

Junior Keith Gilchrese Provides Leadership For Young Rebirds Football Team, Is Auto Butler Male Athlete Of The Month For AHS

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
October 3 2021 3:18 PM



EDWARDSVILLE - Alton High School junior running back and linebacker Keith Gilchrese has emerged as one of the leaders for the Redbirds and in the Edwardsville

game on Oct. 1 caught a touchdown pass from Graham McAfoos on the game's final play.

Going into the game against Edwardsville, Gilchrese has ran for 255 yards and scored two touchdowns, while catching five passes for 41 yards. He has also returned four kicks for 48 yards.

For his efforts on the field, Gilchrese has been named the Auto Butler Male Athlete of the Month For AHS.

Gilchrese, who plays for head coach Eric Dickerson, knows that the Redbirds are still persevering and working hard despite the difficult season.

"I came in this game knowing that I was going to go 110 percent the whole game, and that's what I did," Gilchrese said. "I just came out here and competed. Unfortunately, we didn't get the win that we wanted, but we're going to prepare for next week, next game."

Despite the season so far, the Redbirds are still working and playing hard and haven't thrown in the towel, a great testimony to the team's resolve and character. Gilchrese knows that his team keeps on going, no matter what.

"We've just got to eliminate the mental mistakes," Gilchrese said. "That's what's really beating us is the little mental mistakes. It all comes to practice and pregame and all that other good stuff. We've just got to get even and eliminate the mistakes."

The team's morale remains high, and Gilchrese and the Redbirds know that they're moving forward.

"We preach every week that it's not the end of the world when we lose," Gilchrese said. "We don't like losing, but it's not the end of the world, so we've got to come out 110 percent, we just can't give up on ourselves and come against each other."

It's been an Alton mantra since the opening day of preseason practice: Keep working hard, and good things will happen.

"Yeah, it was preached when I was a freshman," Gilchrese said. "When I was a freshman, it was really preached with us. Ever since I was a freshman, we always stay at 110 percent, stay positive. This year, it's kind of hard, because we're varsity this year, and there's a lot of guys just starting to play, and we've just got to get them molded."

There are three weeks left in the regular season, and the Redbirds will have three difficult games, starting with East St. Louis at Public School Stadium on Oct. 7, then

hosting O'Fallon in the final home game of the year Oct. 14 before winding up the season Oct. 21 the Ft. Zumwalt North in St. Charles County, Mo. The team's focus will be to stay focused, stay positive and keep plugging away.

"Yeah, it's just really being disciplined," Gilchrese said. "I've seen a lot of teams with not a lot of talent, and they're being disciplined. There's a lot of teams I've seen make it to state just being disciplined. Unfortunately, it's too late in the season for us to try and change it now, but we could just fix it and just move on."

Gilchrese knows that there still many good things that could happen to and for the Redbirds in the season's stretch run.

"Yes, sir," Gilchrese said with a smile. "We've got East Side; hopefully, we can compete with them. They're a good team, number one in the state. They're just good competition. just give us a look at what it looks like to go against elite athletes. Just be ready for us to fix our mental mistakes so we can compete with the rest of the conference."

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