

# New EAWR coaching staff the fresh start the team deserves

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer  
August 10 2015 9:13 PM



**EAST ALTON/WOOD RIVER** – As morning broke over the football field at **East Alton-Wood River High School** on Monday, Aug. 10, the 2015 **Oilers football team** hit the field for their first preseason practice. The dawn of a new day is synonymous with a clean slate, and that is exactly what the team has on their plate this season.



After the 2014 football season ended for the Oilers, the district revealed its new coaching squad. **Garry Herron** took on the role as head coach for the varsity and junior varsity teams. Assisting him are **Michael Beachum**, **Derek Forstein**, and Herron's own brother, **Kyle Herron**.

"We kind of have to look at this season as a rebuilding process," **EAWR's Athletic Director Adam Miller** said as the coaches conducted practice. "It's kind of like starting from scratch."

The coaches had no problem asserting their dominance on the practice field outside of the high school on the morning of the first practice. Offensive and defensive skills were run through rapidly, and coaches were quick to discipline those who were not pulling their weight.

Off the field, all four coaches are teachers in various departments at EAWR. "The coaches have the opportunity to be accountable for their athletes on and off the field," Miller said. "Over time, we will see a lot of benefits from that."

This season will begin with non-conference play on Aug. 28 at 7:00 p.m. as the Oilers travel to take on the **Columbia Eagles**. After they duel **Centralia High School** at home, the Oilers will host **Mt. Olive** on Sept. 11 to begin their competition in the Prairie State Conference.

“I think anyone who looks at our schedule would see that our first two non-conference games are pretty tough. I’m not going to say that our conference games are easier, I’m saying that we know the teams a little bit better,” Miller said.

“We may have our hands full the first couple of weeks, but after that, it should be great.”

As for the team’s hopes for the season, Miller had some excellent words of wisdom.

“We just want to compete every night and try to get better as the season goes on, and try to represent our school the best we can.”





