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Sports Report

Our Goal: Recognizing The Achievements Of Young Athletes

XXXVIX No. 5 - November 15 - December 31, 2025

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72 Pages

SC had 48 players sign major college offers with more to follow

By Billy G. Baker Publisher

Moncks Corner—As of December, 15 the state of South Carolina has 49 football players, from the 2026 class, who have actually signed on to play at one of the 136 Div. I major colleges who comprise college football; a new state record for signees within one class with several more players forecasted to sign major college offers by early February.

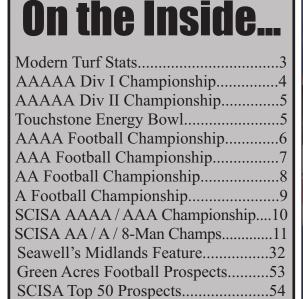
First, and foremost, the *HSSR* always takes a moment to thank our recruiting page monthly sponsor, **Mark Grainger** and all the fine folks at *Modern Turf* in Irmo and Rembert.

In recently developments, **Dutch Fork** DE **Julian Walker** (6-6,220) flipped his pledge from **Michigan** to **South Carolina** where his father is an assistant coach with the Gamecocks. After his decommitment from the Wolverines, **North Carolina** came at him full bore with a big NIL pledge from the Tar Heels.

A recent offer and signee to **Oregon** is AC Flora WR **Azel Bang** (6-0,170) rated 31 overall.

In the in, Walker, rated the number two prospect by the *HSSR*, wanted to stay home and play in the SEC, about 15 miles from his home

See Recruiting, pg. 37





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A Message From The Publisher Billy G. Baker email: bilrecruit@aol.com



Our Goal: Recognizing The Achievements Of Young Athletes

A special salute to our newest football state champions from the 2025 season

Moncks Corner—The 2025 prep football season in South Carolina has concluded; the process of crowning state champions has passed once again, and now over 250 SCHSL and SCISA teams have already begun working out in the weight rooms for the training they hope will prepare them to compete again in the near future.

The *HSSR* salutes the six state football champions from the SCHSL, and the five state champions from SCISA, who survived the Friday night wars, over-coming injuries, surviving the 98 degree heat of those August practices, and in early December, surviving SCHSL teams pressed on in the cold and rain that gripped the playing field of Oliver C. Dawson Stadium at South Carolina State University.

Thus, we pay homage to SCHSL Div. I AAAAA champion Dutch Fork, SCHSL Div. II AAAAA champion Northwestern, SCHSL Class AAAA champion **South Pointe**, SCHSL Class AAA champion **Oceanside** Collegiate, SCHSL Class AA champion Strom Thurmond, and SCHSL Class A champion Bamberg-**Ehrhardt** for emerging as the last teams standing in their respective classifications.

From the SCISA ranks we salute Class AAAA champion Northwood Academy, Class AAA champion Pinewood Prep. Class AA champion Bethesda Academy, Class A champion Williamsburg Academy, along with 8-man champion W.W. King.

We always like to look back to our first SCHSL preseason rankings in mid-summer to see just how accurate, or far-off, we were in the *HSSR* forecast at that time. In Div. I AAAAA we had **Dutch Fork** and **Summerville** ranked 1-2 so we were on the money in that first ranking. In Div. II AAAAA we had **Gaffney**, **Northwestern**, and **Irmo** 1-2-3 in our first ranking so we were somewhat accurate with our forecast.

In SCHSL AAAA, we had **South Florence** and **South Pointe** 1-2 in our first ranking. While we got the top two remaining teams right in AAAA, we got the order wrong

as the Stallions came out on top. In SCHSL AAA we got caught drinking the wrong cool-aid in our early forecast. Our top five teams, in order, were **Dillon**, **Mountain** View Prep, Oceanside Collegiate, Loris and BHP, re-

In our SCHSL AA forecast, the cool aid must have clouded our reasoning, and the 40 years we have been following high school football in South Carolina. We had Batesburg-Leesville, Clinton, and Fairfield Central 1-2-3 in our first ranking. Hampton County and Strom Thurmond, the teams that actually met in the AA finals, were ranked 9th and 12th respectively in our first forecast. (Now we know how the pollsters must feel in their preseason forecast of the Clemson and South Carolina football teams!)

We also got it wrong in our Class A forecast, back in early August, as we had Abbeville, Lewisville, and Cross 1-2-3 coming into the season. The *HSSR* had **Bamberg**-Ehrhardt and Lamar ranked number four and number 10 respectively and these two teams met in the gold medal round in early December.

For the record, our number one ranked SCISA team's back in early August, were **Hammond** in AAAA, Pinewood Prep in AAA, Pee Dee Academy in AA, Williamsburg Academy in Class A, and Richard Winn in SCISA 8-man. In these times, being 40 per cent accurate isn't terrible but it is nothing to write home about ei-

In SCISA AAAA, our two ranked pre-season team Northwood Academy took gold. We were right with our Pinewood Prep pick in AAA and our Williamsburg Academy pick in Class A. In SCISA AA, we had eventual state champion Bethesda Academy ranked number three in our first forecast. The team they beat in the state finals, Colleton Prep, was not even in our first ranking. (Way to

In our 8-man predictions, the cool-aid must have really clouded our judgement. The two teams we had

ranked 5th and 6th in the first ranking (Laurens Academy WW King completing the season with a perfect 12-0 record defeating teams 568-122 along the way. W.W. King was the only undefeated team in the SCISA ranks.

