

Football 2011



Denham aims for playoffs again

Jacket seniors eye fourth straight postseason



DENHAM SPRINGS – In the off-season, the big news drawing attention to the Denham Springs football program was the installation of artificial turf in Yellow Jackets Stadium.

Head coach Dru Nettles is now ready to refocus all the attention to getting the Yellow Jackets back in the playoffs for the fourth year in a row, with the ultimate goal of playing on ultimate turf in the state championship game in the Louisiana Superdome.

Nettles, who enters his sixth season at the helm, is also ready to get his program over the playoff hump. Although has making post-season in each of the last three years, Denham Springs has yet to garner that first playoff win.

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DAVID NORMAND | THE NEWS

The 2011 Denham Springs High coaching staff are (kneeling, from left) Robert Graves, Mitch Covington, David Bourque, Dru Nettles, Denham Springs High head coach; Del Barrow, Trase Satcher and Justin Wax. Standing are Jeremy Lofland, Bob Ingalls, Dexter Thurber, Joey Chustz, Mark Carroll, Rusty Barrilleaux, Josh Neal, Bryan Gendron, and Josh Hogan.

Football 2011

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Denham Springs gears up for a run at a fourth straight playoff season.

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What does it mean to begin each football season anew with hopes of championships and dreams of glory?

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LSU opens in Dallas against Oregon to start the season. Complete schedule.

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2010 Super Bowl champ Saints vs. defending 2011 champ Green Bay to start the year. Complete schedule.

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Experienced secondary gives Denham edge

From 2

Last year, Denham Springs' season did end in New Orleans on artificial turf, but instead of downtown, it happened on the westbank, where the Jackets fell to L.W. Higgins in the bi-district round.

The Yellow Jackets finished the season with a 7-4 overall record.

While plenty of anticipation has been building up about playing on its new turf field, lots more anticipation is looming on the play of junior tailback Caleb Blanchard, who was voted the district "Offensive MVP" last season as a sophomore.

Blanchard finished the season, including the playoff game, with

1,799 yards on 190 carries and 21 touchdowns. He averaged 9.5 yards per carry with a game-high 228 yards against Live Oak.

Blanchard's numbers could have been even larger, but Nettles opted to sit him in the second half of numerous games when the Yellow Jackets were comfortably ahead at halftime.

Junior Justin Martin (5-10, 180) will back-up Blanchard at the running back slot.

In the off-season, former Redemptorist High quarterback Kyle Cedotal (6-1, 175) transferred and enrolled at DSHS in the spring. The senior left-

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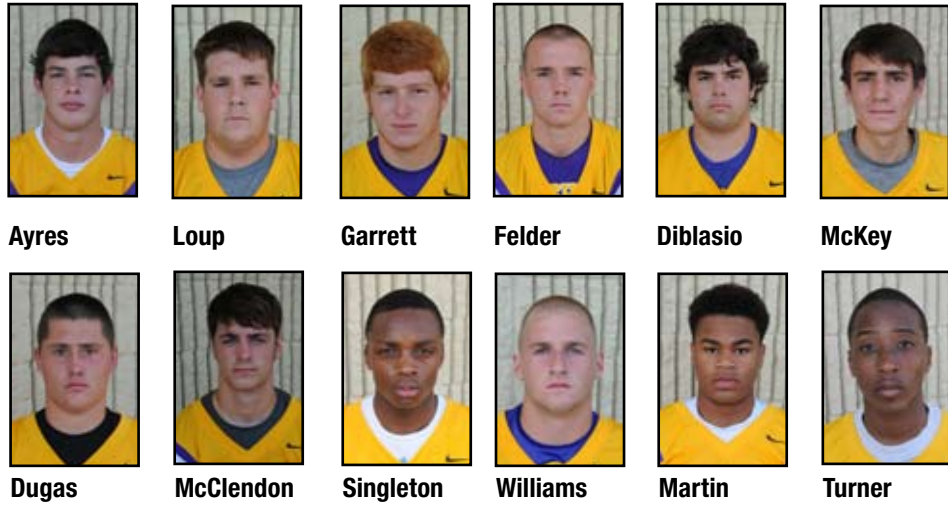


PHOTO BY MUSEMECHE PHOTOGRAPHY

The 2011 Denham Springs High Yellow Jackets football are (bottom row, from left) Trase Satcher, Justin Wax, Mitch Covington, Josh Neal, Joey Chutz, Dru Nettles, Denham Springs head football coach; Del Barrow, Mark Carroll, David Bourque and Rusty Barrilleaux. Second row are Bob Ingalls, Byran Gendron, Josh Neal, Matt Glover, Christian Felder, Ben Bohall, Caleb Alain, Tony Henriquez, Anthony Bracey, Robert Graves, Dexter Thurber, and Jeremy Lofland. Third row are Joseph Westbrook, Alex Payne, David McKey, Tyran Allen, Slade Primeaux, Bryson Laurent, Blake Farlow, Garrett Osborne, Johnnathen Russo, Garrett Matherne, Byron Bujol, Hunter Porter, and Patrick Wale. Fourth row are Reggie Williams, Justin Martin, Tyrus Allen, Zachary Johnson, Justin Bond, Blake Carter, Hunter Holmes, Thomas Naquin, Jeremiah Muse, Andrew Ayres, Chi Pace, Devin Dugas and Brian Garrett. Fifth row are Riley Holbrook, Sam Guba, Barclay Miller, Cole Spear, Romel Williams, Brody Guillot, Cody Brown, Tevin Lawson, Dylan Cambre, Dron Singleton, Tyler Coleman, Dylan Degruy, Zach Taylor and Brian Benton. Six row are Bryce Dugas, Drew McClendon, Jake Williams, Case Warren, Travis Hasllebeck, Micheal Clayton, Caleb Blanchard, Austin Loup, Cody Diblasio, Caleb Kerstens, Tevins Lawson, Zach Borne, Phillip Edward, Kip Hernandez, Sterling Suggs and Kyle Cedotal.

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Denham enters 2011 with high expectations in pared down district

From 4

handler, who had helped guide the Wolves to prominence in Class 3A, quickly emerged into the starting role this past summer in Denham's 7-on-7 league.

