



AUGUST 2018

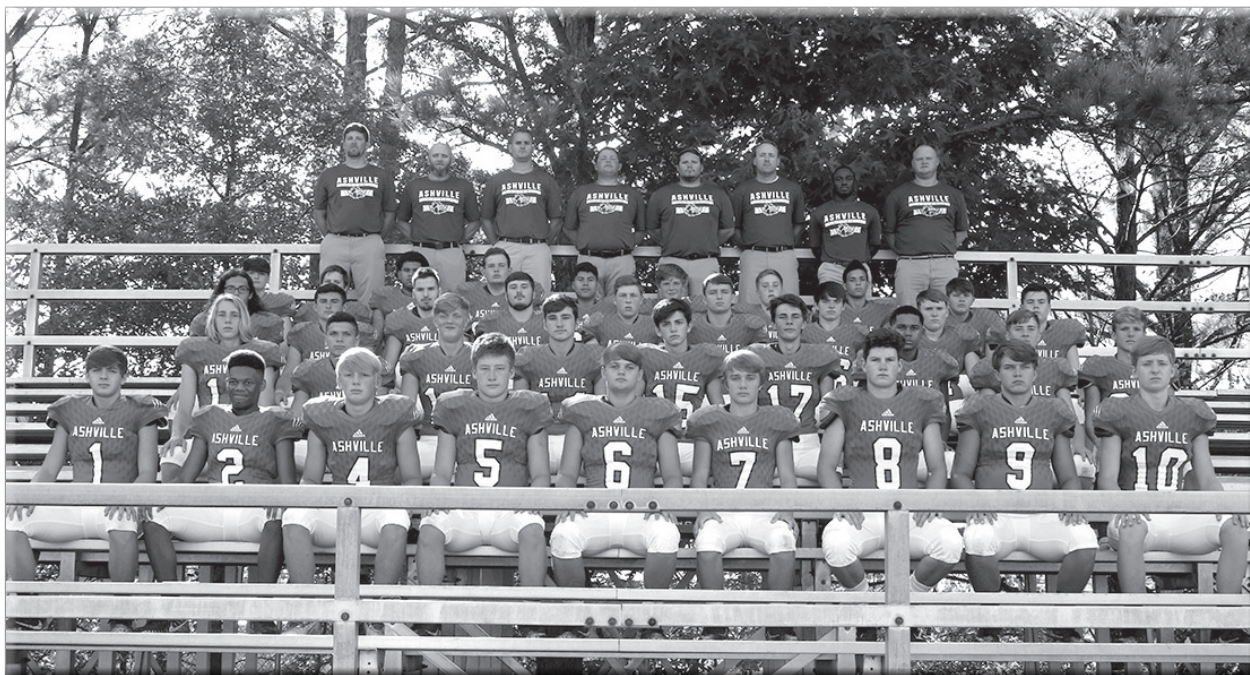
PIGSKIN PREVIEW

A Special Supplement to the St. Clair Times

- Football Team Photos
- Varsity Cheerleader Photos
- High School Band Photos
- Game Schedules
- Team Pre-Game Previews

Ashville Bulldogs

Ashville opens season under new head coach



By GARY HANNER
Times Editor

Ashville will open the 2018 football season under new head coach Barry Simmons, who said this year is going great thus far and the guys had a fantastic summer.

“The kids have worked hard,” said Simmons, who was an assistant coach last year. “They showed up every day and put the time in. We have a great work ethic here, but we’re fighting the numbers here like everyone is. We are trying to recruit kids to come out and play football.”

Simmons said there’s a great core of kids at Ashville, they would just like to have more bodies.

“That’s not an excuse, it is what it is,” he said. “We

have about 36 kids, and we will make them the absolute best we can. We will give everybody our best efforts. I’m confident in what we have and excited about the upcoming season with the group of kids and coaches we

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Adrian Hernandez, Cam Tillman, Nathan Phillips, Clay Keller, Chris Sanders and Parker Jones.

Simmons said there are seven seniors on this year's squad, but some of the underclassmen need to step up in order for them to be successful this year.

This year, the Bulldogs are in Class 4A, Region 6 with Anniston, Cherokee County, Cleburne County, Hokes Bluff, Jacksonville, Oneonta and White Plains.

"This is a very tough region, top to bottom," Simmons said. "I think Hokes Bluff has an edge because they have the best running back overall. I think Jacksonville and Cherokee County are going to be good, and you have to throw Oneonta in the mix. White Plains is a much improved team, and you can't overlook Anniston. Cleburne County is moving down from 5A to 4A. I would like to think that we can compete in this particular region. It is probably the toughest north region in Class 4A."

In talking about team strengths, Simmons said they do have a good core of running backs and skill players

See **Bulldogs**, Page 4

Elijah Beatty. Simmons said they lost a lot of good players, but have some good players returning to fill those shoes.

Key returning players include Ty Armstrong, who has led the team in tackles the past three seasons and was the leading rusher last year. Other key players are Luke Harris,

ASHVILLE 2018 SCHEDULE

Aug. 24 Ragland Away
Aug. 31 Springville Home
Sept. 7 Jacksonville Away
Sept. 14. White Plains Home
Sept. 21 Oneonta Away
Sept. 28 OPEN
Oct. 5 Hokes Bluff Away
Oct. 12 Cherokee Co. Home
Oct. 19 Cleburne Co. Away
Oct. 26 Anniston Home
Nov. 2 Vincent HomeAway

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Bulldogs

from page 3



returning.

"That's going to be a key to our offense," he said. "Defensively, our linebackers will lead us. We have a good group of guys returning."

Team weaknesses will be trying to develop linemen on both sides of the football.

"We will be a very young team,"

Simmons said.

Ashville will open the season Friday on the road against the Ragland Purple Devils.

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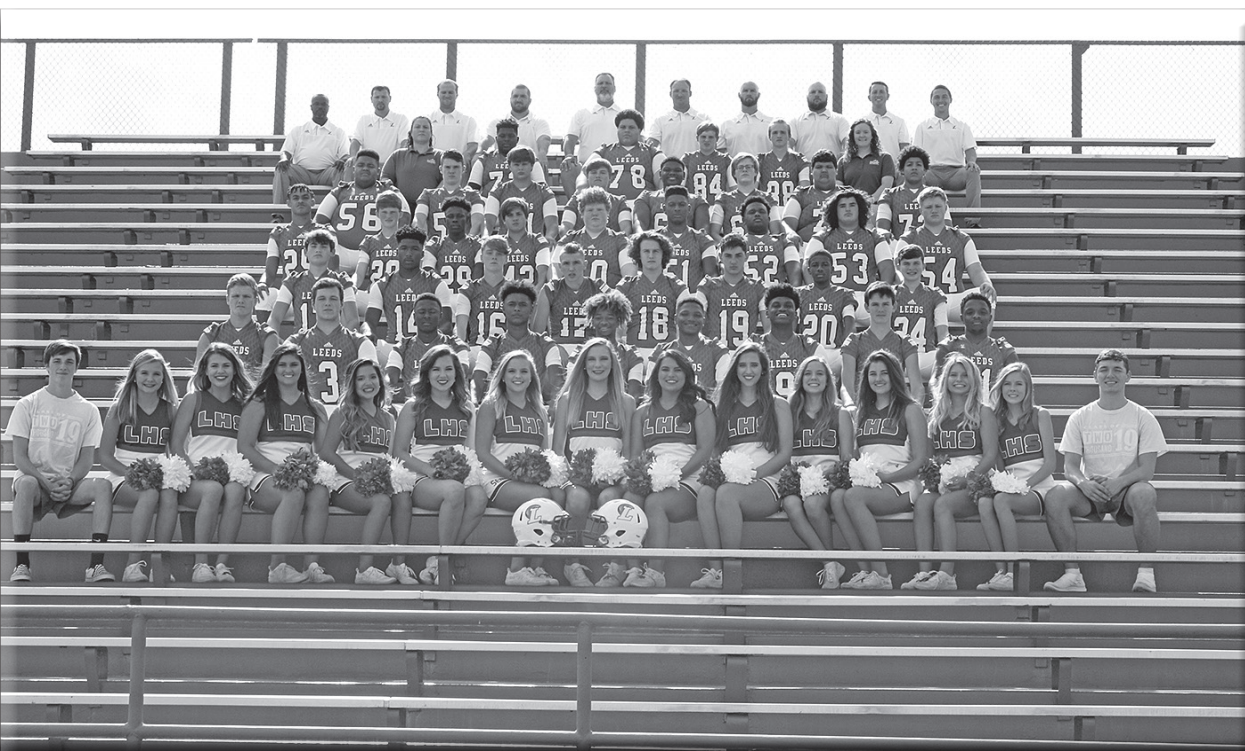
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Leeds Green Wave

