Cameron Heng.

Eighth-grade athletes Jonny Robideau, Spencer Schumacher and Tate Inniger look to see some time this season.

"We have a solid group of athletes

returning from last year's team that saw plenty of playing time," said Strand. "Some of these players have played for a few seasons and will be expected to be our leaders. Seniors Jackson Poepping, Preston Snobl, Chase Brenner and Brooks Martinson had great seasons last year. Add in juniors Hunter Zenzen, Jackson Wahl, Connor Morse and Matt Samuelson, which gives us seven offensive starters returning. Their familiarity with each other should help our early season continuity. We feel Adam Tonsfeldt can take over at quarterback and lead us to many victories. With the additions of Kellen Hinz, Gabe Dent and Nick Detloff, as well as some talented seniors and underclassmen that have not seen varsity playing time yet, I like how our team is taking shape."

The Trojans have been successful thanks to the coaching and development of players starting at the junior high level and rising up through the system. The continuity attained at these early levels helps speed up the process of possibly playing on Friday nights. The kids have bought into a system of learning, lifting weights, teamwork and wins.

The Trojan program is rich in athletes that fit all four of these parameters, which is why they have high expectations every year about competing for a section championship.

"Our expectations are the same every season," Strand said. "We expect to be playing in the section championship game and know that Hawley is the team we will need to beat to get there or beyond. Our team outlook is bright. We will need to stay healthy and improve daily, but I think we have the tools to do so. I feel we have the personnel to compete for a district and section

championship, but the key is to stay healthy and learn to play together as a team."

Barnesville will once again battle teams in the Midwest District, representing the white division. They will be joined by the Breckenridge Cowboys, Crookston Pirates, Frazee Hornets, Hawley Nuggets, Pelican Rapids Vikings and Roseau Rams.

Coach Strand feels that Hawley is the team to beat in the conference and section, and Caledonia is the team to beat for the state title and is the odds-on favorite until somebody figures out exactly how to do that.

"Our consistency over the last 10 years has been outstanding," Strand said. "We have developed a very good team that does the little things at a high rate of success to help us win games. Our home field has become quite an advantage as we defend our home turf very well. We also have a

very good road record over this time span. Our fans are outstanding. They provide energy to our team at home or on the road. They travel very well and support their sons and the team with great pride. Trojan football has become a 'Must See Friday Night Lights' event. We are very excited to put the jersey on and perform on Friday nights. We cannot wait for the season to get started."

Captains for the 2018 season are Jackson Poepping and Hunter Zenzen.



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