HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL 2017

Profiles and schedules of 20 area football teams



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FOOTBALL 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS



SCHOOLS

Mallharn

Alexanuna Page o	vveiiborii Zi
Anniston	White Plains
The Donoho School 8	Clay-Central 23
Jacksonville	Cleburne County
Ohatchee	Handley
Oxford	Lincoln
Piedmont	Munford 24
Pleasant Valley	Ranburne 24
Saks	Randolph County 24
Weaver 19	Spring Garden 24

Check out more sports online at annistonstar.com

PRESEASON ALL-CALHOUN COUNTY TEAM

CLASS 1A-3A

Preseason Player of the Year: **Cardavion Myers**, Piedmont

QB: Cardavion Myers, Piedmont, Sr.
RB: Lee Stanley, Piedmont, Sr.
RB: Jesse Sellers, Ohatchee, Sr.
WR: Darien Bossie, Piedmont, Sr.
WR: London Knight, Weaver, Sr.
WR: Robert Gaines, Weaver, Sr.
OL: Caleb Allison, Weaver, Jr.
OL: Aaric Goode , Ohatchee, Sr.
OL: Riley Benavides, Weaver, Sr.

OL: Cole Chasteen, Piedmont, Sr. OL: Brandon Boyce, Weaver,

DL: **Logan Beadles,** Piedmont, Sr. DL: **Gavin Kircus,** Piedmont, Sr.

DL: **Matthew Thornton**, Piedmont, Jr. LB: **Jamyron Curry**, Wellborn, Sr.

LB: **Austin Duncan**, Ohatchee, Sr.

LB: **Javion Thomas**, Wellborn, Sr.

LB: Alex Parris, Pleasant Valley, Jr.

DB: **Kedd Harris**, Wellborn, Sr. DB: **Kaedon Jenkins**, Piedmont, Jr.

DB: **Caden Turner**, Pleasant Valley, Sr.

DB: **Kevin Wiliamson,** Ohatchee, Sr. K: **Gage Harrell**, Ohatchee, Jr.

CLASS 4A-6A

Preseason Player of the Year: **Abe Peoples**, Oxford

QB: Abe Peoples, Oxford, Jr.
RB: Tyetus Smith-Lindsey, Oxford, Jr.
RB: Keenan Woodruff, Alexandria, Jr
WR: Jamaree West, Anniston, Sr.
WR: Joseph Tucker, Alexandria, So.
WR: Jewels Gray, Jacksonville, Jr.
OL: Clay Webb, Oxford, Jr.
OL: Jordan Brooks, Saks, Sr.
Ol : Cole Gaddy, Jacksonville, Jr

OL: Ethen Darnell, Alexandria, Jr. OL: Braden Best, Alexandria, Jr.

DL: **Sam Shaw**, Alexandria, So. DL: **Marreo Thomas**, Saks, Jr.

DL: **Jamel Mays**, Jacksonville, Sr.

LB: **Brody Syer**, Oxford, Sr.

LB: Josh Glass, Jacksonville, Sr.

LB: Kaynan Mays, Saks, Sr.

LB: Walker Surrett, White Plains, Sr.

DB: **Jordan Swain,** Oxford, Sr.

DB: Joshua Tucker, Alexandria, Sr.

DB: **Junito Allen,** Oxford, Sr. DB: **Romeo Dye,** Alexandria, Jr.

K: **Preston Harvey,** Jacksonville, Sr.

The Anniston Star

ALL-CALHOUN COUNTY

Oxford's Peoples, Piedmont's Myers lead preseason All-Calhoun County teams

BY JOE MEDLEY

jmedley@annistonstar.com

Dual-threat quarterbacks lead the way on The Anniston Star's preseason All-Calhoun County football teams.

Oxford's Abe Peoples is the preseason pick for all-county player of the year for 4A-6A schools, and Piedmont's Cardavion Myers is the pick for 1A-3A schools.

Both figure to rack up big numbers this season for two of the county's top programs. One comes back after starting as a sophomore at quarterback, and the other will move to quarterback before taking his game to college as a cornerback.

Peoples, a junior, was the first-team all-county quarterback for big schools in 2016. While leading Oxford to an unbeaten regular season as a sophomore starter, he completed 82 of 128 passes for 1,381 yards and 14 touchdowns. He also rushed for 826 yards and 14 touchdowns.

His longest run went for 84 yards, underscoring his dual-threat ability.

"He's the fastest kid on the team," Oxford coach Ryan Herring said. "We clocked him at 4.50 (seconds in the 40-yard dash), and that put him at No. 1

Peoples played the latter part of last season with an injury to his right (throwing) shoulder, and initial indications were it would require surgery. He elected not to have the surgery and rested the shoulder for 12 weeks before starting rehab.

"He started a pretty rigorous therapy plan with it," Herring said. "It was therapeutic stuff, band work and stuff like that. He slowly got back into throwing the ball."

Peoples was cleared just ahead of spring practice with full range of motion.

"He was able to grip it and rip it in spring training," Herring said. "He's had a pretty good summer. It hasn't bothered him and all, so, right now, we feel like it's pretty healthy."

It doesn't hurt Peoples that he shares the backfield with running back Tyetus Smith-Lindsey, who rushed for 1,547 yards and 20 touchdowns in 2016 despite breaking a bone in his ankle late in the season. They will again make a stout quarterback-running back combination this season.

Myers succeeds Taylor Hayes, a two-time most valuable player of the 3A state final, and will team with returning running back Lee Stanley, who rushed for 1,698 yards and 16 touchdowns as a junior.

Myers is one of the county's top college recruits, garnering offers from FBS and FCS schools. He announced in July that he had narrowed his choices to six schools: Western Kentucky, Troy, Southern Mississippi, UAB, Liberty and Middle Tennessee.

His collegiate future looks to be at cornerback.

Scout.com and 247sports rank him as a two-star prospect, and with Scout ranking him as the fifth cornerback in Alabama.

He's 6-foot-0 and can run, fitting the next-level prototype.

Myers was first-team All-Calhoun County at cornerback last season, finishing with 83 tackles and four interceptions. He returned a fumble for a touchdown and had eight pass breakups.

Myers also played wide receiver, so he has run routes and defended them. He brings that knowledge to the quarterback position.

He also steps into the always productive position of quarterback under 12th-year Piedmont coach Steve Smith.

He also brings athleticism, presenting more of a breakaway threat on quarterback runs compared to the more bruising threat Hayes brought. Much of Myers' offseason work has centered on improving his passing, and he showed accuracy during the Piedmont Passing Camp earlier this month.

"He's progressed really well as the summer has gone along," Piedmont coach Steve Smith said. "Obviously, he's a very, very talented athlete, but he's really polishing his skills throwing the football and making better decisions."

Contact Sports Writer Joe Medley at jmedley@ annistonstar.com. On Twitter, @jmedley_star.



Bill Wilson/The Anniston Star/File

Quarterback Abe Peoples established himself as a running and passing threat for Oxford.



Trent Penny/The Anniston Star/Fil

Cardavion Myers returns a fumble for a touchdown last season against Ohatchee, as he was a threat to score on defense as well as offense.

ALEXANDRIA

HEAD COACH:

Frank Tucker, 69-41 entering 11th year as head coach, all at Alexandria.

CLASS, REGION:

Class 5A, Region 7.

LAST YEAR:

5--4 overall, 4-3 region. The Valley Cubs finished fifth in their region.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

The Valley Cubs got off to a very slow start but ended up winning four out of our last five games, finishing just out of the playoffs a year after reaching the 5A semifinals. An early 20-14 loss to Arab in the first region game made the difference between a playoff berth and not. It was Alexandria's first year in Region 7.

RETURNING STARTERS:

OG-DE Ethen Darnell, Sr.; C Skyler Payne, Jr.; OT Braden Best, Sr.; OG Peyton Thrasher, Jr.; WR-CB Josh Tucker, Sr.; RB Keenan Woodruff, Sr.; RB-LB Grayson Chaffin, Sr.; DT Sam Shaw; CB Romeo Dye; CB Joe Tucker.

OUR TAKE:

Alexandria hopes to carry momentum into this season after last season's strong finish. The Valley Cubs learned lessons, some painful, during an early season slump, but the sense is they have a more typical Alexandria mindset this season. It should be a more typical Alexandria team.

Word from the coach: "Just like any year, staying healthy is very important. This team has had a good summer, so, hopefully, we can transform that into a good season," Tucker said.

WORD FROM COACH TUCKER:

"Just like any year, staying healthy is very important. This team has had a good summer, so, hopefully, we can transform that into a good season."

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Talladega (H)
Sept. 1, Jacksonville (H)
Sept. 8, at Arab (A)*
Sept. 15, Boaz (H)*
Sept. 22, at Etowah (A)*
Sept. 29, at Cleburne County
Oct. 6, Scottsboro (H)*
Oct. 13, at Douglas (A)*
Oct. 20, at Guntersville (A)*
Oct. 27, Crossville (H)*
Nov. 3, OPEN

2016 RESULTS

Aug. 26, Jacksonville (A), L, 28-14 Sept. 2, Arab (H), L, 20-14 Sept. 9, Boaz (A), W, 45-0 Sept. 16, Etowah (H), L, 24-16 Sept. 23, Cleburne County (H), W, 55-28 Sept. 30, Scottsboro (A), L, 41-28 Oct. 7, Douglas (H), W, 68-34 Oct. 14, Guntersville (H), W, 36-25 Oct. 21, Crossville (A), W, 42-14 Oct. 28, OPEN



Trent Penny/The Anniston Star/File

^{*}Class 5A, Region 7 games

ANNISTON

HEAD COACH:

Eddie Bullock, 37-40 entering eighth year, all at Anniston.

CLASS, REGION:

Class: 4A, Region 5.

LAST YEAR:

2-8 overall, 2-5 region. The Bulldogs finished sixth in their region.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

Anniston's season was impacted by injury before it started. Quarterback Savion Bethune was lost to a fractured femur on a non-contact injury during the jamboree. It forced Marrio Dobbins to play out of position quarterback, and the Bulldogs struggled. They opened with a five-game losing streak, and their two wins on the season came against White Plains and Oneonta.

RETURNING STARTERS:

QB Savion Bethune, Sr. (was starter before preseason injury); RB Jamaree West, Sr.; OL Traquan Cooper, Jr; OL Demarrius Finley, Jr; WR C.J. Ramsey, Sr.; WR Jacquez Maynor, Sr.; LB Jaeden Woods, Jr.; LB Quinntavion Elston, Sr.; DE Jimmy Embry, Jr.; CB Kalik Brown, Jr.

OUR TAKE:

Bethune is back from his injury and hoping to pick up where he left off last preseason, and his return does a lot for the Bulldogs' confidence. He also does a lot for Anniston's ability to pass the ball. Anniston has 58 players out, and Bullock has lauded the work ethic of this team. This could be a rebound season.

WORD FROM COACH BULLOCK:

"I think we've got a good shot to make some noise. We have 12 seniors, but the core of players that will play for us are sophomores and juniors, so we've still got a lot of things we need to work on."

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Holt (A) (Jamboree)

Sept. 1, at Sylacauga (A)

Sept. 8, at Ashville (A)*

Sept. 15, at Cherokee County (A)*

Sept. 22, Jacksonville (H)*

Sept. 29, Pell City (H)

Oct. 6, at White Plains (A)*

Oct. 13, Saks (H)*

Oct. 20, Hokes Bluff (H)*

Oct. 27, at Oneonta (A)*

Nov. 3, Fort Payne (H)

*Class 4A, Region 5 games

2016 RESULTS

Aug. 26, Sylacauga (H), **L, 36-35 Sept. 2,** Ashville (H), **L, 15-6**

Sept. 9, Cherokee County (H), **L, 37-0**

Sept. 16, Jacksonville (A), **L, 37-14**

Sept. 23, Pell City (A), **L, 49-14**

Sept. 30, White Plains (H), **W, 55-13**

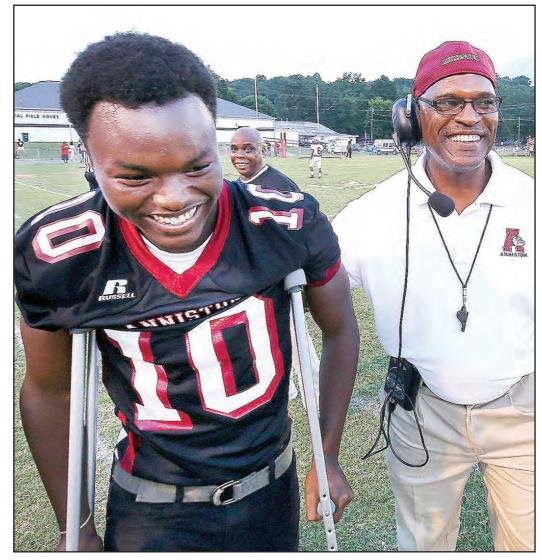
Oct. 7, Saks (A), L, 28-12

Oct. 14, Hokes Bluff (A), L, 35-6

Oct. 21, Oneonta (H), W, 27-17

Oct. 28, Fort Payne (A), L, 49-13





Stephen Gross/The Anniston Star/File

DONOHO

HEAD COACH:

Mark Sanders, 17-14 overall entering fourth year overall, 0-0 at Donoho (first season).

