**SPORTS**

REAGAN LEAGUE

Football team receives ‘first class coaching from a first class staff’

Reagan League

editor

With a new school year came many new coaches for the Devildog football team, some returning home as Travelers Rest HS alumni.

“We only have three coaches and one volunteer back from last year’s staff. We have added seven new coaches to the Varsity/JV staff. I can honestly say that this is the best football staff I have been a part of, and I have worked with a lot of coaches at a lot of schools,” said TR teacher and coach Robbie Cole.

Though head coach Ray Gould hired Cole in March of 2014, the hiring process of other assistant coaches didn’t begin until Gould moved to South Carolina in mid-June of that year, a late start to the cycle of the hiring process. A temporary staff was thrown together to get through the first season, though most of them would not be with the school and the Devildog football program long term. At the end of last season, they could begin to put together a strong staff to build the program with.

Brothers Jeff and Kevin Nelson, defensive coordinator and defensive line coach, have returned as TRHS alumni to help build the program and turn their old school around. Former student athlete at Travelers Rest, Will Ford, has also returned home to be part of the program as coach of the running backs. Ford has had a successful career at both the collegiate and professional levels.

Five of the additions to the team have been head coaches, three of those having experience coaching at the college level as well. “Our players are getting first class coaching from a first class staff, second to none in the area,” said Cole. Between the coaching of Gould and Nelson at their previous schools, over 96 athletes have been sent on to play college football.

Since the change in coaching staff, “our team chemistry has improved tremendously,” said Cole. “As a result of the change in attitude we have seen their effort improve dramatically..” Bigger, better, faster, and stronger - Devildog football is ready to continue its turnaround.