



Media Coverage Report

Coverage window: May 1 – Sept. 8, 2026 (through the Sept. 7 weekly sweep, plus a reader-supplied article verified Sept. 8) | Prepared for Teddi Domann, Pikes Peak Athletic Foundation | Last updated Sept. 8, 2026

Executive Summary

Between the first media alert (May 27, 2026) and the Sept. 7 weekly sweep, the Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic (PPKC) secured 14 verified pieces of third-party media coverage of the event and its matchup — 8 from the Colorado Springs Gazette, 2 from KKTU, 2 from KRDO, 1 from FOX21/KXRM, and 1 from KOAA. That last one is counted per Teddi's direction (Sept. 9): it's real, verifiable coverage of the actual Palmer Ridge–La Cueva game, even though it ran with the wrong venue and no PPKC branding — those errors are noted in full below rather than treated as a reason to drop it from the tally. That's alongside 5 more pieces that cover the participating schools/athletes without naming PPKC, and the first-ever New Mexico market mentions. Nine of the first ten PPKC-branded stories ran within 48 hours of the single Aug. 25 Media Day press conference, which is the clearest data point in this report: the in-person, four-school press conference format worked, and worked fast.

Final scores are confirmed: Fountain-Fort Carson defeated Colorado Springs Christian 20-7 in girls flag football, and Palmer Ridge defeated La Cueva 29-10 in boys football. A post-game Gazette retrospective (verified Sept. 8, after Teddi supplied the article directly — see Post-Game Coverage below) puts independently reported attendance at 2,290 across both games. Even with that retrospective now in hand, several of the event's strongest intended storylines still have zero secured coverage anywhere, more than a week out: the Mayor's and Council Member Rainey's on-field participation, and the GameBreaker AURA safety-headgear partnership. No coverage was found on radio, podcasts, or in the local alt-weekly/community press (Colorado Springs Indy, OutThereColorado, Colorado Politics) at any point in this campaign.

Reach figures in this report are built only from public data (Nielsen-derived TV market size, outlets' own published information) because no media-monitoring subscription is connected to this project. Where no public figure exists, that is stated plainly rather than estimated.

Verification Method & Limits

- Every item logged below was opened directly — via automated fetch or a live browser session — and confirmed to be a real, live page that actually discusses PPKC or the named schools/people. Nothing here is a search-result snippet taken on faith.
- Three Gazette.com articles are confirmed real (headline, byline, date and lead photo/caption verified) but sit behind Gazette's subscriber paywall, so the article body could not be read. They are flagged "paywalled — body unverified" below.
- No coverage naming PPKC was found in any New Mexico outlet as of Aug. 28, 2026.
- PPKC's own Instagram (@pikespeakkickoffclassic) and Facebook (/pikespeakkickoffclassic) accounts are confirmed to exist and be active, but are owned/earned-by-PPAF channels, not third-party press coverage — logged separately in Part 3, not counted as "coverage."

Part 1 — Verified Third-Party Media Coverage (chronological)

July 28, 2026 — Colorado Springs Gazette

"Weidner Field to host Palmer Ridge football, Fountain-Fort Carson and CSCS flag football in Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic"

Reporter: Marcus Hill (marcus.hill@gazette.com)

Link: <https://gazette.com/2026/07/28/weidner-field-to-host-palmer-ridge-football-fountain-fort-carson-and-cscs-flag-football-in-pikes-peak-kickoff-classic/>

Type: Newspaper/digital — full text verified

The announcement story. Confirms the Aug. 28 doubleheader at Weidner Field (8,000-seat capacity), presented by the Pikes Peak Athletic Foundation: Fountain-Fort Carson vs. CSCS girls flag football at 4:30 p.m., Palmer Ridge (2025 4A runner-up) vs. La Cueva (ranked 7th in New Mexico 6A) at 7 p.m. Cites CSCS's Ell Thompson (24 sacks in 2025) and Anna Glojek (5 INTs); Fountain-Fort Carson's Jocelyn Kohones, Jordan Evans and Amarriah Sims. Notes Palmer Ridge's 110-15 record since 2016.

Carries an editor's correction on the record: "This story has been corrected to show Colorado Springs Christian High School's flag football team will play Fountain-Fort Carson in the inaugural Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic" — confirmed proof a matchup correction had to run publicly.