CLASS, REGION:

Class 1A, Region 4

LAST YEAR:

2-8 overall, 1-5 region. The Falcons finished sixth in their region.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

Donoho opened with a victory over Jacksonville Christian but lost four consecutive games before beating Appalachian for the Falcons' other victory and only region victory. Their losses included a 28-27 heartbreaker to Victory Christian, but Donoho got the last laugh by hiring Victory's coach. A team known for great defenses in its greatest years gave up a school-record 422 points.

RETURNING STARTERS:

OL Grayson Marlowe, Jr.; OL Tyler Rigsby, Jr.; RB-WR-S Rod Elston, Fr.; WR-CB Gray Hanley, Jr.; OL-DL Jase Alderman, So.; OL-DL Jack Ray, Jr; OL-LB Dalton Nelson, So.; RB-LB Tej Patel, Sr.

OUR TAKE:

Donoho will miss performers and leaders like Garrett Steed and Mitchell Baker. The Falcons also play in a strong 1A region that includes Wadley, Winterboro, Ragland and Talladega County Central, so they have an uphill climb. But Sanders knows something about uphill climbs, managing to win at a Victory Christian program that, not so long ago, struggled to field enough players. He has the Falcons on a course to win again.

WORD FROM COACH SANDERS:

"We've got a lot of potential.
The guys here have a lot of heart.
We have a lot more athletes than people think. They're a lot stronger than they were last year and a lot faster than they were last year.
I really think we're going to be able to show some people what we can do."

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, OPEN

Sept. 1, Horseshoe Bend (H)

Sept. 8, Victory Christian (H)*

Sept. 15, at Winterboro (A)*

Sept. 22, OPEN

Sept. 29, at Spring Garden (A)

Oct. 6, Appalachian (H)*

Oct. 13, at Talladega Co. Central (A)*

Oct. 20, Ragland (H)*

Oct. 27, at Wadley (A)*

Nov. 3, at Woodland (A)

*Class 1A, Region 4 games

2016 RESULTS

Aug. 19, Jacksonville Christian (A), W, 34-18

Aug. 25, Horseshoe Bend (A), L, 55-13

Sept. 2, Victory Christian (A), L, 28-27

Sept. 9, Winterboro (H), L, 55-35

Sept. 16, OPEN

Sept. 23, Spring Garden (H), L, 45-23

Sept. 30, Appalachian (A), **W, 38-7**

Oct. 7, Talladega County Central (H), L, 44-22

Oct. 14, Ragland (A), L, 55-31

Oct. 21, Wadley (H), L, 61-16

Oct. 28, Woodland (H), L, 54-35



Bill Wilson/The Anniston Star/File

Donoho senior Tej Patel returns at running back and linebacker.

Friday, August 18, 2017 Page 9

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JACKSONVILLE

HEAD COACH:

Clint Smith, 93-66 entering 16th year, 36-19 entering sixth year at Jacksonville.

CLASS, REGION:

Class 4A, Region 5

LAST YEAR:

8-2 overall, 6-1 region. The Golden Eagles finished second in their region and lost to Cordova in a first-round playoff game.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

Jacksonville started 8-0 before losing the de facto region championship game to Cherokee County then the playoff game against Cordova. Top backs Niko Richmond and Taye Akles each suffered a broken wrist in the Cherokee County game and played hurt after that, and other injuries affected depth late. "It's one of those things where things kind of hit at the wrong time of the year, as far as injuries and stuff, but it was a really good year. We just didn't finish kind of the way we wanted to," Smith said.

RETURNING STARTERS:

QB Colton Clark, Sr.; C Cole Gaddy, Jr.; WR-RB-CB Tahj Kirkland, Sr.; DL Jamel Mays, Sr.; DL Josh Bell, Jr.; DL Tae Loud, Jr.; MLB Josh Glass, Sr.; LB Ben Patterson, Sr.; LB Blake Morris, Sr.;

OUR TAKE:

Jacksonville lost four of five offensive linemen and both running backs, Richmond and Akles, but transfers Macy Carr (RB, White Plains) and Jacoby Calloway (WR, Oxford) should help right away. The Golden Eagles have an experienced quarterback in Clark and returning core on defense. If they stay healthy, they can make a run.

WORD FROM COACH SMITH:

"We've got a lot of young guys, especially on the offensive side of the ball, but it's just a matter of them getting experience. I think they'll be able to step in and do a good job."

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Trinity (H)

Sept. 1, Alexandria (A)
Sept. 8, Saks (A)*
Sept. 15, Hokes Bluff (H)*
Sept. 22, Anniston (A)*
Sept. 29, Loachapoka (H)
Oct. 6, Ashville (A)*
Oct. 13, Oneonta (H)*
Oct. 20, White Plains (A)*
Oct. 27, Cherokee County (H)*
Nov. 3, OPEN

*Class 4A, Region 5 games

2016 RESULTS

Aug. 19, Trinity (A), W, 31-3 Aug. 26, Alexandria (H), W, 28-14 Sept. 2, Saks (H), W, 63-24 Sept. 9, Hokes Bluff (A), W, 31-27 Sept. 16, Anniston (H), W, 37-14 Sept. 23, OPEN Sept. 30, Ashville (H), W, 23-13 Oct. 7, Oneonta (A), W, 16-0 Oct. 14, White Plains (H), W, 60-20 Oct. 21, Cherokee County (A), L, 35-21 Oct. 28, OPEN

Playoffs Nov. 4, Cordova (H), L, 46-23



Bill Wilson/The Anniston Star/File

OHATCHEE

HEAD COACH:

Scott Martin, 43-35 overall entering eighth year since moving from Louisiana, 17-17 entering fourth year at Ohatchee.

CLASS. REGION:

Class: 3A, Region 5.

LAST YEAR:

12-2 overall, 5-1 region. The Indians finished second in their region and reached the semifinals, where they lost to Piedmont.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

The Indians had their best season since winning a 1A state title in 1977 and scored a school-record 589 points, somewhat overshadowing a strong defense that posted two shutouts and held five opponents to seven or fewer points. Both losses came to eventual state champion Piedmont. Good luck with injuries and 16 seniors helped as a group of players that grew up in Martin's system matured.

RETURNING STARTERS:

RT Jarrett Ford, Sr.; LG Aric Goude, Sr.; RB-CB Jessie Sellers, Sr.; K Gage Harrell, Jr.; LB Austin Duncan, Sr.; LB Cam McCombs, Jr.; CB Kevin Williamson, Sr.; S Grayson Alward, Sr.

OUR TAKE:

Departed quarterback Taylor Eubanks and running back Austin Tucker were responsible for 65 of Ohatchee's 79 offensive touchdowns last season, and that doesn't cover what the Indians lost in other areas. Martin has a lot to replace but has also had time to raise younger players in his system. Several got playing time in mop-up roles last season. Expect that and a winning mindset to carry forward with Alward at quarterback and more of a rotation at running back and more passing, if necessary, this season.

WORD FROM COACH MARTIN:

"The team is not changing. We're built on the same core building blocks that we build every football team on. We're going to stress fundamentals on offense and defense, not turning the ball over, forcing turnovers and playing with a lot of effort. The names and the numbers change, but the ideas of what we're playing for don't change."

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Ragland (H)
Sept. 1, White Plains (A)
Sept. 8, Randolph County (H)*
Sept. 15, Pleasant Valley (A)*
Sept. 22, Weaver (H)*
Sept. 29, Ashville (A)
Oct. 6, Wellborn (A)*
Oct. 13, OPEN
Oct. 20, Piedmont (A)*

Oct. 27, Glencoe (H)* **Nov. 2,** Pisgah (H)

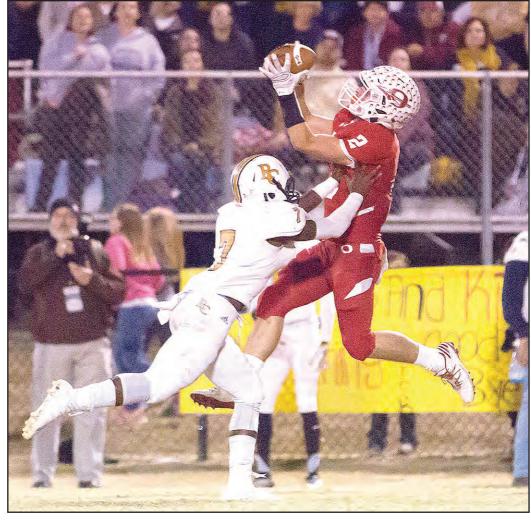
*Class 3A, Region 5 games

2016 RESULTS

Aug. 19, Ragland (A), W, 52-19 Aug. 26, White Plains (H), W, 68-14 Sept. 2, Randolph County (A), W, 34-6 Sept. 9, Pleasant Valley (H), W, 47-7 Sept. 16, Weaver (A), W, 41-21 Sept. 23, Ashville (H), W, 54-20 Sept. 30, Wellborn (H), W, 21-0 Oct. 7, OPEN Oct. 14, Piedmont (H), L, 45-35 Oct. 21, Glencoe (A), W, 40-7 Oct. 27, Pisgah (A), W, 42-22

Playoffs

Nov. 4, Locust Fork (H), W, 49-28 Nov. 11, Lauderdale County (A), W, 49-21 Nov. 18, Randolph County (H), W, 31-0 Nov. 25, Piedmont (A), L, 53-26



Kirsten Fiscus/The Anniston Star/File

Ohatchee's Jessie Sellers (2) is expected to be a big-play performer for the Indians.

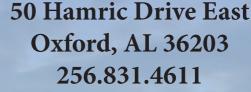


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OXFORD

HEAD COACH:

Ryan Herring, 74-48 entering 12th year overall, 28-17 entering fifth year at Oxford.

CLASS, REGION:

Class: 6A, Region 7.

LAST YEAR:

10-1 overall, 6-0 region. The Yellow Jackets finished first in their region, and lost in the first round of the playoffs to Muscle Shoals.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

Coming off a 3-7 season in 2015, Oxford posted only its fifth 10-0 regular season in school history. Late-season injuries had an impact on an early playoff exit. "We are very proud of those guys. Got the injury bug late in the season, but still felt like we had more to prove," Herring said.

RETURNING STARTERS:

QB Abe Peoples, Jr.; RB Tyetus Smith-Lindsey, Jr.; WR Dave Russell, Sr.; OT Clay Webb, Jr.; OG Trey Latham, Sr.; DE Matthew Muncher, Sr.; LB Brody Syer, Sr.; LB Cross Davis, Jr.; S Jordan Swain, Sr.; CB Junito Allen, Sr.; CB Asante Ferrell, Jr..

OUR TAKE:

The Yellow Jackets will naturally miss departed stars like linebacker K.J. Britt, now at Auburn, but with Peoples and Lindsey back to lead the offense and Webb there to create the holes, there are plenty of reasons to believe Oxford can be strong again this year. The key to putting a postseason run on top of a great regular season will be staying healthy.

WORD FROM COACH HERRING:

"The pieces are in place to have another strong season and, possibly, stay healthier and carry past the first round of the playoffs. The season holds a lot of possibilities for the Yellow Jackets. This team has a lot of character and has really worked hard since last season to give itself a chance to play real physical football."