Gibson preparing Leeds for state title run



Devonte Green and Alphoncie Hoipson.

“We will need to be able to run the football in order to have a successful season,” he said. “With a new quarterback in

Nick Armstrong, our offensive line must be able to protect him to give him opportunities to win games for us.”

When talking about team strengths, Gibson

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In God We Trust

By **GARY HANNER**
Times Editor

Lee Gibson is starting his third year as head football coach at Leeds.

In the first two years, he has led the Green Wave to 8-4 and 7-4 records (15-8 overall) and state playoff appearances both years.

“Our goal this year is just like every other year — compete for the state title,” he said.

To make a run for state, Gibson will need to depend on a young team after losing 14 players to graduation last year.

Leeds is in Class 4A, Region 4 with Childersburg, Elmore County, Handley, Holtville, Lincoln and Talladega.

Gibson said the teams to beat in the region would have to be Handley and Childersburg. Key players returning include Maliek Evans, Jakobi Hunter,

Have A Good Football Season!

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said it would definitely be within the offensive and defensive lines.

“As for team weaknesses, we have some special team issues we have to take care of,” he said. “We have some new guys in our kicking game and Armstrong will be starting his first game at quarterback when we open the

See **Green Wave**, Page 9

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Green Wave

from page 7

LEEDS 2018 SCHEDULE

Aug. 24 Sylacauga Away	Oct. 5 Talladega Away
Aug. 31 John Carroll Home	Oct. 12 Holtville Home
Sept. 7 Elmore Co. Away	Oct. 19 Handley Away
Sept 14. Lincoln Home	Oct. 26 Childersburg Home
Sept. 21 OPEN	Nov. 2 Pleasant Grove Away
Sept. 28 Ohatchee Home	

season. We have several weaknesses we need to work on, but so does everyone this time of season.”

Leeds opens the season Friday on the road at Sylacauga.

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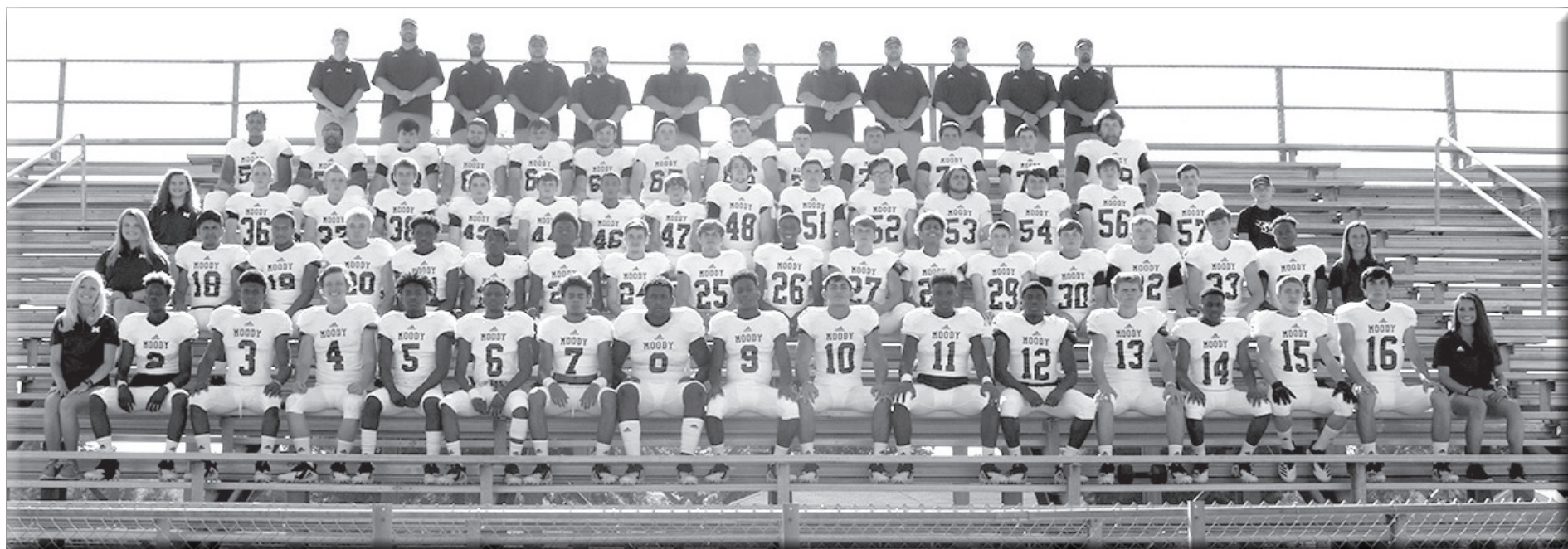
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Moody Blue Devils

Wallace comes home to lead Blue Devils



By GARY HANNER
Times Editor

Adam Wallace has come home to Moody to coach his alma mater, and no one is happier than he is.

"Our guys have worked their tails off this summer to get to the point where we are right now," he said. "We have a lot of new guys that I'm anxious to see play. I want to see how they react to a Friday night, because they haven't been in that position yet. I'm sure they

are good players, they just haven't been in a Friday night situation yet."

Moody has the first week off, but they are playing Douglas at home Friday in a jamboree game.

"We just want our guys to get under the lights and have game-like situations before we start the season," Wallace said.

Twelve seniors graduated from the 2017 Moody squad that went 4-6 and did not make the state playoffs.

"We have over 20 seniors this year," Wallace said. "A lot of those senior players will be playing for the first time and we will be relying on them. I think they will be fine reacting to a Friday night game, and I am very confident in them."

Wallace said key players returning include quarterback Karson Buckner.

"I am excited about the

progress he has shown through spring training and on into the summer," Wallace said. "Rashad Clark has been productive and will play on both sides of the ball."

Moody is in Class 5A, Region 5 along with Center Point, Central Clay County, Mortimer Jordan, Munford, Springville, St. Clair County and Sylacauga.

Wallace said without a

doubt it is going to be a competitive region from top to bottom.