Key messages conveyed: Historic first-football-game-at-Weidner-Field angle; cross-state matchup prestige; team credibility via stats.

Reach: No public circulation/traffic figure found for this article; none estimated.

Aug. 25, 2026 — Colorado Springs Gazette

"Local flag and tackle football teams embracing opportunity to play at Weidner Field in inaugural Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic"

Reporter: Marissa Kraus (marissa.kraus@gazette.com)

Link: <https://gazette.com/2026/08/25/local-flag-and-tackle-football-teams-embracing-opportunity-to-play-at-weidner-field-in-inaugural-pikes-peak-kickoff-classic/>

Type: Newspaper/digital — PAYWALLED, body unverified

Confirmed real (headline, byline, Aug. 25 date, lead photo of CSCS QB Hayley Helwege at the Media Day press conference) but the article body sits behind Gazette's paywall and could not be read this session.

Key messages conveyed: Unknown beyond headline/photo caption — not asserted.

Reach: Not publicly available.

Aug. 25, 2026 — KKTU 11 News (CBS affiliate)

"First Annual Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic puts local teams on a big stage"

Reporter: Jessica Mendoza

Link: <https://www.kktv.com/2026/08/26/first-annual-pikes-peak-kickoff-classic-puts-local-teams-big-stage/>

Type: TV station digital article with embedded video — full text verified

Covers the Weidner Field conversion from soccer pitch to football field and confirms both games/times, framing the event as a big-stage moment for local programs. (A separately supplied internal note flags 0:16–1:03 and

1:46–1:57 as Jessica Mendoza's on-camera narration with athlete/coach interviews filling the rest — not independently timestamp-verified by us.)

Key messages conveyed: Venue-history angle, community/nonprofit framing, cross-state matchup.

Reach: Colorado Springs–Pueblo: 87th-ranked U.S. TV market, 388,730 TV households (2024-25 Nielsen season). Market size, not a verified segment viewership figure.

Aug. 25, 2026 — KRDO NewsChannel 13 (ABC affiliate)

"Inaugural Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic brings high school football, flag football to Weidner Field"

Reporter: Dylan Foreman

Link: <https://krdo.com/news/sports-news/2026/08/25/inaugural-pikes-peak-kickoff-classic-brings-high-school-football-flag-football-to-weidner-field/>

Type: TV station digital article — full text verified

Confirms both games/times as a PPAF fundraiser; quotes Fountain-Fort Carson senior Amarriah Sims on the size/intimidation of playing on a professional-scale field; notes athletes were introduced at Weidner Field on Media Day.

Key messages conveyed: Girls flag football visibility, athlete voice/human interest, PPAF fundraiser framing.

Reach: Same Colorado Springs–Pueblo DMA figure as above; no segment-specific number available.

Aug. 25, 2026 — FOX21 News Colorado / KXRM (Fox affiliate, Nexstar)

"A new tradition: SOCO teams excited for first annual Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic"

Reporter: Hunter Phipps

Link: <https://www.fox21news.com/sports/a-new-tradition-soco-teams-excited-for-first-annual-pikes-peak-kickoff-classic/>

Type: TV station digital article with 1:18 embedded video — full text verified (original + AOL syndication)

Confirms both games/times, gate opening (3:30 p.m.), free admission for 17-and-under. Quotes Fountain-Fort Carson QB Grayce Jacobs: "This is a huge opportunity, especially for all women's sports and flag football since it's such a fast-growing sport... I think we're all really proud to be here and super excited to play." Also quotes Palmer Ridge head coach Zach Carlton on scouting La Cueva's film.

Also syndicated nationally via AOL: <https://www.aol.com/articles/tradition-soco-teams-excited-first-010416000.html>

Key messages conveyed: Growth of women's sports/flag football (athlete voice), cross-state "powerhouse" framing, practical visitor info.

Reach: Same DMA figure as above locally; AOL syndication (Nexstar wire) adds national distribution, but no article-specific pageview count is publicly available.

Aug. 26, 2026 — Colorado Springs Gazette

"Colorado Springs Christian flag football 'thrilled' for game at Weidner Field"

Reporter: Marcus Hill (marcus.hill@gazette.com)

Link: <https://gazette.com/2026/08/26/colorado-springs-christian-flag-football-thrilled-for-game-at-weidner-field/>

Type: Newspaper/digital — full text verified

The strongest single CSCS feature. Quotes senior QB Hayley Helwege at length ("If you told me this a year ago, I would not have believed you... I could have never envisioned such a big stadium"), CSCS coach Aaron Moore ("We're honored that the [Pikes Peak Athletic Foundation] chose us to participate... represent this up-and-

coming sport that empowers young girls”), and captain Anna Glojek on the two-year friendship with Fountain-Fort Carson built at a shared summer camp.