In all honesty, the new SCHSL one time transfer rule, beginning when you start the 9th grade, will make it even more difficult to forecast some teams in the future. For example, we were high on Gaffney because we verified, they had around 12 to 14 incoming transfers into their traditional rich football program. If you had told me in early August that former Gaffney quarterback Jayvon Gilmore would transfer out of the program in mid-September, I would have asked you about what favor cool aid you

The top five scoring teams in the SCHSL for the 2025 season included: 1. Bamberg-Ehrhardt (758), 2. Northwestern (687), 3. Dutch Fork (673), 4. BHP (686) 5. South Florence (658). The top five scoring defenses in-Ehrhardt (122), 4. Hilton Head (132, 5, East Clarendon

The top three scoring teams in SCISA were: 1. Pinewood Prep (594), 2. WW King (568), 3. Bethesda 1. Hammond (77), 2. Bethesda (122), 3. Northwood Academy (150).

lot of points, or prevents teams from scoring a lot of points, they have a high percentage opportunity of win-

and **W.W. King** respectively played for the state title with

In the SCHSL, the only undefeated team when the season was over was Bamberg-Ehrhardt at 15-0! The Raiders defeated teams 758 to 122 during the season. Way to go Raiders!

cluded: 1. Cross (96), 2. South Pointe (117), 3. Bamberg-

Academy (556) The top three scoring defenses included:

The aforementioned just proves that if a team scores a

Now let's move on to basketball and wrestling sea-

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tempts. As a punter, Vargas averaged 36.4 yards per attempt on 19 punts with five of them landing inside the opposition's 10-yard line. On kickoffs, he had 13 touchbacks and had the opposition starting

Laurence Manning, continued from pg. 22

Zy Dennis had 25 catches for 223 yards and three touchdowns and 39 carries for 271 yards and four scores. In th3e secondary, he had 21 ½ tackles, three

inside its 20 on 17 occasions.

PBUs and two interceptions, one returned for a touchdown. He also had three kickoff returns for 123 yards, one going for a score.

Moore was the most valuable player on defense, leading in several categories. He finished with 68 ½ tackles, three TFLs, three PBUs, three interceptions, two big hits and caused one fumble.

Junior quarterback Grainger Powell was se-

lected to the second team as was junior tight end Asher Sanders, senior athlete Payton Brown, sophomore wide receiver Rob Briggs and senior specialist Ray Weston.

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November 30, 2025

Senior center **Kib Newman**, Moore, Zy Dennis and Brown played in the SCISA North-South All-Star Game.

AAA Football, continued from pg. **7**

Johnson had six carries for 30 yards and the three scores while coming up with two catches for 14 yards. Williams had three catches for 75 yards, and junior wide receiver **Cooper Webb** had three catches for 39 vards.

Muncey led the rushing attack with 89 yards on 19 carries and had a 14-yard reception.

For the Bears, Thomas completed 9 of 25 passes for 122 yards and rushed for 45 yards on 11 carries. Watson-Martin ha six catches for 107 yards.

Senior running back **MJ Earl** had 37 yards on

Senior defensive tackle **Kylan Dixon** led the

AA Football, continued from pg. 8

The Rebel defense would end the next three Cane's possessions with interceptions. Jaylen Collins would get two of the

Lee finished the game 5-7 for a 126 yards and two touchdowns while Phillips rushed for a game high 149 yards and two touchdowns. But the stars

A Football, continued from pg. 9

picks and Williams would and the other.

the extra point to be mishandled, leaving the score at 14-13.

"I thought it was a heck of a drive for us," Boyd said. "With two minutes to go I was trying to run the clock out, get a first down and get out. But we had a couple of big plays and then we scored on the last play of the half."

Pierce finished his 4-year career as a starting quarterback by completing 16 of 28 passes for 169 yards and a touchdown against two interceptions. He just missed rushing for 100 yards, finishing with 99 and two TDs on 14 carries.

BHP defense with nine tackles, one of them for a loss. Dubose had eight tackles along with the fumble recovery. Senior defensive back Jacus Paul and junior noseguard Kamarion Glenn also had fumble

Even though Belton-Honea Path came up short for the second straight year, Blackston said he couldn't be prouder of his team, the seniors in par-

"I mean they finished 14-1, and I'm so proud of these guys and what they've been able to do," he said. "They have 50 wins in their careers, and the sun's going to come up tomorrow."

For Oceanside, Manavian is happy the senior class goes out with another championship trophy.

"It's special. I know so many of these seniors, so to help them win their last game is special."

LaPrad said he never felt any pressure to repeat. saying his greatest coaching move was following an

"We didn't change a lot. When it's not broken, don't fix it," he said. "We worked hard the last couple of years. We didn't change a whole lot. We produce good kids, and we have good parents who produce good kids. That's what's special over here."

of the game for the Rebels were Hezekiah East, Amari McCellney, John Las ter, Micah Warren, and Carter Boatwright. This group were physical from the start and they won the day for their team.