"It's hard to say in preseason who is going to be the best team," he said. "Just because you had a

good season last year does not mean you will have a great season this year. Normally, I know that Central Clay County is good. St. Clair County had an unbelievable

See **Blue Devils**, Page 11

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Blue Devils from page 10

season last year. Matt Glover is always going to have his guys coached up

and in a position to win. Sylacauga is always right there in the mix. Mortimer Jordan is always right there. I think we have a

region where there will be a cluster of teams who will be in position to advance to the playoffs when time comes."

Wallace said when discussing team strengths, he has a lot of guys returning on the defensive side of the ball, and has

four offensive linemen returning as well.

"These guys have grown as a team over the past three months," he said. "I believe that will pay off when we get to Friday night games."

As for team weaknesses, Wallace said it is definitely the lack of experience;

many of the guys will be playing on Friday nights for the first time this season.

"My goal this year is to put a football team out there that is well-coached, prepared, and will do things the right way with class," Wallace said. "If we do that, the wins and

See **Blue Devils**, Page 12

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Blue Devils

from page 11

losses will take care of themselves.”

Moody opens the season Aug. 31, on the

road at Etowah.

Reach Gary

Hanner at ghanner@thestclairtimes.com.

MOODY 2018 SCHEDULE

Aug. 24 OPEN

Aug. 31 Etowah Away

Sept. 7 SCCHS Home

Sept 14. Sylacauga Home

Sept. 21 Central Clay Co.

Away

Sept. 28 Shelby Co. Away

Oct. 5 Munford Home

Oct. 12 Springville Away

Oct. 19 Center Point Away

Oct. 26 Mortimer Jordan

Home

Nov. 2 Talladega Home

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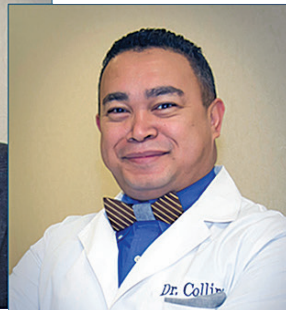
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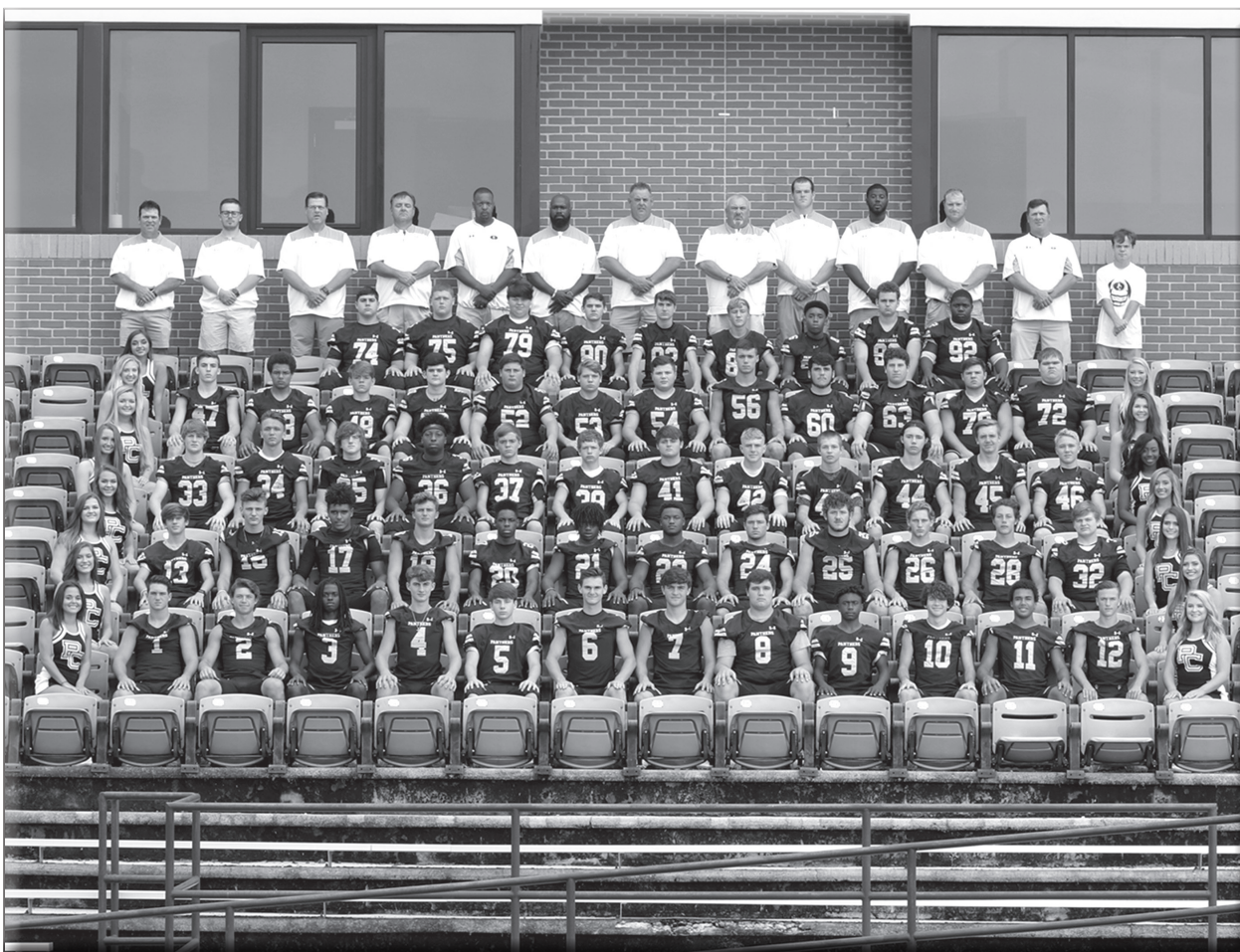
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Pell City Panthers

The Wayne Lee era is officially underway at Pell City High School



By LAVONTE YOUNG

The Wayne Lee era is officially underway at Pell City High School.

Lee takes over a Panthers program that was realigned to Class 6A, Region 6, which features Clay-Chalkville,

Pinson Valley, Oxford, Shades Valley and Gardendale.

Lee said he knows his team is facing an uphill battle, but the Panthers are prepared for the challenge.

"It's been a lot of fun, starting in the spring. They have really worked hard for me," Lee said. "They really got in here and got after it. They have embraced the new

region that we are in.

"We know it is a challenge, we understand that, but they are really looking forward to going out there and competing. We get to see some really good players and we are going to get the opportunity to probably play, at some point in time, the No. 1-, No. 2- and No. 3-ranked teams in the state, maybe in our region. ... That's a big challenge, but we are looking forward to it."

Lee takes over for Keith Etheredge, who spent two seasons at Pell City. Etheredge went 12-10 with the Panthers before leaving to take the job at TR Miller.

This is Lee's first stint as a head coach since the 2008. He spent 10 seasons as Pinson Valley head coach before coming to Pell City as an assistant.

"It has been fun. I have a great group of coaches out here," Lee said. "I have moved some up, and that has been fun. Those kids have really responded to these guys, they are working hard and they are here every day."

The Panthers went 6-5 in 2017 and fell to Shades Valley in the first round of the Alabama High School Athletic Association 6A playoffs. Pell City has made the

See **Panthers**, Page 15

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Panthers

from page 14

postseason in five of the past six seasons. For Lee, continuing that playoff

streak is the goal going into the season. "Every year, we want to

make it to the playoffs," the coach said. "Some people will sit up and say

state championships and this, that and another, but you have to get to the playoffs first.

