Ready Or Not, West Brunswick To Begin State Title Defense

Seven straight winning seasons. Three consecutive eastern North Carolina championships. Back-toback state titles.

West Brunswick High School's football team, one of the most successful in the state in recent years, will begin its quest for even more glory Friday night when it opens the 1994 season at South Brunswick.

The Trojans probably won't look like a state championship team Friday as first-year head coach Yogi Hickman continues to install an Iformation offense and look for the right combination of players on both sides of the ball.

"We're still learning," Hickman said Tuesday. "We're going to have to be very basic for a while. We're not going to look anything Friday like we're going to look in another three weeks."

West Brunswick finished 5-1 in the Waccamaw Conference last year-sharing the league championship with Whiteville and West Columbus-and 12-3 overall.

Twelve of the 14 returning players who were members of the Trojans' state 3A championship team last year are expected to start this season.

Returning are Eric Johnson, Cory Hill, Derek Frink, Timothy Daniels, Dexter Bass, Brian Gore, Ty Brown, James Morgan, Kwabena Green,

Brian McDowell, Jonathan Faulk, Kelly Wooten, Marcus McCray and Terrell Thomas

Key losses from last year's club include linemen Phillip Johnson, Steve Brooks, Charlie Peele and Wayne Branch and running backs Steve Holmes and Michael Lance and William Stanley.

"We got hit pretty hard," Hickman said.

On offense, Hickman inherited three players who started every game last year, but one of those is playing a different position. Defensively, five of the front seven are new.

What we have is a very inexperienced football team. I'm not crying, but it's just a different football team," Hickman said.

"I don't want people to get down on these kids because they're working hard. We're going to be a good football team eventually," he said. "What we're concentrating on is improving as a football team and it's going very slow."

Hickman said speed and quickness at the skill positions will be the greatest strength for West Brunswick, which carries a sixgame winning streak into the season.

And what does the new coach think about his Waccamaw Conference peers picking the Trojans to win the conference cham-



"Obviously they haven't been to practice," he said. "I think there's ome unreasonable expectations. But people are going to take shots at you when you're the defending champion."

Hickman said West Brunswick's goal is to win the conference championship. That would guarantee a berth in the state playoffs, and from

there anything is possible. At this point, Hickman says defending the state 3A championship is the last thing on his mind.

"That's a goal for everybody playing football in the state. That's what you keep totally in the background until you make the playoffs,"

West Brunswick is looking for its eighth consecutive winning season. The Trojans have a record of 66-21 since 1987, including a 36-8 mark over the last three years.

The Starting Lineup

West's starting offense Friday night will include only three players who started every game last year, and one of those has switched to a different position.

Senior Eric Johnson (6-1, 185) returns for his second season as the starting quarterback. An outstanding athlete and leader, Johnson will be called on to run and pass.

As a junior, Johnson passed for 753 yards and nine touchdowns and also rushed for 295 yards and two more scores.

_2sit Daniels (6-2 200), who started at tight end last year, has been moved to tailback. The other returning starter is senior

guard Kelly Wooten (5-10, 175). Junior Kwabena Green (6-1, 245) saw considerable action last season on the offensive line and will occupy one of the tackle spots. Sophomore Brian "Bull" Nealy (6-1,

240) also will start at tackle. Other offensive starters include senior James Morgan (5-11, 195) at fullback, senior Ty Brown (6-2, 180) at flanker, junior Derek Frink (6-6, 175) at split end, junior Jamal Stanley (6-0, 180) at tight end and

..... at South Brunswick ...Dillon, S.C.

-Games start at 7:30 p.m. unless noted



WEST'S KWABENA GREEN (50) and Cory Hill (4) slap hands prior to last week's scrimmage against Wallace-Rose Hill. The Trojans play their first real game Friday night.

junior Brian McDowell (5-11, 190) at center.

Jonathan Faulk (5-9, 210), a senior who will start at offensive guard and defensive tackle this season, was injured in a car accident last weekend and may miss Friday night's opener.

Sophomore Cliff Gore (6-1, 200) is expected to take his spot in the lineup if Faulk cannot play.

West Brunswick's defense will be anchored once again this year by Green at middle linebacker. He is considered one of the top high school juniors in the state.

Green led the Trojans in tackles last year with 132, including 46 solo stops. He also recovered five fumbles, had one interception and blocked three kicks in 1993.

West's only returning defensive lineman is Faulk, who received the Rookie Of The Year Award after a fine season in 1993. He was the second-leading tackler on the line last year with 50 stops.

Morgan, who made 45 tackles and had three interceptions last season, has moved from the secondary to linebacker.

Even with Morgan's move to linebacker, West's secondary remains strong with the return of Johnson and Daniels.