The defensive front of Grayson Smith, Braylon Searles, Gardy Stone,

the Canes to less than 200 yards and Singletary to 141. After the 57-yard run was called back they only allowed three runs of 10 or more vards the rest of the game. They allowed the Rebels

and **Kobe Windless** also won the battle as they held

Senior running back **Nygel Eady** rushed for 74 yards on 13 carries. Morris had six catches for 42 yards and a TD, freshman tight

end Robert Cooper had two catches for 26 yards, junior HI back **DeChayzar Green** had three catches for 22 yards, and senior wide receiver **Kamiil McCoy** had two catches for 20 yards.

Junior inside linebacker **Jaquez Dargan** led Lamar with six tackles. Senior noseguard Da'vaughn Locust, inside linebacker Green and outside linebacker Eady each had five tackles. Eady had 1 ½ TFLs while Locust had one.

As Crosby stated, winning a state title wasn't just for the team. It was for the community as well

"It means a lot to win it," McMillan said. "My brother got to the championship game (in '21) but didn't win it. It was great to be able to win it for

However, by completing a perfect season, this B-E team accomplished something no other has.

"We're the first to do it, and we can always be the team able to say that," Youmans said.

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SCISA AAAA, continued from pg. 10

wood scored three touchdowns to wrap up the win. Johnson threw a touchdown pass to Hogan for the fourth time to open the second half, and running backs Michael Polite and Carter scored rushing touchdowns late in the game.

Heathwood Hall (9-4) was in the state championship game for the first time since 2009 and was looking to add a state title to the two the Highlanders won in 2003-2004.

While Heathwood beat arch-rival **Hammond** for the first time in 16 seasons to reach the state championship, their quest to win another championship

SCISA AAA, continued from pg. 10 ■

AAA title game. The Barons, who finished with an 11-2 record, had six players miss the game with injuries, two others playing hurt and had sickness run through the team at the first of the week, limiting practice time. Panthers started at the 27. Senior Will Watson came in Also, top senior running back **Ben McLaurin** was injured during the game.

"We're just kind of out of gas," said WH head coach Adam Jarecki. "We're beat up and I told you we'd love to play this game one time at full strength." In the two previous appearances, Wilson Hall had to play without key players lost late in the season.

All of that being said, Jarecki knew the Barons had a steep hill to climb either way.

"They've got a great team and we knew that early," he said of Pinewood. "We felt like if we got on them like last time we played them and everything would go our way and we controlled the clock we had a chance to play with them. We had to stop them and we didn't. We didn't play well and then we couldn't get out of our own way. We just weren't sharp, and you've got to be sharp to beat a good team.

"Hats off to them. They jumped on us early, and they put it on us."

The Panthers drove from their 22-yard line to the Wilson Hall 15 before turning the ball over on downs on their first possession. A 39-yard run by McLaurin helped the Barons move deep into Panthers territory on the ensuing possession. WH eventually turned the ball over on downs at the 28.

A 41-yard completion from Brawner to Alexander on the first play got Pinewood out of the hole immediately with a first down at the Wilson Hall 36. Four plays later, Brawner connected with Green for a 21yard TD pass. Senior placekicker Patryk **Dzierzanowski** added the extra point to make it 7-0 with 2:08 remaining in the first quarter.

Pinewood Prep got the ball at the Baron 49 on the next possession, and it took just one play with Alexander and Brawner hooking up. That made it 14-0 with seven seconds left in the quarter.

SCISA AA, continued from pg. 11 ■

The Blazers finished the final three minutes of the first half on Cheever's 54-yard touchdown scamper at the 1:11 mark, and after a third Pee Dee fumble, Turner's 36-yard touchdown pass to Martin with a minute to go.

The Blazers held the Golden Eagles to 51 rushing yards and 13 passing yards on 29 snaps in the first half.

With a running clock in the second half, Cheever's third touchdown run, of 58 yards, came

SCISA A, continued from pg. 11

On the opening play of the fourth quarter, Morse would break free for a 50-yard scoring run to extend the lead to 36-16. The back-and-forth affair would continue on the next series as Laurens took seven plays to go 66 yards behind quarterback **Ethan Collins**. Collins went to the air, completing four of five passes for 38 yards, before scampering for 19 yards and the touchdown to make it 36-22 with 9:37 to play.

However, every time Laurens would look to get back into the game the Knights would answer. This time, after recovering one of many onside kick attempts, the Knights went 48 yards in five plays with Hutto scoring on a draw play from eight yards out with 7:11 left to make it 44-22.

Laurens would answer with another Collins scoring run, this one from 10 yards out, to make it 44-28 fell short Friday night.

"We gave everything we had, they're just a better team," second-year head coach Tymere Zimmerman said. "That's what happens in football. We're ok with that. We're not upset, the seniors are probably mad because it's their last game, but other than that, we're going to celebrate because we had a great year."

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

Rather than dwell sadly on what might have been, Zimmerman was enthusiastic after the game. He said he's proud of the work the team has put in to make it to the final game. He's also looking forward to next year as the program gets more firmly

"We were able to get this far. Nobody picked us when the rankings came out, and the prediction of our record, they picked us to win three games," Zimmerman said. "I'm so happy for my team and happy for my seniors. We won nine games this year. That's the most games they (the seniors) won in all four years put together. They set a standard for Heathwood Hall football and that's all that matters. The kids coming up will be back."