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Hillcrest-Tuscaloosa (H)

Sept. 1, Gadsden City (H)

Sept. 8, Brewer $(A)^*$

Sept. 15, Cullman (H)*

Sept. 22, Albertville (A)*

Sept. 29, Benjamin Russell (A)

Oct. 6, Southside-Gadsden (H)*

Oct. 13, Fort Payne (A)*

Oct. 20, Pell City (H)*

Oct. 27, OPEN

Nov. 3, Sumter Central (H)

*Class 6A, Region 7 games

2016 RESULTS

Aug. 19, Talladega (H), W, 27-6

Aug. 26, Gadsden City (A), W, 22-10

Sept. 2, Brewer (H), W, 44-19

Sept. 9, Cullman (A), **W, 52-28**

Sept. 16, Albertville (H), **W, 44-0**

Sept. 23, Benjamin Russell (H), W, 29-21

Sept. 30, Southside-Gadsden (A), W, 24-21

Oct. 7, Fort Payne (H), W, 35-10

Oct. 14, Pell City (A), W, 37-3

Oct. 21, OPEN

Oct. 28, Sumter Central (H), W, 41-0

Playoffs

Nov. 4, Muscle Shoals (H), L, 31-17



Kirsten Fiscus/The Anniston Star/File

Oxford running back Tyetus Smith-Lindsey returns after a big season in 2016.

PIEDMONT

HEAD COACH:

Steve Smith, 208-68 entering 23rd year, 123-23 entering 12th year at Piedmont.

CLASS, REGION:

Class 3A, Region 5

LAST YEAR:

15-0 overall, 6-0 region. The Bulldogs finished first in their region and won the 3A state title for the second year in a row and third time under Smith.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

It couldn't have gone any better for Piedmont. The Bulldogs were one of only three Alabama high school teams to go unbeaten. Class 2A Fyffe and 1A Maplesville also went without a loss in 2016. Maybe the Bulldogs' biggest challenge came from Calhoun County and Region 5 foe Ohatchee. Piedmont won a knockdown, drag-out regular-season meeting 45-35. It's a credit to the two teams that both recovered and neither lost until a semifinal meeting, which Piedmont took 53-26. The Bulldogs' 10-point win over Mobile Christian in the state finals wasn't as close as the score might show.

RETURNING STARTERS:

WR T.J. Fairs, Jr.; WR Darien Bossie, Sr.; OL Blake Headrick, Sr.; OL Cole Chasteen, Sr.; RB Lee Stanley, Sr.; DE Gavin Kircus, Sr.; DE Matthew Thornton, Jr.; NT Logan Beadles, Sr.; LB Logan Smith, Jr.; CB Kaedon Jenkins, Jr.; CB Cardavion Myers, Sr.; SS Taylor Morrow, Sr.; FS Carl Myers, Jr.

OUR TAKE:

Returning some good players who have been starters or significant contributors on state-championship teams for the past two seasons. The Bulldogs have good young players who have been waiting their turn to play a larger role. How quickly they can fill the voids of the talented-but-departed players from the past two years will go a long way to determining Piedmont's fate. The Bulldogs also need leaders to emerge for this team to have its own identity.

WORD FROM COACH SMITH:

"I don't look for a whole lot of what we do to change. Personnel, everybody graduates players, and everybody has to replace personnel, but we've got an identity that we kind of hang our hat on, and I don't look for that to change. Obviously, different styles of players, but we've had different styles of quarterbacks in the past,"

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Rockmart (at Cedartown, Ga.)
Sept. 1, Cherokee County (H)
Sept. 8, Glencoe (H)*

Sept. 15, Randolph County (A)* **Sept. 22,** Pleasant Valley (H)*

Sept. 29, Leeds (A)

Oct. 6, Weaver (A)*

Oct. 13, Wellborn (H)*

Oct. 20, Ohatchee (H)*

Oct. 27, OPEN

Nov. 3, Oneonta (A)

*-Class 3A, Region 5 game

2016 RESULTS

Aug. 19, Cedartown (Ga.) (H), W, 29-22 Aug. 26, Cherokee County (A), W, 35-21 Sept. 2, Glencoe (A), W, 33-0 Sept. 9, Randolph County (H), W, 42-14

Sept. 16, Pleasant Valley (A), **W, 48-18**

Sept. 22, Leeds (H), W, 29-14 Sept. 30, Weaver (H), W, 49-15

Oct. 7, Wellborn (A), W, 47-16

Oct. 14, Ohatchee (A), W, 45-35

Oct. 21, OPEN

Oct. 28, Oneonta (H), W, 45-9

Playoffs

Nov. 4, Holly Pond (H), W, 55-26 Nov. 11, Colbert County (H), W, 38-21 Nov. 18, Weaver (H), W, 52-28 Nov. 25, Ohatchee (H), W, 53-26 Dec. 1, Mobile Christian (Auburn), W, 22-12



Stephen Gross/The Anniston Star/File

Cardavion Myers is set to take over at quarterback for two-time defending state champion Piedmont.

The Anniston Star

PLEASANT VALLEY

HEAD COACH:

Jonathan Nix, 39-46 entering ninth year overall, 2-18 entering second year at Pleasant Valley.

CLASS, REGION:

Class: 3A, Region 5.

LAST YEAR:

2-8 overall, 0-6 region. The Raiders finished last in their region.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

Sometimes, progress doesn't show in record. The Raiders started 2-0 after going winless in 2015 then lost eight in a row, including all six region games. Word from coaches that faced Pleasant Valley the past two years is the Raiders improved more than two wins would show in the second year under Nix. They just played in a region that saw all four playoff qualifiers reach the state quarterfinals.

RETURNING STARTERS:

RB Reagan King, Sr.; WR-DB Caden Turner, Sr.; OL Adam Freeman, Sr.; RB Ethan Borders, Sr.; DL Carson Brazier, Jr.; DL Colby Nelson, So.; S Nic Smith, Sr.; LB Alex Parris, Jr.; LB Colton East, So.; LB Ashton King, So.

OUR TAKE:

Pleasant Valley has a long hill to climb to contend for a playoff spot in the brutal Class 3A, Region 5, but it's not beyond the pale to think the Raiders could have a say in things this year. They're in their third year under a coach who knows how to win, and they seem ready to take an improved mindset onto the field. The Raiders won't be as easy an out as they have been.

WORD FROM COACH NIX:

"Keys for us is to play with grit for 48 minutes and not beat ourself with mental mistakes. We are in the toughest region in the state 1A-7A. We have to take each game one at a time! Sixtytwo percent of our varsity team is sophomores or younger. This means our older kids have to do a great job of leading, and the younger kids have to grow up fast. As long as we work hard and keep team brotherhood, all the other pieces will fall into place."

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Vincent (A)

Sep. 1, Gaston (A)

Sept. 8, Wellborn (A)*

Sept. 15, Ohatchee (H)*

Sept. 22, Piedmont (A)*

Sept. 29, OPEN

Oct. 6, Glencoe (H)*

Oct. 13, Randolph County (H)*

Oct. 20, West End-Walnut Grove (H)

Oct. 27, Weaver (A)*

Nov. 3, Spring Garden (H)

*Class 3A, Region 5 games

2016 RESULTS

Aug. 19, Vincent (H), W, 42-0

Aug. 26, Gaston (H), W, 30-14

Sept. 2, Wellborn (H), L, 42-7

Sept. 9, Ohatchee (A), L, 47-7

Sept. 16, Piedmont (H), L, 48-18

Sept. 23, West End (A), L, 27-25

Sept. 30, Glencoe (A), L, 31-6

Oct. 7, Randolph County (A), L, 41-13

Oct. 14, OPEN

Oct. 21, Weaver (H), L, 44-0

Oct. 28, Spring Garden (A), L, 36-27





Bill Wilson/The Anniston Star/File

Pleasant Valley's Ethan Borders will help pace the Raiders' ground game.

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Friday, August 18, 2017 Page 17

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SAKS

HEAD COACH:

Jonathan Miller, 45-14 overall entering sixth year overall, all at Saks.

CLASS, REGION:

Class 4A, Region 5

LAST YEAR:

6-5 overall, 5-2 region. The Wildcats finished third in their region. They lost a first-round playoff game to Fayette County.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

Last season, the Wildcats were inconsistent. "We played like an inexperienced football team. We learned a lot of lessons and gained valuable experience that will help us this year with so many of our guys returning," Miller said.

RETURNING STARTERS:

Q LaDerrick Bell, Sr.; WR Brent Clark, Sr.; WR Rodolfo Torres, Sr.; WR Eley Downes, Sr.; OL Jordan Brooks, Sr.; OL Marreo Thomas, Jr.; OL-DL Dawson Wells, Sr.; LB Kaynan Mays, Sr.; LB Will Fletcher, Sr.; LB Jadarrius Griffin, Sr.; DB Amarea Abney, Sr.; DB Allston McLaughlin, Sr.; DB Brent Clark, Sr.

OUR TAKE:

Saks went young last year after losing several senior starters from 2015, and gained experience. The Wildcats return a lot of starters, including one of the area's top quarterbacks. Expect Saks to challenge for a region title and possibly have a team that can go deep in the playoffs.

WORD FROM COACH MILLER:

"We play Wellborn and Jacksonville the first two weeks of the season, so we will know a lot about our team after those two games. Our region should be tough again this year, so it will be beneficial for us to get off to a good start,"

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Jamboree (H)
Sept. 1, Wellborn (A)
Sept. 8, Jacksonville (H)*
Sept. 15, White Plains (A)*
Sept. 22, Ashville (H)*
Sept. 29, Saint Clair County (A)
Oct. 6, Cherokee County (H)*
Oct. 13, Anniston (A)*
Oct. 20, Oneonta (H)*
Oct. 27, Hokes Bluff (A)*

*Class 4A, Region 5 games

Nov. 3, Weaver (A)

2016 RESULTS

Aug. 26, Wellborn (H), L, 26-21 Sept. 2, Jacksonville (A), L, 63-24 Sept. 9, White Plains (H), W, 51-6 Sept. 16, Ashville (A), W, 39-6 Sept. 23, St. Clair County (H), W, 37-0 Sept. 30, Cherokee County (A), L, 30-7 Oct. 7, Anniston (H), W, 28-12 Oct. 14, Oneonta (A), W, 27-24 Oct. 21, Hokes Bluff (H), W, 34-28 Oct. 28, Weaver (A), L, 34-21

Playoffs Nov. 4, Fayette County (A), L, 20-7



Bill Wilson/The Anniston Star/File

LaDerrick Bell is back for his second year as Saks' starting quarterback.

WEAVER

HEAD COACH:

Daryl Hamby, 38-40 entering eighth year, all at Weaver.

CLASS, REGION:

Class: 3A, Region 5.

LAST YEAR:

9-4 overall, 3-3 region. The Bearcats finished fourth in their region and reached the playoff quarterfinals, where they lost to Piedmont.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

Playing in a beast of a region, Weaver had one of its best seasons, reaching the 3A quarterfinals. It was the Bearcats' deepest playoff run since 2005. This despite losing line-backer Giovanni Mosley to a season-ending injury in the fifth game and tight end Cody Ortiz in a playoff victory at Fultondale. Weaver could have won a lot of 3A regions, but realignment put it up against three other state quarterfinalists.

RETURNING STARTERS:

QB Dalton Hamby, Sr.; RT Riley Benavides, Sr.; WR-DB London Knight, Sr.; LB-FB Caleb Allison, Jr.; WR-DB Robert Gaines, Jr.; RB Shamar Spinks, Jr.

OUR TAKE:

In one of the state's top regions, Weaver must replace key performers like Mosley, Ortiz, Paul Hubbard, Tyrik Hall, Kyle Clapper, Matt Elston and Maurice Goodman. The Bearcats return some good players, though. They also have an experienced quarterback in Dalton Hamby, who has that "it" factor as a leader. Expect easily the best four seed in last season's 3A playoffs to be in the hunt for its fifth consecutive playoff berth and seventh in eight years.

WORD FROM COACH HAMBY:

"We've got some unanswered questions. We feel good about a lot of things, but we don't know until we get out there and start hitting and playing and see what they can do."