A pair of returning receivers are back in senior split end Dron Singleton (6-2, 170) and senior wide receiver Brian Garrett (5-11, 175).

Senior Patrick Wale (5-10, 155) will back-up Cedotal.

Up front leading the way in the I-formation set will be returning tackle Tevin Lawson (6-4, 275) and returning senior guard Austin Loup (6-2, 275).

Senior Justin Bond (5-11, 250) will anchor the front at center, while junior Hunter Holmes (5-11, 225) will hold down the other guard position and junior Travis Hasslebeck (6-1, 275) the other tackle slot.

Junior Sterling Suggs (6-2, 215) will not only line up at tight end, but we also handle the punting chores once again.

"We have all the making of having a real good offense," said Nettles.

"Beginning with Lawson and Loup up front, and if the rest gel together, they could be a very good high school offensive line.

"Of course, Blanchard will be the featured tailback," said Nettles.

"He's an outstanding player and person. We'll work off of him with the play-action and other parts of the offense, but obviously, we feel our running game will be our strong suit. That's what we like to do.

"But with (receivers) Dron Singleton and Brian Garrett, along with some of the defensive backs who double as wide receivers, Justin Turner and Andrew Ayres, I feel like we've got some guys who can operate out there and give us some big-play potential. To keep people honest and give Caleb a little more space to run."

Defensive coordinator Mark Carroll's 4-2-5 set returns five starters as well, headed up by a pair of linebackers, senior Cody Diblasio (6-1, 250) and junior Devin Dugas

(5-11, 215).

Coach Nettles sees the secondary as one of the best in quite some time in Jacketville, as the secondary return three senior starters in Reggie Williams (5-8, 190), Justin Turner (6-1, 180) and Andrew Ayres (5-10, 165).

Also piling on depth to the secondary will be senior Hunter Porter (5-9, 170) and senior Sam Guba (5-11, 155).

Denham will also bring experience at linebacker, with returning starters Devin Dugas, a 5-11, 215-pound junior and Reggie Williams, a 5-8, 190-pound senior, along with junior Drew McLendon (6-0, 195), who broke his arm in the first game last year and missed the rest of his sophomore season.

The inexperience on defense lies up front, with a whole new starting crew, beginning at ends with senior Thomas Naquin (5-11, 215) and junior Jake Williams (6-2, 210), while



Blanchard



Cedotal



Wale



Williams



Suggs



Lawson



Haslebeck



Tyran A.



Tyrus A.

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Denham features depth

From 6

the tackles are senior Tyran Allen (5-10, 240) and senior Cody Diblasio (6-1, 250).

"We return the entire secondary and Brian Garrett will play there some too at corner and safety," said Nettles. "We just need the defensive line to grow up early in the season to compete and we're expecting good things out of them.

"We feel like it's an athletic defense and we're pretty quick," said Nettles. "We made use of a 3-3 stack at times and Coach Carroll likes to move around and blitz. So it will be multiple, but we're just going to just use the athleticism we have in spots.

"We just hope our defense can make a lot of plays, make some turnovers and give our offense a chance to score," added Nettles.

Handling the place-kicking and kick-off chores will be David McKey.

"Expectations have obviously increased since we've been to the playoffs three years in a row," said

Nettles. "This group of seniors have had nothing but success. We hope this will be the fourth group to be back in the playoffs and go on from there. We're an older team this year with 75 junior and seniors out of the 120. And in 5A football, depth and experience is a big key. It really helps in that week-to-week grind.

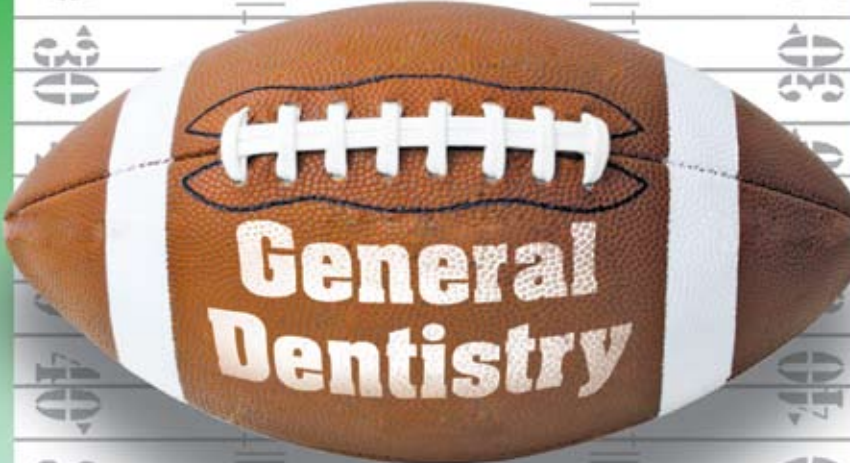
"The kids expect to do well and we're going to play hard," said Nettles. "Hoping week-to-week, we can improve, be in line for a district championship, get into the playoffs and compete for a state title. That's the ultimate goal."

Denham Springs will be a part of the newly named District 4-5A, along with parish foes Walker and Live Oak, as well as Central, Zachary and Scotlandville.

Catholic High has moved over to the new District 5-5A, but remains on Denham's schedule as a non-district game.

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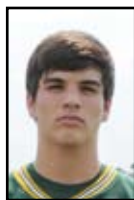
The 2011 Walker High School Wildcat football team are (bottom, from left) James Roberts, Randy Sandifer, Terry Peters, Donnie Goodson, Keith Childress, Dwayne Severio, Walker High head football coach; Karick Durham, Bill Alford, Daniel Desselle, Kevin Schexnayder Kirby McGregor and Austin McMorris. Second row are Casey Chiders, Tyler Rosado, Antonio Lee, Jordan Folks, Mandon Clarke, Powers Ortis, Slade Madden, Shea Meliet, Tyrico Felder, Taylor Dean, Chase Boitnott, Jordan Hills, Lloyd Bennett, Daryl Martin, D'Antonio Daigre, Chase Corley, Brandon Hernandez and Ty Jannise. Third row are Hunter Seguin, Kody Howell, Chase Taylor, Wyatt Wales, Jousha Roundtree, Jordan LeFebvre, Christian Moore, Colby Leger, Logan, Easley, Norman Barnett, Bud Persilver, Peyton LeJeune, Tyler Lockhart, Shaun Lowe, Shedrick Terrell, Hunter Chaney, and Preston Chaney. Fourth row are Tabrodric Young, Taylor Brown, Adam McGraw, Carlton Perkins, Dylan Hirtzler, Emmanuel Kennedy, Taylor Sharp, Taylor Bowden, Jimmy LeBlanc, Jacob Thumon, Josh Gibbons, Jeffrey Johnson, Matthew Graham, Trevor Miller, Brody Quartana, Austin Drury, Dakota Braud, Gabriel Lagos and Dustin Rivere. Fifth row are Justin Rushing, Tate Sibley, Greg Cotton, Hayden Erwin, Wes Patin, Sam Montgomery, Jacob Arnold, Kyron Scott, Shane Carpenter, Austin Smith, Casey Victory, Tyler Henderson, Avery Moser, Desi Rosado, Stephen Zoll, Dreagen Bethel, Mark Finch, Kody Driver and Andrelyon Lee.