"When you get to the playoffs, it is a one-game (elimination matchup each week) for everybody; you don't know what's going

to happen, but you have to get there.

"Right now, it is about getting in. It is a challenge in our region, there are a lot of good teams in it. That's the way it falls, but we are going to compete and see what happens."

See **Panthers**, Page 16



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Panthers

from page 15

The Panthers' inexperienced players will have to be prepared to make an impact immediately if they are going to accomplish their goal of making the postseason. Pell City has four returners on the offensive side of the ball. Going into the season, Pell City's defense may be its strength. There are eight returners on that side.

"We have a lot of people coming back on defense, and the defense over the last several years, the scheme has stayed intact," Lee said. "These guys have been playing in the same scheme for four or five years now. ... The offense has had some changes, and they are having to catch up, and there are some younger kids

out there on offense."

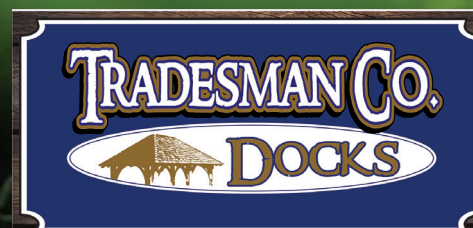
One of the new faces on offense will be at quarterback. The Panthers entered fall camp with a quarterback battle between Mitchell Gossett and Colton Fincher. Lee said leadership will play a role in determining who will start the first game of the season against Fort Payne on Aug. 24.

"It is a competition, and that is the thing that we wish we could have at every position," Lee said. "We fully believe competition brings out the best in everybody. Right now, these two are doing a good job, they are splitting reps.

See **Panthers**, Page 18

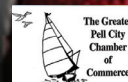
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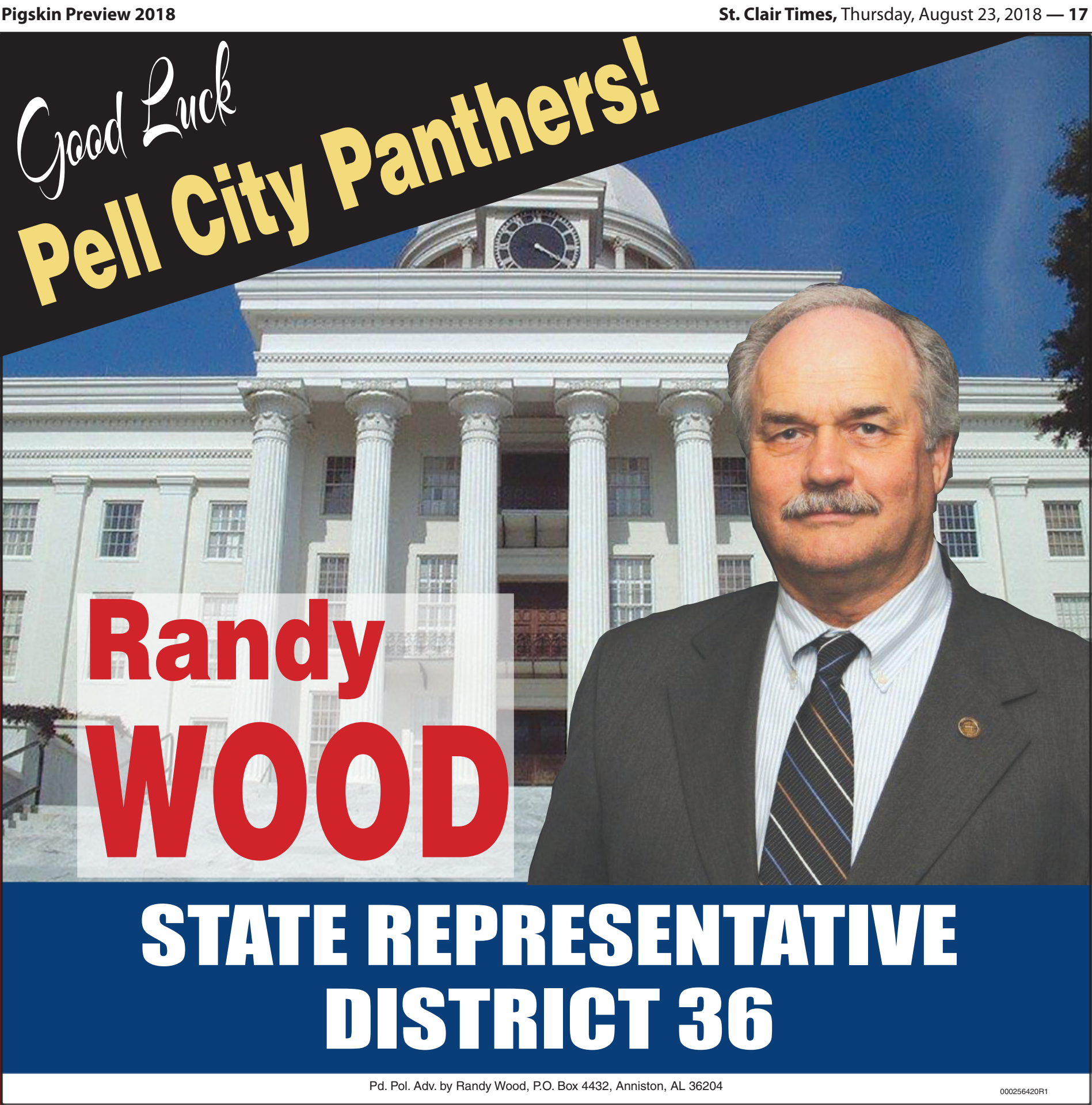
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Good Luck
Pell City Panthers!

A portrait of Randy Wood, a man with a mustache wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and striped tie. He is positioned in the foreground on the right side of the image. Behind him is the Alabama State Capitol building, featuring a large dome and classical columns. The sky is blue.

**Randy
WOOD**

**STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 36**

Panthers

from page 16

“Whoever wins the battle, there is going to be playing time at other positions, whether it is on defense, receiver or whatever for the other guy.”

Darius Garrett is one of the four starters returning on offense. The senior running back was the leading rusher for Pell City last fall. Garrett has high expectations going into the season.


“I just want to help our team win,” Garrett said. “I want to get a lot of yards and score a lot of touchdowns. I have to do what I need to do to help me accomplish my goals.”

With several traditional powerhouses in the region, Pell City is expected to struggle in region play. Garrett said he wants the team to prove all its naysayers wrong in 2018.


“We are out here working hard because we know that we are playing good teams that can make it to the playoffs,” Garrett said. “People are doubting us, but we are working hard to prove people wrong. We want to get everybody out here to watch us. We have to make sure we are working hard, stepping up and being a leader out here.”

