

2020 HIGH SCHOOL VOLLEYBALL

ELITE 11

Here is a look at a top returning player from each area school for the 2020 season:

BY ROB HUNT | PHOTOS BY DON KNIGHT & JOHN P. CLEARY | DESIGN BY HEATHER BREMER



LAUREN DUNGAN

Dungan and fellow senior star Kaitlyn Bair are the last two Tigers from the 2017 regional championship team.

Last year, Dungan posted an outstanding junior campaign with 231 kills, 45 aces, 40 blocks and 374 digs. She led the 19-13 Tigers in aces and digs as well as serve receive.

"My freshman year was definitely my best year, my first year playing in high school and I got to play varsity, which was great," she said. "That was part of history, going to semistate. We won county that year, conference and went on to semistate. It's been a great ride."

Dungan is interested in studying criminal psychology.

ALEXANDRIA - SENIOR



LEXI SWANSON

After two years at Lapel, Swanson came to Anderson as a junior and excelled for both the girls swim team and the volleyball squad last year.

Projected as an outside hitter, Swanson is expected to be one of the top offensive weapons for the Indians under first-year head coach Beth Etchison. Swanson is excited to have a full season under the former Daleville coach, who came to the Indians as an interim coach late last season.

"Practices have been really promising, and it's crazy to see how much everyone has changed in just the three weeks we've been practicing with her," Swanson said. "I'm just really hopeful for the season, honestly."

ANDERSON - SENIOR



TYRA GILLISPIE

Gillispie returns as not only the most experienced Jets player but is the only returning varsity athlete from last season's 4-19 team.

The defensive specialist posted 105 digs and 28 aces and was second on the team in serve receiving. In APA's first Madison County tournament win, Gillispie recorded two aces and led the Jets with 10 digs. She is hoping the Jets can build on last year's successes.

"We just want to keep going and achieving more," she said. "I think we can do it this year and get another county win. This season we're mostly focused on coming together more and hopefully having a successful season."

ANDERSON PREP - SENIOR



SARAH SIZEMORE

While a young Daleville team struggled at times in 2019, Sizemore stood out as one of the top defensive specialists in the area.

In addition to serving up 34 aces, Sizemore led the Broncos with 331 digs and 281 service receptions. Sizemore is playing for a new coach this season in Valorie Fleck and is excited for the 2020 season.

"I'm definitely really excited and so are all the girls," Sizemore said. "I think it's going to be better this year, the gym culture is already so nice and looking good. We're all coming in with a positive attitude with things."

Sizemore would like to continue playing volleyball in college.

DALEVILLE - SENIOR



JALEIGH CRAWFORD

Some athletes break out, and others explode. In 2019, Crawford was an example of the latter.

As a sophomore, Crawford was among the area leaders in kills (335), total blocks (55) and serve receptions (420) while also posting 261 digs and 50 aces to earn First Team All-THB honors. She is excited to be one of the leaders of a young and improving Panthers team.

"We're pretty close all together, and we have a bunch of incoming freshmen. And I'll think they'll be good with all of us," she said. "We're all really, really close, and I think this season is going to be really good."

ELWOOD - JUNIOR



CHLOEE THOMAS

Thomas returns as one of the top middle hitters in the area to a Frankton team that won 27 matches a season ago.

The 6-foot-1 senior was second on the Eagles with 244 kills in 2019 and led the team with 50 blocks. Also one of the heroes from the girls basketball team's run to the state finals earlier this year, she is looking forward to assuming more of a leadership role this season.

"It was a struggle at first because we have so many freshmen this year," Thomas said. "But now, we're starting to settle in and come together, which is really nice."

Thomas is entertaining options for both volleyball and basketball at the next level.

FRANKTON - SENIOR



AVERY BAILEY

Throughout her career, Bailey has consistently been one of the top defensive players in the area.

She topped the Bulldogs in service aces (66) and digs (307) and was second in service receptions (295) a season ago.

From her libero position, she is used to being a leader on the court, which makes taking on the role as a senior leader an easy transition.

"I just want to get everyone involved and make sure everyone has fun," she said. "And to make sure we win."

Bailey is unsure if athletics will figure in her future beyond high school but would like to study to be a dental hygienist.

LAPEL - SENIOR



KAITLYN SMITH

Smith will shoulder much of the attacking responsibilities following the graduation of Elena Tufts.

Blessed with long arms and legs, the 5-foot-10 middle hitter plays with a wingspan of a 6-foot player. With no seniors on the team this year, Smith is excited to take on a leadership role for a young team.

"I'm excited to lead these freshmen and help them," she said. "Maybe I can help them figure some things out. I just want to be positive, that's something we're taught."

Although she still has two years of high school remaining, Smith plans to play volleyball, hopefully at Middle Tennessee State, which has the equine science program.

LIBERTY CHRISTIAN - JUNIOR



MALOREE STANLEY

For a young and talented Madison-Grant team, leadership will be important. That is something Stanley hopes to bring to the squad, both on the court and on the sidelines.

A defensive specialist, Stanley recorded 39 aces and 82 digs for the Argylls last season. While the younger players may post the biggest numbers, she sees leadership as her most important role.

"I'm going at it as, 'What else can I do?'" Stanley said. "There's a lot of good young players on this team. Sometimes my role is not going to be on the floor but on the bench or in practice. I'm trying to be an encourager."

Stanley plans to attend Indiana University-Kokomo.

MADISON-GRANT - SENIOR



AVERY ROSS

In just two years, Ross has established herself as one of the best hitters and all-around players in the area.

In 2019, as Pendleton Heights won its second straight Madison County title, Ross led the Arabians with 389 kills while also posting 42 aces, 38 blocks and 250 digs. Despite the departure of a strong senior class, Ross says PH will still be a handful for area teams this season.

"It's very exciting, I think we can be a really good team," Ross said. "We just need to knock some rust off, and I think we can win county again."

The recruiting process has been busy for Ross with multiple schools of varying sizes.

PENDLETON HEIGHTS - JUNIOR



ERIKKA HILL

A dominant force in the middle, Hill returns to help lead a talented Shenandoah team with high hopes for 2020.

Last year, Hill led the Raiders with 373 kills and 39 blocks in earning First Team All-THB honors. As one of many in this group to lose her spring season to cancellation, she is fired up to get back to competition this fall.

"Skipping my junior spring events was definitely a blow to my ego," she said. "But, at the same time, it gets me going. This is going to be the year we're really going to kick it into gear."

Hill's collegiate future likely will involve track and field, and she plans to study biochemistry or molecular biology.

SHENANDOAH - SENIOR



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