

Eagles look for combination for successful campaign

By Hank Bond
Park Newspapers

MOOREHEAD — Moorehead State University's football coach, Cecil Prentice hopes a minimum of experience and an abundance of youth can be combined into a successful campaign.

Nearly 50 players reported for the gridiron, and could possibly team with MSI media day, August 17, in preparation for the 1993 season.

Of those reporting, the roster shows 28 Kentucky players, the remainder are from out of state.

The players have an international origin. Transfer linebacker Gerald Lewis is from Windsor, Canada, and place kicker Alvin Larson, who was an exchange student at Lakeland County High School, is from Sola, Norway.

The Eagles, coming off a disappointing 3-5 regular season mark and a 3-0 record against Ohio Valley Conference foes, will field only four seniors to kickoff September 4 at Marshall.

The eventual national champion Thundering Herd claimed a 49-7 win in last season's opener in Huntington, West Virginia.

The Eagles struggled to a 3-5 record before a 31-7 win over Murray State snapped the streak. Moorehead also had a 41-34 win on the road over Austin Peay and a 20-17 win at home over Southeast Missouri.

Prentice will welcome back 25 lettermen and 11 starters from last year's five for a loss squad.

The Eagles will need only four seniors to the field this season.

J.R. Cook, a defensive lineman from Leavenworth, transferred to MSI last season from Cumberland College. He was an action in seven games last season before suffering a season-ending knee injury. Cook should start at offensive guard, and could possibly team with his brother Stuart, a junior, on the offensive line.

Returning as starter at fullback and projected to be a starter in 1993 will be Phil Dixon, a senior from France, Ky.

Dixon saw action in nine games and rushed for 392 yards on 89 carries last year. He also caught eight pass exchanges for a career high 139 yards on 18 carries against Tennessee State. He transferred to MSI, a 3-0 record against Ohio Valley Conference foes, will field only four seniors to kickoff September 4 at Marshall.

John Davall, a defensive lineman and linebacker, should be back as a starter this season.

The Jeffersonville, Indiana product, is considered one of the most versatile players on the squad in his fifth season at MSI, he played all 11 games last season, with eight starts.

He had 67 tackles last season, plus 11 starts from last year's five for a loss squad.

He will return to tight end, after spending much of last season as an offensive tackle.

He caught only one pass in limited receiving duty last season, after catching 13 passes for 163 yards in 1991.

Veteran quarterback Jeremy Hallbrook, a junior from Paintsville, had a strong spring practice and was listed as first team quarterback on the team's pre-season depth chart.

Hollbrook appeared in seven games with six starts in 1992. He had 215 yards rushing on 70 carries. He was 18 of 40 passing with four interceptions for a total of 195 yards and one touchdown.

However, Hollbrook suffered an injury to his right knee in non-contact practice the week of August 9. His status for the season's opener is unknown.

Junior college transfers Eric Stuckton and Ray Williams along with freshman Adam McCormick are listed at 1-3-3 on the depth chart and are expected to battle for the starting spot of fullback in 1993.

"We lost three quarterbacks last season," Prentice said. "We have players on the roster with experience to fill the position if Hollbrook is unable to play."

Prentice looks for speed to be an asset for this year's team.

"We have more on the roster with speed of 4.6 down to 4.4 seconds in the 40," he said. "We should be a good football team."

With Dimm at fullback, the Eagles show Corey, Corey as first team wingback, along with Pete Ruby on the other side. T.J. Kinchen is shown as first team wide receiver, along with Matt Venturino.

Pre-season positions can obviously change as the opener nears.

Prentice sees the team for 1993 as a team with desire.

The strength of the team is certainly going to be the team itself. We have had an excellent attitude from the very beginning. We lost some experience, but we are going to build into a good unit.

"We have the speed. We have to work hard to make certain the offensive line provides the opportunity for the running backs."

The Eagles have seven junior college players this season, plus three transfers.

"With the 49 freshmen we have, we have to hope the players will jell together as a team."

"We will be young this season, but we continue to gain experience."

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