PELL CITY 2018 SCHEDULE

Aug. 24 vs. Fort Payne
Aug. 31 vs. Calera
Sept. 7 at Oxford
Sept. 14 vs.
Gardendale
Sept. 21 vs. Huffman
Oct. 5 at Etowah
Oct. 12 vs. Clay
Chalkville
Oct. 19 at Pinson
Valley
Oct. 26 at Shades
Valley



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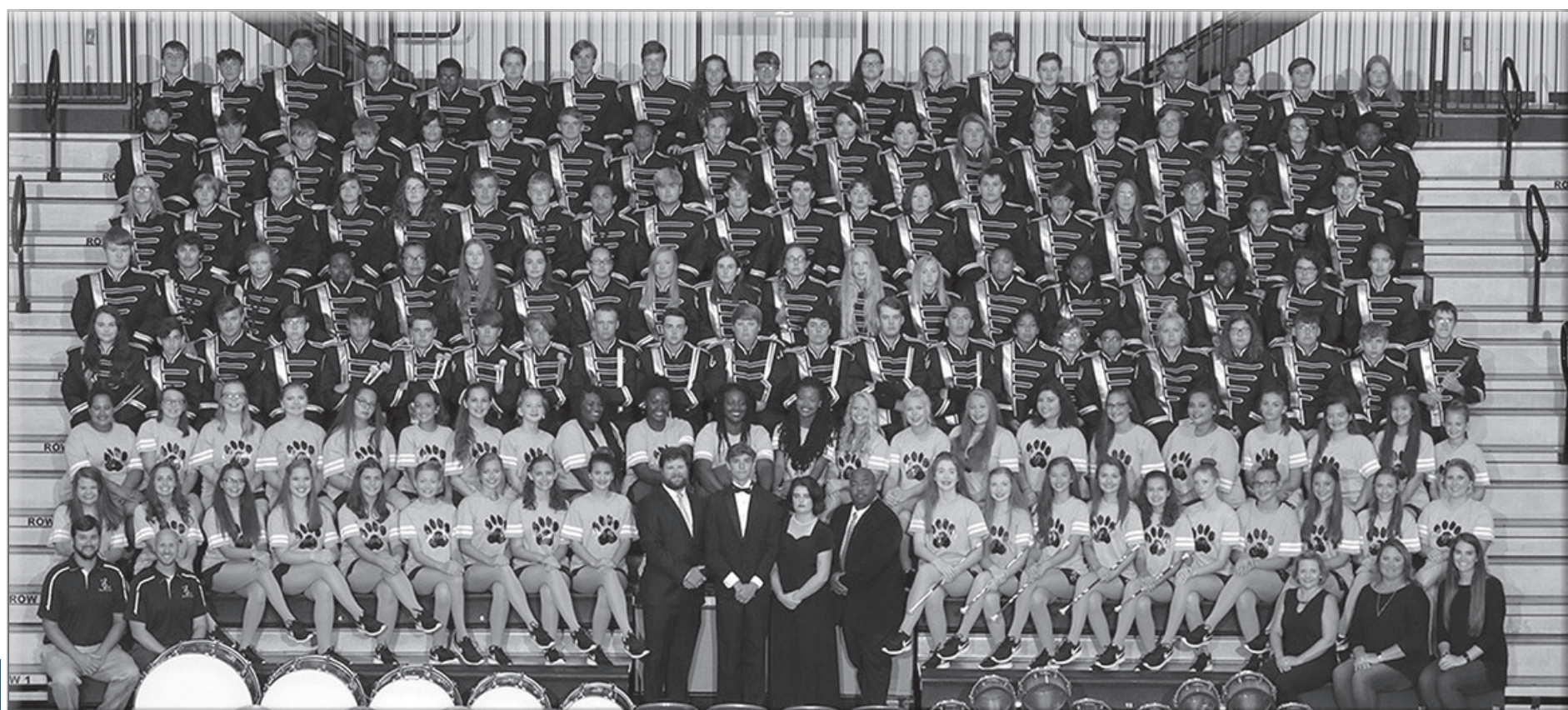
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Ragland Purple Devils

By GARY HANNER
Times Editor

After spending the last two years as defensive coordinator at Ragland High School, Derrick Sewell is now the Purple Devils' new head football coach.

This is the first time Sewell has been a head football coach, and he said he's thankful.

"First of all, I am thankful to God that He decided a long time ago that this was His plan for me," he said. "I am very thankful to my wife and family for allowing me to pursue this dream. I am thankful to my principal, Jennifer Ball. I'm just

very thankful for the opportunity."

Sewell, 31, attended Sylvania High School through halfway of his junior year where he played football, basketball and baseball. He transferred to Ft. Payne High School where he graduated in 2005. He received a football scholarship to Kentucky Wesleyan, a Division II college, where he was a receiver.

Last year, Ragland finished the season 5-6. The year before that, the Purple Devils finished 7-4. Both years they lost in the opening round of the state playoffs.

When asked what it will

Purple Devils open season under new coach

take to win a first round game and move on to the second round, Sewell said it's a matter of taking care of the week-to-week business.

"In the past, we have said we can beat this team, this team and that team in order to match up with a certain team in the playoffs," he said. "That's all fine on paper, but what can help us to advance to the second round of the state playoffs is beating Ashville the first game of the season."

The Purple Devils are in Class 1A, Region 5 along with Appalachian, Donoho, Spring Garden, Talladega County Central, Victory Christian and Winterboro.



Sewell said each team in the region will be better, and they all have great athletes. He said the team to beat in the region would be Spring Garden due to the level of success they've had in recent years.

"They will probably be the team to beat just

because of the reputation they bring to the region," he said.

Ragland lost 12 seniors to graduation last year, many of whom started for the Purple Devils.

There are six seniors on this year's squad. Sewell said key players returning include Jaylen Byers, Hunter Day, LaDarius Spikes, Josh Phillips, Brody Bice, Elijah Ball,

See Purple Devils, Page 22

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Purple Devils

from page 20

Nathaniel Kelly and Travis Schall.

Team strengths, according to Sewell, include more depth than in the past few years.

“Especially at the offensive and defensive line areas,” he said. “Even though with our small numbers overall, we will be able to rest some guys

throughout a game. That’s a key, because if you can’t win at the line of scrimmage, you don’t have much of a chance to win a game.”

Sewell said the overall team weakness would be the numbers game.

“We’re just not very deep in some of our skill positions,” he said. “But,

that’s how we focused our conditioning and weight program this summer to compensate for those lack of numbers.”

When discussing goals for the upcoming year, Sewell said number one would be, every Friday night, putting the best unit on the field and winning that game.

“I know I am going to get everything our players have,” he said. “That will be the standard. We talked in a meeting the next day

after I was hired about setting a standard. We have a high standard with high lofty goals. We will work to get to them. Ragland is accustomed to winning football games. What we want to make sure we do is get to that place where we are winning championships – ultimately. They can’t see that as some far-off dream. They’ve got to understand this is something we can do and that will set the tone for the way we work.”

Ragland opens the season Friday at home against Class 4A and county foe Ashville. The Bulldogs won last year’s game 33-32.

