

New coach Remy, Indians hungry for season start

By Mike Gilmore

The Larned Indian football team is hungry to get the season started. At Tuesday's annual fall sports dinner, the entire table rose as a unit to hit the serving line when the announcement came for seconds.

To be fair, they'd just finished a full-pads practice.

First-year coach Tad Remy is hungry, too. In five years as defensive coordinator for outgoing coach A.B. Stokes, Remy has shared a taste of post-season, but there's more on the table as the Indians return to Class 3A play.

Stokes engineered one of the biggest turnarounds in Kansas football taking over the Indians' program in 2012.

The Indians had won just 10 games from 2004 to 2011, going 0-9 in coach Al Troyer's final season with just 30 players on the roster. The team's last win during the stretch was Sept. 18, 2009, in a 36-26 surprise over Thomas More Prep in Hays.

After his inaugural "boot camp" two-a-day preseason practice regimen, Stokes led the 2012 Tribe to a 3-0 start – the best opening the Indians had had since 1998. They

finished 3-6, but the crop was planted; 11 seniors returned in 2013, to a full roster of 63 players.

The 2013 season had its ups and downs, but there were a lot of ups near the end. Losing to Hoisington cost them a chance at a Mid-State Activities Association title and a loss to Ulysses cost them a district title, but the season ended with 27-14 over Pratt – their first win over the Greenbacks in 17 years and their first playoff ticket since 1985.

Stokes, who announced his departure for a defensive coordinator position at Bethel College following the 2017 season, compiled a 27-32 record in six years with the Indians. His playoffs tickets in 2013, 2016 and 2017 comprise almost half of Larned's total eight playoff appearances in school history.

Remy, who has underwritten the school strength program at LHS with successive powerlifting state titles in as many years, brings a physical focus to his first season as Indian Chief.

"Our summer is always key, and this summer is no different," Remy noted, as successful camp outings segued into preseason practice with 53 players

on the roster. "I'm confident that we're in shape," Remy noted. "But we've got some work to do to start thinking football. Our season will hinge on eliminating mistakes and playing with consistent, great effort. We want to be playing our best football at the end of the year."

Remy's first thoughts to the season are to fill in the blanks left by a senior backfield running the power-I offense and filling some secondary positions behind the defensive line.

"There are still a lot of blanks out there (points to the field) and up here (points to his head)," Remy said. "There are definitely groups that have separated themselves. I think we've got a pretty good idea on who our top seven offensive linemen are, maybe top two quarterbacks. Offensively, we feel a little more settled personnel-wise on offense than we do on defense."

"We've got a lot of big bodies, and I think that's pretty productive," he said.

Losses to graduation include senior all-Central Kansas League tailback Anthony McConnell, who posted 1,431 yards with 16 touchdowns on 186 carries in 2017, for an average of 7.69 yards per carry.

Also gone is senior halfback Wes Davis, who had 105 carries for 736 yards, with 11 TDs. Senior quarterback Carson Smith had 70 yards rushing with 3 TDs on 42 carries. In the



INDIANS START FRESH: The Larned Indians have 53 players on the roster from which first-year Coach Tad Remy will be rebuilding a senior-laden 2017 squad that went 6-5 last season. (photo by Mike Gilmore)

air, Smith had 45 receptions on 82 attempts for 809 yards and 10 scores. Senior Damontay Phillips had 21 catches for 369 yards and three TDs.

The Indians have two returning starters on offense and four on defense, from last year's 6-5 season.

Returning are junior quarterback prospects Mason Perez (5-11, 160) and Braydon Lemuz (5-9, 160); junior Jacob Smith (5-9, 165) at tailback and Brock Skelton (5-9, 160) at wide receiver. Senior Braden Rupp (6-0, 165) is also a wide receiver prospect.

Offensive linemen returning include: Paxton Wagner, 6-2, 260 junior

tackle; Caleb East, 6-0, 210 junior guard; and Taylor Martin, 6-3, 280 tackle.

On defense, Perez returns as an all-Central Kansas League pick at safety, with Smith and East at linebackers; Skelton at cornerback and Christian Martinez, a 6-2, 270 senior at noseguard.

The Indians open on the road against Smoky Valley, which they beat last year 28-14. Remy, who will be evaluating play from two varsity scrimmages as well as preseason practice, will keep his position picks close to the vest heading into the game Aug. 31.

"We've got five, six films on Smoky Valley

already, we know what they've lost and what they've got coming back. But I'm not going to talk to coach (Tim) Lambert ahead of time. We know what they are going to run; they won't know what we are going to run."

Topping that off, Coach Stokes pulled some winners from his trick bag before heading to Bethel and left them in the coach's office. Add that to some of Remy's that worked pretty well over the summer. He was mum on that, too, but a couple have to do with a new offensive set, maybe a pistol.

Like I said, the Indians are hungry. They will be taking their best shot.

Larned football 2018

Aug. 31	@Smoky Valley
Sept. 7	HESSTON
Sept. 14	HOISINGTON
Sept. 21	@Pratt
Sept. 28	@Holcomb
Oct. 5	NICKERSON
Oct. 12	@Hugoton
Oct. 19	KINGMAN
Oct. 26	Playoffs TBA

Larned's Demond understands importance of kicking

FROM KSPREGAMEMAG
Larned senior kicking specialist Logan DeMond was featured in this fall's Kansas Pregame Magazine in their special

section honoring classic Topps trading cards, along with the players themselves.

LARNED – Larned kicker Logan DeMond understands the importance of his position. Not only does it take physical strength and talent; according to DeMond, "it isn't for the weak-minded." The 5-11, 150-pound senior was 31-of-41 on PATs in 2017 and 2-for-3 on field goals, with makes from 22 and 32 yards.

"Getting stronger and more powerful will be important for him as well as continuing to improve his consistency," LHS first-year coach Tad Remy said.

DeMond understands the hard work and dedication his position requires.

"I enjoy the mental aspect of kicking," DeMond said. "It requires a certain set of skills that differs from the others. Not everyone understands all that goes into it."

DeMond's personal goal is a simple one – to have the most fun every



DeMond

time he plays, noting that "kickers have so little time on the field, you have to make that count."

As a team, he hopes the Indians can achieve a winning record.

DeMond would like to play in college and explore his options, but he says education is first and plans on working toward a Bachelor's in Communications/Public Relations.

"I love interacting with the public and coordinating events," he said. He also plays tennis but looks to a football player as his role model.

"Cardale Jones (former Ohio State QB)," DeMond said. "Much like myself, he stepped into a starting role late in the season at a crucial time and he took the reins and helped his team to a National Championship."

Good luck,
Indian
athletes!

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