

football



Kelli Engstrom / Kelli Engstrom Photography
Pequot Lakes football team members include, front row from left: Cody Harper, Ben Westerman, Sutton Sullivan, Micah Loukota, Samson Rothwell, Nic Foster, Connor Johnson, Luke Schlagel, Ethan Arellano, Bryson Berg, Jackson Olsen, Logan Happke, Jacob Sievert, Bryce Scully and Braden Wallin. Second row: Manager Landon Walsten, Manager Dane Olsen, Bryar Nordby, Logan Verville, Griffin Hoffman, David Austin, Joe Kosloski, Will Taylor, Payton Scott, Paxton Goddard, Alex Kriesel, Riley Peters, Clay Erickson, Brandon Dixon, Tommy Blomer, Sean Kilpatrick, Thomas Hansen, Jarrett Freking, John Paul Elsenpeter, Dane Mudgett, Coach Bill Magnuson and Coach Nate DeChaine. Third row: Kamrin Hulke, Landen Brill, Jack Haar, Aaron Clark, Michael Oseland, Tyler Mulholland, Ben Broskovetz, Connor Welle, Jacob Lane, Jackson Jorgens, Colton Christopherson, Tristan Schoeb, Toby Hoffard, Aaron Barnes, Coy Gist, Becker Lipke, Carter Erickson, Jackson Wait-Learned, Coach Kirk Loge and Coach Blaine Kriesel. Back row: Coach Adam Buffington, Coach Preston Peters, Coach Brian Homan, Coach Justin Franke. Missing: Manager Wyatt Brown, Coach Cale Wolf and Coach James Brennan.

PEQUOT LAKES FOOTBALL HOPES TO BUILD ON 2022 SUCCESS

Patriots are in a realigned district with new rivalries

BY PETE MOHS
Echo Journal

PEQUOT LAKES

The Pequot Lakes Patriots football team hopes to build on its success after turning its program around last season — winning seven more games than the prior year.

After finishing 1-8 in 2021, the Patriots improved to 8-3 after losing to top-seeded Esko in the Section 7-3A championship game.

“We lost in the section final against a talented Esko team,” said Pequot

With eight starters returning, we look to get back to the section final and change the results of last year.

BILL MAGNUSON

Lakes head coach Bill Magnuson, whose team defeated Aitkin and Greenway/Nashwauk-Keewatin in last year’s playoffs. “With eight starters returning, we look to get

back to the section final and change the results of last year.”

Magnuson, starting his 25th season as a head coach, is also excited about the season because of a recent Minnesota State High School League realignment of district football teams. The Patriots will no longer be competing against familiar foes such as Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton, Perham and Detroit Lakes.

The Patriots will build new rivalries against teams from the Northeast District, such as Esko, Mora, Two Harbors, Proctor and Grand Rapids.

Magnuson added that

August

31 - Pequot Lakes at North Branch 7 p.m.

September

8 - Pequot Lakes at Pine Clty 7 p.m.
15 - Two Harbors at Pequot Lakes 7 p.m.
22 - Pequot Lakes at Esko 7 p.m.

Esko, Mora and Pierz are section favorites.

Returning starters include: Riley Peters, Jacob Lane, Paxton Goddard, Dane Mudgett, Alex Kriesel, Clay Erickson, Bryar Nordby and J.P. Elsenpeter.

29 - Hibbing at Pequot Lakes 7 p.m.

October

6 - Pequot Lakes at Mora 7 p.m.
13 - Proctor at Pequot Lakes (homecoming) 7 p.m.
18 - Grand Rapids at Pequot Lakes 7 p.m

Besides the returning starters, players to watch are seniors Tommy Blomer, Logan Verville, Joe Kosloski, Griffin Hoffman and Jarrett Freking; juniors Landen Brill, Jackson Jorgens, Kamrin Hulke, Aaron

Clark, Micah Loukota and Ethan Arellano; and sophomores Sutton Sullivan, Samson Rothwell and Ben Westerman.

Assistant coaches are Justin Franke, Brian Homan, Kirk Loge, Preston Peters, Blaine Kriesel, Adam Buffington, Nate DeChane, James Brennan and Cale Wolf.

