

# Inside SCOOP FOOTBALL

## St. Louis' Elite Football Academy

by Mike Morgan,  
Sr. Staff Writer

**I**N THE ST. LOUIS AREA, THERE are many baseball academies where young aspiring baseball players can get some of the best one-on-one tutoring. But for quite some time, there was nowhere to go and receive the same type of teaching for football players.

That all changed a few years ago when former Missouri Tiger wide receiver Matt Biermann started Elite Football Academy to work individually with young signal callers.

"I started this whole thing just coaching quarterbacks," said Biermann. "There are just so many places for kids to go and get some baseball training and I wanted to help young quarterbacks."

Last summer, Biermann expanded his academy to all positions including offensive lineman, defensive lineman, linebackers, defensive backs, quarterbacks, running backs and wide receivers. Not

only do these high school kids receive some of the best instruction on the field, but assistance in their mental preparation as well.

"The main goal of Elite Football Academy is to help each of our athletes become more complete football players," said Biermann. "Our skills development program, I would have given anything to learn the techniques we teach when I was in high school."

There are nine coaches at the academy, which takes place at Velocity Sports Performance in Chesterfield, and all of the nine have high school, college and most have professional playing experience.

"These coaches have been there, they know what it takes," said Rockwood Summit sophomore linebacker Jim Vavak. "It makes it very easy to listen and learn from these coaches. They have been where we all want to go and they know how hard you have to work and know the skills you have to have."

The Academy has trained and is train-

ing some of the best players in the area. Among the players currently training with Biermann are Wes Kemp of DeSmet, Blaine Gabbert of Parkway West, and Steve Kaiser of Francis Howell among others.

"I have come so far since I started training here," said freshman quarterback Steve Kaiser. "There are several things that

I have learned that have already made me a better quarterback."

During the training at Elite athletes get the one-on-one teaching that they can't get during high school football practice.

"We believe position-skills training is vital to all players' success. However, it's probably the most neglected area of off-season training," said Biermann. "For many years, players have thought that off-season football consisted of running and lifting. Skills training is something



Front Row Left to right: Michael Kelly (Francis Howell), Mike Wente (DeSmet), Jim Vavak (Rockwood Summit), Ricky Dansill (DeSmet), Steven Kaiser (Francis Howell), Drew O'Connell (Parkway West)  
Second Row Coaches/Instructors Left to right: Brett Fischer (coach), Jamie Pond (Velocity), Matt Biermann (coach), Jason Christopher (coach)

most players leave alone until two-a-days. Players can't expect to show up in August and get all of the skills training they need to be successful. It's not the coach's fault. Often times coaches have too many players and too little time to slow practice down to teach every player the finer points of the game."

With only a couple kids to every coach the instructors are able to analyze every aspect of the athlete's ability.

"The small groups are what make it so easy to learn," said Vavak. "The coaches can really see what I need improve on even it's something very small like hand position or foot work."

Unlike any other type of training, Elite gives all of the position-specific training and then incorporates all positions in drills. Quarterbacks will throw to the wide receivers while the defenders are using what they learned while they defend the receivers.

"It's a great feeling when you see the pride in a players eyes after they accomplish something they thought they could never do," concluded Biermann. "It makes it all worth it!"

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