

# Staying healthy will be key to 2000 campaign

By: Richard Anderkin

The 2000 Edition of the Rockcastle County High School football team will kick-off on Friday night at Lincoln County.

The Rockets will be looking for their 15th straight winning season and they hope they can repeat last year's excellent season mark of 8 and 2.

They also won two of three in the play-offs to finish second in the region behind highly touted Lawrence County.

But if they are to accomplish their goals, head coach Tom Larkey says the ROCK must stay healthy in 2000.

"We've got some key players it would be very hard to replace - we really don't have a lot of depth," Larkey said.

Larkey, who along with head assistant Tony Saylor begins his 16th season at the ROCK, pointed to seniors Greg Harper, Derrick Bussell, Sean Smith and Travis Ingram, as key players who the Rockets would have a hard time replacing.

When the Rockets line up on Friday night they will have quite a bit of new personnel in the line-up, but they will also have several returning starters from a year ago.

On the offensive line, junior William Blair, senior Sean Smith and sophomore Tanner Abney are definite starters. Senior Jason Bullock, junior Jason Ramey, sophomore Michael Brummett and freshman Jason Leger are all fighting for a job. "They will all play, but we really haven't decided who will start because of injuries and some other circumstances, such as missed practices," Larkey said.

Larkey admitted that it was unusual for a freshman to be a possible starter for the ROCK but he said Leger had what it takes. "He works hard, he has a good attitude and he has the body to play - he is going to be a very, very good football player for us," Larkey said.

In the backfield, the Rockets return two key starters, in senior quarterback Christopher

Parsons and senior tailback Derrick Bussell.

Parsons and Bussell are three year starters and they will be joined by two other backs with varsity experience, junior Josh Hale and sophomore Marty Reagan. Junior Clay Dooley has been tapped to fill the fullback spot and junior Josh Taylor will also see action in the backfield.

Seniors Greg Harper and Dackery Larkey will play the end positions and Hale, senior Chaz Cable and senior Heath Payne will see action at the flanker spot.

One of the ROCK's strong points in 2000 will be their kicking game.

Senior Greg Terry is a three

year starter, who is being looked at by several colleges.

Terry is probably the best kicker ever to play at the ROCK, and should be a big part of the Rocket offense in 2000.

The Rockets actually had more holes to fill on the defensive side of the ball than on offense because of graduation, but Coach Saylor is always up to the task.

The ROCK will start four new players on the defensive line in 2000. None of them played on the line last year and three of them will be underclassmen.

Senior Dackery Larkey will start at one defensive end and junior William Blair will start

at the other.

Junior Adam Childress will start at one down lineman and sophomore Tanner Abney will start at the other one.

Larkey is the most experienced of the four, but as a group they are very inexperienced.

Another strong suit for the Rockets will be their linebacking corp.

Seniors Travis Ingram, Greg Harper and Sean Smith will make most of the tackles for the ROCK in 2000.

The trio is experienced, strong and mobile.

Ingram has proven that he is one of the best at his middle linebacker spot, but he

has been hampered by a sore shoulder all summer long.

Senior Derrick Bussell will play the strong safety spot, while junior Josh Hale will assume the very important role of defensive rover. Junior Clay Dooley will play one corner and sophomore Marty Reagan will play the other one.

Larkey and Saylor both said things could change before Friday night, but unless someone comes up hurt, a line-up change at this point is unlikely.

The Rockets open up on Friday night in Stanford, where they will play host Lincoln County in the Death Valley Bowl.

Game time has been moved up to 6:00 p.m.

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