That would be the first of four straight Pinewood possessions that began in Baron territory. Wilson Hall had to punt from its 1 on the next possession, so the at quarterback and ran a draw up the middle for a touchdown to make it 21-0 with 10:02 to go in the sec-

Pinewood Prep started inside Baton territory the next time as well, this time at the 39. Brawner connected with Lucas this time, a 34-yard scoring pass to make it 28-0 with 7:17 remaining in the first half. The next drive started at the 33 and ended with Lucas hauling in a 19-yard scoring pass to make it 35-0 with an even five minutes left.

Wilson finally got on the scoreboard, putting together an 8-play, 71-yard drive. It ended with senior quarterback Ford Wilder tossing an 18-yar scoring pass to senior split end Cooper Hill. Sophomore placekicker Nehemiah Dinkins added the PAT to make it 35-7 with 1;46 to go.

The Panthers chose not to sit on the 28-point lead. Instead, they drove 76 yards in six plays with Watson connecting with Lucas for a 16-yard score 20 seconds before intermission for a 42-7 lead. Watson had two touches on on offense, both going for touchdowns. Defensively, Watson had 10 tackles and two tackles for a loss in the secondary.

The second half was anticlimactic. Wilson Hall had another 71-yard scoring drive, this one needing five plays. It started with a 32-yard completion from Wilder to McLaurin. It ended with Wilder scoring on a 2-yard run with 2:23 remaining in the third quarter to make it 42-13.

Pinewood Prep's final two scores came in the fourth quarter. Junior running back Grayson Salego scored on a 3-yard run with 8:37 left, and Alexander hauled in a 20-yard TD pass from Brawner with 4:46 to go. Salego had seven carries for 21 yards.

The Panthers had five quarterback sacks with junior defensive lineman Jacob Sweet leading the way

with 2 ½. He had 4 ½ tackles for loss among his six

Sophomore defensive lineman Mason Summers had seven tackles, 3 ½ TFLs and one sack, and freshman linebacker Nathan Good had eight tackles, 2 ½ TFLs and one sack.

Wilson Hall graduates 17 seniors from this team. Jarecki has nothing but praise for them, not only for this year but for their careers as well.

"This group of seniors graduates with three trips to the state championship and not many people can say that," Jarecki said. "I'm extremely proud of them. They're our leaders at the school. They're the influential people at our school. We'd love to see them go out with success in the end, but what they accomplished is pretty special, and they've got to take pride in that.

"They had a great year and they've had a great career. It's tough not to come out on top, but they know what it takes to get here and they bought into it."

Holloman said the Panthers more than rose to the challenge of being defending state champions.

"Last year we were chasing history, this year we were chasing excellence," the former South Carolina and National Football League defensive back said. "Can we do it again, can we be better, can we repeat? It was very tough, a lot of new faces, a lot of new coaches. Hats off to everybody. We kept improving, kept getting better and better each week."

"It was a mesh kind of thing," Brawner said. "We had a bunch of new guys come in, we had to get to where we knew one another, mesh as a team. This shows what happens when we mesh."

Alexander said it's nice to be able to quieten the

"A lot of people had a lot of things to say like, 'Anybody can do anything once,' he said. "But to say we did it twice, they really can't say anything now."

early in the third quarter. From that point both teams made many substitutions.

Junior defensive lineman Walker Trussell, lining up as a running back in the team's single wing offense, had five straight carries to lead the Golden Eagles to the last score of the game, his 2-yard TD run with 4:54 left.

"Bethesda is a great football team, great program, well-coached. They deserved to win the game, but our kids put in a great year," Pee Dee

lost from last year, most people wrote us off before the season ever started. We've had a lot of questions all summer long and preseason, but I knew we had a potential with the kids we have on this team. They worked hard, had a great summer, great practices. These kids didn't' want to be written off and they showed it in the way they played."

head coach Jonathan King said. "From what we

with 5:04 to play. Morse put the game away with a 44-yard scoring run with 3:21 to play to make it 50-28. Laurens would add a 27-yard touchdown pass from Collins to Hornberger with 1:29 to play to make it 50-36, but the Knights were able to run the clock out and claim the perfect season.

With the Knights wrapping up their first perfect season and second state championship, Kneece was asked when he knew this team had a chance to be

"We had a lot of commitment this summer in the weight room," Kneece said. "(Assistant) Coach (Dennis) Gibson has a great weight program and a lot of our guys committed to it. When you see guys in there pushing heavy weight around and working their tails off in the summertime, you know you're going to have some kind of chance to do

something when the season starts. All credit to those guys putting in the work."

On the night, Morse was the star for King Academy as he led the team with the 295 yards. Hutto added 108 yards rushing and two scores. For Laurens Academy, Collins was the star as he was 9 of 14 passing for 100 yards and a touchdown and added 167 yards rushing and two touchdowns on 19 carries. Hardy added 69 yards rushing and a score.

