

Fresh Meat

By Meadow Pike

As the Perry School 2022-2023 year rolls in, everyone is looking forward to high school's biggest event: Friday Night Lights. Football season is one of the most popular events on TV. Head Varsity Coach Bob Gecewich is looking forward to this season with confident eyes, largely due to the underclassmen who make up a large chunk of the team.

Perry has begun depending heavily on their freshmen and sophomore players, both to carry out successful plays and to give them the experience they need to prepare for their own spotlight on varsity. However, the freshmen make up a large portion of those playing football in general, not just those receiving varsity playing time. Out of 64 football players this year, 26* are freshmen (for reference, this is about 41 percent of the team). By allowing the newbies playing time, Gecewich is both making the team a well-rounded powerhouse, as well as ensuring that everyone is able to function under the pressure of playing with the word "varsity" hanging over their heads.

Gecewich wants to cultivate these kids into not only above-the-line players, but outstanding people. His advice, for any of the players on his team, would be to "create your own path...don't necessarily worry about society's scoreboard." He urges the team to ask themselves if they're putting their best effort into everything that they do, whether it's academics, social or romantic relationships, future athletic opportunities, or career paths.

All of the freshmen players, through Gecewich's mindset about coaching and through his football program, will learn the skills to be the best people on the field, and for the rest of their academic and social lives. "You're gonna win, you're gonna lose. You're gonna get that job, you're not gonna get a job. You're gonna love, and you're gonna lose in love. All of those things

are gonna happen, but did you learn from it?” Gecewich wants his kids to go through the experiences of life - both successes and failures - in order to rise above the rest of society.

So while they may be the low men on the totem pole, Gecewich wants to teach the freshmen to climb, and continue on their upwards journey throughout their lives.

*The freshmen team includes: Brody Petruccelli, Jimmy Ashburn, McKoy Richards, Brayden Price, Connor Cox, Michael Nowosielski, Nick Harris, Dane Pike, Connor Meikle, Scott Stang, Keith DePoy, William Kananen, Dakota Rodgers, Brody Hicks, Antonious Bertone, Brandt Greco, Gavin Culligan, Connor D’Astolfo, Teagan Jakubson, Ryan Cousineau, Brady Stevenson, Trent Taylor, Sean Budziak, Adrian Yankie, Justin Costello, and Anthony Anderson.