Walker reaches for next level

Severio returns
with championship
football on his mind

WALKER – Wins have been at a minimum for the Walker football program over the last five years, but former assistant Dwayne Severio is hoping to bring the Wildcats back to the winning ways they once enjoyed.

The one-time defensive coordinator under the John Guerin regime has returned to Wildcat country to take over the reins after stints at Independence (assistant), St. Helena Central (head coach) and the past two seasons at the highly success-



Moser



Perkins



Leger



Cotton



Thurmon



LeBlanc



Driver



Scott



LeJeune



Montgomery



Lowe



Zoll



Miller



Henderson



Hunt



Lockhart

ful Bastrop program as offensive coordinator.

Severio replaces Mike Todd, who spent the past three years Walker

and is now an assistant coach at Livonia.

Severio, a 1984 graduate of Doyle, was hired by former Walker head

coach Bill Spear in 1988 and with the exception of one year, remained a part of the Wildcat program until 2005.

Since his departure, Walker has gone through two head coaches with a com-

Walker looks at combo for quarterback in 2011

From 8

bined record of 4-45.

"My last five years, my eyes have been opened to a different type of football," said Severio. "Going to Bastrop was probably one of the best things that has happened to me. Football in Monroe is a different game."

Of course, that also gave Severio a rare chance at coaching in a state championship game in the Louisiana Superdome."

Severio tapped sophomore Tyler Lockhart as the No. 1 quarterback, but looks at tailback Carlton Perkins as "1-B."

Perkins tallied up 1,155 yards on 162 carries last season, while scoring 11 touchdowns. Averaging 7.1 yards per carry, Perkins also has his hands on nine pass receptions for 46 yards.

Junior Jordan Folks is slated to hold down the fullback slot, while Shawn Lowe, a track star who did

not play football last year, will also carry the football.

Outside of Perkins, Walker returns just two more players with starting experience on offense, junior tackle Greg Cotton (5-11, 235) and junior guard Trevor Miller (5-11, 235).

Anchoring the middle will be senior center Tyler Henderson (6-2, 275), while the other two slots across the five-man front has competition, as senior Chase Taylor (5-9, 200) and junior Ben Imme (6-0, 245) battle at guard, while senior Dylan Hirtler (6-0, 215) and sophomore Shane Carpenter (6-4, 260) are vying for the tackle position.

Targets for Lockhart will be either junior Sam Montgomery (6-1, 170) or senior Emanuel Kennedy (5-11, 165) at one split-end slot, while senior Stephen Zoll (5-11, 165) or senior Dustin Rivere (5-10, 175) will line up at the other.

WALKER
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DAVID NORMAND | THE NEWS

The 2011 Walker High School coaching staff are (seated, from left) Terry Peters, Kevin Schexnayder, Dwayne Severio, Walker High head coach; Daniel Desselle, and Randy Sandifer. Standing are Donnie Goodson, James Roberts, Karick Durham, Keith Childress, Kirby McGregor and Bill Alford.

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Walker adopts 'win now' philosophy despite rebuilding

From 9

Along with Perkins Lowe and Folks, senior Avery Moser (6-1, 185) will also line up in the backfield at running back some.

The Wildcats' multiple-set defense has only three returning starters back from a year ago, senior linebackers Jacob Thurmon (5-11, 215) and Jimmy Leblanc (6-0, 210), as well senior Peyton Lejeune (5-10, 165) in the secondary.

Up front, Severio is eyeing junior Andre Lyon (5-9, 255) or sophomore Gabriel Lagos (5-11, 290) at the tackle position, while battling for ends' slots are sophomore Taylor Bowden (5-1, 265), sophomore Tyler Rosado (6-1, 255), senior Hayden Derwin (5-11, 190) and junior Norman Barnett (6-0, 195).

Rounding out the linebacking corps with Thurmon and Leblanc is senior football newcomer Kyron Scott (6-2, 210), who many are fa-

miliar with on the Wildcat basketball team.

Along with Lejeune, other players vying for the defensive backs positions are senior Logan Easley (5-10, 170), junior Kody Howell (5-9, 170), senior Desi Rosado (6-0, 175), sophomore Kody Driver (5-10, 160), junior Chase Boitnott (5-8, 170), junior Tate Sibley (5-10, 170) and senior Colby Leger (5-10, 165).

"People tell me that Rome wasn't built in a year, but I'm not going to be real patient," said Severio. "I'm trying to change the kids' attitude and tell them that I want to win now and compete now.

"We're preparing to win now and we're not going to put it off," said Severio. "We're not going into it saying it's going to take four or five years."

Walker is part of the newly named District 4-5A, along with parish foes Denham Springs and Live Oak, as well as Central, Zach-

ary and Scotlandville.

Catholic moved out of the district and into the newly formed District 5-5A.

The Severio era at Walker begins in the confines of Wildcats Stadium against St. Michael's the Archangel.

Walker then takes to the road the next two weeks, first at Broadmoor, then off to East Ascension.

The Wildcats return home in Week 4 to host New Orleans-based Riverdale before wrapping up their non-district slate down in Cajun Country at West St. Mary.

Walker opens District 5-5A play at home against parish-rival Live Oak, but then turns around and travels to Central the following week.