Kneece added, "I am very thankful for the Lord giving us an opportunity. I know He doesn't care who wins football games. But I am thankful for Jesus Christ dying on the cross for us. I am excited to be a part of this team and this program. I am very thankful and happy for WK."

2025 Football Stats modern



RUSHING	RECEIVING
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Z. ROBERTSON

JAYDEN SCOTT

RAPHAEL PUIU

JOSEPH HOUPT JAYDEN ALEXANDER

COREY GLEATON JAI CHUNIESINGH SAM PETRAUSCHKE

TREY WIMBLEY TILDEN RILEY

HAYDEN MORRIS

TAJEH WATSON-MARTIN RALO WESLEY

JEREMIAH HUNTER

TERENCE JOHNSON CARNELL WARREN

KAMERON VANCE

JAYAUN PERKINS

GARRISON COPELAND

SEQUEL PATTERSON

JAIDEN KELLY-MURRAY

CHRISTIAN WILLIAMS

DARIUS CARTER

JUDE HALL

R BRACEY CARSON BRYANT

KELDIN WRONA

MYQUAN MCWHITE

DESMOND WILLIAMS II

JEREMIAH WALTERS

ANTHONY WILLIAMS

ERIC RICHARDSON

DAILAN DUNCAN

MARTRELL WRIGH

DILLON HUGHEY

CHARLIE SCOTT

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ROMAN BENJAMIN

KEON MCKINNLEY MITCH BOBBITT

ROYCE WILLIAMSON

NICK GORDON

STONE FURREY

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KYSON MCLEOD

PEYTON STEVENSON

MICHAEL BOULWARI

WALKER WILLCOX

J P SWEATT

JACOB BUSSEY MAC STRICKLAND

KAMRON MCGILL

K J BURG KELVIN SMALLS

DRAKE PORTER

EVAN SIMMONS

CALEB HARDY

NATHAN BELL

JOSEPH DUEY MARCUS FRASIER

WILL JIMENEZ

MALCOLM GORDON

DARIUS DIXON JOSIAH ROBINSON

WHITFIELD KING

IAY'SEAN CULF TYE RIVERS

AVAY PENNY BRANSON WILSON

KALEB WRIGHT HUNTER ALEX

JACE COLEMAN ALLEN CHISOLM

JAH'MAUD MOORE KOLBEN THOMPSO

HEYWARD BELSER

BLAKE INABINET

BRYCE CLEMONS

MICHAEL POOLE THAN LOWDER

ETHAN CHISUM M J RESPASS

COOPER JOHNSON

SINCERE HUBBARD

ANGEL GOMEZ

K. BROWN SAM PETERS

AKEEM SHAW

MATTHEW HILLSTOCK

AMIRI ACKER

ASHTON KELLERMA

PLAYER	SCHOOL	YARDS	ATT	TDS
JAYLEN SINGLETARY	HAMPTON COUNTY	2209	212	37
JOSEPH MORSE	W W KING ACADEMY	2018	165	33
AMARI VERNER	SENECA	2007	217	23
AMADRE WOODEN	BATESBURG-LEES	2000	200	25
GRANT SMALL	WILLIAMSBURG	1940	198	29
PARKER KIZER	HOLLY HILL ACADEMY		192	31
JAVEN COOK	CLINTON	1777	155	34
MUNTU BROWN	WREN	1686	229	20
HAYDEN MYERS	RIVER BLUFF	1682	261	14
MELIQ MCGOWAN	STRATFORD	1660	179	21
RYAN CAMPBELL	ASHLEY RIDGE	1629	165	17
KEYLAN POWELL	WESTSIDE	1610	221	22
JOHN WHETSELL	DORCHESTER ACAD	1607	200	18
TREVON WILLIAMSON	GRAY COLLEGIATE	1603	226	25
AIDEN GIBSON	WOODRUFF	1595	195	21
NYCH UNDERWOOD	BEAUFORT ACADEMY	1566	168	21
JAYVEN WILLIAMS	SUMMERVILLE	1534	188	19
TRE SEGARRA	JAMES F. BYRNES	1460	174	17
MICHAEL MARTIN II	CHRIST CHURCH	1425	257	30
TYQWON BOOKER	GETTYS BROOME	1424	228	16
CHRISTOPHER DEAN	EMERALD	1418	175	12
BRYSON CRAWFORD	FOX CREEK	1391	198	21
MAH'KY GREEN	CROSS		133	15
		1375		
SEAN MITCHELL	MAY RIVER	1372	242	17
CALEB HARDY	LAURENS ACADEMY	1366	136	14
NOAH CAFFELL	SPARTANBURG CHR	1363	213	12
TRISTAN HECKMAN	PEE DEE ACADEMY	1361	140	16
JACK LAMONICA	LUCY BECKHAM	1359	204	16
CALVIN WOFFORD	CRESTWOOD	1357	158	13
OWEN GEORGE	ACADEMIC MAGNET	1334	162	19
WILL MCNEELEY	N MYRTLE BEACH	1313	217	16
CALEB FEASTER	CHESTER	1300	126	17
J'ZAVIEN CURRENCE	SOUTH POINTE	1295	89	13
PRESTON SMITH	MIDLAND VALLEY	1262	161	10
D J LEE SOUTHSIDE	CHRISTIAN	1256	231	11
JAMOI HORTON	INDIAN LAND	1254	193	12
HUNTER O'NEAL	W J KEENAN	1254	192	12
TRISTAN DANIELS	SALUDA	1249	153	14
CALVIN MCCOY	GREER	1246	181	13
JALEN SIMMONS	A C FLORA	1237	154	17
TONY O'BANNER	THOMAS HEYWARD	1220	116	11
JAHCORY SUMPTER	EAU CLAIRE	1206	173	13
COLT LAYTON	CALHOUN ACADEMY	1205	115	21
TRENTON LYNCH	SPARTANBURG	1204	130	17
BRANDON MACK	DREHER	1204	222	11
ALTAVIS EVANS	WARE SHOALS	1190	137	13
XAVIER MEANS	NORTHWESTERN	1179	198	23
CAMERON JAMES	SOUTH FLORENCE	1178	135	15
JAYDEN JOHNSON	WARE SHOALS	1177	165	9
ANTONIO PRICE	LEWISVILLE	1176	129	11
SPENCER BOBIAN	RIDGE VIEW	1174	185	17
BEN MCLAURIN	WILSON HALL	1172	109	15
NYGEL EADDY	LAMAR	1158	142	16
CALE OWENS	COLLETON PREP	1158	159	18
JORDAN CHEEVER	BETHESDA ACADEMY	1139	120	13
BRODEN MITCHESON	FORT MILL	1136	234	12
MAK ANDERSON	MOUNTAIN VIEW PREP		117	20
NIGEL SMITH	NORTHWESTERN	1130	168	11
NAVIER BOYKIN	CAMDEN	1122	172	15
KAVEN FORD	NORTHWOOD	1115	152	21
TRE JACKSON	PELION	1112	215	9
THADDEUS CZAMECKI		1110	146	20
LORENZO KITCHING JF		1106	116	9
DOR REICHLEY	ST. JOHNS CHRISTIAN		119	11
JAMIJAE KARIM	LIBERTY	1091	151	15

