

One team, one goal: Roxana Shells ready to hit the gridiron

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer
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ROXANA - After a **7-3** season, the **Roxana High School Shells** football team are ready to head back on to the gridiron and show their tough **South Central Conference** competitors what the revitalized squad is all about this season.

The Shells, led by **Pat Keith**, celebrate their victories and their defeats under one mantra that keeps them going throughout the season: one team, one goal.

"This is not an individual sport, this is a team sport," Keith said. "I think that we've had some success over the past couple of years because of that. The kids are buying into the fact that it's not about one guy, it's about all of us. That's our goal still."



Luckily for the Shells, they have some key players returning to keep the team driving through the competition. Now a junior, **Jordan Hawkins** as the 6-2, 200-pound running back and defensive end. His classmate, **Marcus Harnett** (6-0, 165 lbs) takes over the reins as the quarterback. Supporting the defensive line is 6-1, 265-pound junior **Ryan Harris**. Seniors **Trey Kelley** (5-9, 175) is back as a linebacker and **Cody McMillan** (6-4, 175) will be the squad's key wide receiver.

Hawkins produced 13 touchdowns and rushed 1079 yards, more than any of his other teammates in the 2015 season but one; former teammate Blake Vandiver scored 16 touchdowns and rushed 773 yards.

"We had some guys that we had to replace, but as I said, they have a great attitude and a great opportunity for some competition," Keith added.

Though their season was relatively positive, the Shells took their two regular losses in the first two games of the 2015 season against **Carlinville** and **Pana High Schools**.

After winning the remainder of their games for the season, the **Cavaliers** and the Shells faced off yet again in the **IHSA Regional** battle in Carlinville. Roxana was defeated **52-12**.

The two teams will dual once again during the 2016 season kickoff at **7 p.m.** on **Aug. 26** at Carlinville.

"I'm happy with the guys this year," Keith said. "They're putting in a good effort and have a good attitude, so we'll go from there."

