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(Neb.)-Hay Springs coach optimistic for 2013

By: Andrew Lacy Posted at: 08/27/2013 06:08 PM

The Hay Springs football team enters the 2013 season with a new man in charge as Jason Funk takes over head coaching duties. Funk was a three-year starter for Chadron State and joined the Eagles Hall of Fame in 2012. He was previously a head coach at Red Cloud, Neb., and is excited to coach an experienced team.

"We have six returning starters on offense and defense," Funk said. "I'm excited about the depth that we have. We still have a lot of young guys that are learning positions, but overall the maturity of the team from last year has gone up."

Among the returning players are seniors Jordan Houser, Joey Johnson and Steven Horrocks. Horrocks began last season on the offensive line before putting up big numbers as a running back at the end of the year.

"Steven is a great kid," Funk said. "He's blessed with amazing physical ability. He came into camp weighing about 235; he's 6'1". He's a very fast runner, good on his feet. He's just a dominant force on the field."

Johnson will take over starting quarterback duties this season after playing running back and receiver last year. Funk says he expects a smooth transition.

"He's doing really well," Funk said. "His mechanics are improving day-to-day. He's getting more efficient with his passing. And he's a confident runner. That's what I've been working on is building the confidence of the team up that they can compete with all the teams we play this year."

The Hawks went 4-4 in 2012, losing to eventual state champion Giltner in the first round of the playoffs. Funk said he expects to go deeper in the postseason this year. Hay Springs will start the season Friday, Aug. 30 at Morrill.