The Wildcats have back-to-back home league games with Zachary and Denham Springs before wrapping up district play and the regular season at Scotlandville.

District 4-5A WALKER

Sept. 2
Sept. 9
Sept. 16
Sept. 23
Sept. 30
Oct. 6
Oct. 14
Oct. 21
Oct. 28
Nov. 4

St. Michael
at Broadmoor
at East Ascension
Riverdale
at West St. Mary
Live Oak*
at Central*
Zachary*
Denham Springs*
at Scotlandville*



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Expect Live Oak to sling football

Dykes counts on transfer QB to spark offense

headed to Southeastern to play baseball, Dykes will be fortunate in having one of his former pupils, Cole Leblanc, lining up under center.

Leblanc, who grew up and remained a resident of Watson, went to Central for three years, where his mother teaches.

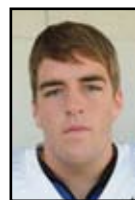
Early on with the Wildcats, Leblanc's offensive coordinator at Central was Dykes, as he was being groomed as a quarterback.

After Dykes landed the job with the Eagles, Leblanc was moved to wide

LIVE OAK
PAGE 13



Forrest



Burt



Wheeler



Brewer



Forbes



Landry



LeBlanc



Weaver



Landry



Troxclair



Marino



Williams

WATSON – Head coach David Dykes is hoping to reel in a few wins this season in his second year at Live Oak, and to help him do that he threw a net over a Watson resident who had been playing on the other side of the Amite River.

With the departure via graduation of quarterback Tyler McGrew, who is



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The 2011 Live Oak High Eagles football team are (bottom, from left) Brooke Brewer, student trainer; Haskell Dyer, Blane Westmorland, Chad Vasiliauskas, Ray Thomas, Robbie Mahfouz, David Dykes, Live Oak High High head football coach, Greg Briggs, Brent Baker, Lafayette Duhe, Eric France, Chris Collier, Thomas Broady and Stephanie Smith, athletic trainer. Second row are Tori Vincent, student trainer; Courtney Hill, student trainer; Everett Lee, William, Templet, Jhon Odevilas, Luke Andrepont, De'Trenta Lee, Blaze Kinchen, Jordan Alford, Kirk Allen, Dan Ricard, Seth Aillet, Jamison Moore, Paul Bilski, Dillon Dearman, Bret Rushing, and Rodlyn Harden, student trainer. Third row are Bryce Brewer, Lance Andre, Austin Page, Destin Marler, Brandon Culpepper, Justin Webb, Cody Hanna, Erik Troxclair, Jonathan Hagan, Brandon Chenevert, Hunter Marino, Austin Zachary, Brandt Wheeler, Jonathan Guidry, Hans Troxclair, and Antonio Williams. Fourth row are Shawn Jennings, Wesley Fuller, Drew Landry, Jacob Buckhalter, Cody Gauthier, Preston Meadows, Cameron McKenzie, Jacob Brown, Jacob Neyland, Michael Allen, Jarrett Williams, Dylan Bermes, Austin Barber, Curtis Davies, Zachary Cate and Tristen Penton. Fifth row are Brandon Burt, Beau Forrest, Ricky Fuller, Ryan Kimball, Ryan Wood, Wesley Howard, Hunter Hutchinson, Wayne Sullivan, Michael Covington, Austin Lacombe, Ryan Davidson, Brock Johnson, Cris Trahan, Tyler Ory, Josh Easley, John Crutchfield and Kenneth Nuckles. Top row are Caleb Reynolds, Brendon Charbonnet, Jacob Tugwell, Lucus Schenk, Jordan Hebert, Cole LeBlanc, Jeffrey Aydele, Colin Jones, Clay Landry, Blake Brock, Richard Gerage, Devin Weaver, Jesse Price, Jarrad Mury, Kade Freeman, Chase Forbes and Chris Kelly.



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Live Oak welcomes back Mahfouz as QB coach

From 11

receiver his junior season with the Wildcats.

The 6-2 208-pound right-hander quickly moved atop the quarterback depth chart this summer during the 7-on-7 league and took about 90 percent of the snaps

"The good thing is that he was at Central under me and he knows the system that I run, so there wasn't any change there," said Dykes. "He was able to come right in and get right to it rather quickly.

"He has a really good arm and throws the ball really well," said Dykes. "And the good thing about him, like McGrew, he can run. He's a big body."

McGrew accounted for more than 2,100 yards and 19 touchdowns last year, passing for 10 TD's and running in nine more scores.

Dykes will get veteran quarterback coaching as well as former Central, Walker and Live Oak head coach Robbie Mahfouz has returned to the Eagles' football field as the quarterback coach after a one-year absence from coaching.

Mahfouz, who signed with LSU coming out of high school, eventually transferred to Southeastern, where he broke many Lions passing records.

"He's been a big asset," said Dykes of Mahfouz. "Robbie has been a voice of reason to me this summer. Sometimes I get sort of distracted and Robbie's been there to calm me back down.

"When it comes to X's and O's, he knows more than any guy I've ever coached with," said Dykes, who knows plenty about quality coaches, having grown up with the legendary coach Johnny Dykes as his father. "He's going to be a pretty important asset to have by my side this season."

Backing up Leblanc at quarterback will be juniors Jordan Hebert and Brandon Culpepper.

The bulk of the receiving corps is back from last year, with the exception of one of its biggest weapons, Stephen Prescott, who graduated.

Returning is slot receiver Jarrett Williams (5-10, 165), a senior, along with junior Wesley Howard (6-0, 185), the Eagles' number two pass-catcher a year ago. Howard has bulked up and is slated to play the tight-end slot.

Senior Beau Forrest (6-0, 180) is another returnee from a year ago who Dykes is eyeing as the Eagles' deep

threat receiver.

Rounding out the receiving corps is junior wide-out Ryan Wood (6-0, 175) and 6-3, 220-pound junior Blake Brock, who may also see action at tight end.

The Eagles have three returning starters up front on the offensive line, senior center Bryce Brewer (5-10, 270) at the anchor, senior guard Brandon Burt (6-1, 235) and senior tackle Devin Weaver (6-2, 280).

