

## HHS boys eager to hit the court

Written by Chris Lee

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HHS boys' basketball head coach Scott Dille is excited for the upcoming basketball season. Having lost a solid group of seniors to graduation, the coach is confident the younger players on the team are ready to step up and pick up from where they left off last year.

Practice began Friday, Nov. 9 and a total of 26 boys have turned out for practice as they prepare for the season opener against Haxtun in Holyoke Friday, Nov. 30. Tipoff is set for 4 p.m.

Leading the charge this year will be five returning letterwinners. They include seniors Deyten Klein and Logan Zeiler, juniors Trevor Dalton and Logan Tharp and sophomore Tito Fierro.



**Returning letterwinners on the HHS Dragon boys' basketball team are pictured from left, front row, Logan Zeiler and Tito Fierro; and back row, Trevor Dalton, Deyten Klein and Logan Tharp. —Enterprise photo**

According to Dille, Dalton, who suffered a knee injury during the football season, hopes to hit the court sometime in February. "He's there every day. He's a great leader and great teammate. He cares about those kids a lot. Just having him there is a huge thing," the coach said.

Others on this year's roster include seniors Brett Cumming and Matt Golden; juniors Daniel Bencomo, Andrew Kent, Alan Madrid, Ryan Parker, Saul Ramos, Zach Roll and Tanner Smith; sophomores Jesus Martinez, Wyatt Powell and Kody Timm; and freshmen Bradley Cumming,

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Edgar Cruz, Jahir Gardea, Tyler Loutensock, Jesus Loya, Jesus Martinez, Taylor Mayden, Xander Nelson and Alex Yanez.

Dille said he is proud with the teamwork and camaraderie of the group so far. The ball movement on offense and the communication on defense is beginning to come through. "It's been real nice so far," he added. "We have some seniors who are hungry and want to do things and we've got some younger guys that are wanting to prove themselves. It's a nice mix right now."

Having reached post season play last year and falling in heartbreaking fashion, the team is ready to improve upon that. Dille also said the post season football run has sort of fueled the team as well. "Those kids came in not quite in basketball shape which is all right, but they're competitive and they know what it takes to be winners."

In high school, teams always have to deal with replacing senior leadership. Dille said some roles will change and the younger players will get a chance to prove themselves.

On the defensive side of the court, Dille said they are really trying to concentrate on passing lanes and making things work a little farther away from the basket. "I think we have a little more overall team quickness and the ability to switch defensively and do some of those things that last year, just because of personnel, I had to be a little more traditional."

The third-year coach said the thing he has been blessed with is how hard the kids work. "They sacrifice for each other and get after it every day." Dille said the willingness to work comes from the top down. The seniors and some of the juniors with lots of experience are showing the younger kids how to work hard and become successful.

"These kids aren't afraid to work," the coach noted. "That doesn't always equate to success but I feel the harder you work, the more successful you're going to be. This group has put in the time and the effort. I'll be anxious to see what the reward is."

Helping Dille on the bench this year will be assistants Ben Rahe and Nic Balog. Team

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managers include Tate and Levi Dille and Isaiah Rahe.

The district tournament will begin Tuesday, Feb. 26 with regionals beginning Friday, March 8. The state tournament will be held in Pueblo Thursday-Saturday, March 14-16.

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