

# Great attitudes, camaraderie will help Redbirds build for 2016 season

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**ALTON** - As they put on their helmets for a new football season, the **Alton High School Redbirds** are using the clean slate as motivation for the weeks to come.

Kicking off their first official day of practice with drills beginning at **7 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 8**, the Redbirds arrived at the practice fields behind their school filled with determination and great attitudes.

Starting his second season as head coach for the Redbirds, **Eric Dickerson** and his coaching staff are hoping to keep discipline at the forefront of the season.

“We do have some experience coming back,” Dickerson said. “Those sophomores and juniors that played last year, we’re really relying on them to use experience that they had last year to kind of bring those young ones along and go from there.”



The team’s freshman squad went undefeated in their 2015 season and with luck, their addition to the varsity team can give the Redbirds another boost.

“With the first three days of helmets only, it’s a lot of learning,” Dickerson said. “We stress mental focus and preparation on these three days. basic fundamentals and some of these kids we haven’t seen all summer, we have to get them caught up on things.”

The Redbirds struggled throughout their nine weeks of play last fall, winning one game of the season in a matchup against the **Granite City High School Warriors** with a score of **42-14** on **Oct. 9, 2015**.

The team will travel to **Rock Island High School** on **Aug. 26** for their first game of the season. Last season, the Rocks defeated the Redbirds **35-6**.



Throughout the summer, the group of 60 to 70 athletes have attended workout sessions and have been showcasing some extraordinary teamwork and positive attitudes.

“It’s good to see them out here and get back into football,” Dickerson said. “The attitudes we’ve seen and the camaraderie that they have between each other now is a little bit different and it’s a good feeling to see that. If you care about the person next you, you may play a little bit harder for them.”



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