Reach Gary Hanner at ghanner@thestclairtimes.com



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Aug. 31 Westbrook Christian
Away
Sept. 7 Donoho Away
Sept. 14 TCC Away
Sept. 21 Victory
Christian Home
Sept. 28 West End
Walnut Grove Away
Oct. 5 Appalachian Home
Oct. 12 Valley Head Home
Oct. 19 Winterboro Away
Oct. 26 Spring Garden Home
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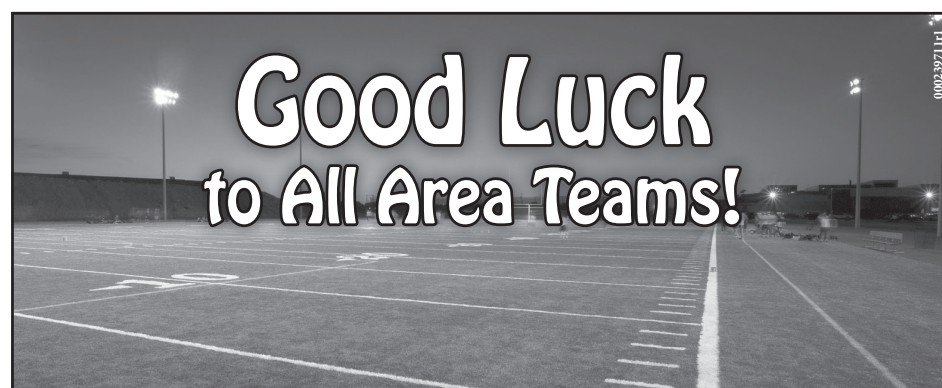
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Springville Tigers

Graben to lead Tigers in 2018



By GARY HANNER
Times Editor

Michael Graben is the new head football coach for the Springville Tigers. This will be his first stint as a head football coach.

In the last three years,

the Tigers have gone 2-8 each season. When asked how he can turn the program around, Graben said they have to practice better and improve on facilities.

“We want to improve on what we have,” he

said. “We are redoing our weight room. We put some artificial turf down that covers about 10 yards that we can practice on when it is raining outside.”

Graben said despite the record in recent years, the guys have played hard, and

have never given up in a game.

“Last year, we had the opportunity to win two or three more games,” he said.

Springville is in Class 5A, Region 5 along with St. Clair County, Moody, Center Point, Central Clay County, Mortimer Jordan, Munford and Sylacauga.

Graben said the teams to beat in the region are Central Clay County and Mortimer Jordan.

“You can also add Sylacauga, Munford and Center Point as well,” he said. “And St. Clair County went to the semis last year.

Moody has a new coach and they have about 80 kids out for football. We will be the underdog in each of the region games we play. That means we will have to catch a few breaks here and there.”

Graben said when talking about team strengths, you have to start with quarterback Austin Hutchison, a 6-foot, 4-inch 205-pound junior.

“I think he is a college prospect,” Graben said. “He can throw the football, run with it, and can read

the defenses well. He has been to several quarterback camps this summer.”

Graben said the biggest strengths are on defense.

“We lost some linemen, but Coach Brad Preston does a great job with that defensive line. Ever year he takes new guys and makes linemen out of them. He will need to do that again this year because we lost four seniors from last year’s squad.”

Graben also said linebackers will be pretty good this year, anchored by

See **Tigers**, Page 24

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Isaiah 40:31



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Tigers

from page 23

Braden Hughes in the middle.

“Braden is just a junior, but I believe he will have a shot at playing college football,” he said.

When asked what the goal was for his team this year, Graben didn’t hesitate when he said, “to win the state championship.”

“I want to be competitive in every game,” he added. “If you say anything other than winning, you sell yourself short. I want to find a way to win some of those games we’ve been losing the past several years. We don’t have a magic win total, but we would like to win the county. We play Ashville, St. Clair and Moody. Those are three big games for us in order to win the county.”

Graben also said he would like to see his team

make the state playoffs.

“You don’t go from 2-8 to winning a state championship in one year,” he said. “But, I don’t want to sell our seniors short, because we do have a great bunch of seniors – 17 of them. We have experience coming back in every position except for defensive line.”

Springville opens the season Thursday, Aug. 23, on the road against Hayden.

SPRINGVILLE 2018 SCHEDULE

Aug. 23 Hayden Away
Aug. 31 Ashville Away
Sept. 7 Sylacauga Away
Sept. 14 Central Clay Co. Home
Sept. 21 Munford Away
Sept. 28 Crossville Home
Oct. 5 Center Point Home
Oct. 12 Moody Home
Oct. 19 Mortimer Jordan Away
Oct. 26 SCCHS Away
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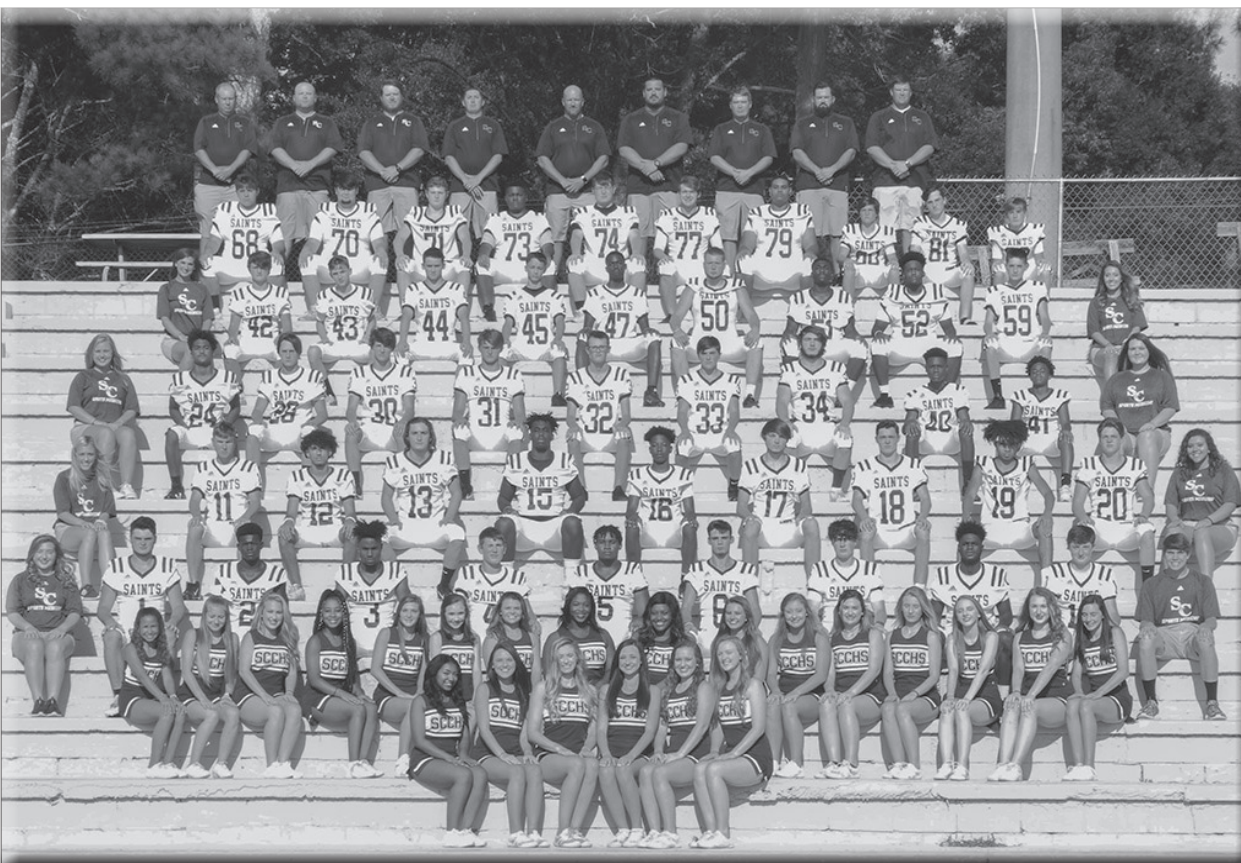
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St. Clair County Saints

Saints set for second year under Glover



By GARY HANNER
Times Editor

In only his second year at St. Clair County High School, Matt Glover is the dean of high school football coaches. Every St. Clair County high school team has a new head football coach this year with the exception of SCCHS.