Rounding out the line will be senior tackle Clay Landry (6-6, 265) and junior tackle Chase Forbes (6-1, 277).

Lining up in the backfield will be senior running back Garrett Thurman (5-9, 170).

"Defensive-wise, we've tried to revamp some things and make some changes," said Dykes. "We're going from a 3-3 defense to what I guess you would say a more conventional style of a 4-2-5.

"We've got some young guys there," said Dykes. "But fortunately the ones getting experience out there last year were sophomores."

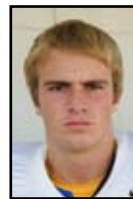
Among those in the secondary are junior Blaise Kinchen (5-7, 143), Ricky Fuller, the lone senior in the secondary, receiver-turned-strong-safety junior Ryan Kimble (6-1, 185) and sophomore Justin Webb (5-8, 160), who was the freshman quarterback a year ago.

Rounding out the secondary is junior Drew Landry (6-0, 185).

"We're probably deeper at corner than we've ever been," said Dykes. "We have like six kids who can play that po-



Wood



Howard



Fuller



Kimball

sition and contribute on Friday nights. It's going to be a war to see who's going to start at corner and at free safety this year."

Up front defensively are a pair of returning tackles, junior Jessie Pierce (6-1, 220) and sophomore Antoine Williams (6-0, 230).

Also returning is senior defensive end Marc David (5-11, 195). He will be joined on the opposite end by junior Blake Brooks (6-3, 210).

A pair of junior linebackers are also returning starters in Michael Allen (5-9, 175) and Brandt Wheeler (5-7, 175).

Live Oak is coming off a 2-8 season, which included just one district win. This year the Eagles will be a part of newly named District 4-5A, with parish foes Denham Springs and Walker, along with Central, Zachary and Scotlandville.

Former league foe Catholic moved in into the new District 5-5A.

The Eagles open the regular season on the road at Livonia, with their home-opener the following week against Redemptorist. They remain in the confines of Eagles Stadium in Week 3 to

play host to Broadmoor.

Live Oak wraps up non-district play with back-to-back road games, first to the Dog Pound to take on Springfield and then on to the Charles McClendon Practice Field on the campus of LSU to tangle with University High.

The Eagles remain on the road for the third consecutive week when they open up league play at Walker.

Live Oak finally returns home the following week to take on DSHS and remains there one more week to host Scotlandville.

The Eagles will host Zachary in Week 9 for league game with the Broncos and then wrap up district and the regular season at home against Central.

District 4-5A LIVE OAK

Sept. 2

Sept. 9

Sept. 15

Sept. 23

Sept. 30

Oct. 6

Oct. 14

Oct. 21

Oct. 28

Nov. 4

*District game

at Livonia

Redemptorist

Broadmoor

at Springfield

at University Lab

at Walker*

Denham Springs*

Scotlandville*

at Zachary*

Central*



DAVID NORMAND | THE NEWS

The 2011 Live Oak Eagles football coaching staff are (kneeling, from left) Eric France, Robbie Mahfouz, David Dykes, Live Oak High head football coach; Brent Baker and Greg Briggs. Standing are Thomas Broady, Chad Vasiliaskas, Chris Collier, Blane Westmorland, Ray Thomas, Haskell Dyer and Lafayette Duhe.

Albany searching for balance

Hornets set sights on return to postseason

9-3A.

Year-in and year-out perennial favorites Amite and Independence are the tough hurdles to face, but Ficklin is hoping this year's team can not only give the Tigers and Warriors a challenge, but compete with the likes of Loranger, Jewel Sumner and Bogalusa.

"We're going to have to be a little tougher than we were last year," said Ficklin. "Football isn't a finesse game. You have to be tough.

"And it's going to take us being more than one-dimensional," said Ficklin. "Last year, it was pretty much Heath (DePhillips). This year, I think we'll be more balanced and we'll be able to run the ball a little better and will have more than just one guy to throw to."

DePhillips was a huge part of Albany's offense last season, as the graduating senior receiver amassed over 700 yards receiving and 10 touchdowns. He finished the year with over 1,000 all-purpose yards and was the team's punter, averaging 42.3 yards per punt.

ALBANY - In 2010, it was a case whether or not Albany's season was half-empty or half-full.

Head coach Brad Ficklin, who is entering his fifth season at the helm of the Hornets, is hoping to fill that glass high to top this season, which could spill over into the playoffs, as in 2009.

Albany won its first five non-district games a year ago, but then went winless in five league games to finish 5-5 overall.

The Hornets are still part of the same league make-up as they have been, although the district identification has changed to District 8-3A from District



McSwain



Bowers



Dickerson



Cooper



Arnold



Roach



Lavergne



Cutrer



Jackson



Watt



Duncan



Sansovich

On top of that, DePhillips was a key defensive player in the secondary, with six interceptions and two fumble recoveries returned for scores.

But an equally huge part of the Hornets' offense is back as junior quarterback Louis Sansovich (5-11, 170) is

coming off a season in which he threw for more than 2,300 yards.

"He's (Sansovich) very athletic, but he doesn't totally rely on this athleticism,"

ALBANY
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DAVID NORMAND | THE NEWS

The 2011 Albany High School Hornets coaching staff are (kneeling, from left) Brett Lato, Michael Janis, Brad Ficklin, Albany High head football coach, and Jody Wild. Standing are Phil Stine, Mark Thompson, Sammie Lacara, Austin Thomas and Robert Bowens.

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The 2011 Albany High School Hornets football team are (bottom row, from left) Dylan Cutrer, Brian Dickerson, Kendall Duncan, Anthony Love, Tanner Wild, Dale Wolfe, Luke Callahan, Thomas Aguirre, Tanner House, Nick Strahan, Dylan Kinchen, Louis Sansovich, Dylan Roach, Jasper Watt, Caleb Murray and Elijah Callhan. Second row are Prentiss Newsome, Jamare Jackson, Tyler Smith, Bryce Wells, Branson Nicolosi, Cody Miller, Brandon House, Alex Vallo, Vic Tailla, Zachary Begeron, Dathan Kinchen, Dennis Lavergne, Connor Sullivan, austion Kinchen and Dalton Romero. Third row are Verone Brown, Dustine Stine, Adolpho Lopez, Wesley Smith, Justin Delecarda, Nic Latham, Roger Murphy, Zachary Dennis, Devin Hughes, Seth Murray, Ty Kinchen, Kolby Hill, Bryan Cooper, Steven Fontenot and Austin Bowers. Fourth row are Justin Nolen, manager; Kain Lemons, Cody Thompson, Dustin Lavergne, Alex McSwain, Tyler Daigle, Bryaus Ott, Dylan Palmer, Kyle Lewis, Matthew Stevens and Cody Thompson, manager. Top row are Brad Ficklin, Phil Stine, Mark Thompson, Sammie Lacara, Jody Wild, Austin Thomas, Brett Lato, Michael Janis and Robert Bowns.

