

Alton High School grid team appears quick, in shape, in first practice with new coach

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - **Alton High School's football squad** appeared quick and in top shape at an initial practice on Monday morning under new head coach **Eric Dickerson**.

Dickerson takes over for Athletic Director **Jeff Alderman**, who will now focus on those duties after leading the Redbirds to a winning season last year.

The new Alton High mentor said he couldn't have been more pleased with the first day of practice with his kids.



“Things are going great,” he said. “We lifted three days a week during the summer and had 40-60 kids here for that and we practiced seven on seven’s a couple nights a week. Seeing what I did today and the way the kids understood our plays put us that much further along and that is nice to see. The work in the summer now pays off.”

A total of 22 seniors graduated from last year’s team, but Dickerson returns some players with a hearty appetite for football, many whom have played for years beginning with Junior Football League play.

“We are looking for guys to step up and be players,” Dickerson said.

Dickerson is also the Alton High School track coach and he is seeing many of the athletes on that squad also out for the football team, which he said helps the process.

“Football and track do go together in terms of conditioning,” he said during the track and field season.

Defensive lineman Asa Collins returns as does linemen Charlie Sholar and Zach Llewellyn. Charlie Markum is another linemen who should get noticed.

Senior Keenan Stegall, also a quarter miler in track, should provide quickness on the field and is contending for that starting position with some others.

Backs Jameyon Alexander and William Malike should be keys carrying the ball for the Redbirds, with others.

On opening day, Dickerson loved the way his backs cut and showed natural instincts running the ball. There was no doubt the quickness the backs will possess observing at the opening day practice.

“We don’t want to get too excited, but I talked with the coaches after practices and they felt good where we are at this point,” Dickerson said.

“Practice is one thing, but Friday nights are another. We want to continue at the pace we had this morning and no doubt we will be ready.”

Alton hosts **Rock Island** on Friday, Aug. 28, in its home opener at Public School Stadium. [You can watch the game on RiverBender.com.](http://RiverBender.com)



