

Lions optimistic with Schmidt & Scott

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 13 August 2014 20:07 -



Ryan Schmidt attended college football camps all over the country this summer to try and improve and possibly land a Division I scholarship.

Perrion Scott traveled to Mississippi for personal reasons, but he's back and determined to have a successful season as a senior. He's eligible and ready to run.

They are two of the big reasons the Linn-Mar Lions are "cautiously optimistic" they'll have a good season this year after suffering through a 2-and-7 campaign in 2013.

There's another reason Coach Bob Forsyth and his players like their chances. They have 33 seniors on the roster this year, compared to only 15 a year ago.

"We're getting great leadership from our seniors from that big group," Forsyth said Wednesday before practice. "They've been through some wars as juniors."

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Many of those wars were tough ones, but the Lions think they've learned their lessons and are ready for success.

Schmidt, a strapping 6-foot-5 quarterback with a powerful arm, passed for 1,716 yards and 12 touchdowns last season as a junior. He spent a good part of the summer at major college camps with some of the other top QBs in the country.

"I think it was 11 or 12 camps. Yeah, I got around," he said. "It was a pretty busy summer for me.

"Some of the bigger ones? I went to Iowa, Minnesota, Indiana, Michigan, Stanford and Purdue. Those are some of the bigger ones."

Schmidt does not have any offers, but Forsyth's phone has been ringing. "I've fielded a bunch of phone calls and people have some interest," the coach said.

Schmidt knows he needs to have a good season to land a scholarship. "A lot of teams are waiting and watching my senior year and how I perform this year," he remarked. "That's basically it."

Schmidt will have an easier time performing if Mr. Scott stays on the field this season. He was limited by a leg injury last season and was academically ineligible during the track season, but he's a special talent with blazing speed.

Scott is one of the top sprinters in the state and showed what he can do with a football under his arm last year against Xavier, when he ran for 200 yards and two touchdowns.

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It appeared for awhile that Scott would spend his senior year in high school in Mississippi, but Forsyth stayed in touch with Scott during the summer and he's back in good graces with the Lions.

"He's a really good kid. A hard worker, and he's set some goals for himself that he's going to try hard and achieve, academically and athletically," said Forsyth. "He's on our roster, he's in good standing with us and we're moving forward.

"He's going to play from Day 1," said Forsyth. "He is determined and wants to have a good senior year in football and track and everything. We're just excited that he's here."

Forsyth indicated he'll use Scott in a variety of spots on offense as a runner and receiver. Logan Benter, who averaged 10.1 yards on 19 carries last year, is currently splitting time with Scott at tailback.

In addition to Schmidt and Scott, the Lions think a big senior class will help lead them to success.

"I think it helps that we have a lot of seniors on our team this year and most of us are going to be playing both ways," said Trevor Noble, a receiver and free safety. "A lot of experience will help us out. A lot of people who played last year will be playing this year."

It starts with all those 12th graders.

"I think last year, with the lack of seniors we had, we might have been lacking in leadership and the kind of drive we needed to keep the team together," said Lotukalafi Ahomana, an offensive lineman. "This year we're

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focusing a lot more on being one unit, one team and one goal."

Quarterbacks are normally good leaders and Forsyth thinks he has a good one in Schmidt.

"He's one of the hardest-working guys we've ever had," said Forsyth. "He came to me in the spring with a pretty ambitious calendar (of college camps and workouts). He did everything we asked of him.

"He's really improved," said Forsyth. "It's a credit to his work ethic. He really went after it, so we're excited about him."

The Lions were not a physically imposing team last year, but Forsyth said they have improved their size and speed.

"I like the way our lines are coming around," he said. "We've got high expectations of them. They've put in a lot of grunt work from December until now, working together in the weight room and working in their drills in the winter. I like the chemistry in our lines."

2014 SCHEDULE

Friday, Aug. 29 - at Prairie
Friday, Sept. 5 - Pleasant Valley
Friday, Sept. 12 - at Clinton
Friday, Sept. 19 - Washington
* Friday, Sept. 26 - Waterloo East
* Thursday, Oct. 2 - at Kennedy
* Friday, Oct. 10 - Cedar Falls
* Friday, Oct. 17 - at Waterloo West
* Friday, Oct. 24 - Jefferson

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* District Games