PASSING

3543

BLUFFTON

PINEWOOD PREP

AEDAN MCCARTHY

SILAS BRAWNER

		•		
CONNOR DANTZIER	JAMES ISLAND	3346	205	40
AIDEN MANAVIAN	OCEANSIDE COLL	3325	197	35
KASON CANUPP	NATION FORD	3136	193	29
ROPER WENTZKY	A C FLORA	2812	193	29
JACE GRASS	DANIEL	2779	193	31
MATT KUCIA	INDIAN LAND	2717	187	23
WAK ANDERSON	MOUNTAIN VIEW PRP	2700	159	31
ZAMIRE MOON GERALD	LORIS	2699	137	46
KAVIER MEANS	NORTHWESTERN	2686	245	28
HAYES GODDARD	PHILIP SIMMONS	2675	171	30
GAVIN THOMA	SENECA	2639	165	38
J'ZAVIEN CURRENCE	SOUTH POINTE	2555	153	22
CONNOR DAVIS	WOODRUFF	2554	189	30
JACE WILLIAMS	THOMAS SUMTER	2481	203	20
ZACH WILLIAMS	LUGOFF-ELGIN	2443	171	17
GREYSON RIMPF	CAMDEN	2390	148	28
GIDEON MERHIB	RIVERSIDE	2361	182	19
K. SAM FONG-TALIA	DILLON	2315	149	25
JACKSON FREE	HILLCREST	2301	140	25
JAXON KNOTTS	DUTCH FORK	2293	192	19
ANDREW FRICK	BROOKLAND-CAYCE	2287	175	18
MASON EVANS	CRESCENT	2223	125	26
BEAR WOODS	WESTSIDE	2214	151	22
PATRICK BELK	HEATHWOOD HALL	2206	159	20
JUDD WINDHAM	CHRIST CHURCH	2160	160	22
BRENDEN PEOPLES	ORANGEBURG-WILK	2149	132	28
KEVIN JOHNSON	NORTHWOOD ACADEMY	2149	161	19
KAVIER WRIGHT	GRAY COLLEGIATE	2141	112	22
KAVIER GETER	MIDLAND VALLEY	2124	132	20
NOAH THOMAS	BELTON-HONEA PATH	2083	142	32
BRAYDEN FRANKLIN	BAPTIST HILL	2050	120	21
DAVIDSON LYNCH	TRINITY COLLEGIATE	2047	116	19
CALE OWENS	COLLETON PREP	2027	127	21
JAEDON BELL	BETHUNE-BOWMAN	2024	138	16
JORDAN TURNER	BETHESDA ACADEMY	1996	83	33
DERRICK RANISZEWSKI	HILTON HEAD	1932	107	18
JOSIAH COLEMAN	EASLEY	1909	176	15
JACOB OWINGS	WREN	1903	134	19
TRISTEN HOWARD	WILSON	1868	133	19
ALAN MOORE	PELION	1860	125	20
BEAU HITE	EMERALD	1845	135	19
SAM HOLLIDAY	FOUNTAIN INN	1829	140	20
JAMES VEASEY	BLYTHEWOOD	1797	158	16
KRES LANGHAIS	HILTON HEAD CHRIST	1793	110	19
SHIMM KELLV	EODT MILL	1702	112	16

