

Athletes face final seasons

Seniors set goals for their last year

BY RYLIE SCOTT
News Editor

The last seconds are ticking away on the game clock. The crowd is roaring. The fans cheering becomes deafening. It all comes down to the last play of the game.

For some athletes it's just another game. But for the seniors, this is the last season they will ever step out on an Albany court or field again.

This year 19 seniors will participate in sports, ranging from football in the fall to tennis in the spring.

Most athletes are ready to take on this last year of sports, such as senior Kelsey Tollett.

"I am very excited to take on this year. It's my last chance, and I'm going to make it a good one," Tollett said.

Senior Drew Neece is also ready to give it his all in football, basketball, baseball and track.

"I'm definitely excited, but kind of sad that it's my last year to be an Albany athlete," Neece said.

Becoming a senior means being seen more as a role model for underclassmen. Senior Savannah Perez explained how open she is to start her last year in athletics.

"I'm ready, but I just don't feel like a senior yet," Perez said. "I like knowing I'm the oldest and can be used as a leader when it comes to practice."

Senior Tobi Nall is also willing to step up

to the plate, planning to participate in volleyball, softball, and track.

"I'm so ready to take on the leadership role as a senior," Nall said.

However, senior Levi Britting has a different outlook about his last year. He is playing football and running track.

"To be honest, I'm not ready at all," Britting said. "I want to stay a kid forever."

With the reality of seniority setting in, the seniors amped up their goals for their upcoming seasons.

"I'm looking to go deep in playoffs in both volleyball and softball," Nall said. I want to not only better myself, but my teammates by pushing them in every practice and game."

Perez has even started practicing early in hopes to improve before the start of tennis later this year.

"I'd really like to at least make it to Regionals," Perez said. "I'm going to make sure I work hard in practice and encourage my teammates to work their hardest too."

After making it to the state game last year at the AT&T stadium in Arlington, Neece has even higher expectations for his last season.

"In football, we all want to come out on top this year," Neece said. "We want to make it to the state game and win it."

With goals set high, some seniors are looking to possibly extend their athletic career into college.

"I would like to try to pole vault in college," Britting said, hoping to return to the state track meet in pole vault this

spring. "Maybe at Angelo State or Texas Tech."

Some athletes even wished they would've tried out different sports when they first entered high school.

"I wish I would have played baseball," Carter said. "I think I really would've liked it."

Even Neece said he would've wanted to try out for tennis his freshman year.

"It seems really fun," Neece said. "I like table tennis a lot, so I'd probably do well at it."

Having played sports earlier in the years, some seniors are choosing not to participate in a specific one this time around.

"I'm not going to play basketball this year," Nall said. "I don't want to risk getting hurt again so I can be healthy for softball."

Britting also wishes he could have played basketball more.

"I kind of miss it, but I can deal with it," Britting said. "It provides more time for training in the off-season."

Tollett has decided to stick with just volleyball and softball, not playing basketball or running track again this year.

"I didn't enjoy them, and I don't want to focus on something that I won't give 110 percent to," she said.

Caleb Masters carries the ball into the end zone during the Dublin game, Sept. 4. The Lions won the non-district bout, 40-14, before moving on to defeat Roby, 41-0, the following week. Albany will travel to Vernon tonight to play the defending Class 2A-Div. II Canadian Wildcats in the final pre-district game.

PHOTO BY CURRY WILSON



Senior Kelsey Tollett (above) spikes the ball over the hands of two Knox City blockers in the district opener Sept. 12. The Lady Lions won in four sets against the Greyhounds. The volleyball team also beat Woodson on Sept. 15 in three sets. The Lady Lions will face the Hawley Lady Bearcats on Saturday in Hawley, starting at 11:00 a.m.

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NOLAN DAVIS