

Brady Eagles look for unity to start season

Written by Austin Benson

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Balanced conference to test team.

Head Coach Lynne Johnson is certain of five positions with five returning starters from last year's state playoff team. That's it.

With two girls graduating and going to play college volleyball at McCook, the right side of the offense needed fixing, she said, but that didn't change her season outlook this fall.

The ultimate goal is winning state, of course," Johnson said. "The coaches and players want to get back there this year."

Last year, a 23-8 Eagle team lost to Mead in the first round of state playoffs but return almost everyone from last year's team.

"We should be as good as last year, if not stronger," Johnson said. "We have experience, height, good hitters and a two-time All-Conference libero.

Even with all that returning experience, Johnson said that areas of the game need to be improved.

She said her right side is still coming together which was a known concern at the end of last season. There are two girls that have experience playing that side, but it is something that will be worked on throughout the season, Johnson said.

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At other positions on the floor, Johnson will have to see which lineup works best. Having lineup options is always a good thing, she said.

“We have girls that can set and play outside hitter, and those who can play middle and set too,” Johnson said. “The hardest part will be finding out where to put girls to form our best unit.”

She said the main focus of preseason for Brady has been working together for the common goal, a victory, she said

The biggest issue right now is being a collective group and making the next player look better. If the girls can focus on playing with each other and working each play for the other person, then they should be okay, Johnson said.

She added the returning starters and members of the team with varsity experience have taken it into their own hands to form that bond.

“The upperclassmen are leading this great group of girls,” Johnson said. “They know what we want to accomplish and have really helped the younger girls progress so far.”

That leadership will be needed in the tough Sandhills Conference the Eagles compete in, Johnson said. Brady opens the season on Thursday at Maxwell at 6:30 p.m.

Members of the 2013 Brady volleyball team are (*denotes returning letter winners) :

Seniors—Madison Elliot*, Lexi Franzen*, Alexis Mann*, Valerie Most*, Carrissa Rayburn*, Dusk Sabin and Sydney Widick*.

Juniors—Rachel Hanson, Autumn Hild*, Allison Hood and Josie Palmer*.

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-Sophomores—Stephanee Black, Jenna Lusk, Bailey Maddox and Emilee Shaw.

Freshman—Tara Callahan, Hannah DeStefano, Michaela Jurjens, Kaylee Messersmith, Jessica Most, Joya Most and Shyla Stearns.

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