YARDS 1367 1356 1329 1314 SCHOOL DILLON NATION FORD JAMES ISLAND PHILIP SIMMONS 1314 HILTON HEAD CHRIST 1313 **CRESCENT 1277** LUGOFF-ELGIN GRAY COLLEGIATE 1170 1167 PELION THOMAS SUMTER DANIEL 1072 ORANGEBURG PREP 1050 **MOUNTAIN VIEW PREP 1019** INDIAN LAND CAMDEN 1000 BELTON-HONEA PATH 994 BETHESDA ACADEMY 989 SENECA OCEANSIDE COLL BLUFFTON PINEWOOD PREP NORTHWESTERN SOUTH FLORENCE TRINITY COLLEGIATE 921 LAURENS ACADEMY INDIAN LAND THOMAS SUMTER RIVER BLUFF NORTHWOOD ACAD WILSON TRINITY COLLEGIATE 893 CHRIST CHURCH SOUTHSIDE CHRIST MANNING OCEANSIDE COLL 833 828 **COLLETON PREP** EASLEY **DILLON CHRISTIAN** WREN LUGOFF-ELGIN BAPTIST HILL SENECA 704 CLEAR DOT CHARTR 759 CLEAR DOT CHARTR 746 A C FLORA BLYTHEWOOD BLUFFTON HEATHWOOD HALL BLUE RIDGE GRAY COLLEGIATE CHERAW BATESBURG-LEES DUTCH FORK UNION COUNTY DUTCH FORK RIVERSIDE

TACKLES

SOUTH AIKEN

SCHOOL	TOTAL	SOLO
GRAY COLLEGIATE	263	43
EMERALD	179	105
TRINITY COLLEGIATE	166	166
WARE SHOALS	164	124
GRAY COLLEGIATE	158	26
ANDREW JACKSON	151	118
W W KING ACADEMY	151	85
ORANGEBURG PREP	150	60
ANDREW JACKSON	149	116
SOUTH POINTE	144	114
BAPTIST HILL	143	58
WOODRUFF	141	50
BEN LIPPEN	140	95
BAPTIST HILL	137	62
BROOKLAND-CAYCE	136	115
LAURENS ACADEMY	135	91
LAURENS ACADEMY	132	91 77
BAPTIST HILL	131	55
BLUFFTON	130	84
MAULDIN	129	40
FORT MILL	128	75
BAPTIST HILL	126	52
HILTON HEAD	125	88
W J KEENAN	124	53
RIVER BLUFF	124	51
WILLIAMSBURG ACAD		44
LUCY BECKHAM	121	73
LEWISVILLE	120	120
GRAY COLLEGIATE	120	20
CAMDEN	119	79
PENDLETON	119	85
ROCK HILL	118	110
BISHOP ENGLAND	118	62
LUCY BECKHAM	117	69
LUGOFF-ELGIN	117	61
PORTER-GAUD	117	96
YORK	116	70
ROCK HILL	116	88
HEATHWOOD HALL	116	59
BISHOP ENGLAND	116	54
ORANGEBURG PREP	115	46
DILLON	114	27
ACADEMIC MAGNET	114	74
STRATFORD	113	64
MAY RIVER	113	54
MANNING	113	49
PHILIP SIMMONS	113	35
ASHLEY RIDGE	112	92
GREENWOOD CHRIST		49
CITELITIOOD CHING	4	73

WADE HAMPTON

CHESTERFIELD WARE SHOALS

111 111

QUARTERBACK SACKS

JULIAN WALKER	DUTCH FORK
JOSHUA WINBUSH	WARE SHOALS
JADEN WUERTH	DUTCH FORK
M J POSEY	EASTSIDE
ELI GARRETT	LAURENS ACADEMY
I'VEON WATSON	WHALE BRANCH
ETHAN MOZE	DUTCH FORK
KELVIN SMALLS,JR	BAPTIST HILL
TRENT DYAL	WARE SHOALS
MARIO ANDERSON	DUTCH FORK
JOSH BIGGER	HILTON HEAD
TERRY RADFORD	CHESTER
JACE COLEMAN	LUGOFF-ELGIN
MATTHEW PONKOW	BISHOP ENGLAND
LUCIANO CESARIO	DUTCH FORK
CEDRIC BURKES	NORTH CHARLESTON
ZAIRE WILLIAMS	ROCK HILL
JOSHUA MCCLURE	SOUTH POINTE
BRYSEN GINN	SOUTH POINTE
MALIK DARBY	NORTHWESTERN
NOAH BELTON	CLEAR DOT CHARTER
MALQUAN PIMENTAL	ASHLEY RIDGE
JAMARI HAYNES	BAPTIST HILL
JAY'SEAN CULP	LEWISVILLE
LANDON CONNER	LORIS
JULIAN RENRICK	GREENVILLE
JUSTICE HOPKINS	JAMES F. BYRNES
FRANK STATHAKIS	EASTSIDE
PERVIS WALKER	LUGOFF-ELGIN
GARRETT VAUGHAN	LAURENS ACADEMY
JEQUANN HENDERSON	DUTCH FORK
JAIDEN BRYANT	IRMO
SEAN PHALEN	JOHN PAUL II
TERRY GORDON	SOUTH FLORENCE
JOHN TRUESDELL	FOX CREEK
NIGEL ROCK	SOUTHSIDE CHRISTIAN
NOAH MORRISON	YORK
EVERETT ULMER	ANDREW JACKSON ACADEM

