

**(Neb.)-Sioux County looks to build on last season's success**

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Coming off a 9-2 season and a trip to the state championship game, the Sioux County football team is going to have a tough time repeating its success from last season. But ninth-year head coach Barry Swisher believes his team is up to the challenge.

“Our kids are excited,” Swisher said. “It was not the ideal ending, but it was a good season for our kids last year. We have a lot of those kids coming back and they put in a lot of good time during the offseason. They’re very excited to get going again.”

The team will be without some key players from last season, including Garrett Gray and six man offensive player of the year Jonny Dunn, but Swisher says his team still has plenty of experience.

“We return all our linemen,” he said. “Kyle Westover is a 6’5”, 230 lb. junior. Phillip Parker and Josh Kling are back. They have starting experience on both sides, so they’re going to give us some advantage up front.”

“And then we have a couple of kids like Nathan Woodrum, by the time we got to state last year he was starting on offense. He’ll be our quarterback this year.” Swisher added. “Connor Rodenbaugh and Jeremiah Fink will try to fill in at running back. They also got a lot of experience last year. Skill-wise, we’re going to be pretty young, but up front and on defense we have some key kids returning.”

The Warriors were disappointed to come up short in last year’s title game and Swisher wants his players to use that for motivation.

“It’s a double-edged sword,” Swisher said. “It’s good that our kids had that experience and they’re excited to get back, but hopefully they’re not content just getting there. We want them to keep working and realize you still have one more game you have to finish off.”

Sioux County will open the season Friday, Aug. 30 in Minatare.