Albany spread attack protected by veteran offensive line

From 14

said Ficklin. "He's a kid who's very smart and almost like a coach on the field for us."

The only returning receiver back is senior tight end Kendall Duncan (6-2, 180). He will be joined by senior split end Jamare Jackson (6-4, 170), junior split end Branson Nicolisa (5-6, 155) and sophomore split end Caleb Murray (6-2, 165).

Albany's spread offense will operate behind an offensive line that has three returning starters, senior offensive guard Seth Murray (6-3, 280), senior center Austin Bowers (6-1, 24) and junior tackle Dakota Arnold (5-10, 260).

Lining up in the backfield will be junior Tanner Wild (5-9, 200), a returning linebacker who is a newcomer to the running back position.

"Tanner is a kid who is extremely tough," said Ficklin. He can wear on the defense. With that and the things that Louis (Sansovich) can do, it could make our offense a really tough thing to deal with."

Albany's 3-5-3 defense has three returning starters, defensive end Ty Kinchen (6-0, 215), linebacker Wild



Wild



Kinchen

and a pair of senior defensive backs, Alex McSwain (6-1, 180) and Dylan Cutrer (5-11, 170).

Rounding out the defense will be senior end Bryan Cooper (6-3, 265), sophomore tackle Dennis Lavargne (5-10, 265), senior linebacker Lane Kinchen (6-0, 185), and sophomore linebacker Elijah Callahan (6-1, 175).

Joining McSwain and Cutrer in the secondary will be junior DB Justin Cuccia (5-8, 165).

"Defensively, our strong point will be our defensive line," said Ficklin. "We have a lot of older guys in the trenches there who can make some good plays there. Secondary is thin, but the guys that are out there are more than capable of doing what they need to do."

"The linebackers are a question mark," said Ficklin. "But then again, we're having to replace all five of them."

Albany opens up with Episcopal and then plays host to archrival Springfield in a Thursday night television game.

The Hornets will then head up Interstate 55 to Pine, but then head back home in Week 4 for a non-district match-up with New Orleans-based Ellender.

Albany will then depart on a three-week road trip,

first wrapping up non-district play at Class 2A St. Helena Central. Then the Hornets open up the ever-so-tough District 9-3A slate at Loranger and then at Independence.

The Hornets will be able to wrap up their district schedule and regular season with three straight home games, Jewel Sumner, Bogalusa and Amite.

District 8-3A ALBANY

Sept. 2
Sept. 9
Sept. 16
Sept. 23
Sept. 30
Oct. 7
Oct. 14
Oct. 21
Oct. 28
Nov. 4

Episcopal
Springfield
at Pine
Ellender
at St. Helena Central
at Loranger*
at Independence*
Jewel Sumner*
Bogalusa*
Amite*

Springfield must fill many shoes

Rebuilding Bulldogs depend on youth movement

SPRINGFIELD – The Bulldogs are hoping to put a little bite back in their bark as they head into the 2011 season.

But for these canines to find themselves chomping at the playoffs once again, they must overcome some key personnel losses from a year ago.

Springfield has to replace a pair of weapons on offense, beginning with tailback Jamar “Marty” Jones, who rushed for 810 yards and eight touchdowns last season, quarterback Dustin McLin and big 6-foot-6 senior receiver Will Freeman, who made 44 catches for nearly 800 yards.

But despite that talented trio,

along with a some studs on the defensive side, Springfield slipped from a playoff team to 2009 to a 3-7 finish and post-season spectator last fall.

Ryan Serpas, who enters his fourth year at the helm after a short stint as defensive coordinator, is ready to reload and draw their weapons.

Springfield’s “Pistol” offense will be engineered by sophomore quarterback Joseph Kemp (6-0, 165), flanked in the backfield by sophomore running back Gharmaine Ashton (5-10, 185), Thomas Armstrong (6-0, 180) and junior Kimanea Claiborne (5-10, 160).

“I feel he gives us more athleticism at the quarterback position, which should give our quarterback more opportunities to make plays,” said Serpas. “Not only with his arm, but with his legs.

“He will be a young kid stepping into that leadership role, but it gives him a chance to be successful



Carter



Vikes



Hagen



Ashton



Quave



Kemp



Hernandez



Claiborne



Jones



Smith



Armstrong



Wheat



Jasper

early on,” said Serpas. “Losing the type of kids that we had in Marty, Will and Dustin, they are definitely hard to replace.

Serpas said that Ashton will likely handle the bulk of the load at the running back position, while he’s hoping that sophomore Chuckie Vikes (5-9, 150) can help fill the shoes left behind by Freeman.

Lining up as receiver along with split end Vikes will be another sophomore in Bryant Manchack (6-0, 160).

“The offense will be more option-oriented,” said Serpas, “which will allow us to scheme through defense and let us make plays.”

What experience Springfield has on offense lies in the trenches, with junior returning center Wade Wheat, senior guard John Quave (5-10, 205) and sophomore guard Travis Tillman (5-10, 210).

Joining them up front will be sophomore guards Cale Smith (5-10, 195) and Gharmaine Ashton (5-10, 185), sophomore tackle Cambell Palmer (6-3, 230) and freshman tackle Chris Carter (5-9, 225).

The Bulldogs’ 3-4 defense returns only four starters, but two of those are linebackers in , junior Keith Hernandez (5-11, 190) and junior Shaquille Smith (5-9, 170), while two-way player Quave moves back from his defensive line spot a year ago.

