



# Granite City Ready For Solid Football Season In 2023, Warriors Team Stillwater Senior Living Male Athletes Of Month

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GRANITE CITY - Granite City High School's football team appears primed for an outstanding season in 2023 after an excellent summer of training. The Warriors are loaded with talent on both the offensive and defensive sides of the field and have an excellent place kicker in Abby Knight.

The Warriors suffered a tough opening loss on Saturday at O'Fallon, but should rebound and have an outstanding season under second-year head coach Kindle Lyons. Lyons has inspired the Warriors in both the weight room and on the field and he expects big things from his kids this fall.

The Warriors football boys are Stillwater Senior Living Male Athletes Of The Month for their superior efforts over the summer.

Granite is coming off a 1-8 season last year, the only win coming against Madison 51-34 on Sept. 17, 2022, at Memorial Stadium/Kevin Greene Field. The Warriors were shut out in five of their games last season, including the last four consecutive, but all the signs of a big turnaround are evident for the team.



"Coming into practice, now, the guys are really confident," Coach Lyons said in a recent interview. "We had a good summer. Going into the regular season, the kids have a good understanding of what we've got going on and they're really working hard to create this winning atmosphere that we're trying to create here."

The Warriors return many backfield players and an improved offensive line to the fold and they'll be a key factor in the team's fortunes this season.

"One of the guys that's going to be missed a lot is Ian Poston," Lyons said. "Ian Poston is getting an opportunity to go play in college, but we have some guys behind him as well that's going to be able to come in and help us out a lot. Guys like JCoryn Landry. We've still got Kendrick (Lyons, the team's quarterback) coming back. We've got a good offensive front that all started last year and they were young. They were all sophomores."

The Warriors are confident in an improved running game for success, with Lyons feeling that will be the key to the 2023 season.

"One part that we feel confident about is our running back position this year," Lyons said. "Last year, we really didn't have a strong running game, but this year, we're going to be pretty good with Carl Harris being in the backfield."

The Warriors will be joining Collinsville in entering the South Seven Conference for football on a two-year trial basis, with permanent membership coming if the trial goes well. The South Seven lost Belleville Althoff Catholic to the Gateway Metro Conference, but still has Marion, Carbondale, Mt. Vernon, Centralia and Cahokia. They'll serve as conference games for Granite, along with the game at Collinsville, and the schedule also has O'Fallon, Althoff and Belleville East.

"I think the toughest teams we're going to see this year are Marion and Cahokia," Lyons said. "So it's going to be hard. They have a lot of guys that match our talent. So our guys have to be up to that challenge to go in and win those games. Those are big games we have to win and if we can win them, we could see ourselves in the playoffs this year."

The team's biggest challenge right now is identifying their weaknesses and work hard to strengthen and improve those weaknesses and eventually overcome them.

"Just trying to figure out what it is that what we're weak at," Lyons said, "and make ourselves stronger there. Lyons thinks the Warriors will have an exciting team that's fun to watch and is encouraging the Granite fans and community to come out to see his team play in 2023.

"It's going to be an exciting one," Lyons said. "So, if you're going to miss it, you're going to miss some fun. A lot of fun we haven't seen here in Granite City in quite some time. So make sure you've got yourself in the seats up there, so we can watch a good football game this year."



