

Stillwater Senior Living Male Athlete Of Month For The Warriors: Kaysen Emerson Will Be Key Runner And Receiver For His Team

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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GRANITE CITY — Kaysen Emerson, a senior running back and wide receiver for Granite City, said Aug. 8, 2026. at Kevin Greene Field that the Warriors are working to turn around the program after a third consecutive 0-9 season in 2025, to win games and reach the playoffs when the new season begins Aug. 21 at home against Freeburg.

Emerson, a Stillwater Senior Living Male Athlete of the Month for the Warriors, made an impact last season as Granite City's leading receiver. He ran 19 times for 104 yards and a touchdown and caught 25 passes for 413 yards and two touchdowns.

Asked after a preseason practice if he felt the Warriors were beginning to move in the right direction, Emerson credited teammates on both sides of the ball.

"Yeah, we are," Emerson said. "The defense is good, the offense is good. Especially our other receivers," including Landon Marshall and Dexter McClendon Jr. "Great guys, and the defense on the other side, Frederick Ware, Delano Russell, and Demond (Lewis). Those are great guys."

Emerson said the team's goals are straightforward.

"Our goal is just to win games," Emerson said. "At least win five games, make it to the playoffs, just be good, and communicate all of that."

Granite City is rejoining the Southwestern Conference this season, along with Collinsville for football. Triad and Mascoutah are also joining the league, and the IHSA playoffs are expanding to 40 teams in all eight classes.

Emerson said the new conference teams will present challenges.

"Those teams, they're good," Emerson said, "but I think we have a chance to beat them."

Emerson said his role is clear as the Warriors prepare for the season.

“Just getting open,” Emerson said, “just running scoring touchdowns, getting the yards, getting the first downs. All of that.”

The Warriors also have a new coach, Sherand Boyd Jr. Emerson said Boyd and his staff have made a positive impression.

“They’re great coaches,” Emerson said.

Emerson said he hopes the Warriors can move forward from last season.

“I hope we win some games,” Emerson said, “and we’ll be good, unlike last year. I hope so.”