

Ski Valley

FROM PAGE 13

Jackson, DB-E Scott Mason, LB-OL Jordan Nevarez (5-11, 195), L Sean McDaniel (5-8, 160), L-LB Parker VanSice (6-0, 185), DE Nathan Butler (6-3, 185), LB DW Czajkowski (6-0, 155), RB Graham Burry (6-0, 155), DB Rob Fischer (5-6, 150).

Outlook: In 2004, Bellaire earned a share of its first Ski Valley title since 1993. Coach Jeff Hebden lost tons of firepower off that squad, including the All-State pitch and catch combo of QB Zach LaPointe and end Brandon McClary. Defensive leader Steve Sheneman also graduated.

Although the Eagles might lack the explosiveness of a year ago — they scored 23 touchdowns in the air, 22 on the ground — they still have some weapons to worry opponents. John Pawson, the leading rusher, is back. Fullback David Ryan will move to wing back with Pat Guy stepping in at fullback.

“They’re not big, but they’re quick and strong,” Hebden said.

The trio will run behind an experienced line that returns four returning starters — James McQueen, Charlie Brownell, Roger McQueen and Eric Shumaker.

Skyler Hindes, the JV quarterback the last two years, replaces LaPointe.

“We think he can come in and do the job,” Hebden said. “He’s a good passer and he’s a good decision-maker.”

His targets will include juniors Kouri Jackson, Scott Mason and Michael McClary, along with senior Erik Edwards.

Defensively, Guy at tackle and James McQueen at linebacker will lead the charge.

“We could be better defensively than last year,” Hebden said.

Hebden has a thin senior class — only seven seniors are out — but those players have experience. His junior class counts 15.

Hebden knows the challenge ahead.

“I told the kids it’s harder to stay on top the heap than it is to get there,” he said. “We need to step it up another level.”

5. CENTRAL LAKE

Coach: Adam Grybauskas

2004: 4-4 in the Ski Valley, 4-5 overall.

Key Players Returning: QB Byron Patton (6-3, 190), TE-LB Brent Patton (6-2, 200), LB-FB Cody Mongar (6-0, 195), OG Bob Hoose (5-9, 185), G-DE Scott Dunson (5-10, 185), TE-DE Josh Moffat (6-4, 220), RB-DB Cody Rogers (5-8, 170), C-DE Spencer Hickman (5-8, 175), WR-DB Ben Ernst (5-10, 165), RB-NG Ken Shove (5-11, 180), E-DB Brandon Folsom (6-0, 170).

Key Newcomers: T Tyrail Wilson

(5-10, 230), T Justin Clark (6-3, 240), LB Andrew Foss (5-10, 165), E Dustin Flory (6-5, 195).

Outlook: Coaches pick Central Lake as the “sleeper” in the league. The Trojans were extremely young last season. In fact, coach Adam Grybauskas lost only a few starters to graduation.

Junior Byron Patton returns for his second season at quarterback. He “took his lumps” a year ago, Grybauskas said, but he’ll be counted on to lead what could be a dan-

SKI VALLEY FACT

The Ski Valley put four teams in the playoffs last season — Bellaire, Gaylord St. Mary, Johannesburg-Lewiston and Inland Lakes. The league nearly had a fifth entry, but Onaway lost to Central Lake 24-6 in the final week to finish 5-4 — one victory short of an automatic berth.

It was a tough post-season for league teams, however. All four squads lost in the opening round. The combined score was 157-24.

gerous attack. The Trojan backfield also includes junior Cody Rogers, who rushed for more than a 1,000 yards, fullback Cody Mongar and senior Ken Shove.

“He’s (Mongar) a devastating blocker,” Grybauskas said. “He’s a Cory Schlesinger type of guy. He’s a big reason why Rogers had the year he had last year. He’s a force to be reckoned with.”

The Trojans have experience on the line with center Spencer Hickman, guards Bob Hoose and Scott Dunson, tackle Guy Foss and tight ends Brent Patton and Josh Moffat. Brandon Folsom and Ben Ernst will be two of Patton’s main receiving targets.

Defensively, Mongar, Shove and Brent Patton form a formidable line-backing corp. Mongar led the team in tackles. Shove and Patton were second and third.

“We have a lot of good kids coming back,” Grybauskas said. “On paper, we have every position filled. That’s a good position to be in. We’re pretty excited.”

Grybauskas said his team’s goal is to make the playoffs and he feels a fast start will be important.

“We need to set the tone and show everyone we mean business,” he said.

6. ONAWAY

Coach: Tony Hoffmeyer

2004: 4-4 in the Ski Valley, 5-4 overall.

Key Returning Players: RB-DB Lonnie Splan (5-10, 180), WR-DB Ben Reiger (5-9), RB-LB Eric Bentley (6-1, 195), T Mark Miller (6-3, 240).

Key Newcomers: Greg Ellenberger (6-0, 290), G-T Justin Stockwell (5-10, 250), TE T.J. Bentley (5-10, 180), G Ben Ellenberger (5-9, 170), QB Tim

Garms (6-0, 180), RB Andrew Lalonde (5-11, 160).

Outlook: The Cardinals are struggling with numbers with 17 on the roster.

But Onaway boasts one of the most talented players in the league in conference sprint champion Lonnie Splan.

The senior rushed for 1,310 yards last season and scored 15 touchdowns. He runs a 4.7 40 and is perhaps the league’s most exciting player. His teammate, Ben Reiger, is a game-breaker as well. The senior wideout averaged 37.5 yards per catch in 2004. He runs a 4.6 40 and has “great” hands, according to Hoffmeyer.

Junior Tim Garms is expected to start at quarterback, although he popped a tendon in the pre-season. Another junior, Andrew Lalonde, will join Splan and Eric Bentley at running back.

“Garms worked hard in the off-season, attending numerous camps as did LaLonde,” Hoffmeyer said. “Both must have big years on both sides of the ball if we are to be successful.”

Greg Ellenberger will anchor the line at center.

Bentley, a potential Division 1 baseball recruit next year, will lead the defense from his middle linebacking post. He led the Cardinals in tackles last season with 80.

“He’s a hard hitter who is extremely physical,” Hoffmeyer said.

Mark Miller is an “animal” on the defensive line, Hoffmeyer said. He benches over 300 pounds.

“We’re young and not very deep,” Hoffmeyer said. “We only return seven players and our whole line will likely be juniors. In order to compete in the Ski Valley, we must stay healthy and play with minimal mistakes.”

“Our starting offense will likely only start two or three seniors while the defensive side may start four or five. We are few in numbers, but big in heart.”

7. MANCELONA

Coach: John Neumann


2004: 1-7 in the Ski Valley, 1-8 overall.

Key Players Retraining: T Justin Woirol (6-0, 230), G Pete Griffore (6-0, 190), T Josh Ponder (6-3, 220), T Mike Bergeron (6-1, 230), T David Peterson (6-0, 250), RB Steve DenBoer (5-11, 170), FB Matt DenBoer (5-9, 170).

Key Newcomers: HB Justin Allen (5-9, 170), E Robert Gerring, G-LB Brandon Cooper (5-10, 190), E Josiah Simmonds (5-11, 165), QB Zac Musselman (5-8, 145), E Zach Squires (6-1, 175), E Rick Lawrence, HB Travis Perrault.



Outlook: Coach John Neumann expects Mancelona to be a much improved team in 2005.

The Ironmen went 1-8 a year ago after not winning a game the previous



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