

Junior Oilers Football League prepares young athletes for future play

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer
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EAST ALTON-WOOD RIVER - For the **fifth through eighth graders** who participate in the **Junior Oilers Football League**, the Saturday morning games are preparing them for the future Friday night lights.

Under the coaching of their fathers and coaches, **East Alton Wood River High School Assistant Coach Mike Beachum, Joey Yarborough, Jason Wells, Scott Slayden, and JFL President Jamie Westbrook**, young athletes can aspire to learn how to play football and sharpen up their skills before entering high school.

“They love it,” Westbrook said, “I don’t think there’s one of them that comes and plays on Saturdays and plays through the week at practice who don’t like it.”

In their games against **Carlinville on Saturday, Sept. 26**, the Junior Oilers showed that they have a great amount of potential to play varsity football as soon as they hit high school.

The dedication of the **85 football players** and over **65 cheerleaders** has made the organization as strong as it is over its past four years as a league.

Heading into its fifth year, the Junior Oilers are making their way into the high school sports system. With time, the skill and discipline gained through their experience in the junior league will shine through in varsity play at **EAWR**.

“We’re all staying healthy and having fun,” Westbrook said, “And that’s most important.”