An outstanding cover man at cornerback, Daniels lead the defensive backs last season with 68 tackles. He also had one interception, forced three fumbles and recovered two. Johnson, who made 41 tackles

last season with two fumble recoveries, will occupy one of the safety Other defensive starters include McDowell and Wooten at defensive

end and Gore and senior Mark Everette (5-11, 185) at tackle. Junior Terrell Thomas (6-2, 200) will start at linebacker, and senior Brian Gore (5-9, 155) and sophomore Cory Hill (5-10, 160) will

round out the secondary. Hickman expects the kicking game to be one of West Brunswick's strengths this year with Frink back

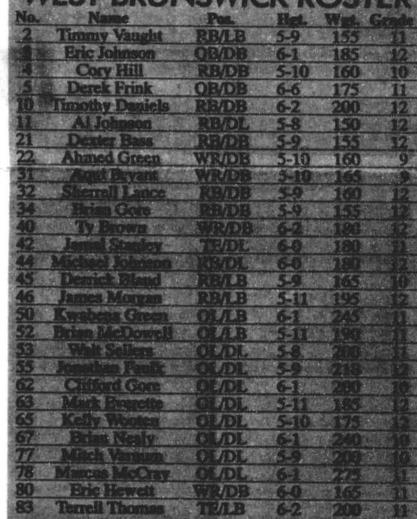
as the Trojans' punter and place

Frink converted 42 of 54 extra point attempts (78 percent) last year, including 16 of 18 in the playoffs.

The Coaching Staff Before coming to West Brunswick, Hickman was the head football coach at St. Pauls from 1988 to 1993. In six years, he guided the Bulldogs to six conference championships and an overall record of 64-

Hickman is a Whiteville native and was an assistant coach at Whiteville High School for three years, serving as offensive coordina-tor when the Wolfpack won the state 2A championship in 1987.

The strong staff of assistant coaches includes veterans Mike Alderson (defensive coordinator) and Joe Noble and newcomers Heath Hewett (offensive coordinator), Frank Ciamillo, Emmett Lay and



QUARTERBACK ERIC JOHNSON scrambles for yards at muddy

Legion Stadium last Friday. The senior will be one of the keys to West Brunswick's success.

Grissett Catching On With NCSU Wolfpack

BY DOUG RUTTER

After sitting out his first year at N.C. State University and spending much of 1993 on the sidelines, Jimmy Grissett should start making an impact this fall for the Wolfpack football team.

The former West Brunswick High School standout is competing for one of the starting wide receiver positions, according to NCSU wide receiver coach Jimmy Kiser.

"He's doing great. Jimmy has just worked extremely hard in the offseason to improve his speed and strength," Kiser said. "He's battling

for a starting position right now."

Three other players also are in the running for the Wolfpack's wide receiver spot opposite senior Eddie Goines, who is considered one of the top pass-catchers in the Atlantic Coast Conference.

| NORTH CAROLINA STATE | 3 |
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| FOOTBALL SCHEDULE | |
| DATEOPPONEN | - |
| Sept. 1Bowling Gree | |
| Sept. 10at Clemso | |
| Sept. 24 Western Carolin | |
| Oct. 1Georgia Tec | |
| Oct. 8 at Louisvill | |
| Oct. 15Wake Fore | |
| Oct. 29at North Carolin Nov. 5at Marylan | |
| Nov. 12Duk | |
| Nov. 19Florida Stat | |
| Nov. 25at Virgini | |

He'll get plenty of playing time without a doubt. I play four or five people every ne. He'll get in the rotation quite a

Grissett, who was red-shirted in 1992, is a 6-foot, 188-pound sophomore who coaches say has the best hands on the team.

"He's got huge hands to start with," Kiser said. "If you throw it to him he'll catch it. He can really catch the football."

Whether or not Grissett starts, he's sure to see a lot of action this fall as a receiver and possibly as a

"He'll get plenty of playing time without a doubt," Kiser said. "I play four or five people every game. He'll get in the rotation quite a bit."

Kiser said Grissett's greatest im-provement during his first two years at N.C. State has been his speed.

When he reported to Raleigh in 1992, coaches timed him at 4.6 seconds in the 40-yard dash. Twice this spring, Grissett was clocked at a blazing 4.38 seconds.

"That's the biggest surprise of the strides he's made," Kiser said. "He's worked hard in the weight room to build himself up. He's a good bit

heavier and a lot stronger."

Most of Grissett's playing time last season was on special teams. "Last year he just got a little taste of it. He's ready to go now. We're looking for three years of a lot of contributions from him," Kiser said.

Grissett should be counted on even more heavily his junior and se-nior years following the departure of Goines, an All-ACC selection last year who is on track to rewrite many Wolfpack receiving records this sea-

As a West Brunswick senior, Grissett helped lead the Trojans to a 13-2 record and the Eastern North Carolina 2A Championship. He caught 34 passes for 745 yards and seven touchdowns and also had

eight interceptions in 1991. The Wolfpack was 7-5 overall in 1993, ending the season with a 42-7 loss to Michigan in the Hall Of Fame Bowl. NCSU finished fifth in the ACC with a 4-4 record under first-year head coach Mike O'Cain. N.C. State will open the 1994

campaign on a Thursday night, Sept. 1, against visiting Bowling Green. The Wolfpack also has non-conference games at Louisville and home against Western Carolina.

State has ACC home games this year against Georgia Tech, Wake Forest, Duke and Florida State and will play Clemson, North Carolina, Maryland and Virginia on the road.

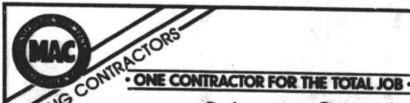
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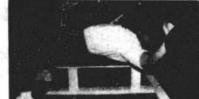
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