Pequot Lakes is scheduled to open Thursday, Aug. 31, at North Branch..

Pete Mohs, Brainerd Dispatch and Echo Journal publisher, may be reached at 218-855-5855 or pete.mohs@brainerddispatch.com. Follow him on Facebook.

football



Travis Grimler / Echo Journal

The Pine River-Backus football team includes, front row from left: Austin Degrote, Ethan Lodge, Brady Ruhl, Tyler Day, Chance Abraham and Nevada Ehlenfeldt. Second row: Torin Desmond, Beau Burrell, Karson Crawford, Kaleb Shamp, Owen Dabill, Koal Oberfell, Eli Abraham, Kolby Walters and Dalten Meyers. Third row: Gavin Tulenchik, Logan Tymenski, Easton Wynn, Alex Crannell, Andrew Volk, Noah Abraham, Shaunn Reyes, Grady Ratz and Brody Day. Fourth row: Adrian Schrupp, William Gould, William Moore, Brody Mongan, Scott Scovel, Blake Hoplin, Gabe Diers and Jay Rahm. Fifth row: Coach Mike Dinnel, Coach Nate Fischer, Coach Erik Vetsch and Coach Rob Johnson. Not pictured: Konnor King.

FISCHER IS NEW PR-B HEAD FOOTBALL COACH

He succeeds longtime coach Demars

BY PETE MOHS
Echo Journal

PINE RIVER

The Pine River-Backus Tigers football team will have a new head coach this season as Nate Fischer replaces long-time coach Tom Demars.

But Fischer is no stranger to the football program as he served as Demars’s assistant coach the past two seasons.

“This will be my third

season at Pine River-Backus,” said Fischer, whose squad is scheduled to open the season by hosting Upsala at 7 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 31. “Prior to PR-B, I was at a handful of other schools. I coached and taught at Staples-Motley for three years, and before that I coached two years at Carlton High School near Duluth. I got my football coaching start back in 2014 at the College of St. Scholastica.”

Fischer had been part of the Tigers’ success the past two years with 15 total wins.

“The Tigers are coming off two solid seasons as they finished 7-3 last fall and 8-2 in 2021,” he said. “We lost a plethora of seniors, but we return a

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NATE FISCHER

number of players who have logged significant minutes the past two years, and will look to continue their upward trend in 2023.”

Returning letterwinners are Chance Abraham, Brady Ruhl, Ethan Lodge, Nevada Ehlenfeldt, Eli Abraham, Dalten Meyers, Austin Degrote and Koal

Oberfell. Others who could contribute are Tyler Day, Andrew Volk, Owen Dabill and Adrian Schrupp.

Last year, No. 3 Ottertail Central defeated No. 2 Pine River-Backus 27-6 in the section 6A semifinals. The Tigers had defeated Walker-Hackensack-Akeley 37-13 in the quarterfi-

nals.

Five PR-B players were members of the All-Northwest South District team. They included Corbin Knapp, Irvin Tulenchik, Rian Struss, Chance Abraham and Trey Tuchtenhagen. Ethan Lodge, Konnor King and Eli Abraham were honorable mention.

The Tigers finished 5-1 overall last season in the Mid-Northwest Central District.

PR-B assistant coaches are Rob Johnson, Mike Dinnel and Erik Vetsch.

Pete Mohs, Brainerd Dispatch and Echo Journal publisher, may be reached at 218-855-5855 or mohs@brainerddispatch.com. Follow him on Facebook.

August

31 - Upsala at Pine River-Backus 7 p.m.

September

8 - Pine River-Backus at New York Mills 7 p.m.
15 - Wadena-Deer Creek at Pine River-Backus 7 p.m.
22 - Pine River-Backus at Breckenridge 7 p.m.
29 - Staples-Motley at Pine River-Backus (homecoming) 7 p.m.

October

6 - Pillager at Pine River-Backus 7 p.m.
13 - Pine River-Backus at Walker-Hackensack-Akeley 7 p.m.
18 - Pine River-Backus at Parkers Prairie 7 p.m.