Up front will be senior tackle Cody Hebert (5-10, 175), sophomore end Dale Smith (5-10, 175), and freshman end Chris Carter (5-10, 215).

The lone returnee in the secondary is senior DB Sam Jones (5-10, 160), while joining him will be senior Will Jasper (6-0, 165), junior Kimanea Claiborne and another two-way player, sophomore Vikes.

DAVID NORMAND | THE NEWS

The 2011 Springfield High School coaching staff are (from left) Kosi Brignac, Guy Henderlick, Ryan Serpas, Springfield High head football coach; Tony Salim, David Driggs and Keith Patterson.



DAVID NORMAND | THE NEWS

The 2010 Springfield High Bulldog football team are (bottom row, left) Chuckie Vikes, LaMorris Reed, Thomas Armstrong, Joseph Kemp, Marty Jones, D'Marco McKay, Dustin McLin, Shaquille Smith, Matthew Gregoire, and Will Freeman. Second row Jermaine Taylor, Nick Lyons, Cole McKigney, Brandon Norman, Darren Hagen, Sam Jones, Daniel Laurent, Gharmaine Ashton and Dale Smith. Third row are John Quave, Tricocci Moore, Brian Forrest, Cody Hebert, Billy Costanzi, Britton Rowell, Eitore Austin, Travis Tillman, David Hoover, and John Whittington. Fourth row are Josh Childers, Cardell Dudley, David Porter, Dallas Laurent, Wade Wheat, Bryant Manchack, Micheal Jackson, Hollis Bell and Campbell Palmer. Top row are Springfield coaches Ryan Serpas, David Dragg, T J Tyler, William Tally, Kodi Brignac, John Hill, Tony Salim and Guy Henderlick. Not pictured are Gaige Jones and Nick Guthrie.

Denham opens with Broadmoor

From 7

One thing seems to never change on DSHS' schedule, but another has.

The Yellow Jackets will continue their long-standing rivalry with Broadmoor in a non-district opener, but they have removed an even longer rivalry with Covington.

Nettles said he had to remove Covington from the slate to make room for Catholic, which he feels will be better for the program financially.

Denham Springs will travel to Nettles' former head coaching job when the Yellow Jackets head to Baton Rouge in Week 2 to take on Woodlawn.

After hosting Catholic in Week 3, the Jackets head down to Yenni Stadium in New Orleans to tangle with Archbishop Rummel. The game is scheduled for Saturday afternoon (2 p.m.), Sept. 24, but there have been some talks of moving the game to a Thursday night to accommodate CST sports television network.

Denham wraps up non-district

play the following week against its third District 6-5A opponent, when the Jackets host East Ascension back at Jackets Stadium.

The Yellow Jackets' league slate includes back-to-back road trips to Scotlandville and Live Oak, followed by a home game against Central, back on the road a few miles away at Walker and then at home against Zachary to complete the regular season.

District 4-5A DENHAM SPRINGS

Sept. 2	Broadmoor
Sept. 9	at Woodlawn
Sept. 16	Catholic
Sept. 24	at Rummel
Sept. 30	East Ascension
Oct. 7	at Scotlandville*
Oct. 14	at Live Oak*
Oct. 21	Central*
Oct. 28	at Walker*
Nov. 4	Zachary*

B | H

A | A

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*Attorney Brian K. Abels is responsible for the content of this ad

Springfield *relies on linebackers as others gain experience*

From 16

"We're definitely taking a hit up front with defensive line," said Serpas, who graduated the likes of Dallas Laurent and Cardell Dudley. "We're going to be lacking up front in experience, but I think our linebacking corps will be the heart of our defense."

Ben Hagen will be called upon for place-kicking, while Wade Wheat will handle the punting chores.

"We're going to be a very young team," said Serpas. "But I also think we could be very successful."

"I think we're very capable of making the post-season this year and I expect to make the post-

season," said Serpas, who is 15-15 overall as a head coach, but was also a part a pair of playoff teams under Spencer Harris. "The kids are just going to have to understand what we're trying to do with them and what we want to accomplish. The faster we can get them to buy-in to that, the faster their maturity level will take hold and faster we'll be successful down the road."

The Bulldogs open up the regular season at home against Mt. Hermon and then hit the road for two weeks, first against Albany in a televised game on a Thursday night and then down to New Orleans to take on DeLaSalle.

Springfield returns to

the Dog Pound in Week 4 to host another Livingston Parish foe in Live Oak, but then heads back to the New Orleans area for a game with Metairie-based Grace King.

Week 6 opens up District 8-2A play with a road trip to Slidell to take on Pope John Paul II.

The Bulldogs return home the following week to take on St. Helena Central, but then are back on the road in Week 8 at Pine.

The Dogs however, can relax at home in the final two weeks of the regular season with league matchups against Northlake Christian and St. Thomas Aquinas in the confines of the Dog Pound.

District 8-2A SPRINGFIELD

Sept. 2
Sept. 8
Sept. 16
Sept. 23
Sept. 30
Oct. 7
Oct. 14
Oct. 20
Oct. 28
Nov. 4

*District game

Mt. Hermon
at Albany
at DeLa Salle
Live Oak
at Grace King
at Pope John Paul*
St. Helena Central*
at Pine*
Northlake Christian*
St. Thomas Aquinas*

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The luxury of hope

The rite of fall holds meaning for communities

By Jim Spring
Special to the News

"I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all he holds dear, is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle—victorious."

— Coach Vince Lombardi
Green Bay Packers

During the 1950s the rural south was dotted with nondescript little hamlets that didn't have much to brag about. Absent the scenic wonders of the American west or the affluence of major cities, these small towns often struggled to find an identity that would make the natives proud. The common thread that bound them together was how unremarkable they were.

There was one thing, though, that could galvanize a community even more than a good funeral. It could sprinkle optimism into the sweet autumn air and had the power to transport townsfolk from their ordinary lives straight into the heavens. Friday night football.

Every year in early August, whether or not they needed a haircut, anxious fans would begin dropping by the local barbershop to rejoice in the latest rumors about this year's team. If only that big defensive tackle has gotten himself eligible during summer school, or, just maybe, if the new manager down at the pulp mill has a son in tow who could solve all our quarterback problems. Such are the dreams of the longsuffering.