Last year was an unbelievable year for the Saints as they made a deep run into the playoffs and finished the season 10-4. Two of the four losses were to Briarwood

Christian, the second one a 37-33 season-ender in the semifinals of the state playoffs.

It will be like a rebuilding season for Glover, who lost 24 seniors from last year's team.

"When we played our spring game this year, we

had seven guys who played against Briarwood in the semifinals left on this football team," he said. "Basically, when we lost to Briarwood, we lost our team that night."

When asked how he starts over, Glover said the first thing is dealing with a lot of kids who have never seen any playing time on a Friday night.

"No one has ever counted on them to do anything in a game situation," he said. "They've all been junior varsity kids or scout team guys. This season will be a whole new experience for them. They are learning how to be accountable, how to practice so we can count on them during game situations."

Glover mentioned Javon Ousley, Isaiah Smith, Gage Ivey, Trey Christian and Rodney Jones as key players returning.

"To be honest with you, every player that is back from last year's team is a key for us," he said. "They have playing experience."

SCCHS is in Class 5A, Region 5 along with Center Point, Central Clay County, Moody, Mortimer Jordan, Munford, Springville and Sylacauga.

Glover said his Saints will need to step up to the level of several teams in the region.

"You've got perennial 5A powerhouse Mortimer

See **Saints**, Page 27



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Saints

from page 26

Jordan and Central Clay County in there,” he said. “Coach Matt

Griffith does a great job at Sylacauga. The team I think will be really

good that a lot of people are not talking about is Center Point. They have been a 6A school the past four years playing some tough teams and now they have dropped to 5A. The

last time they were a 5A team, they advanced to the semifinals in the state playoffs. I think Moody with Coach Wallace there will be a good football team. This will be a tough

region. Last year, three of the four teams in the quarterfinals came out of our region. I see that happening again this year. Whoever wins our region has a great chance to move on and represent the north in the state title game.”

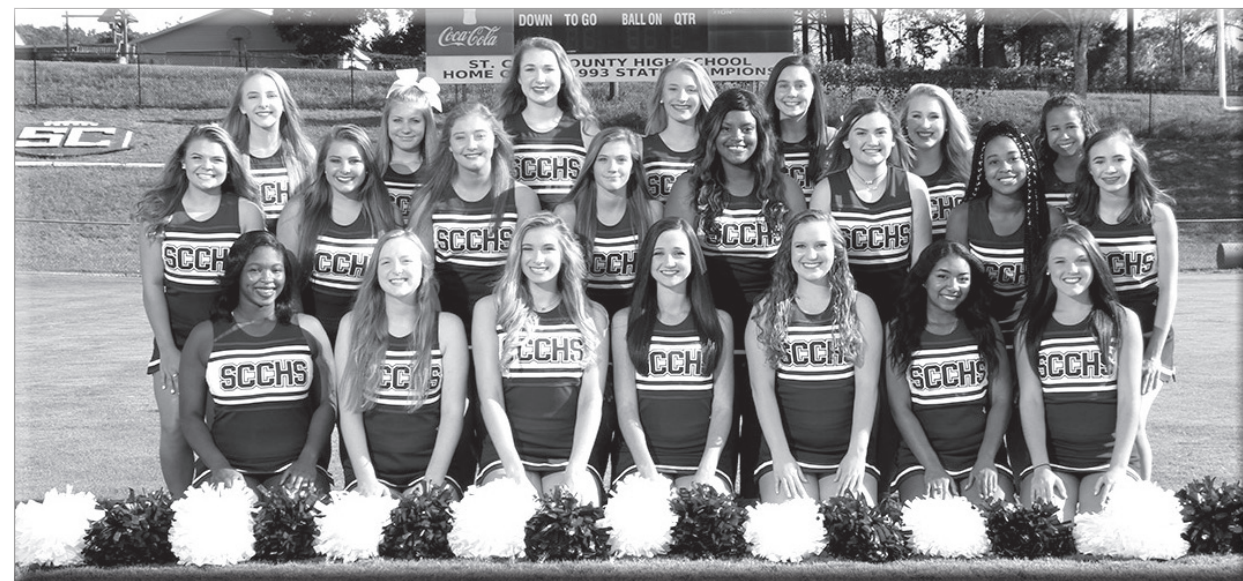
As for team strengths,

Glover said that’s all still up in the air.

“I really don’t know yet,” he said. “With the large senior class graduating, we have so many positions to fill.”

Glover said the goal for the upcoming season is to make the playoffs.

See **Saints**, Page 28



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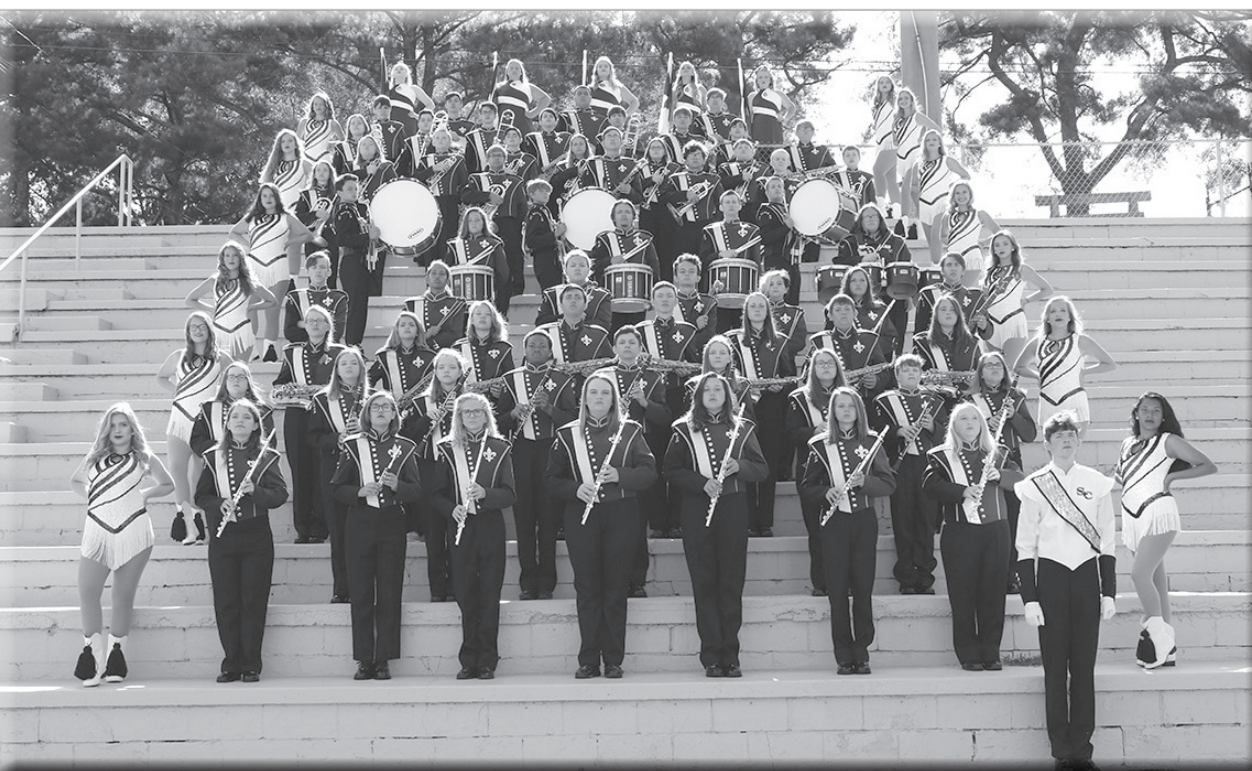
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Saints

from page 27

“We play five games, take a week off, and play five more games,” he said. “We basically have two five-game seasons. I want to have a winning record in those two five-game seasons. If we can do that, we will make the playoffs. If we can get to the next level (state playoffs), then anything can happen.”

