

AN UNEXPECTED SEASON

Football players Quinlan Samuelson '21 and Brycen Aten '22 explain how the sudden changes this season motivated them

Throughout the uncertain football season, senior Quinlan Samuelson was determined to make his senior year and first year on varsity, his best season yet.

Having started the school year with no expectation of a season at all, when Samuelson received news of a somewhat normal season, he knew he had to give this season his all.

"It has made me want to do better every single game and I have practiced harder right from the start," Samuelson said.

All players were encouraged to condition outside of practice, because of the limited practice time allowed due to COVID-19. Having been a part of the sport for all four years, Samuelson used his time lifting as well as running because he knew it would improve his gameplay.

"I love football because of the team mentality. EVERY GUY MATTERS and has job to do. This year every player put in a lot of effort."

might say COVID-19 caused more bad than good this football season, but Samuelson used this disappointment to motivate him and his teammates to make the best out of what they were given. "I am proud of how I ended my career although it sucks that the

season was cut short," Samuelson said.

Similarly, Brycen Aten '22 anticipated his first football season in Colorado to be a lot different than it turned out. Having moved to Castle Rock from Florida only 6 months ago, Aten jumped into the football season with no experience under his belt.

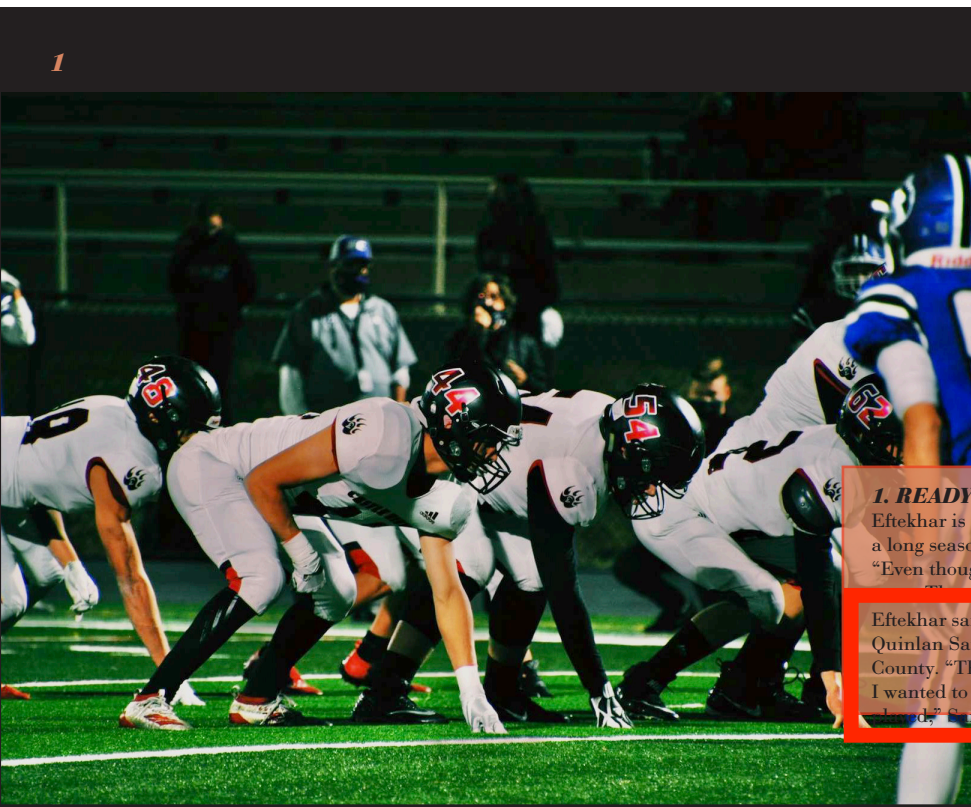
"I think this season made my overall view of the sport a lot better because all the coaches kept me motivated even though it was an odd first year for me to play. It was a great season and I learned a lot," Aten said.

With high hopes of everything going back to normal by his senior year, Aten currently spends his time preparing for basketball season practicing every night as well as lifting. Aten is determined to make the best out of his athletic career. Aten and his teammates spend many hours conditioning outside of practice in anticipation of their upcoming seasons.

"I'm excited for the chance to play a season with my friends and get to better myself throughout the season," Aten said.

The players received overwhelming support from the community throughout the season, such as poms and cheer baking cookies, watch parties in the commons and many watched the games from their cars at the stadium. Despite all that has been taken away from athletes this season, players seem to agree that they are grateful to have been given a season at all, especially when some sports won't get to practice as a team anytime soon.

written by Macy Key and photos courtesy of Alexander Vigil



1. READY FOR BATTLE: Setting up for the play, sophomore Lucas Eftekhar is ready to earn his first win against Douglas County. Throughout a long season, Eftekhar was determined to win their last game of the season. "Even though the season was cut short, it meant a lot to be out there with my

Eftekhar said. **2. THAT MAKES SEVEN:** As the crowd roars, senior Quinlan Samuelson celebrates with his teammates over their lead on Douglas County. "This game was really important to me because it's my last season. I wanted to be able to continue our winning streak and be proud of how I ended," Samuelson said.