

Owls

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supervisor for the school system.

“My wife and family were very supportive of me,” said Dyer. “We live right across the road from here on Jackson Avenue. It is a two minute drive over here. We have lived here since 2011, me and my wife have, so I have actually had to drive by the school to get to some of the other programs I have worked at.”

Dyer expressed appreciation to the Smith County administration for the opportunity to lead the Owls.

“I am glad the administration gave me a shot and gave me a chance,” said Dyer. “Mr. (Dusty) Whitaker and Mr. Barry Smith — have given me the opportunity to come back to my alma mater and lead this program. It is just a true blessing to have the support that I do and kind of instill some of the values that I had when I was a player here and when my dad coached here. If we can get that rolling again, that is the goals we are trying to attain right now.”

Dyer will navigate through the 2021 campaign with an underclassmen heavy squad with only six seniors on the Owls’ unit. One luxury for the juniors and sophomores is a lot of them saw extensive playing time last fall and are coming in with some valuable game experience.

The new coaching staff was quick to express to the players what kind of team and program they wanted to build.

“The biggest thing we express to our guys is that we have to become a player led team,” said Dyer. “Any successful team is going to have players who hold other players accountable. That is what we are looking for right now.”

Dyer continued, “We tell them that we are looking for guys that are going to be dogs — we want some savages. We just do not know right now who we have to fill that void. But that is what we are looking for — some guys to take charge and to be the physical aggressor type of guy — the alpha dog.”

With Dyer being introduced as the new coach in December, he and the coaching staff were able to interact with players implement their new ideas.

Although COVID limitations at the time prevented a traditional spring camp with scrimmages, the new coaching staff was still able to get players acquainted with their new system.

“We had a good spring,” stated Dyer. “We did not have our baseball guys. They were still playing their season during our spring practice but we had most of our team with the exception of our freshmen.”

Dyer continued, “We had a lot of good reps. We installed a new offense and new defense. We got a lot of young guys plenty of reps. Offensively, we had just enough bodies where we could run two offensive huddles — a first huddle and a second huddle.”

With the ever changing climate of the school year during the pandemic, prep sports can foresee being affected in some kind of way. Which makes having depth even more important — something Dyer is aware of and addressed during the spring and summer.

“We did that because we knew we were going to have a “next man up” type team mentality. With 50-plus kids on the roster, it was just a matter of time before one kid went down, one kid got sick or one kid got quarantine and we are going to have to plug and play.”

“We have proved that so far, we had one kid get hurt in the spring — we may or may not get him back —we had another kid get hurt this fall who we will not get back. We have had two or three other players who have come off injuries and had to miss a week or two so they missed our padded practices and were not able to participate in our first two scrimmages. We have one who is coming off surgery and will not be available until the jamboree. We are not necessarily at 100 percent right now but most of our guys they have had good work since the spring.”

With a new staff and complete overhaul of their schedule, the Owls needed to get to work quickly in the off season to prepare for 2021.

“We are still looking for some leaders and some guys to step up but the guys have bought in to what we are trying to do and what we are trying to accomplish — that is half the battle,” said Dyer. “If you can sell your vision and



SHEA HAILE / COURIER

2021 SMITH COUNTY HIGH JUNIORS — Kneeling from left: Nathen Davis, Joel Perrault, Hayden Bush, Josh Allen, Johnny Lyda. Second row from left: Hannah Anderson mgr., Jake White, Billy Brannan, Joe Daniel Stout, Bryce Currie, Brooke Russell. Third row from left: Jamison Keeley, Tristin Washer, Jimmy Enoch. Not pictured: Jeremiah Restrepo, Dane Woodard.



SHEA HAILE / COURIER

2021 SMITH COUNTY HIGH QUARTERBACKS — Standing from left: Clayton Rigsby, Key Harris, Johnny Lyda, Peyton Hix.

sell what you want to do to a bunch of high school kids and a community — then you are on the right path. You have to get them to believe in the process and embrace their role in the process. I believe the majority of our guys have done that. On top of that we have a great coaching staff.”

The Owls used the summer not only to familiarize themselves with their new coach’s philosophy but also used the camp as a chance to challenge themselves against some quality teams.

“We got good work over the summer,” said Dyer. “We got in the weight room — got stronger, bigger and faster. We have been repping our offensive scheme and our defensive scheme. We had some 7-on-7’s this summer that we attended — we went to two in Cookeville. We went to one at Jackson County and one at Beech. We competed very well at all of those. We saw some speed and we saw some size. We needed to see that athleticism from other teams like Beech, Cookeville and Lebanon — because that is what we are going to see this fall in East Nashville, Stratford and Maplewood. Outside of our region we are going to

see some tough opponents as well.”

Another offseason goal for the Owls was updating their facilities. The team received help from boosters and the community as they raised funds to update the program’s weight lifting equipment.

The Owls also had a peach sale and a Lift-A-Thon to raise money for improvements and team expenses.

“We renovated our weight room this spring, summer and fall. We had a lot of help from some sponsors and donors. They helped us. We are appreciative of the community and their support.”

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SMITH COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL 2021 Football Schedule				GORDONSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL 2021 Football Schedule			
Aug. 21	Gordonsville	Away		Aug. 21	Smith Co.	Home	
Aug. 27	DeKalb Co.	Away		Aug. 27	Watertown	Away	
Sept. 3	Maplewood*	Home		Sept. 3	Oliver Springs	Home	
Sept. 10	W'moreland (H-C)	Home		Sept. 10	Eagleville (H-C)	Home	
Sept. 17	Walker Valley	Home		Sept. 17	OPEN		
Sept. 24	Trousdale Co.	Away		Sept. 24	Coalfield (6 pm)	Away	
Oct. 1	Stratford*	Away		Oct. 1	Jo Byrns*	Home	
Oct. 8	OPEN			Oct. 8	Trousdale Co.	Away	
Oct. 15	Jackson Co.*	Home		Oct. 15	OPEN		
Oct. 22	Macon Co.	Away		Oct. 22	Red Boiling Spr.*	Away	
Oct. 29	East Nashville*	Away		Oct. 29	Clay Co.*	Home	

* Denotes Region Games ALL GAMES START AT 7:00 CST

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