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Hayden (A)

Sept. 1, B.B. Comer (H)

Sept. 8, OPEN

Sept. 15, Wellborn (H)*

Sept. 22, Ohatchee (A)*

Sept. 29, Locust Fork (H)

Oct. 6, Piedmont (H)*

Oct. 13, Glencoe (A)*

Oct. 20, Randolph County (A)*

Oct. 27, Pleasant Valley (H)*

Nov. 3, Saks (A)

*Class 3A, Region 5 games

2016 RESULTS

Aug. 19, Hayden (H), W, **42-21**

Aug. 26, B.B. Comer (A), W, 49-8

Sept. 2, OPEN

Sept. 9, Wellborn (A), **W, 27-6**

Sept. 16, Ohatchee (H), **L, 41-21**

Sept. 23, Locust Fork (A), W, 30-10

Sept. 30, Piedmont (A), **L, 49-15 Oct. 7,** Glencoe (H), **W, 34-15**

Oct. 14, Randolph County (H), L, 61-41

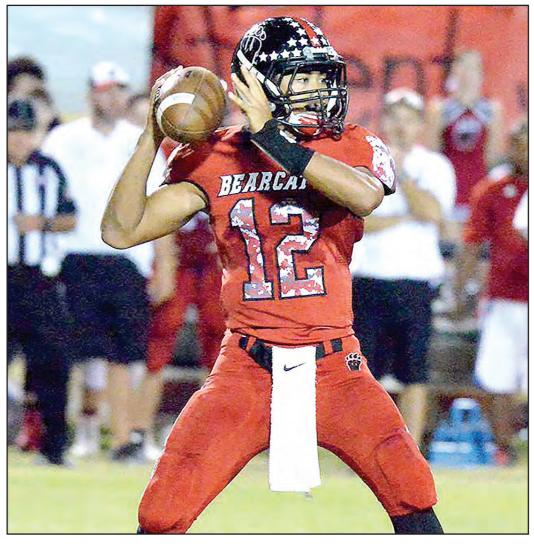
Oct. 21, Pleasant Valley (A), W, 44-0

Oct. 28, Saks (H), W, 34-21

Playoffs

Nov. 4, Fultondale (A), W, 37-7 Nov. 11, Lexington (H), W, 42-0 Nov. 18, Piedmont (A), L, 52-28





Bill Wilson/The Anniston Star/File

Page 20 Friday, August 18, 2017







WELLBORN

HEAD COACH:

Jeff Smith, 131-89 entering 21st year overall, 55-34 entering ninth year at Wellborn.

CLASS, REGION:

Class: 3A, Region 5.

LAST YEAR:

5-4 overall, 2-4 region. The Panthers finished fifth in their region and missed the playoffs for the first time since 2008. An overtime loss to Randolph County in the final region game seal their fate.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

The Panthers lost to Randolph County in overtime, and that loss made them the odd team out of the playoff picture in arguably the state's toughest region. The Panthers have been to playoffs seven out of eight seasons under Smith. The Panthers have won 55 games in that span.

RETURNING STARTERS:

QB Austin McQueen, Sr.; TE Dylan Grubbs, Sr.; RB-LB Javian Thomas, Sr.; RB-DB Kederick Harris, Sr.; RB-DL Jamyron Curry, Sr.; WR-DB Walker Hayes, Sr.

OUR TAKE:

Wellborn is always competitive. The Panthers could have won some 3A regions last year or, at least, made the playoffs in most but wound up outside looking up at four eventual quarterfinalists, two semifinalists and a state champion. They'll miss Jordan Montgomery, but other 3A, Region 5 teams lost a lot, as well. Wellborn took the team that returns the most to overtime last season. Expect to see the Panthers in the thick of the playoff race again this year.

WORD FROM COACH SMITH:

"Expect a combination of very experienced seniors with muchtalented underclassmen that will be moving up. Expect a playoff battle in a very tough 3A region."

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 24, North Jackson (at JSU)

Sept. 1, Saks (H)

Sept. 8, Pleasant Valley (H)*

Sept. 15, Weaver (A)*

Sept. 22, OPEN

Sept. 29, Talladega (A)

Oct. 6, Ohatchee (A)*

Oct. 13, Piedmont (H)*

Oct. 20, Glencoe (A)*

Oct. 27, Randolph County (H)*

Nov. 2, White Plains (A)

*Class 3A, Region 5 games

2016 RESULTS

Aug. 26, Saks (A), W, 26-21

Sept. 2, Pleasant Valley (A), W, 42-7

Sept. 9, Weaver (H), L, 27-6

Sept. 16, OPEN

Sept. 23, Talladega (H), **W, 14-6**

Sept. 30, Ohatchee (A), L, 21-0

Oct. 7, Piedmont (H), L, 47-16

Oct. 14, Glencoe (H), W, 35-28

Oct. 21, Randolph County (A), L, 28-27

Oct. 27, White Plains (H), W, 62-13





Stephen Gross/The Anniston Star/File

Austin McQueen is back for his senior season at quarterback for Wellborn.

WHITE PLAINS

HEAD COACH:

Chris White, 1-19 entering third year, all at White Plains.

CLASS, REGION:

Class 4A, Region 5

LAST YEAR:

0-10, finished last in region.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

No way to sugarcoat it. The Wildcats were 0-10, averaging 13 points a game and giving up 45. White Plains tied a school record for losses in a season and set records points allowed in a season and a game (68, Ohatchee). White Plains had its moments of competitiveness, however, against programs with good names, including a 21-14 loss to Oneonta and a 21-19 heartbreaker against Westbrook Christian.

RETURNING STARTERS:

RB-LB Charlie Huey, Sr.; RB-LB James Elrod, Sr.; DB-RB Garrison Abbott, Jr.; TE-LB Austin Bussey, Sr.; QB Ryan Bannister, Sr.; LB-RB Walker Surrett, Sr.; LB Austin Farley, Sr.; OL-DL Caleb Knight, Sr.; OL-DL Jake Spivey, Jr.; OL-DL Riley Dothard, Jr.; OL-DL Jacob Briggs, Sr.; OL-DL Tanner Kughn, Jr.

OUR TAKE:

White Plains lost one of its better players when Macy Carr transferred to Jacksonville, but the Wildcats picked up four promising newcomers, including wingback Pat Harris from Wellborn. White spent the summer talking to state-championship coaches and has brought advice into the program, looking to establish a mindset. The Wildcats have gotten stronger in the weight room and look to be a tougher out this year.

WORD FROM COACH MILLER:

"We feel like we have put together a team that will compete this year. Really anxious to see how our work in the weight room will carry over to our performance on the field. We have a couple of new faces that I feel like will help our team. If we will take this attitude we have created throughout the fall, we can open some eyes."

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Woodland (A)

Sept. 1, Ohatchee (H)

Sept. 8, Oneonta (A)*

Sept. 15, Saks (H)*

Sept. 22, Hokes Bluff (A)*

Sept. 29, Westbrook Christian (H)

Oct. 6, Anniston (H)*

Oct. 13, Cherokee County (A)*

Oct. 20, Jacksonville (H)*

Oct. 27, Ashville (A)*

Nov. 2, Wellborn (H)

*Class 4A, Region 5 games

2016 RESULTS

Aug. 26, Ohatchee (A), L, 68-14

Sept. 2, Oneonta (H), **L, 21-14**

Sept. 9, Saks (A), L, **51-6**

Sept. 16, Hokes Bluff (H), **L, 41-0**

Sept. 23, Westbrook Christian (A), L, 21-19

Sept. 30, Anniston (A), **L, 55-13**

Oct. 7, Cherokee County (H), L, 37-7

Oct. 14, Jacksonville (A), L, 60-20

Oct. 21, Ashville (H), L, 35-21

Oct. 27, Wellborn (A), L, 62-13



Kirsten Fiscus/The Anniston Star/File

In his third season, White Plains coach Chris White has taken steps to turn around his program.

CLAY-CENTRAL

CLEBURNE COUNTY

HANDLEY LINCOLN

HEAD COACH:

Kris Herron, 66-23 entering eighth year, 33-15 entering fifth year at Clay-Central.

CLASS, REGION:

Class 5A, Region 4

LAST YEAR:

9-3 overall, 6-0 region. The Volunteers finished first in their region and lost to St. Paul's in a second-round playoff game.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

The Vols were competitive, as always, but ran up against the buzz saw that is St. Paul's in the playoffs, falling by a school-record 34 points (48-14). They also gave up a school-record 50 points to Handley and 265 points on the season, unusual for Herron, who coached great defenses both at Clay County and now the combined Clay Central. Still, Clay Central handed eventual state champion Beauregard its lone loss on the season en route to a 6-0 finish in region play

RETURNING STARTERS:

QB Ben Street, Sr.; RB Camerun Peoples, Sr.; WR-CB LaShawn Simmons, Sr.; TE Cole Burns, Sr.; NT Jaylon Bass, Jr.; DE Quan McKinney, Sr.; LB JoJo Brannock, Sr.; SS Paul Garrett, Jr.; FS Shamari Simmons, Jr.; K-P Dawson Harry, Sr

OUR TAKE:

Central has a good group of skill position players but all-new starters on the offensive line, though several played last season. Defensively, the Vols return starters on all three levels and game-tested players to fill in openings. Expect another competitive team with a more Herron-like defense, thanks to experience.

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Munford (H)

Sept. 1, at Benjamin Russell (A)

Sept. 8, Valley (H)*

Sept. 15, at Eufaula (A)

ocpt. 10, at Latatia (11)

Sept. 22, at Cleburne County (A)*

Sept. 29, OPEN

Oct. 6, Lincoln High School (A)*

Oct. 13, at Beauregard (A)*

Oct. 20, Sylacauga (H)*

Oct. 26, at Talladega (A)*

Nov. 3, Handley (A)

*Class 5A, Region 4 games

HEAD COACH:

Michael Shortt, 141-78 entering 20th year, all at Cleburne County.

CLASS, REGION:

Class 5A, Region 4

LAST YEAR:

 $2\mbox{-}8$ overall, $2\mbox{-}4$ region. The Tigers finished fifth in their region.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

"Well it did not go too well. Lost eight starters to leaving the team or injuries. Ended the season with six freshmen starting at some position. Now, they are 10th graders. Lost four games by seven points or less," Shortt said.

RETURNING STARTERS:

QB Brock Swafford, Sr.; RB Trevor Houston, Sr.; WR-S Nick Dunston, Sr.; OL Alex Bolden, Sr.; OL Ryan Day, Sr.; S Isiviah Brown, Jr.; S Will Morrow, Jr.; CB Cade Smith, Jr.; LB Cale Dingler, So.; LB Michiah Ross, So.; LB Christian Seale, So.; LB Graham Cheatwood, Sr.; DL Gage Harcrow, So.

OUR TAKE:

Cleburne County made it to the finals of the Piedmont Passing Camp, coming from behind to beat the host team in the semifinals. With sharp new uniforms featuring Tiger claw marks, expect a more typical team as a perennially successful program claws back from a tough year.

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Jamboree (H)

Sept. 1, Leeds (A)

Sept. 8, Talladega (H)*

Sept. 15, Valley (A)*

Sept. 22, Clay-Central (H)*

Sept. 29, Alexandria (A)

Oct. 6, Randolph County (A)

Oct. 12, Lincoln (A)*

Oct. 20, Beauregard (H)*

Oct. 27, Sylacauga (A)*

Nov. 3, Fyffe (H)

*Class 5A, Region 4 games

HEAD COACH:

Larry Strain, 123-91 entering 19th year, 21-5 entering third year at Handley.

CLASS, REGION:

Class 4A, Region 3

LAST YEAR:

13-2 overall, 6-1 region. The Tigers finished first in their region and won the Class 4A state title.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

What it year for Handley, which won its second state title in five years and first in 4A. Both times, they beat Madison Academy in the final. The Tigers opened 0-2 then went on a 13-game winning streak, including an amazing playoff run, including wins at UMS Wright, Thomasville and Andalusia. As Strain puts it, "Handley played the who's who of class 4A and beat Madison Academy 30-7 in the championship game."

RETURNING STARTERS:

C-DE Corey Arrington, Sr.; DT Tykeon Wilkes, Sr.

OUR TAKE:

It's a tall order to expect any program to replace 27 seniors from a state-championship team, including 20 starters, but Strain is the coach to do it. He took just two years to win a state title Handley, a program that always has athletes, so don't be surprised to see him coaching when the weather turns cold this year.

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, OPEN

Sept. 1, OPEN

Sept. 8, Tallassee (H)*

Sept. 15, at Elmore County (A)*

Sept. 22, Leeds (H)*

Sept. 29, Lanett (H)

Oct. 6, Childersburg (H)*

Oct. 13, at Munford (A)*

Oct. 20, Dadeville (H)*

Oct. 27, Holtville (A)*

Nov. 3, Clay-Central (A)

*Class 4A, Region 3 games

HEAD COACH:

Matt Zedaker, 0-0 (first year).

CLASS. REGION:

Class 5A, Region 4

LAST YEAR:

4-8 overall, 3-3 region; the Golden Bears finished fourth in their region and lost to Jackson in a second-round playoff game.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

The Golden Bears moved into a very tough region, and it showed as they lost five of their first seven games. It showed most on defense, where Lincoln gave up a school-record 394 points. Yet, the Golden Bears finished strong and found their way into the playoffs.