The Saints open the season Friday on the road at John Carroll.

Reach Gary Hanner at ghanner@thestclairtimes.com.

ST. CLAIR CO. SAINTS 2018 SCHEDULE

Aug. 24 John Carroll Away
 Aug. 31 Cherokee Co. Away
 Sept. 7 Moody Away
 Sept. 14 Mortimer Jordan Home
 Sept. 21 Center Point Away
 Sept. 28 OPEN
 Oct. 5 Sylacauga Away
 Oct. 12 Central Clay Co. Away
 Oct. 19 Munford Home
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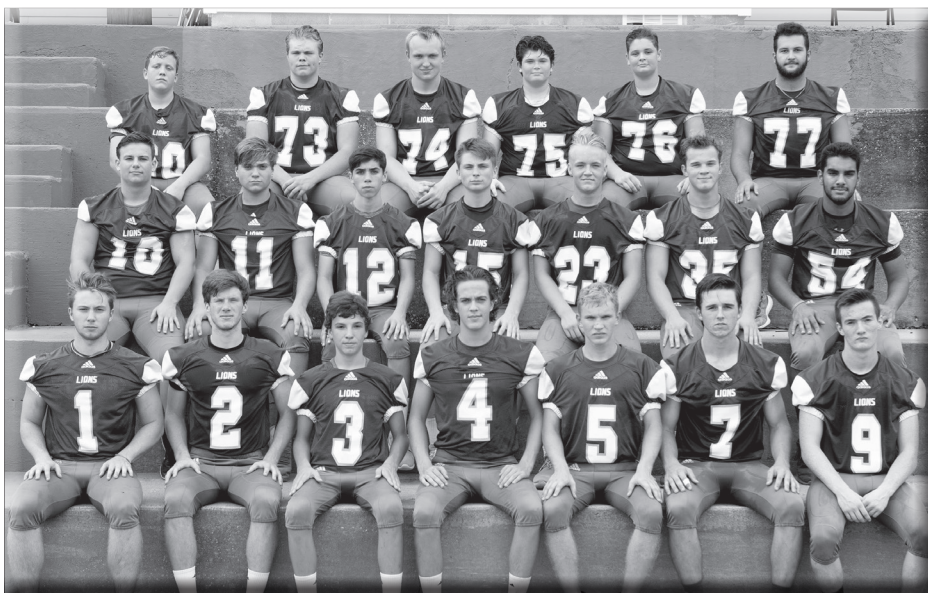
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Victory Lions

Making playoffs is a priority for Victory Christian



By SHANE DUNAWAY

Victory Christian fell a few plays short of securing a playoff berth in 2017 in Mike Holliday's first season as head coach.

Going into his second year, Holliday sees plenty of opportunity and ability on his squad.

"We definitely want to get to the playoffs," Holliday said. "There's no question about that. We were so close last year to getting to the playoffs. We figured it up and we were probably four plays from being 8-2. I mean, we were right on the edge."

"We've got to get over that hump, we've got to get

out of mediocrity and get into something that's better than mediocre."

Holliday said his team has been focusing on the mental aspect of the game going into the 2018 season in hopes of avoiding a letdown.

"We've always been physically fit and physically ready to play," he said. "We've got to be mentally ready to play and we've got to not make mistakes."

"If we do that, we play for one another and we play for Jesus -- which is the main reason we play anyway -- if we do that, we trust our teammates and we don't play for ourselves, there's no telling what we

can do."

The Lions' offseason losses were big in terms of talent but not in numbers.

"We've got a great group coming back," Holliday said. "We lost six seniors, and all of them were contributors. We had a couple guys who had played

all four years, and those will be hard to replace. You can't replace them. You've just got to move forward and get other guys to do their thing in their spot."

"For that reason, I think we've got a great team coming back. This team is jelling together and learning a lot. This team is mentally tough. They're going to be mentally ready. I think we've always been physical, but we're going to be mentally ready this time."

Of the six players who've moved on, the void left by departed quarterback Harrison Cheatwood could, perhaps, be the most difficult to fill.

"Harrison was in here for four years for us and started for four years for us," Holliday said. "He put up some great numbers. He's a good leader, and I

think he'll do well over at (Jacksonville State)"

Holliday said Abe Sargent, who backed up Cheatwood in 2017, will take over this season.

"Abe's going to be our starter," Holliday said. "He's a totally different quarterback. He's not going to try to be Harrison, and we don't want him trying to be Harrison. We want him to be Abe, and that's what he's going to do. He's going to be the quarterback Abe can be."

On the defensive side, senior linebacker Ashton Love will slide into the role previously held by Brodie


Holliday.

"(Brodie) suffered some injuries the (past) couple years that slowed him down a little bit, but he's still going to be hard to replace," Holliday said. "We've got a good linebacker right here in Ashton, who I think is going to be a great replacement for him."

"He's going to play in the middle just like Brodie did when he replaced a great middle linebacker in Kyle Roberson, who had a great career here. We're going to continue (our) long line of middle linebackers who can do the job."

Love said the difference

See **Lions**, Page 31



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Lions

from page 30



is noticeable in where the Lions were at the end of 2017 and now.

"I think we've improved a ton," he said. "I think we've got some of the best coaches at the (Class) 1A level. They've spent countless hours just teaching us to be better men for God and teaching us to be better football players (by) getting our minds right and getting our bodies right -- out here in the weight room working every day. I think we're going to be much better."

Not much changed with

realignment for Victory Christian. The team, alongside all but one of its 1A, Region 4 foes, shifted to Region 5 and picked up Spring Garden, which replaces perennial powerhouse Wadley.

"Spring Garden has always had a good team," Holliday said. "They've always had a good reputation and always had a good, sound team. I think we match up with them well."

"Wadley didn't lose a region game in all four years they were in our

region ... That tells you the region will be a little bit easier, I believe, with Wadley gone. ... I think Spring Garden will be a challenge for us, but I think it works well for us and makes it better for us in the

region."

Holliday added even though the region may have opened up a little bit, he's not taking any opponents lightly.

"Winterboro and TC (Central) are always physical and always have athletes," he said. "Donoho I know has got great numbers. They've got a lot of guys out. The school itself, I think they're one of the largest 1As. I think they're on the cusp of becoming 2A in the last count, so that'll be a challenge."

"Appalachian has got a new coach, so I don't know how they're going to respond to that. They always have athletes and they always have big boys up there in Appalachian ... Ragland is always tough. Always has been."

VICTORY LIONS 2018 SCHEDULE

Aug. 31 at Fayetteville
Sept. 7 vs. Gaylesville
Sept. 14 at Appalachian
Sept. 21 at Ragland
Sept. 28 vs. Coosa Christian
Oct. 5 vs. Winterboro

Oct. 12 vs. Spring Garden
Oct. 19 at Donoho
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