

FRANKLIN STILL BUILDING, EXPECTS MORE SUCCESS

By Charles Pulliam • Sports Editor

After playing for back-to-back state championships as defensive coordinator at Summit High School, Franklin's Alex Melton managed a humble beginning as the new coach for the Admirals last year.

Franklin assembled a lone win with plenty of growing pains – especially on offense – in Melton's first season.

"We had a rough go of it last year," Melton said. "We kept fighting, though. I thought we improved as the season went on."

Franklin senior wide receiver and linebacker Reagan McClosky said he's entering his final season with plenty of motivation.

"We have been through that losing season, and we do not want that to happen again," he said. "We have been gaining confidence through scrimmages and practices."

Fellow senior Cooper Brown, who will transition from quarterback to wide

receiver and see plenty of time on defense, said his team has plenty of new faces this season, but they are focused on continuing to build.

"I think our team is just focused on this year and putting the past in the past," said Brown, who threw for 513 yards in his eight games under center. "We have new players at new positions. We are just a new team this year."

New with some of the old.

Melton's predecessor Donnie Webb, who coached Franklin for nine seasons producing a 59-43 record capped with a Class 6A quarterfinal appearance in 2020, rejoined the staff as the defensive line coach. Former NFL quarterback Kerry Collins, whose wife works in the school, further boosted the staff as a volunteer quarterbacks coach.

"We love having guys like that around," Melton said. "Those are two great adds to our staff."

Melton said Webb was cautious in re-



PHOTO BY JOHN CROSS

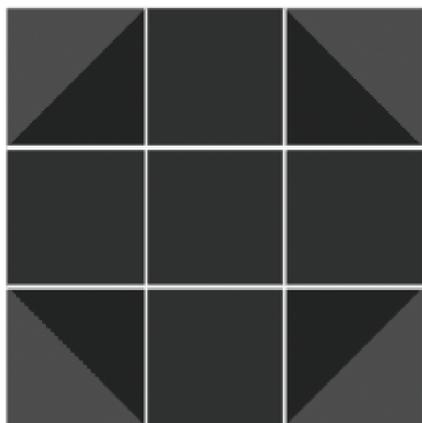
Franklin's Cooper Brown will move from quarterback to wide receiver this season for the Admirals.

joining the football team to "avoid any disruption." He coached the inaugural Girls Flag Football team this spring at

the school, which included his daughter Ava.

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