RETURNING STARTERS:

RB Montrell Johnson, Sr.; LB Eddie Leonard, Sr.; WR Quin Carter, Sr.; DT Rell Howard, Sr.; QB-LB Garrett Vick, Sr.; QB-S Earl Wells, Sr.; LB-RB Jarrod McBurnett, Jr. OL/DL Dalton Gowers, Jr.; K Nick Pope, Jr.

OUR TAKE:

Once again, Lincoln starts over with a new coach, its fifth since Keith Howard died in 2009. The Golden Bears have had three winning seasons since then but made the playoffs six times. It's a program with athletes, and they showed toughness in how they finished 2016. If they can carry that momentum forward and click with another new coach, there's no reason to think they can't make the playoffs again.

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, at Leeds (A)

Sept. 1, Saint Clair County (H)

Sept. 8, Sylacauga (H)*

Sept. 15, at Talladega (A)*

Sept. 22, Valley (H)*

Sept. 29, at Munford (A)

Oct. 6, Clay-Central (A)*

Oct. 12, Cleburne County (H)*

Oct. 19, OPEN

Oct. 26, at Beauregard (A)*

Nov. 3, Hayden (H)

*Class 5A, Region 4 games

MUNFORD

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SPRING GARDEN

HEAD COACH:

Bill Smith, 51-39 entering ninth year, 16-9 entering third year at Munford.

CLASS, REGION:

Class 4A, Region 3

LAST YEAR:

6-5 overall, 5-2 region. The Lions finished fourth in their region and lost a firstround playoff game to Bibb County.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

Injuries hurt Munford at the end of 2016. Quarterback Avery Harris rolled his ankle in the next-to-last regular-season game against Leeds, and the injury affected his play going forward. Top defensive end/running back Tacorrie Russell sustained a season-ending knee injury against Leeds, as well. Inconsistency was a year-long problem.

RETURNING STARTERS:

OL Jeffrey Threatt, Sr.; OL Luke Gaither, Sr.; OL Brody Bussie, Sr.; OL Jacob Smith, Sr.; WR Tanner Reeves, Sr. (will move to QB); WR Zay Britt, So.; RB-WR Carson Smith, Sr.; WR Marshall Clark, Sr.; CB Christian Ousley, Sr; CB Tyreke Kite, Sr.; S Kyle Ross, Jr.; DB Draven Campbell, Sr.; LB Pernell Mitchell, Jr.; DT Dylan Campbell, Sr.; DE Ethan Leahey, Sr.

OUR TAKE:

Munford lost Harris and offensive lineman Jakari Robinson to graduation, and Russell is at Oxford. Also gone is wide receiver La'raie Ball and linebacker Jimbo Stone, among others. The Lions also play in a tough 4A region that includes defending state champion Handley and back-to-back state champion Leeds (2014, 2015). Still, the Lions are talented. If they avoid injuries and chemistry issues, they'll be in the hunt.

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Clay-Central (A)

Sept. 1, OPEN

Sept. 8, Dadeville (H)*

Sept. 15, at Holtville (A)*

Sept. 22, Tallassee (H)*

Sept. 29, Lincoln (H)

Oct. 6, at Elmore County (A)*

Oct. 13, Handley (H)*

Oct. 20, at Childersburg (A)*

Oct. 27, at Leeds (A)*

Nov. 3, at Cordova (A)

*Class 4A, Region 3 games

HEAD COACH:

Stephen Bailey, 2-8 entering second year, all at Ranburne.

CLASS. REGION:

Class 2A, Region 5

LAST YEAR:

2-8 overall, 2-5 region. The Bulldogs finished sixth in their region.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

The Bulldogs began to rebuild in Bailey's first year replacing Chad Young, who went 101-80 over 17 and produced double-digit-win seasons in 2013, 2014 and 2015. Ranburne's 2016 season included close losses to Reeltown (20-17), Fayetteville (40-26) and Gaston (25-17). Bailey's team played as many 12 freshmen and sophomores throughout the season, with 10 starting at some point.

RETURNING STARTERS:

OL-DL Brock Young, Jr.; OL-LB Brennen Gaines, Jr.; C Lee Jackson, Sr.; RB-WR-CB Jake Burson, Jr.; WR-S Josh Ralston, Jr.; TE-LB Landon Woodard, Sr.; RB-LB Sam Calvert, Sr.; RB-LB Aaron Benefield, Sr.; CB Bradley Martin, Sr.; DE Brady Bailey, Jr.

OUR TAKE:

Five sophomores QB-DB Tye Bailey, LB Spencer Jordan, TE-DE Caleb Hornsby, RB-LB Damon Calhoun and LB Hunter Hollis also saw playing time last season, but the Bulldogs have few juniors and seniors and have low numbers overall. They must stay healthy and build off of last season's experiences. Ranburne got everyone's attention by making the semifinals of the Piedmont Passing Camp, so expect the Bulldogs to be competitive for a playoff berth.

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, OPEN

Sept. 1, OPEN

Sept. 8, at Fayetteville (A)*

Sept. 15, Woodland (H)*

Sept. 22, Horseshoe Bend (H)*

Sept. 29, at Gaston (A)

Oct. 6, at Reeltown (A)*

Oct. 13, Lanett (H)*

Oct. 20, LaFayette (H)*

Oct. 27, at Vincent (A)*

Nov. 3, Randolph County (H)

*Class 2A, Region 5 games

HEAD COACH:

Pat Prestridge, 106-65 entering 16th year, 89-42 entering 12th year at Randolph

CLASS, REGION:

Class 3A, Region 5

LAST YEAR:

10-3 overall, 4-2 region. The Tigers finished third in their region and reached the playoff quarterfinals, where they lost to Ohatchee.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

Randolph County was young in 2016 and just up from 2A, yet finished third in one of the state's toughest regions. All three of the Tigers' losses were to eventual state champion Piedmont (once) and semifinalist Ohatchee (twice). Their quarterfinal loss at Ohatchee ended a nine-game winning streak.

RETURNING STARTERS:

RB Trent Lane, Jr.; QB-WR-CB Andrew Prestridge, Sr.; WR-CB Tre Terrell, Sr.; RB-LB Aaron Knight, Jr.; FB-LB Jay Wright, So.; WR LaDarius Calloway, Sr.; OL-DL Richard Bledsoe, Sr.; OL Nick Sims, So.; OL-DL-LB T.J. Sims, Jr.; OL-DE Stephen Akins, Jr.; OL C.J. Pinkard, Jr.; OL-DL Seth Goodson, Jr.; TE-DE E.J. Clark, Sr.; DL Tyler Pressley, Jr.; LB Jagar Anthony, Sr.; CB Donte Davenport, Sr.; S Damarcus Davis, So.

OUR TAKE:

Consensus is that Randolph County is the favorite in the brutal Class 3A, Region 5. After reclassifying up from 2A, the Tigers were one of four teams from the region to make the quarterfinals last season. They return most of their team, while Piedmont, Ohatchee and Weaver have several key players to replace. Randolph County also plays Piedmont and Weaver at home this season.

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 25, Wadley High School (H)

Sept. 1, Barbour County (H)

Sept. 8, Ohatchee (A)*

Sept. 15, Piedmont (H)*

Sept. 22, Glencoe (A)*

Sept. 29, Woodland (H)

Oct. 6, Cleburne County (H)

Oct. 13, Pleasant Valley (A)*

Oct. 20, Weaver High School (H)*

Oct. 27, Walter Wellborn (A)*

Nov. 3, Ranburne (A)

*Class 3A, Region 5 games

HEAD COACH:

Jason Howard, 71-80 entering 15th year, 37-20 entering 13th year at Spring Garden.

CLASS. REGION:

Class 1A, Region 6

LAST YEAR:

10-2 overall, 5-1 region. The Panthers finished second in their region and lost to Addison in a second-round playoff game.

HOW IT WENT IN 2016:

Spring Garden set a school record for wins in a season. The Panthers also set a school record with 526 points. They made the second round of the playoffs and played a home playoff game for the second year in a row after doing it for the first time in school history in 2015.

RETURNING STARTERS:

DL P.J. Smith, Jr.; LB Luck Bolen, Jr.; C Christian Crider, Jr.; OL Jonah Smith, Sr.; OL Gaines Petty, Jr.

OUR TAKE:

The Panthers must replace backfield stars, including quarterback Ben Ivey. Luke Ivey and Draven Bowman will compete at quarterback with a rotation at running back. Eighth-grader Andrew Floyd, freshmen Luke Welsh and Weston Kirk, sophomore Colby Slyton and junior Michael Floyd must mature quickly as Spring Garden relies on a veteran offensive line. Many of the same players must mature on defense around All-State pick P.J. Smith.

2017 SCHEDULE

Aug. 24, Cherokee County (A) (jamboree)

Sept. 1, Beulah (A)

Sept. 8, Gaylesville (A)*

Sept. 15, Woodville (A)*

Sept. 22, Valley Head (H)*

Sept. 29, Donoho (H)

Oct. 6, Coosa Christian (A)*

Oct. 13, OPEN

Oct. 20, Holy Spirit (A)

Oct. 27, Cedar Bluff (H)*

Nov. 3, Pleasant Valley (A)

*Class 1A, Region 6 games

The Anniston Star

Friday, August 18, 2017 Page 25



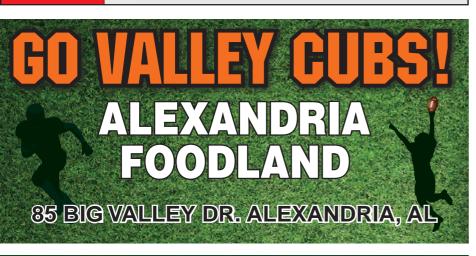
It's game time! Larry Currie, Agent 425 East 10th Street Anniston, AL 36207 Bus: 256-237-5911 www.larrycurrie.com Let's go, Area Schools! On the field or off, my team and I are always here to support the players, coaches and parents. Good luck!

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Our choices for the best of the best in Calhoun County

The Anniston Star sports department has taken a deep dive through history and compiled All-Calhoun County football teams for the decades. Teams include the 2000s, 1990s, 1980s, 1970s, 1960s and post-World War II-1959. Selections and information gleaned from Star archives, the Calhoun County Sports Hall of Fame web site, Alabama High School Football Historical Society web site and knowledgeable individuals. Special thanks to Charlie and Trudy Munford and William Hutchings for input on Cobb Avenue High School and Calhoun County Training School, which closed in the early 1970s.

Legend (CCHoF) — Calhoun County Sports Hall of Fame inductee.

2000-current: Smith, Hayes painted the 2000s blue and gold

BY JOE MEDLEY

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The 2000s have produced amazing high school football players and teams in Calhoun County.

Oxford produced an Alabama "Mr. Football" in running back Roc Thomas, who became one of a group of Division I college recruits to wear black and gold. As of this writing, Kwon Alexander (Tampa Bay), Bobby McCain (Miami) and Trae Elston (Cleveland) work in the NFL.

So does former Anniston High and Jacksonville State running back Troymaine Pope, now with Indianapolis.

But when it comes to consistent on-field results, Piedmont painted the 2000s blue and gold. That's why 11thyear Piedmont head coach Steve Smith and former quarterback Taylor Hayes draw top honors for The Star's All-Calhoun County Team for the 2000s.

Smith is Coach of the 2000s and Haves Player of the 2000s.

Smith just won his third state title in eight years, when Piedmont beat



Trent Penny/The Anniston Star/File

Taylor Hayes led Piedmont to two state titles, including as a senior over Mobile Christian, and made first-team all-state four times.

Mobile Christian in Auburn on Dec. 1. That made back-to-back 3A titles for Piedmont, which won another under Smith in 2009.

He's 123-23 with a 71-7 region record and 28-8 playoff record since becoming Piedmont's coach before the 2006 season. His three state titles are matched only by Robert Herring's three at Oxford from 1988-93.

One of Smith's keys to field championship teams in the Field of Champions is strong quarterback play, and his best quarterback yet just completed a remarkable high school football career.

Hayes was most valuable player of the past two 3A state finals, Piedmont victories over Mobile Christian and Bayside Academy. In those two games, he accounted for 467 yards in total offense and six touchdowns.

Haves' best performance arguable

came in last year's 3A semifinal, he threw for five touchdowns and ran for two against Ohatchee.

Hayes won his second consecutive 3A Back of the Year honor and second first-team All-State honor as a quarterback. He was a strong contender for "Mr. Football" in 2016.

