



Quick Hits

Looks around the Greater Valley Conference

McMinnville

McMinnville's head coach has reasons to think his team will move up.

Mac went 1-8 last year, but Ryan McIrvin, in his 16th season with the Grizzlies program and his first as head coach, sees a good chance of winning more games in 2015.

The better players lost to graduation are guard Tanner Scanlon, who also was a wide receiver and a defensive back; Zach Silver, a running back and linebacker; and linemen Oliver Vera and Josh Sorenson.

Returning offensive starters are headed by Wyatt Smith, an all-conference quarterback last year. There is competition for the running back positions, but Cedric Agcaoli and Wyatt Adams are likely to make first string. Expected to start as receivers are Justin Trimble and Jesse Medley. There are three contenders for tight end. Leading offensive line candidates are Drew Rubado, Taylor Brown and Jesus Fajardo.

Most of them are likely to start on defense as well. Agcaoli and Rubado are line-

backers. Griffin Williams will be an outside linebacker and Brad Hessel a defensive back.

Either Hessel or Colton Ramos will be the kicker. Ramos is expected to be the punter.

Asked how the rest of the Greater Valley Conference looked, McIrvin said the top three are likely to be West Salem, South Salem and Sprague. All three, he observed, are "big, fast, strong and athletic."

McIrvin will be his own offensive coordinator and usually coach the quarterbacks and offensive line – usually, because "we'll move around a bit." Don Rutschman is the defensive coordinator and at

times will "move around" to coach the offensive line. Reeve Woodward will coach defensive backs and running backs. Mike Gower is the defensive line coach.

"We're just excited to get started," McIrvin said. "Our kids have worked hard all summer. We seem to have more depth."

- Herb Swett, for the Keizertimes



South Salem

South Salem, last year's football champion of the Greater Valley Conference, is a strong contender again according to coach Scott Dufault.

The Saxons went 9-1 in 2014 but lost in the first round of the playoffs. A few of last year's key players were seniors, but Dufault points to several returning standouts.

Those lost to graduation include wide receiver Connor Phong; offensive linemen Benny Ham-Marsh and Dakota Conover and Jack Gries, who was a running back and linebacker; linebacker Chris Toomb; and defensive linemen Omar Hidalgo, Drew Raynak and Romie Ezell.

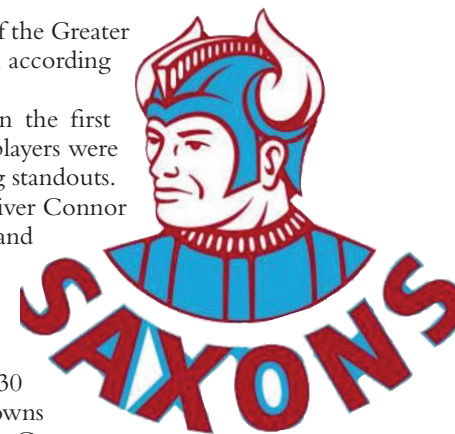
Quarterback Gabe Matthews, who had 30 touchdown passes and 10 rushing touchdowns last year, returns. So does running back Davis Carter, South's No. 2 rusher in 2014. Returning offensive linemen are Vincent Villareal, Tyler Coates and Luke Raynak. Gibson Carey, Tony Phong and Carter are back as receivers and defensive backs. Raynak and Villareal also will play on the defensive line, so in Dufault's words, "We need to find more." Returning inside linebackers are Davis Carter and Will Riffe. For the special teams, all-conference kicker Matthews returns. The others on special teams last year graduated.

Asked how the rest of the conference looked to him, Dufault called West Salem "pretty solid" and observed that Sprague and McNary had good seniors.

Dufault is in his 28th year of coaching high school football, his 21st as a head coach and his 17th as the Saxons' head coach.

He is his own defensive coordinator and inside linebacker coach. Chris Short is offensive coordinator. Terry Haugen and Aaron Haugen coach the defensive backs. Steve Norris and Bryan Martz coach the defensive linemen. Other assistant coaches are Casey Connor, outside linebackers; Josh Van Lue, quarterbacks; Paul Cary and Ryan Bell, offensive linemen; Sam Mendez, Jake Turner and Joey Placek, receivers; and Adrian Lewis, running backs.

- Herb Swett, for the Keizertimes



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