Key messages conveyed: Girls flag football growth/equity, cross-school sportsmanship/community, showcase-stage excitement — the best-aligned single story with PPAF's own messaging pillars.

Reach: Not publicly available.

Aug. 26, 2026 — Colorado Springs Gazette — FLAGSHIP PLACEMENT

"Introducing the Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic: How Nate Lenz turned his love for sports into a force for good"

Reporter: Hugh Johnson

Link: <https://gazette.com/2026/08/26/introducing-the-pikes-peak-kickoff-classic-how-nate-lenz-turned-his-love-for-sports-into-a-force-for-good/>

Type: Newspaper/digital — full text verified. The single best-placed story of the campaign.

A full origin-story feature on Nate Lenz and PPAF. Lenz explains he wanted something other than “another milquetoast gala or golf tournament,” describes the college-bowl-style vision, and names future-year matchup ambitions (Valor Christian, Cherry Creek, an out-of-state Texas team at Pine Creek, The Classical Academy). Confirms Weidner Field's broader sports pedigree and quotes Switchbacks staff on the robotic line-painting process.

Quotes Teddi Domann directly: “Just given what we're all about, which is giving back to the community... I absolutely love football but preps football, I have a huge, big heart for it because I believe it can be the heartbeat of any community.”

Confirms on the record that Fountain-Fort Carson was originally set to play Palmer High School, and CSCS stepped in only after that fell through.

Note on figures: Lenz is quoted citing “22 high schools” reached in three years — different from the “15+ schools” figure used in PPAF's own Aug. 20 press release and the Mayor's talking points. See Areas for Growth, item I.

Key messages conveyed: Founder passion/origin story, community impact, proof-of-concept vision for 2027+, venue prestige.

Reach: Not publicly available for this specific article.

Aug. 27, 2026 — Colorado Springs Gazette

"It's business as usual for Palmer Ridge as Bears face La Cueva in interstate matchup for Kickoff Classic"

Reporter: Hugh Johnson

Link: <https://gazette.com/2026/08/27/its-business-as-usual-for-palmer-ridge-as-bears-face-la-cueva-in-interstate-matchup-for-kickoff-classic/>

Type: Newspaper/digital — PAYWALLED, body unverified

Confirmed real (headline, byline, Aug. 27 date, lead photo of Palmer Ridge captains Matt Bosseler, Trek Leonard, Drew Japp and Zak Crisler at the Media Day press conference); body sits behind the paywall.

Key messages conveyed: Unknown beyond headline/photo caption — not asserted.

Reach: Not publicly available.

Aug. 27, 2026 — Colorado Springs Gazette

"Fountain-Fort Carson girls' flag football is eager to play at Weidner Field in second year as a program"

Reporter: Marissa Kraus (marissa.kraus@gazette.com)

Link: <https://gazette.com/2026/08/27/fountain-fort-carson-girls-flag-football-is-eager-to-play-at-weidner-field-in-second-year-as-a-program/>

Type: Newspaper/digital — PAYWALLED, body unverified

Confirmed real (headline, byline, Aug. 27 date, lead photo of Fountain-Fort Carson players Amarriah/Ammariah Sims, Jaslene Ortiz, Jocelyn Kohones and Grace/Grayce Jacobs at the Media Day press conference); body sits behind the paywall. Note: first-name spelling of Sims and Jacobs varies slightly across outlets — not our error, just inconsistent source spelling worth standardizing internally.

Key messages conveyed: Unknown beyond headline/photo caption — not asserted.

Reach: Not publicly available.

Aug. 27–28, 2026 — KOAA News 5 (NBC affiliate) — ⚠️Note: no PPKC mention and venue incorrect.