And here's the thing ... he was first-team All-State as a linebacker as a freshman and sophomore, before largely giving up the position to concentrate on quarterback as a junior and senior.

Coach of the 2000s: Steve Smith, Piedmont Player of the 2000s: Taylor Hayes, Piedmont

Offense

QB: Taylor Hayes, Piedmont RB: Troymaine Pope, Anniston

RB: Roc Thomas, Oxford

RB: Chris Evans, Alexandria

WR: Bayley Blanchard, Piedmont WR: Dalton Screws, Wellborn

Honorable mention Alexandria: Frank Tucker, Coach; Dakota Sams, OL; Jamal Tucker, ATH; Keenan Woodruff, RB; Justice Owens, ATH; Taylor Watts, OL; Jarline Lee, RB; Jaron Johnson, RB; Ethan Vineyard, ATH; Terrell Stewart, RB;

Blake Jennings, LB; Bryan Renforth, DL; Jake Welch,

OL: Jake Smith, Jacksonville OL: Antoine McClain, Anniston

OL: Seth Reedy, Piedmont

OL: Mason Langley, Piedmont

OL: Dontavius Blair, Anniston

Defense

DL: Mickey Jackson, Piedmont

DL: Brandt Thomas, Wellborn

DL: Jared Morse, Oxford/Donoho

DL: Ulric Jones, Oxford

LB: Kwon Alexander, Oxford

LB: K.J. Britt, Oxford

LB: Marquise Elston, Anniston

DB: Trae Elston, Oxford

DB: T.J. Heath, Alexandria

DB: Bobby McCain, Oxford

DB: Jamal Johnson, Piedmont

Special teams

K: Jimmy Newman, Oxford P: Jordan Warren, Alexandria

The Anniston Star

Friday, August 18, 2017 Page 27

QB; Michael Everly, DL; Justin Houston, OL; Bryant Ginn, TE; Derrick Kirby, DB; Brandon Alldredge, WR; Jonathan Osowski, OL; Will Ginn, QB; Wyatt Osman OL; Colin Dunahee, OL; Zac Welch, LB

Anniston: Eddie Bullock, Coach; DeMarcus Thomas, ATH; Quinton Royal, LB; Adrian Woodard, DB; Jermaine Sims, DB; Al Hope, LB; Joey Burke, ATH; Ryan Burke, QB; Xavier Brooks, WR; Tommy Harrison, LB.

Donoho: Shannon Felder, Coach; Justin Foster, LB; Chris Carr, ATH; Samuel Garner, LB; Teddre Williams, QB; Brandon Dunn, DB; Caleb Thomas, ATH; Chase Edwards, ATH; Will Vandervoort, P; Kenneth Vandervoort, TE; Lance Rolax, RB; Josh Forrest, P.

Jacksonville: Clint Smith, Coach; Savon Parker, LB; Sid Thurmond, ATH; Tyler Warner, OL; Stephen Water, DL; Duane Tolbert, TE; Jared Joiner, OL; Jared Vanderbleek, K; Jowan Siders, DL; Nick Pope, K; Torrie Lankford, DL; Tyrel Elston, OL

Jacksonville Christian: Tommy Miller, Coach; Davlon Brackett, QB: Jacob Bollinger, WR.

Ohatchee: Scott Martin, Coach; Austin Tucker, RB; Taylor Eubanks, ATH; Hunter Barclay, OL; David Barksdale, LB; Morris Young, RB; Chris Hardison, DB; Maurice Brewster, DB; Patrick Conning, OL; Dale Engle, OL.

Oxford: John Grass, Coach; Josh Niblett, Coach; Tredarian Gamble, WR; Kenyn Richey, DL; Coty Spurling WR; Michael Flint, OL; Jackson Stephens, QB; Allan Carson, DL; Ryan Preston, OL; Charles McClain, ATH; Donnie Jones, OL; Dan Caldwell, P; Tadarrell Thomas, OL; Zac Luker, LB; Colin Cordell, OL; Cory Kelley, RB; Chris Hodges, K; Maurice Cunningham, DB; Tae Davis

Piedmont: Cardavion Myers, DB; Chase Bobbitt, DL; Darnell Jackson, RB; Krae Keener, OL; Neonta Alexander, FB; C.J. Savage, WR; Dreek Thompson, ATH Tyler Lusk, QB; Denard Spears, ATH; Exavyer Jackson, DL; Ty Sparks, QB; Dillon Terry, K; Jamie Major, LB; Laphonso Burroughs, DB; Marquez Gamble, DL; Clay Dent, LB; Jameson Trammell, OL; Sloan Garner, WR; Noah Willis, WR; Warren Alexander, OL; Chase Childers QB; Christian Cantrell, RB; Daniel Hammett, LB; Chris Griffie, DB: D'Eric Jackson, ATH: Kyle Glover, P: A.J. Young, TE; Richard Stone, DL; Kevin Bedwell, ATH; Adam Smith, ATH; Casey Stitts, ATH; Derek Freeman, OL; Max Cosper, K.

Pleasant Valley: Kyle Bean, RB; Zach Atherton, DB; Joe Faucett, LB; Nick Hinton, DB; Joey Mashburn, LB.

Saks: Jonathan Miller, coach; Tre Smith, ATH; Austin Kilgore, OL; Monty Young, LB; Calvin Figueroa, RB; Devin Harris, ATH; Vincent Hilliard, DL; Jesus Garcia, K; Mytez Madden, LB; Byron Bibbs, OL; Eric Johnson, DB.

Weaver: Daryl Hamby, Coach; Paul Farlow, Coach; Roland Houston, Coach; Giovanni Mosley, LB; Timothy Hawkins, DB; Mike Starr, QB; Ricky Lopez, OL; Shawn Green, RB; Tanrance Landrum, WR; Josh Cofield, DL; Kyle Seckinger, OL; Michael Medley, DL; Timo Styles, ATH; Geromy Ledbetter, DB; Justin Fox, TE; Zach Mad dox, DL; Corey Ramsey, LB.

Wellborn: Jeff Smith, Coach; Jordan Montgomery, ATH; Corri Tignor, DL; Landon Machristie, LB; Devron Taylor, DB; Jaleel Burton, OL; Chantz Goodman, RB; Delrickus Rhoden, RB; Devon Gray, LB; Dominique Cosper, DB.

1990-99: Alexandria's Ginn, Campbell best of best in 1990s

BY JOE MEDLEY

imedley@annistonstar.com

The 1990s saw Anniston win a state football championship under Rodney Bivens. The decade saw Robert Herring win his third at Oxford, in 1993.

Great players like Anniston's Montressa Kirby (Jacksonville State) and Oxford's Darius Gilbert (Alabama) went on to have highly productive

college careers. Anniston's Quinton Caver and Kivuusama Mays took it on to the NFL.

When it comes to consistent onfield success at the high school level, the 1990s had no match in Calhoun County for Alexandria's run with late head coach Larry Ginn and running back Mac Campbell. They take top honors for The Star's 1990s All-Calhoun County Team, Ginn as Coach of the Decade and Campbell as Player of the Decade.

Ginn, also selected for The Star's All-County County Team for the 1960s as an All-State quarterback, ran up a 196-53 record in 21 seasons as Alexandria's head coach.

In the 1990s, Ginn was 102-19 with seven seasons of double-digit wins, including six in a row from 1994 through 1999. His teams made the state semifinals nine times, including three in the 1990s and four in a row in his final four seasons. Six of his 11 region titles and both of his state titles (1995, 1997) came in the 1990s.

Ginn retired abruptly for health reasons, just before the start of the 2007 season. In 2009, he died from melanoma.

He was part of the Calhoun County Sports Hall of Fame class of 2010, a legendary successor to the legendary Lou Scales.

Campbell was the key cog for Ginn's two state-title football teams. Campbell was "Mr. Football" in 1997, Alabama Sports Writers Association 4A player of the year for 1995, 1996 and 1997 and All-State four years in a row.

Campbell still holds Alabama High School Athletic Association records for career carries (1,157), yards (9,839) points scored (928).

Coach of the Decade: Larry Ginn, Alexandria Player of the Decade: Mac Campbell, Alexandria

Offense

QB: Montressa Kirby, Anniston

RB: Larry Bowie, Anniston

RB: Mac Campbell, Alexandria

RB: Casinious Moore, Anniston

WR: Damien Dorsey, Anniston/Wellborn

WR: Jeff Jackson, Alexandria

WR: Michael Scales, Donoho

OL: Banyon Allison, Weaver

OL: Chris Lee, Anniston

OL: Shelton Deramus, Oxford

OL: Matt Primm, Saks

OL: Chris Ray, Piedmont

Defense

DL: Mike Denson, Oxford

DL: Mark Epps, Wellborn

DL: Mike Shuler, Ohatchee

DL: Jeremy Heathcock, Alexandria

LB: Darius Gilbert, Oxford LB: Kivuusama Mays, Anniston

LB: Quinton Caver, Anniston

DB: Quincy Bowie, Anniston DB: Charles Goodson, Anniston

DB: Robert Taylor, Anniston

DB: Shane Morrow, Piedmont

K: Johnny Barnes, Piedmont

P: Brad Prince, Oxford

Honorable mention

Alexandria: Kent Wheeler, LB; C.J. Boyd, LB Todd Noolin, DB; Clint Curvin, OL; Scott Campbell, LB; Scott Ginn, QB; Toby Brewster, DB; Brian Westfall, QL; Michael Hardin, DB; Todd Ginn, QB; Jeremy Heathcock DL; Kevin Thrasher, DL; Leon Crook, LB; Roosevelt Hardy, DB; Tripp Ferrell, OL; Dexter Mallory, RB; David Taylor, DB; Jeremy Moore, OL; Joe Cargal, DB

Anniston: Rodney Bivens, Coach; Tyrone Goggan, DL; Torrez Waters, DL; Roy Elston, LB; Tyus Bowen, DL; Kevin Nolan, LB; Jarvis Johnson, TE; Rodney Satcher, OL; Tevaris Johnson, WR; Tony Williams, P; John David Phillips, QB; Brian Busbee, OL; Fred Brown, WR; Rod Burke, WR; Ronald Young, DB; Kevin Johnson, WR; Sidney Tyus, LB; Brad Jackson, OL/P.

Donoho: Robert Green, Coach; John Lawrence, RB; Bobby Plummer, LB.

Jacksonville: Sam Clark, QB; Kevin Harris, OL; Andrew Gross, TE; Jeff Tippets, QB; Travis Johnson, WR.

Ohatchee: Abby Brunner, LB; Nick Wood, OL; Floyd Collins, LB; Matt Moon, QB; Richard Carr, WR; Willie

Oxford: Brock Gardner, OL; Matt Howard, LB; Reggie Jenkins, RB; Josh Moses, OL; Krendal Deramus, LB; Kelvin Malone, DL; LaBrent Sterling, LB; Paul West, RB; Dion Calhoun, DB; Ty Dingler, LB; Brent Sewell, DB; Chauncey Teague, QB; Donald Murray, DL; Mark Reaves, WR/TE; Michael Higgins, DL; Ryan Herring, DB Conray Knox, LB; Clyde Abernathy, LB; Gene Hillian, DB; Joey Gallahar, DL; Kyle Heard, OL; Chris Wright, WR; Ken Bargerhuff, WR.

Piedmont: George Hoblitzell, Coach; Craig Parris, OL; Jeremiah Hendrix, OL; Justin Amberson, ATH; Nathan Shubert, DB; Chris Ray OL; Michael Stitts, RB; Greg Nation, RB; Maurice Johnson, LB; Robert Jackson, DL; Trent Brown, RB; Michael Ball, RB; Jubal Donaldson, DL; Jason Morrow, QB; Marty Harrell, LB; Phillip Nation, RB.

Pleasant Valley: Daniel Kilgore, LB; Kevin Malsy, DB; Ryan Freeman, OL.

Saks: Bobby Joe Johnson, Coach; Lance Henderson, DB; Scott McKenzie, DL; Lawrence Bradford, RB; Ryan Wells, DB; David Cadle, DL; Demar Bowe, WR; Dewan Graham, RB; Josh Green, QB; Anthony Thornton, RB; Michael Graham, K.

Weaver: Tarus Nelson, DB; Luke Hurst, LB. Wellborn: Corey Peters, DL; Lamont Bagley, LB; Marreo Thomas, RB; Mike Epps, DL; Spence Beasley, LB/OL; Wes Brooks, K; Chet Hafley, OL; Shannon King, RB; Robert McQueen, DL; William McCain, LB/TE.

