

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE WEST PLAINS DAILY QUILL

West Plains Zizzers Bigger, stronger, faster

by Chris Herbolsheimer sports@wpdailyquill.net

On paper, West Plains football coach Matt Perkins says his football team has a chance to have a very good season this fall. Perkins heads into just his third season as head coach with a strong returning team, but the wisdom to know things can go wrong, and paper can end up in the trash.

Last season, the Zizzers finished with a record of 10-2, a conference championship, and a district championship. Helias Catholic of Jefferson City dashed their state dreams by delivering a six-point defeat in the Class 4 quarterfinals of the state tournament.

The "locomotive that could" Titus Seeley graduated and will be playing at Evangel University in the fall, and that's a blow for sure.



PRACTICE IS UNDERWAY for the Zizzers. This year's team has a lot to live up

With 17 returners, including Connor Lair, Dagen Kenslow, and Heston Miller, the Zizzers can still bring the thunder.

The Zizzers have a top heavy, older, well seasoned team that is ready to pick up where they left off last year. The performance

ZIZZERS cont. pg 6

Taylor (Trubaugh

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

2021 Football Preview

West Plains Zizzers **Willow Springs Bears** Mtn. View - Birch Tree Liberty

FOOTBALL WORD SEARCH

BACKFIELD KICKOFF CENTER LINEBACKER OFFENSIVE CORNERBACK DOWN LINE **END ZONE PUNT** EXTRA POINT QUARTERBACK **FAIR CATCH RED ZONE** FIELD GOAL RETURN **FULLBACK** RUSHING **FUMBLE** SACK **GUARD SAFETY HALFBACK SNAP HAND OFF SPECIAL TEAMS** HUDDLE **TACKLE** INCOMPLETION INTERCEPTION

TIGHT END WIDE RECEIVER

SOLUTION PG 15

2021 WPHS ZIZZERS VARSITY SQUAD



District champ Liberty Eagles eye a state title

by Chris Herbolsheimer sports@wpdailyquill.net

A brand new coach, big losses, a young team, these were all the obstacles that the 2020 Mtn. View-Birch Tree Liberty Eagles faced as they headed into the 2020 football season. Their response?

In his first year as head coach, Brock Kenaga led the Eagles to a district championship. Under Kenaga Liberty saw a return to the glory days of 2010 to 2016 when the team went 78-11.

"We were 10-3 last year. We return almost everyone except for the line. We lost 9 seniors last year. 5 of them were lineman, big strong lineman at that. We do return both of our QB's in Tyler Watts and Carter Pruett. These guys amassed 4000 yards of offense last year so we are extremely happy to have them back. Noah Jester is our all state receiver that returns after a stellar year where he had 64 catches for over 800 yards and 11 TD's. We will have alot of really good skill players to go along with these guys but we are going to have to hurry along our lineman in order to have another successful season," said



LIBERTY HEAD COACH Brock Kenaga leads drills during practice. Last year, in his first season as head coach, Kenaga delivered a district championship. This year, his eyes are set on a state title.

Coach Kenaga. Senior quarterback Tyler Watts is back after passing for 1,873 yards and 22 touchdowns, while adding another 1,059 rushing yards and 10 touchdowns.

EAGLES cont. pg 5





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EAGLES cont. from pg 4

Classmate Noah Jester was one of the area's most productive receivers, totaling 818 yards and 10 touchdowns on 64 receptions. "The SCA is always a meat grinder and I expect this year to be no different," said Kenaga. "The Mtn, View-Birch Tree Liberty Eagles promise to thrill fans with another exciting season. The Eagles kick off with two tough games. On Aug. 27 they open their season with a trip to Strafford and the hometown crowd will get their chance to see the Eagles take on Fair Grove on Sept. 3.



LINEMEN DRILLS to get the Eagles ready to push back those tough SCA defensive lines.



IF PRACTICE MAKES perfect, then this duo are on their way to some serious yardage this season.



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2021 SCHEDUL

Aug. 27	@Stafford	7 p.m.
Sept. 3	Fair Grove	7 p.m.
Sept. 10	@Thayer	7 p.m.
Sept 17	Ava	7 p.m.
Sept 24	Willow Springs	7 p.m.
Oct. 1	@Mtn. Grove	7 p.m.
Oct. 8	@Cabool	7 p.m.
Oct. 15	Salem	7 p.m.
Oct. 22	Houston	7 p.m.

against Helias still weighs heavily on everyone's minds.