Unknown to these fine folks, however, they were really on a subconscious quest searching for something else, something more elusive. Admittedly, rural people in the 1950s had not yet found it fashionable to self-actualize. What they

really wanted was an assurance that they could allow themselves a simple pleasure—the luxury of hope.

It was well known among southerners that nothing made spirits soar like the promise of a new football season. No matter that your boss was a jerk, or that you could never quite ignore the foul odor drifting in from the pulp mill, this just might be the year we win a championship! How easily forgotten those hateful seasons past, when the fanciful hopes of summer gave way to despair by November, as your beloved team disappointed you once again. But not this year.

You see, the town barber, he has it on good authority: "We're gettin' in here a halfback from Baton Rouge who can run the hundred in 9.9 seconds. And he's a big'un too—5'10" and a hundred and eighty-five pounds." Inspiring his rapt audience, he continued, "With this new kid and the offensive line we got comin' back, we can win state this year! We ain't never even won district before. This town needs something to believe in. His name is Randy. Randy Rushing."

In 1958 the Denham Springs Yellow Jackets stirred the hearts of the faithful like homesick angels taken flight. Randy Rushing ran like the north wind, enabling fans to flaunt the sin of pride with the permission of local clergymen. On those explosive power sweeps that rocketed him into stardom, Rushing was blessed with a pair of pulling guards who moved like angry ballerinas in cleats. But mostly it was his scorching speed and ravenous appetite for large swaths of yardage that catapulted an otherwise average team into playoff contention.

In those days only the district champion made the playoffs, and at season's end the town was buzzing with anticipation as the University High Cubs invaded Jacket stadium for a pivotal game that could decide the district title. We had Randy Rushing and a band of gritty farm boys who had never been this close to respectability. They had a privileged team of city-slicker rich kids accustomed to success, as if it were their birthright. A classic match



Randy Rushing

between the country boys and the country clubbers.

Though the locals played with heart and never flinched, at half-time we trailed 26-6, eventually losing to the better team 33-12. Rushing ran for 122 hard-fought yards that night but was held scoreless. The loss was riveting for the team and for the community. Our chance at gridiron immortality would have to wait until another year.

Players and fans were bitter and heartbroken over the abrupt end to their storybook season. Yet, within a week the disappointment subsided when the Yellow Jackets were invited to play in the Kentwood Dairy Bowl against a highly touted team from Liberty, Mississippi. Randy Rushing scored five touchdowns and Denham Springs won in a rout 46-6. He was named to the All State team for the second time and established the school's single season rushing record with 1,873 yards.

That Denham Springs High School rushing record has endured for 53 years, but during the 2010 season a lanky tailback named Kaleb Blanchard placed it on the endangered species list, gaining 1,799 yards—as a fifteen year-old sophomore. While Rushing possessed greater breakaway speed, Blanchard is a more athletic runner with

exceptional balance. Both were blessed with such explosiveness that you feared they might self-combust right there on the field. Blanchard also has a celestial gift for lateral movement that confounds defenders and evokes raucous cheers from fans reminiscent of the 1958 season.

Like that first great football team in Denham Springs history, the 2011 Yellow Jackets have the same potential this season to galvanize an entire community. When they walk through those turnstiles on Friday night, Jacket fans will leave their burdens behind because their beloved team has once again given them the luxury of hope.

I reckon if players and coaches in all the little towns around here understood how much we depend on them for our emotional equilibrium, we'd have a few more winning records in these parts. Our self-esteem would skyrocket so high that therapists would be a relic of the past. Cheerleaders would probably become passé because we would no longer need to be cheered. Local pastors might have time to take up golf since all the wives would stop complaining about male irritability. And the pulp mill, well, it would just stop stinking, don't you think?

We don't mean to put pressure on you players and coaches out there, but things have changed. Used to, before us fans got enlightened, we could handle a mediocre season. But now, you see, we've self-actualized and require true meaning in our lives.

I'm not quite certain, though few would be surprised if our crime rate shoots right up there if we lose a single game this season. Devout clergymen, only recently having learned to chill on the golf course, would soon be overwhelmed by desperate housewives seeking help for their demoralized spouses. Prospective customers would hide in their man-caves at home, too depressed to meet fellow fans at their favorite restaurant, causing the local economy to collapse.

Now you boys run on out there and have fun. Don't mind us fans, but remember—hope is a fragile commodity, and we're really countin' on you.

LSU 2011 Schedule

Saturday, Sept. 3	vs. (3) Oregon in Dallas	7 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 10	Northwestern State	7 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 15	at (20) Mississippi State	7 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 24	at (24) West Virginia	TBA
Saturday, Oct. 1	Kentucky	7 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 8	(22) Florida	7 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 15	at Tennessee	TBA
Saturday, Oct. 22	(23) Auburn	7 p.m.
Saturday, Nov. 5	at (2) Alabama	TBA
Saturday, Nov. 12	Western Kentucky	7 p.m.
Saturday, Nov. 19	at Ole Miss	TBA
Friday, Nov. 25	(15) Arkansas	2:30 pm
	SEC Championship Game	
Saturday, Dec. 3	at Atlanta, Ga. (Georgia Dome)	TBA

Saints 2011 Schedule

Thu, Sep 8	at Green Bay	7:30 p.m.	NBC
Sun, Sep 18	Chicago	Noon	FOX
Sun, Sep 25	Houston	Noon	CBS
Sun, Oct 2	at Jacksonville	Noon	FOX
Sun, Oct 9	@ Carolina	Noon	FOX
Sun, Oct 16	@ Tampa Bay	3:15 p.m.	FOX
Sun, Oct 23	Indianapolis	7:20 p.m.	NBC
Sun, Oct 30	at St. Louis	Noon	FOX
Sun, Nov 6	Tampa Bay	Noon	FOX
Sun, Nov 13	at Atlanta	Noon	FOX
Mon, Nov 28	New York Giants	7:30 p.m.	ESPN
Sun, Dec 4	Detroit	Noon	FOX
Sun, Dec 11	at Tennessee	Noon	FOX
Sun, Dec 18	@ Minnesota	Noon	FOX
Mon, Dec 26	Atlanta	7 :30 p.m.	ESPN
Sun, Jan 1	Carolina	Noon	FOX

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