White Plains: Corey Cronan, WR; Clay Sprayberry, LB.

1980-89: Oxford's Herring, **Anniston's Christopher** best of a great 1980s

BY JOE MEDLEY

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What a decade the 1980s was for Calhoun County high school football.

Alexandria (1985), Anniston (1989) and Oxford (1988, 1989) combined to win four state titles.

Legendary coach Larry Ginn didn't miss a beat, succeeding the legendary Lou Scales at Alexandria in 1986. Oxford's Robert Herring and Anniston's Berry Halladay lifted two other traditional county powers to the top in



Steve Christopher

their classifications in Alabama.

It was one of the greatest decades for fall Friday nights in our county, leading to hard choices for The Star's 1980s All-Calhoun County Team. Herring was the pick for Coach of the Decade and Anniston quarterback Steve Christopher as Player of the Decade.

Herring arrived at Oxford from Oneonta in 1985 and immediately began building a winner. The Yellow Jackets went 20-10 and made the playoffs in his first three seasons.

The building came to fruition in 1988 and 1989, when Oxford went a combined 26-2 with two 5A titles. Those two state titles go with three region titles in the 1980s.

Herring went on to go 117-43 with three state titles and eight region titles over an Oxford stay that spanned through the 1998 season. His accomplishments won him Calhoun County Sports Hall of Fame induction in 2012.

Herring's legacy lives on at Oxford in the form of his son, current Yellow Jackets head coach Ryan Herring. The younger Herring just let Oxford through a 10-1 season.

Robert Herring's quarterback in 1988 and 1989, Jason Jack, drew strong consideration for player of the decade. He played in the 1989 Alabama-Mississippi All-Star Game, was first-team All-State in 5A in 1989 and honorable-mention All-State in 1988.

Christopher, however, had one of

Continued on I Page 29

Page 28 Friday, August 18, 2017

The Anniston Star





The Anniston Star

Friday, August 18, 2017 Page 29

Continued from Page 27

the most spectacular seasons in county prep football history in 1989 in leading Anniston to a 6A title. He threw for 3,586 yards (sixth on the Alabama High School Athletic Association all-time list), accounted for 4,327 total yards (fifth in state history), attempted 392 passes (fourth), completed 246 passes (eighth) and threw 42 touchdown passes (eighth).

He also played in the Alabama-Mississippi All-Star Game in 1989 and was 6A player of the year.

But he wasn't just a one-year wonder. He was honorable-mention All-State in 1988, and his career numbers also show up on the state's all-time lists — 6,732 total vards (19th), 61 touchdown passes (29th) and 5,358 passing yards (40th).

He was a special player, giving area high school fans a vision of the future by excelling in a spread offense before it was called a spread offense.

Coach of the Decade: Robert Herring, Oxford (CCHoF) Player of Decade: Steve Christopher, Anniston

QB: Steve Christopher, Anniston

RB: Joel Miller, Pleasant Valley

RB: Tony Young, Alexandria RB: Derrick Griffie, Piedmont

WR: Randy Jones, White Plains

WR: Orlando Watters, Anniston

WR: Charles Dudley, Piedmont

OL: Ronnie Nordan, Oxford

OL: Matt Thomas, Wellborn

OL: Tony Owens, Ohatchee

OL: Mike Allison, Weaver

OL: Bill Clark, Piedmont

DL: Rick Burgess, Oxford DL: Victor Hall, Wellborn

DL: Johnny Endress, Ohatchee

DL: Vincent Hilliard, Anniston

LB: Willie Pless, Anniston (CCHoF)

LB: Jeff Smith, Wellborn

LB: Wendell Kelley, Oxford

DB: Alan Dial, Anniston DB: Eric Davis, Anniston (CCHoF)

DB: Darrell Malone, Jacksonville (CCHoF)

DB: George Dothard, White Plains

Special teams

P/K: Mike Battles, Wellborn.

Honorable mention

Alexandria: Bobby Freeman, LB/OL; Eric Thomas, QB; Shawn Taylor, DL; Hollis Brewster, LB; David Ball, B; Lee Heifner, OL; Lee Ponder, DL; Kevin Blue, DB/WR; Keith Henegar, K; Derek Warren, P.

Anniston: Berry Halladay, Coach; Smith, WR; Kevin Mixon, LB; Mondreco Blair, DL; Pat Laney, P; Pat Neal, RB; Isiah Carter, WR; Reuben Taylor, LB; Tim Neal, OL/DL; Jacque Smith, DL

Donoho: Randy Smith, RB; Ted Colby, K/OL Jacksonville: Chris Chapman, LB; Paul Glass, WR; Jeff Isom, QB; Mike Newell, LB; Scott Campbell, OL.

Ohatchee: Shane Ferguson, LB; Chris Bailey, RB; Ty Lambright, OL; Steve McDeal, L; Ricky Gallahar, L; Bart

Oxford: Chris Houston, OL; Jason Jack, QB; Jeremy Sewell, P/K; Revy Higgins, WR; Zack Clay, OL; Andre Allen, OL/DL; Doug Selliff, LB; Todd Edmondson, DL; Mark Marable, OL; Rony Kelley, B; John Jurichich, DL; Keith

Bonner, DB; Keith Taylor, QB; Lawyer Tillman, DB; Bruce Harmon, RB; Robby Bussey, LB; Glenn Thompson, L;

Piedmont: Eldon Gowens, QB; Pat Lawler, LB; Michael Downey, L; Neal Ridley, DB/QB.

Pleasant Valley: Aubrey Thornton, WR; Mark Saks: Donald Page, DL/RB; Jeff Powell, LB; Joe

Jones, LB; Jeff Best, LB; Kerry Stumpe, DB. Weaver: James Young, RB/P; Mac Young, WR; Eldridge McDonald, DB/B.

Wellborn: Mike Battles, Coach; Alfred Hall, WR; Johnny Harris, RB; Greg Mondabaugh, DL

White Plains: Randy King, DL; Scott Brown, DL.

1970-79: Scales. **Burgess and Franklin** best of the best in '70s

BY JOE MEDLEY

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The 1970s were a golden decade for football, and the high school football scene in Calhoun County was no

Eventual Calhoun County Sports Hall of Fame coaches roamed the sidelines at Alexandria and Oxford. Four hall-of-fame players operated between the sidelines.

Ragan Clark turned Ohatchee into a winner, and Jimmy Wood completed the work all the way to a Class 1A state

Those old enough to remember tend to see the 1970s as the last decade of an era when football was football. and top choices for The Star's All-Calhoun County Team from that decade reflect it. Alexandria's Lou Scales and Oxford's Bill Burgess are co-Coaches of the Decade, and Anniston fullback Andra Franklin the Player of the Decade.

Scales' stay at Alexandria spanned from 1948 to 1985, and he compiled a 220-141-12 record. He won his state title in his final year but rebuilt through two losing seasons to start the 1980s.

His best decade, start to finish, was the 1970s, when he compiled a 68-34-3

On the southern tip of the county, Burgess was building the resume that led to his chance to lead Jacksonville State through a golden era. Burgess started at Oxford in 1971 and built a 106-42-4 record through 1984, his last season at Oxford. He was 63-29-3 in the

Burgess' record in the 1970s was equivalent to Scales, factoring in that Burgess coached one less year in that

Both were building careers that led them to induction in the Calhoun County Sports Hall of Fame, both in the inaugural, 10-member class of 2005. They made the Hall the same year as Rudy Abbott, Van Deerman, Glenn Hawkins, Edgar "Chink" Lott, Louise Marbut, Robert Mosby, Tommy O'Brien and Malcolm Street.

Scales and Burges are two of the most towering figures in county sports history.

Between the lines, Player of the Decade was a choice between Franklin, Alexandria quarterback Mike Tucker, Alexandria defensive lineman/ linebacker Greg Robinson and Saks running back Boyce Callahan ... all county-hall members.

Franklin was first-team All-County as a linebacker as a junior at Anniston and first-team All-County as a fullback as a senior, when he rushed for 1,200 yards. He was also first-team All-State and Super All-State, according to the Birmingham News.

Franklin went on to star at Nebraska, one of college football's marque programs, running for 1,753 yards and 10 touchdowns and earning induction into the Cornhuskers' sports hall in

The Miami Dolphins selected-Franklin in the second round of the 1981 draft and he enjoyed a productive career until a 1984 knee injury ended it. He started in Super Bowl XVII and made the 1982 Pro Bowl.

Co-Coach of the Decade: Lou Scales, Alexandria

Co-Coach of the Decade: Bill Burgess, Oxford

Player of Decade: Andra Franklin, Anniston (CCHoF)

QB: Mike Tucker, Alexandria (CCHoF)

RB: Boyce Callahan, Saks (CCHoF)

DL/LB: Greg Robinson, Alexandria (CCHoF)

B: Andra Franklin, Anniston (CCHoF)

B: Mike Henley, Oxford

B: Rodney Morris, Anniston

B: Mike English, Oxford

B: Jeff Cunningham, Wellborn

E: Gino English, Wellborn

E: Andre Duncan, Cobb Avenue

L: Mike Brunson, Jacksonville L: Bo Batev, Jacksonville

L: Bubba Williams, Jacksonville

L: Donnie Brooks, Wellborn

L: Jerry Pike, Piedmont

LB: Terry Stephens, Jacksonville

LB: Billy Knopp, Saks LB: Mike Morgan, Donoho

LB: Mitchell Knox, Oxford

DB: Ricky Jackson, Ohatchee

DB: Earl Woods, Cobb Avenue

DB: Gary Lambert, Weaver

Honorable mention Alexandria: Mike Watts, QB; Rodney Clark, L; Mike Diggs, B; Bill Fincher, LB.

Anniston: Clark Ware, E/L; Anthony Bush, E; Tom Sears; Danny White, HB; Donald Young, E; Jerry Brown, E; Marty White, B; Ronald Young, B; Speedy Brown, E; Tommy Hall, B; Keith Robertson, LB; David Ford, T; James Almon, T; Mike Canada, G.

Cobb Avenue: Billy Stevens, L; Warren Blair, L; William Vincent, T; Charles Olivers, DB; Anthony Ramsell, QB.

Steve Battles, T; Sonny Smith, DT.

Ohatchee: Ragan Clark, Coach: Jimmy Wood, Coach; Rush Propst, B; Roy Evans, K; Andy Stinson, T; Darryl Crump, QB; James Collins, B; Pat Lindsey, B; Dennis Nance, L; Troy Lee Crook, LB; Wayne Whaley, L; Laurthonia Johnson, B; Jeff Winn, L/LB; Marty Perry, B; Randy Ferguson, B; Ricky Jones, T; Stan Jones, G; Steve Jones, E; Randy Brewster, G/C; Pete Brooks, T; Dennis Oxford: Rodney Edwards, QB; Jerry Elston, G; Lee

Hanson, B; Marty Hanson, L/T; Tim Hurst, L/T; Barry Fuller, B; David Traywick, E; Eddie Grizzard, T; Tim Davis, L/G. Piedmont: Marty Lively, E; Freddie Morgan, LB; Mike Griffith, E; Tim Kerns, RB; Johnny Trammell, C; Steve Sewell, B/LB; Ricky Westbrook, MG/E; Vernon Young, Saks: Glenn Toney, T; Wayne Clark, B; Barry Smith,

L; Eddie Wells, B; Johnny Jones, B; Bobby Land, $\Omega B/B$; David Brooks, L/LB; Jeff Jennings, DB. Weaver: Pat Bell, DE; Steve Hobbs, OT/NG; Butch

Baker, B; Fred Fain, LB; Doug Giddens, E; Byron Cole,

Wellborn: Johnny Ingram, Coach; Barry Miller, QB; Harris Montgomery, B; Chuck Delker, LB; Keith Kilgore, DB; Earnest Truss, OT/DE.

White Plains: Bobo Nunn, G; Terry Williams, DE; Anthony Chatman, DL.

1960-69: Mosby, Rudolph give Cobb sweep of top honors in 1960s

BY JOE MEDLEY

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Cobb Avenue High School has been gone since 1973 but has not gone

Attend an Anniston High game, and one will see Cobb coaching legend Robert Mosby's name on Lott-Mosby Stadium. Fans might also see maroon-and-gold Cobb letterman jackets in the home stands.

Cobb grads Charlie and Trudy Munford have opened a Cobb Avenue High School sports museum in an East Anniston house.

