

Wellington area gridder to enhance debut of Keiser University football



Keiser University players from area high schools await the inaugural 2018 football season. From left, front row: Andy Angervil (Royal Palm Beach), Daniel Rivera (Royal Palm Beach), Sage Chen-Young (Wellington), Tremayne King (Seminole Ridge), Ron Brown (Royal Palm Beach); back row: Rontavious Boldin (Royal Palm Beach), Mikhail Hanson (Royal Palm Beach), Camron Allen (Wellington), Dion Cooper (Wellington), Chris Hart (Seminole Ridge), Austin Parrotta (Seminole Ridge). (photo/courtesy)

Right now, Florida Atlantic University in **Boca Raton** boasts the only college football team in **Palm Beach County**, but that is about to change.

In less than a year, the county's collegiate gridiron landscape is going to double in size as Keiser University will be joining the fray. And the Seahawks will do so with a solid nucleus of players from the Western Communities area.

Back on Sept. 16, when the world of college football was busy with tailgating and regular season games, the West Palm Beach-based school hosted its own version of a football 'open house.'

There, area football fans and the media were invited to be eyewitnesses to the Seahawks' first practice session in pads.

Keiser University head football coach Doug Socha said the practice served to lay the foundation for what is expected in the future.

"We try to teach good practice habits," Socha said. "We teach hard work, teach the demands of the sport and explain sacrifice."

The initial roster of players includes seven from Royal Palm Beach High School, four from Seminole Ridge High School, three from Wellington High School, and one each from Palm Beach Central High School and Berean Christian School.

Socha likes the talent base in the Western Communities, and he plans to come back looking for more players.

"That area has been good to us," Socha continued. "We plan to continue our recruiting efforts in that part of the county."

Two players from these area high schools — defensive lineman Camron Allen and tight end Chris Hart — earned top recognition as high school seniors. Allen was an all-conference selection in 2016 at Wellington High School, while Hart also received 2016 all-conference recognition at Seminole Ridge High School.

After a year of practicing, running, blocking, tackling and lifting weights, the majority of the Keiser University players will be new to the college football experience. Current freshman will use this year as their redshirt year.

"I expect that we will dress 70-80 first-time college football players," said Socha, who has also coached football at the high school and professional levels.

When asked what keeps the players motivated since Keiser won't have an official game until late next August, Socha said it's internal competition.

"With 121 players on the roster right now, we have enough numbers at each position to keep it competitive," Socha said.

While next year's schedule has not been released, Socha did say that the Seahawks plan to open the season at home on Saturday, Aug. 26. The kickoff time, the exact location of the game and the opposition have yet to be determined.

For the rest of this season, the Seahawks' players will attend class and continue to practice with and against one another as they look forward to their first game next year. According to Socha, the team practices outside three days a week on the practice field and lifts weights another three days a week.

To follow the Keiser University football program, visit www.kuseahawks.com