"Friday Football Fever 2026: Week 1 Preview"

Reporter: James Gavato

Link: <https://www.koaa.com/sports/friday-football-fever/friday-football-fever-2026-week-1-preview>

Type: TV "Game of the Week" digital/broadcast preview — full text verified

Names Palmer Ridge vs. La Cueva as KOAA's Week 1 "Game of the Week," with both teams' 1-0 records and Palmer Ridge's championship pedigree. However, the article states kickoff is "at 7 p.m. from Don Breese Stadium" (Palmer Ridge's normal home field) and never mentions Weidner Field, the Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic, or the Pikes Peak Athletic Foundation.

This had originally been excluded from the coverage count entirely. Per Teddi's direction (Sept. 9), it's counted here instead — it's real, verifiable coverage of the actual matchup — with its errors noted in full rather than used as grounds for exclusion.

This is KOAA's highest-profile local sports segment, built around exactly PPAF's marquee matchup — and it currently sends viewers to the wrong stadium with zero PPKC branding. See Areas for Growth, item F.

Key messages conveyed: Cross-state matchup prestige only — misses Weidner Field, PPKC branding, PPAF, tickets and the Fan Zone entirely.

Reach: Same Colorado Springs–Pueblo DMA figure as above; no segment-specific number available.

Post-Game Coverage (Aug. 28 – Sept. 1, 2026)

Aug. 28, 2026 (game night) — Colorado Springs Gazette

"Palmer Ridge dominates La Cueva in Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic matchup"

Reporter: Not extractable — body blocked by a redirect/paywall gate

Link: <https://gazette.com/2026/08/28/palmer-ridge-dominates-la-cueva-in-pikes-peak-kickoff-classic-matchup/>

Type: Online sports recap — headline/URL/date confirmed across independent searches; body unverified

The flagship game-night recap headline; the PPKC brand name carries into the result story itself.

Key messages conveyed: PPKC branding in the recap headline.

Reach: Not publicly available.

Aug. 28, 2026 — verified Sept. 8 (article supplied directly by Teddi) — Colorado Springs Gazette

"Fans near and far celebrate "big-time football feel" at Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic"

Reporter: Hugh Johnson

Link: <https://gazette.com/2026/08/28/fans-near-and-far-celebrate-big-time-football-feel-at-pikes-peak-kickoff-classic/>

Type: Newspaper/digital — full text verified via a reader-supplied PDF (this session's own fetch attempts had been blocked by a redirect/access gate; flagged as unverified in the Sept. 7 sweep)

The event's actual post-game retrospective — the piece the Sept. 7 sweep flagged as a likely candidate to close open gaps, now confirmed. Leads with Andrew Powell, Colorado state director of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (one of the sponsors that helped bring the event to life) and a former Air Force Academy quarterback/receiver: “It has that big-time football feel. We got those experiences when I was in high school in Florida... It's awesome to see this level of excellence being brought to sports in Colorado Springs.”

Quotes Palmer Ridge student Trox Maulsby on the atmosphere (“It's a great place for all the city to come to... It's just a great, fun, loud environment for us to celebrate at”) and Fountain-Fort Carson players Da'Quan Burton and Dillon Sikes, who attended in support of their school's girls' 20-7 win over CSCS. Also quotes La Cueva parent Scottie Turcotte on the five-hour drive from Albuquerque (“This is so cool... I didn't even know this was here”) and confirms Palmer Ridge led 22-0 at halftime.

States attendance directly: “In all, 2,290 people attended the event across both contests.”

Does NOT mention Mayor Mobolade, Council Member Rainey, or the GameBreaker/AURA headgear partnership anywhere.

Key messages conveyed: Community buzz/word-of-mouth (“students were talking about it in the halls all week”), sponsor voice (Fellowship of Christian Athletes), cross-state travel/hometown-pride angle (La Cueva family), founder vision for expanding to more regional schools in future years.

Reach: Not publicly available. (Now the 8th verified Gazette byline of the campaign.)

[Aug. 28, 2026 — KRDO](#)

"Friday Night Blitz Week 1, Part 1"

Reporter: Not specified

Link: <https://krdo.com/sports/friday-night-blitz/2026/08/28/friday-night-blitz-playoffs-edition-week-1-part-1/>

Type: Multi-game scores roundup — full text verified

Reports the football final: La Cueva 10, Palmer Ridge 29. Does not name PPKC, Weidner Field, the Mayor, Rainey, or GameBreaker.

Key messages conveyed: Score only — no PPKC branding.

Reach: Same Colorado Springs–Pueblo DMA figure as above.

