

Cascade Champions



Photo by Chris Siers

Cascade will travel to Lynchburg to face long-time rival Moore County for the 2022 opener.

Champs not resting on successes, hungry for more

By Chris Siers
sports@t-g.com

Last season, the Cascade Champions qualified for the playoffs for the second-straight season and started the year on a 6-0 run.

While the successes of last season showcased a turning point for the program, Champion coach Jake Tyre and his team aren't satisfied with the accomplishments last year and are eager to take the next step with the program.

"It's a sign of where we're at and what we've been working on. Small school football is funny. It fluctuates. You may have years where you have 60 players and you may have years where you have 20 players. I think we're at a point now where we're growing and there's more players out. But

I also think it's finding the right combination of players and coaches. The last couple of years has been a decent run for us," Tyre said.

"Last year we got off to a good start and it carried over. There were some games nobody picked us to win and we won and there were some games we lost that we should have won. High school football is such an ebb and flow, you never know what you're going to get."

The numbers for the Champion roster have been as good as they have been in several years and have helped Cascade establish a two-deep roster that allows only a couple of players to have to play on offense and defense.

"We've been pretty good in the pre-season. When you're playing small school

football and you get four injuries, you may lose eight starters because they play both sides of the ball. Having depth and trying to be two-deep definitely helps," Tyre said.

"That's something we've had the last couple of years and for the future, I think we're going to have depth. I think we have 25 or 26 freshmen, a really big junior class and a pretty decent sized senior class."

While the bulk of the Champs' offense centered around quarterback Ryan Inmon last season, Cascade gets back to not being schemed around one player, but rather has options in moving the ball.

In the pre-season, Xamarion Dixon and Damien Byford have split duties at quarterback, each bringing their own wrinkle to the offense.

"Xamarion has done a good job all fall

camp and Damien Byford played quarterback as well. Xamarion knows the system. He's done some backup quarterback and JV quarterbacking for the last couple of seasons. But he's also played tailback all three years as well. He can do it all. Maybe if he's struggling or we just want to make a change, we can put him in at tailback, we can bring Damien in. And he's learning as we go. We're starting to get more comfortable with him," Tyre said.

"It gives us more opportunities. Ryan was a great player, but we were so centered around one player trying to make the offense go, now we're back to trying to spread the wealth around a little bit. It's not going to be one person that makes us go this year."

▶ See **Champions**, Page 10