By Byron Higgin

Mascot Sports Editor

“Last year was something special.”
It’s not always easy to digest something as huge as winning a state title, but Minneota Coach Chad Johnston had a year to think about it as he heads into a new season.
“It took me awhile to sit back and think about it,” he said.
Johnston, who also coaches the girls’ basketball team said, “Football is my love, it’s what I played in college and when I got out of college and thought about being a head coach, football is what I thought about.”
He laughed, “I used to joke and say, who would ever think that girls’ basketball would take me to the state tournament before football.” But it did.
“I’ve had the opportunity to work with kids in both programs,” he added.
As for last year, “You put on a little pressure because this is your pride, but also because people still talk about the late 80’s and 90’s and I wasn’t here and had nothing to do with that. So to get

one (state championship) and get it back with this coaching staff, it meant a lot to me," Johnston said.

"It also was important for assistant Coach Matt Myrvik, who was part of the Vikings' past as a player. He puts a lot of pressure on himself," Coach Johnston said.
"It took me awhile to sit down and think about it, but it was a great feeling. Probably I just regret not soaking it up when I needed to ... and I should have taken the time to enjoy it with the kids. I try to be a professional sometimes and get caught up in all the other administrative things and that I didn't sit back and enjoy it with the kids is my biggest regret from last year."
But honestly, "I was scrimmaging with basketball (Minneota girls' team as head coach) the very next day (after winning the title)," the coach laughed.
He didn't have much down time because the girls' season was upon him by the time the Vikings had won the state tournament.
"I know that but I think it was important for the kids and it was the time the kids cherished it."
He added, "Maybe we'll get the moments again this year."
For Chad Johnston, it was a dream come true.
"Everyone dreams of a state championship. But it's about the relationships you make, the bond you make with the kids and the life-experience you're teaching the kids. We stuck with it and we finished it," he said.

More challenges
'This year may present even more challenges for the coach who hopes to bring his team into another state championship, then jump into the busy winter sports season as the girls' head coach.
And there are even more challenges on a personal level. He now has two children and his wife accepted a teaching position at the Lakeview Schools in Cottonwood so time will be spread thin.
"It could be a long stressful year — but I'll take that. The opposite is to take the stress of not winning," he said.
"I know some good coaches who have never been there. I know how many years it took us," he said.
"We get spoiled," but the time will come when the great class of athletes runs thin, so, "We've got to cherish these times."