[Aug. 28–29, 2026 — KKTU](#)

"Friday Night Endzone: Week 1"

Reporter: Jessica Mendoza and Cameron Dean

Link: <https://www.kktv.com/2026/08/29/friday-night-endzone-week-1/>

Type: TV sports roundup — verified via page metadata

States “Palmer Ridge football wins 2026 Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic” and that Fountain-Fort Carson won the girls flag football matchup — the event name reached KKTU's flagship weekly HS sports franchise.

Key messages conveyed: Event-name framing; both PPKC winners named.

Reach: Same DMA figure; ran inside an established weekly franchise segment (existing regular viewership, not quantified).

[Independent score corroboration \(stats aggregators, not editorial coverage\)](#)

- Palmer Ridge 29, La Cueva 10 — confirmed by PrepRedzone and ScoreStream
- Fountain-Fort Carson 20, Colorado Springs Christian 7 — confirmed by MaxPreps, which lists the venue as “Switchbacks Stadium” (Weidner Field's branded name).

Aug. 30 & Sept. 1, 2026 — Albuquerque Journal (James Yodice column, via Yahoo Sports) — first New Mexico mentions

“The Bears gave up the first 22 points to Palmer Ridge, Colorado, and eventually lost 29-10 in Colorado Springs. (The game was played at the Colorado Rapids soccer facility.)” — Aug. 30. “La Cueva ... did not, perhaps, work out as they'd hoped, with the Bears losing by 19 in Colorado Springs.” — Sept. 1.

This is the first New Mexico-market acknowledgment of the trip at all — but the Aug. 30 column misidentifies the venue as “the Colorado Rapids soccer facility” (a Denver-area MLS club) rather than Weidner Field, and neither column uses the “Pikes Peak Kickoff Classic” name. Net effect on the pre-game New Mexico gap: partially closed — the score has incidental NM pickup, but the event brand still has zero pickup in any New Mexico outlet, and no NM TV station (KOB4, KRQE, KOAT) covered the game at all.

Part 2 — Reach & Audience Summary

Channel	Public reach data found	Source
KKTV, KRDO, FOX21/KXRM, KOAA (Colorado Springs–Pueblo broadcast)	Market of 388,730 TV households; 87th-largest U.S. TV market (2024-25 season)	ustvdb.com (Nielsen-derived)
FOX21 story's AOL syndication	Distributed onto AOL's national network via the Nexstar wire; no article-specific pageview count publicly available	—
Colorado Springs Gazette	No current public circulation/digital-traffic figure found. (A 2009 print figure exists but is 16 years stale — not used, as it would mislead.)	--
PPKC Instagram / Facebook	Accounts confirmed to exist; follower counts not obtainable without platform login	—
Radio / podcast	No coverage found on any channel	—

Bottom line on “audiences reached”: the verified, publicly groundable reach claim for this campaign is broadcast-market size (up to ~389,000 TV households) across four Colorado Springs stations, plus the Gazette's own (undisclosed) reach across 8 confirmed bylined stories, plus incidental national exposure through AOL's syndication of the FOX21 piece. A more precise number would require either a media-monitoring subscription or direct data pulled from each outlet/platform — see Open Questions.

Part 3 — Key Message Points Successfully Communicated

Cross-referenced against the Mayor's talking points, the Aug. 20 press release, and the Social Media Strategic Plan's four content strategies.

- Girls flag football growth & equity — landed strongly and repeatedly across KKTV, KRDO, FOX21 and three Gazette stories. The single most successfully placed message of the campaign.
- Community/nonprofit mission (PPAF) — landed exceptionally well in the Hugh Johnson Gazette feature, a genuine origin-story placement most nonprofits don't get.
- Cross-state “interstate matchup” prestige — landed in nearly every piece (Colorado Springs side only — see Areas for Growth, item G, on the New Mexico gap).

- Historic Weidner Field angle (first football game at the venue) — landed in KKTV, KRDO, FOX21, and both Gazette announcement/feature stories.
- Athlete voice / human interest — landed well: Hayley Helwege, Anna Glojek, Amarriah Sims, Grayce Jacobs and Palmer Ridge's captains were all quoted somewhere in verified coverage.
- Proof-of-concept/future vision for the series — landed once, well, in the Hugh Johnson feature (Lenz naming Valor Christian, Cherry Creek, Pine Creek/Texas, The Classical Academy as future dream matchups).