A lot of good football players and coaches called themselves Panthers. Count Mosby and defensive standout Council Rudolph as the cream of a deep crop of talent on The Star's All-Calhoun County team from the 1960s decade.

Mosby is coach of the decade and Rudolph player of a decade that produced 12 Calhoun County Sports Hall of Fame inductees with ties to the county's high school football scene.

Mosby was part of the Calhoun Hall's 10-member inaugural class of 2005, along with 1970s co-Coaches of the Decade Bill Burgess (Oxford) and Lou Scales (Alexandria).

Mosby coached at Cobb from 1955 through the Panthers' final season of 1972, going 118-52-10. He coached

Continued on I Page 30

Donoho: Jim Shepherd, T/E; Charles Wigley, E;



Council Rudolph

Continued from Page 29

all but his final four seasons in the Alabama Interscholastic Athletic Association but posted his numerically best season in Alabama High School Athletic Association play, going 10-1 in 1970.

Cobb played the 1969 and 1970 seasons in 4A, the AHSAA's top classification at that time.

Mosby's teams tied for AIAA state championships in 1965 and 1967, going 8-2-1 and 9-0-1 respectively. Cobb Avenue won AIAA Northeast District titles in 1955, 1959, 1960 and 1961.

Mosby's 100th victory with Cobb came in the final game of the 1969 season, the Anniston Quarterback Club's Crippled Children's Charity Bowl. The Panthers defeated Anniston 34-21.

Rudolph played from 1964-67, including both of Mosby's AIAA state co-championship seasons. Cobb went 24-4-2 in Rudolph's final three seasons and allowed just 46 points.

The standout defensive end went on to star at Kentucky State College and played six seasons in the NFL for the St. Louis Cardinals, Houston Oilers, Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Miami Dolphins. A preseason injury ended his career in 1978.

Coach of the Decade: Robert Mosby, Cobb Avenue

Player of Decade: Council Rudolph, Cobb Avenue

(CCHoF induction and/or first-team All-State) QB: Howard Miller, Cobb Avenue (CCHoF) QB: Larry Ginn, Alexandria (CCHoF) QB: Ray Vinson, Oxford (CCHoF) B: Terry Henley, Oxford (CCHoF)

- B: Mike Tolleson, Anniston
- B: Danny Nunnally, Ohatchee
- B: Travis Reaves, Ohatchee
- E: Charlie Munford, Cobb Avenue (CCHoF)
- E: Virgil Stone, Saks
- E: Wayne Carden, Wellborn (CCHoF)
- C: Tony Couch, Jacksonville
- C: Robert Poore, Oxford
- G: Johnny Ingram, Wellborn (CCHoF)
- G: Andy Landers, Oxford
- G: Jerry Abernathy, Oxford
- G: Jerry Gunnels, Wellborn
- G: Buddy Cutcliffe, Wellborn
- G: Johnny Hyde, Ohatchee G: Charles Needham, Piedmont
- T: Jim Simmons, Piedmont (CCHoF)
- T: Herschel Poore, Wellborn
- T: Travis Tucker, Ohatchee
- T: Steve Wade, Piedmont
- T: Jim Simmons, Piedmont
- DE: Council Rudolph, Cobb Avenue (CCHoF)
- LB: Phil Murphy, Saks
- FB/LB: Ken Hutcherson, Anniston (CCHoF)
- G/LB: Steve Adams, Wellborn
- C/LB: John Graham, Saks
- C/LB: Jerry Pike, Piedmont.

Alexandria: Corky Peoples, G; Jim Owens, B; Roger Guin, T; Jerry Davis, E; Tony Turner, L; Curtis Gilbert, G.

Anniston: Gary Stedham, OL; Butch Welch, T; Tony Zion, B; Ken Borders, G; Ronald Peake, B; Danny Swafford, C; Gilbert Sanders, E; Harold Steely, G; Joe Strickland, T; Jerry McCaha, T; Herman Clark, B.

Calhoun County Training: J.D. Wheat, B; Mitchell Knox G; Thad Christian, T; Walter Christian, E; Sonny Howard, S; Walter Young, E; Benny Ray, QB; Harry Ray, QB-RB; Curtis "Meat" Ray, G-T; Glen Ray, RB; Bo Sumlin, QB-RB; Harold Morris, RB; Jeffrey "Midnight" Golston, QB; Benny "Junior" Moss, RB; Dee Phillips, FB; C.T. Johnson, T.

Cobb Avenue: Thomas Carter, E; Lee Harris, HB; Henry Young, QB; Grady Parker, FB; Jeffery Phillips, HB; Alfred Munford, T; Roosevelt Parker, G; Willie Bailey, HB; Charles Edward, LB; Curtis Jernigan, QB; Alexander Jones, G; Jessie Gibbons, QB; Roosevelt Boyd, LB; John Fox, G; Charles Northard, G; William Kennedy, G; James Poor, L; Larry Mays, L; Cecil King, B; Patrick Fox, G.

Jacksonville: Jerry Woodall, E; Mike Lebrecque, LB; Bob McCloud; Ross Pruett, G; Clifford Ford, LB. Ohatchee: Danny Dunn, B; Tommy Stinson, L;

Wayne Williams, E.

Oxford: Jack Grizzard, Coach (CCHoF); Barney Wilson, C; Jimmy Hubert, FB; Larry Young, B; Steve Duncan, C; Britt, B; Paul Williams, L/T; Larry Young, B;

Jerry Ray, B; Billy Pettus, B. Piedmont: Steve Sewell, B; Randy Morgan, B; Phil Ray, T; Tony Young, B; Benny Coleman, T; Herb McCarley, E; Jerry Amberson, B.

Saks: Jack Stewart, Coach (CCHoF); Dennis Cook DL; Steve Cook, OL; Ken Borders, Paul Kadle, DB.

Wellborn: Ed Deupree, Coach; Denny Anderson, B; Gerald Wright, B; Pat Daniels, L; Butch Bishop, E; Ricky Weems, B; Dennis Dunaway, QB; Wright, T; Johnny Prater, E; David Haynes, B; Lester Champion E; Lloyd Heron, B; Mike Wright, E; Ronnie Wright, E; David Holmes, E; Ferris Daniels, G.

WWII-1959: Piedmont's Farrell, Bible brightest of many stars from post WWII

BY JOE MEDLEY

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Piedmont High School's football program just equaled the greatest run among Calhoun County-based

programs, winning its third state title in eight years.

That struck par with Oxford's run of three state titles in a six-year span from 1988-93.

But Piedmont has always had a place among the county's most consistently successful programs, as true when "baby boomers" became a thing as it is today.

Former Piedmont coach Bill Farrell and late player great Thomas Bible were selected as coach and player of The Star's All-Calhoun County football team post-World War II through 1959.

Selections for this period weren't easy. The corresponding All-County team includes 18 Calhoun County Sports Hall of Fame inductuees, with Farrell and Bible among them.

Want Wigwam Wisemen All-Americans? This bunch has them, in spades.

Clarity comes when driving by Piedmont High School, on the Thomas Bible Memorial Highway.

He was a multisport standout but stood out most in football. In his three years as a Bulldog, he starred as a lineman, then as a back in Piedmont's single-wing offense. He won All-State recognition and then attention from then-Alabama coach Bear Bryant.

Bible lettered on Bryant's first national-championship team at Alabama, in 1961. Despite hearing loss, he emerged as first-team right tackle in spring of 1962.

That would've been his senior year, but Bible drowned on June 12, on a fishing-and-swimming trip near Mobile, where his parents moved. His loss was felt around the state.

"All of his days he did nothing except reflect credit on his mother and his father and all of them who loved him," wrote legendary Alabama sports writer Benny Marshall, then sports editor of the Birmingham News. "It is an obligation. He paid it high honor."

Bible played under Farrell at Piedmont. Farrell took over the Bulldogs in 1952 and went 54-20-1 in eight seasons, including seven winning seasons.

Farrell rejuvenated a Piedmont program that had endured three consecutive losing seasons, going 8-2 in his first year. His final two Piedmont teams went 9-1, and his 1958 team beat Wellborn 26-6 in the Turkey Bowl to avenge the Bulldogs' only loss.

Before Piedmont, Farrell went 21-19-5 at Ohatchee from 1947-51, including a stellar 1951 season. The Indians went 8-0-2, with a Calhoun County championship. A 20-13 win over Oxford in the final game clinched Ohatchee's first undefeated season, and Farrell won his second consecutive win over Oxford.

He was named Calhoun County coach of the year.

Contact Sports Columnist Joe Medley at jmedley@annistonstar.com. On *Twitter,* @jmedley_star.

Coach of the Decade: Bill Farrell, Piedmont

Player of the Decade: Thomas Bible, Piedmont

(CCHoF induction and/or first-team All-State) QB/HB/LB: Sargent Pickett, Alexandria (CCHoF) QB/HB: Earnest Washington, Cobb Avenue (CCHoF)

QB/TB: Carlton Rankin, Piedmont (CCHoF) RB/LB: David Luttrell, Jacksonville (CCHoF) L/B: Thomas Bible, Piedmont (CCHoF)

G/NG: Jack Grizzard, Oxford (CCHoF) ATH: Harold Warren, Alexandria (CCHoF) RB: Jimmy Pettus, Oxford (CCHoF)

- HB: Larry Gowens, Piedmont (CCHoF) B: Bobby Wilson, Piedmont (CCHoF)
- B: Gary O'Steen, Anniston (CCHoF)
- B: Jerry Diffle, Ohatchee
- B: Raymond Calloway, Alexandria
- B: Freddie Casey, Jacksonville
- E: Henry O'Steen, Anniston (CCHoF)
- E: Bill Miller, Ohatchee (CCHoF)
- E: Pete Cook, Alexandria (CCHoF) E: Tommy Rose, Anniston (CCHoF)
- C: Roy Ford, Anniston
- G: Jimmy Luttrell, Jacksonville (CCHoF)
- G: Harold "Frog" Willingham, Anniston
- G: Travis Fleming, Ohatchee
- G: Gary Ray, Piedmont
- T: Roosevelt Coleman, Cobb Avenue (CCHoF)
- T: Mike Biddle, Anniston
- T: Charles Hurst, Piedmont

Honorable mention

Alexandria: Jim Braden, B; Norris Robertson, E; Ted Boozer, T; Jack Clark, QB; James Phillips, B; Ray Burgess, B; Tom Smith, G; Lacy Bolling, T; Dan Perry, G;

Anniston: Billy Bancroft, Coach; Mike Godsey, C; Eddie Murray, QB; John Carpenter, T; Frank Bochnowski, G; Jerre Brannen, E; Herb Taylor, E; Kenneth Roberts, C; Dishner, G; George Keech, B.

Calhoun County Training: James A. "Pappy" Dunn, Coach; William Hutchings, QB; Alvin Hutchings, HB; Elenor Smith, QB; Clarence Pyles, K; Fred Jennings, RB-DB; Leroy Angel, E; Thomas Dokes, G-T; Harvey Harris, T; John Harris, DB; Joe Brockman, QB-TE (Eagles); James Hutchings, S; Carl Hutchings, S; Wilmer Bush, T; Robert Peters, FB; James "Bo" Summerville, HB; Bobby Carr, E; Roosevelt Woods, E; Alvin Smith, S Charlie Porter, T; Milton Slaughter, HB; John Bush, RB; Willie James Bell, HB; Grady "Lamp" English, E; Noble Mason, E; Leon "Bro" Malone, T; William Malone, T.

Cobb Avenue: Vick Calhoun, G; Charles Goggins, HB; Richard Munford, HB; John Jackson, QB; A.J. Kel ley, C; Arlie Lee Calhoun, E; Charlie Patrick, HB; Forest Miles, QB; Jake Greer, E; Robert Munford, DB; Jerome Novel, G; William Robertson, C; Arthur Munford, HB; M.C. Harvey, HB; Billy Whatley, LB; Fred Halloway, QB; Samuel Hadley, HB; Bubba Cahill, G; James Stubbs, T; Robert Johnson HB; C.L. Bradford, HB; George Halloway, HB; John David Glass, G.

Jacksonville: Ernest Newman, Coach; Jimmy Snider, T; Billy Bryan, B; Maurice Johnson, E; Ronald Horton, B; Jon Edwards, B.

Ohatchee: Dee Pruitt, B; Robert Elders, E; Fuzzy

Oxford: Buddy Mayne, B; Tommy Sewell, B; Bobby Harris, C; Thomas Waugh, E.

Piedmont: Ray Glover, B; H.C. White, G. Wellborn: David Bishop, C; Stanley Bell, E





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