"It has been all we have thought about for eight months," said Perkins. "Our kids know we are knocking on the door. We have to be more disciplined and do little things better to take the next step."

Senior Dagen Kenslow is one of the area's top dual-threat quarterbacks, passing for 865 yards and rushing for another 791 and 22 total touchdowns. Of course, as the team punter—a position he also excels in— he could be considered a triple threat.

"He will be very good this year in all ways," said Perkins. "We gave him more and more down the stretch and he handled it well. He will take a jump this year. We have seen that this summer from him. Special year ahead."

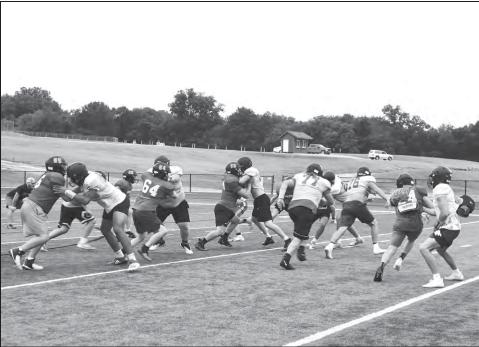
A theme of this year's defense will be speed.

"We return quite a bit and they're fast," said Perkins. "We have some really good players that the league and state will learn about."

With two district championships in the last three seasons, the Zizzers aren't looking for just district championships or moral victories – West Plains is looking to compete for a state championship.

Perkins believes it'll largely be mental factors for West Plains to take the next step.

"To win it all we will have to be focused all year," said Perkins. "I think the league is up. Glendale in Week 1 is a tough team. It starts



HESTON MILLER TAKES handoff from Dagen Kenslow during practice. With his winged feet, Miller is sure to cross the goal line several times this season.

hard for us and stays that way to the end. We expect to be in the thick of it. We just hope that our kids stay healthy and stay together." For the past several seasons, the Zizzers have set a standard of

ZIZZERS cont. pg 11



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DAGEN KENSLOW scans for an open receiver.

2021 SCHEDULE

Aug. 27	Glendale	7 p.m.
Sept. 3	@Hillcrest	7 p.m.
Sept. 10	Rolla	7 p.m.
Sept 17.	@Camdenton	7 p.m.
Sept 24	Kickapoo	7 p.m.
Oct. 1	@Lebanon	7 p.m.
Oct. 8	Parkview	7 p.m.
Oct. 15	@Waynesville	7 p.m.
Oct. 22	@Bolivar	7 p.m.











ASSISTANT COACHES PITTS (left) and Womack oversee varsity scrimmage drills.

Thank you for



KENSLOW SHOWED OFF his moves like Jagger last season against Bolivar.

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not just winning, but dominating. A fascinating stat would be to see what percentage of Zizzer games have had the "turbo clock" enacted.

In fact, last season the Zizzers seemed to have an unspoken challenge they issued to themselves that they would have their first TD on the board in less time than it took to perform the national anthem.

Friday nights promise to be a thrill this fall as the West Plains Zizzers hit the field.

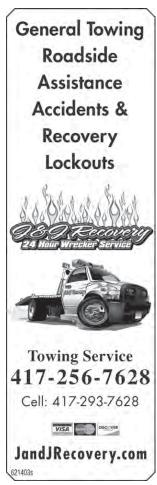
The Zizzers will host Glendale for the season opener on Aug. 27.



RAISING A HELMET in success after a hard practice.













Thayer Bobcats looking to finish what they started

by Chris Herbolsheimer sports@wpdailyquill.net

The Thayer crowd held their breath in silence as their beloved Bobcats attempted a 2-point conversion to push the last game of the 2020 season into overtime against the eventual Class 1 state champion Windsor. The Bobcats' effort came up short, and their season was over.

What does a Bobcat offense look like without Jayce Haven? After four years, it's time to find out.

Landry Pitts will get his chance to helm the ship this season.

"Landry did a great job at quarterback for seven weeks last season," said Thayer coach Billy Webber. "We are looking for that to continue and hopefully improve this season."

No one can deny there were big losses for the Bobcats, but with an intact offensive line and a handful of returning all-staters, don't count Thayer out just yet.

"Our defense has several guys that can run and hustle to the ball," said Webber.

While six straight district championships is impressive, the Thayer Bobcats have their sights set on lucky number seven. If heart and determination are keys to success, then the Bobcat's have it in spades.

Thayer opens their season on the road in Hayti on Aug. 27 and will play their home opener one week later on Sept. 3 against Highland.





LANDRY PITTS has big shoes to fill with the graduation of Jayce Haven, but Coach Billy Webber feels confident that he is up to the task.

THAYER BOBCATS 2021 SCHEDULE

Aug. 27	@Hayti	7 p.m.
Sept. 3	Highland	7 p.m.
Sept. 10	MV-BT Liberty	7 p.m.
Sept 17.	@Salem	7 p.m.
Sept 24	Houston	7 p.m.
Oct. 1	@Cabool	7 p.m.
Oct. 8	@Ava	7 p.m.
Oct. 15	Willow Springs	7 p.m.
Oct. 22	@Mtn. Grove	7 p.m.



A former Bear now leads the pack

by Chris Herbolsheimer sports@wpdailyquill.net

The Willow Springs Bears find themselves with a brand new captain of the ship this season as they have hired Willow Springs alum Joel Wyatt.

Wyatt spent his high school career playing for the Bears, then went on to be the Bears' offensive coordinator in the late 90s and early

The last 10 years have seen Wyatt as a head coach in Malden and Kennett.

"I didn't know a soul when we went to Malden," Wyatt said. "I wanted to branch out and get out of my comfort zone by being a head coach. It was the best decision I ever made. The people at Malden were good to me. I landed in a good position for my first head coaching job. Then, I moved 25 miles south to Kennett. We had a successful run there. Both stops were full of a lot of great memories.

"Family brought me back home," he added. "This is coming full circle for me, back to where I grew up and graduated. It's been a breath of fresh air, seeing old faces and some of the players I coached before, now I'm coaching their kids. It shows how time flies."

Coach Wyatt returns to a program looking to get back some of their

glory from days gone by. The Bears were 8-22 for the past three seasons.

"We think our offensive line is going to be a strength," Wyatt said. "People that knew me when I was an offensive coordinator know I'm a run-first guy. Everybody says they want to be balanced. But we're definitely going to run the football more than throw it."

Coach Wyatt was there for the glory days of Willow Springs football, and hopefully he remembers the path back there.

W SPRINGS **BEARS 2021 SCHEDULE**

Aug. 27	Clever	7 p.m.
Sept. 3	@Marionville	7 p.m.
Sept. 10	Cabool	7 p.m.
Sept 17.	Mtn. Grove	7 p.m.
Sept 24	@MV-BT Liberty	7 p.m.
Oct. 1	@Salem	7 p.m.
Oct. 8	Houston	7 p.m.
Oct. 15	@Thayer	7 p.m.
Oct. 22	Ava	7 p.m.

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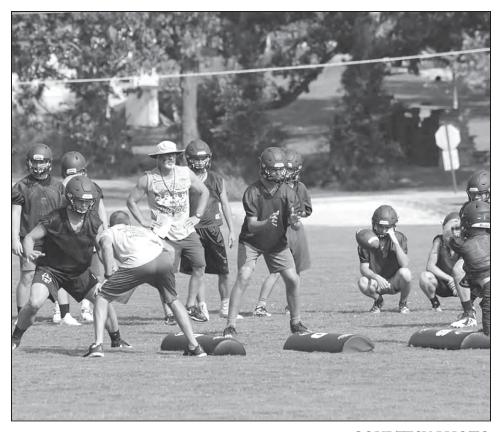
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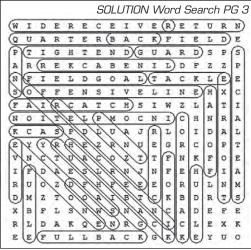
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Box Blade, Kubota Loader,
5' Land Pride Brush Hog.
6 Year Power Train Warranty ***
\$0 Down, 0% A.P.R.
for 84 months*

\$330 per mo.²

L4701 DT PACKAGE DEAL

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6 Year Power Train Warranty ***



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