EVERETT ULMER	ANDREW JACKSON ACADEMY
INTER	<u>CEPTIONS</u>
NOAH TERRY	INDIAN LAND
SAIQUAN JOHNSON	EDISTO
TYRELL CUNNINGHAM	WARE SHOALS
JEREMIAH YOUNG	FORT MILL
KAIDEN ERBY	EASLEY
ROYCE WILLIAMSON	GRAY COLLEGIATE
TUCKER MCGINTY	W W KING ACADEMY
K J DUPREE	DUTCH FORK
MEKHI QUILLER	FOX CREEK
HUCK NEVIN	PORTER-GAUD
TYVION HALL	BOILING SPRINGS
CADEN RAMSEY	CROSS
RODNEY WILDER	COLLETON COUNTY
CASEY FIKIS	CATAWBA RIDGE
JERMON BOWERS	WHALE BRANCH
DEYON FORD	MULLINS
JOSAIH TAYLOR	SUMMERVILLE
KILYN GORDON	BAPTIST HILL
DAVON BOWMAN	WILSON
HALL DUKES	WILLIAMSBURG ACADEMY
JAKOBE STARKS-WRIGHT	CHESTER
DESMOND WILLIAMS II	TRINITY COLLEGIATE
COREY GLEATON	GRAY COLLEGIATE
JAYDEN MOORE	AIKEN
CADEN RAMSEY	CROSS
DA'SHAN SCRIVEN	CRESTWOOD
AZEL BANAG	A C FLORA
D. MCCLAM	DILLON

KICK SCORING

<u>- 11 0 1 1</u>	000::::0					
		POINTS	P/			
ALEX BENDT	NORTHWESTERN	118	76			
BRAD O'LEARY	DUTCH FORK	76	58			
C J FALOTICO	PHILIP SIMMONS	65	41			
NOAH HARDY	FORT MILL	63	27			
CHAZ BRELAND	BAMBERG-EHRHARDT	60	57			
BENJI WARD	BELTON-HONEA PATH	57	51			
EASTON DEMARSKI	HILLCREST	57	42			
JULIAN IGO	DANIEL	54	36			
COY JOYNER	SOUTH FLORENCE	53	50			
JOSH DANIEL	WREN	53	41			
TREY SMITH	BATESBURG-LEES	52	49			
COLE MCLEOD	NORTHWOOD ACAD	51	42			
COREY SHOEMAKER	SENECA	49	46			
RAFE SULLIVAN	HAMPTON COUNTY	49	49			
WESTON MIMS	GRAY COLLEGIATE	48	36			
DIEGO TRANQUIINO	WOODRUFF	48	39			
WILL LOVE	SPARTANBURG	47	32			
WYATT CARTER	ASHLEY RIDGE	44	35			
DANIEL RHODES	CHERAW	44	26			
HUNTER THIEM	PORTER-GAUD	43	28			
NICO MILLER	N MYRTLE BEACH	41	20			
JOED RENTAS	BISHOP ENGLAND	41	32			
ASHTON DAVIS	BLYTHEWOOD	40	25			
LUKA KUCINIC	ST. JOSEPH	39	39			
LAWSON MILLER	SOUTH POINTE	39	33			
ZACH REINERT	JAMES F BYRNES	39	27			
GUNNAR WELLS	CHESTER	39	33			
RYAN VON WYL	CHRIST CHURCH	38	32			
BEAU SEXSON	HILTON HEAD	37	25			
BRANDON JARAMILLO	EASTSIDE	37	25			
RYLAND CURWEN	BERKELEY	37	19			
NATE BEAVER	SUMMERVILLE	36	33			
ALESSANDRO SANTANA	GAFFNEY	36	33			
LIAM FLYNN	RIVER BLUFF	36	18			
EVAN MASSEY	EASLEY	35	26			
SAWYER SMITH	CAMDEN	35	35			
ISAIAH CHACON	LAMAR	35	35			
ADAM BRYSON	LIBERTY	35	35			
ISAAC LORENTZ	JAMES ISLAND	34	22			
RENZO GORRITTI	STRATFORD	34	31			
Forces	Ear complete state					

For complete stats, visit us online at www.HSSR.com

AAAAA Div. I Football Championship



Dutch Fork Silver Foxes

Dutch Fork defeats Summerville for second straight year to claim title

By Roger Lee

HSSR, Contributing Writer **Orangeburg - Dutch Fork** captured its fourth consecutive 5A football championship with a 40-20 win over fellow gridiron power-

house **Summerville**. For some of the seniors on the **Silver** Foxes' team, the win in the 5A, Division 1

Football Championship at Oliver C. Dawson **Stadium** Dec. 6 puts them in a prestigious

"Four rings, there aren't that many people in the country who have done that so it shows what a special group this is," said Dutch Fork coach Tom Knotts.

The coach now holds a prestigious spot in South Carolina high school football record books since this championship is his 10th championship with Dutch Fork. That ties him with former Summerville coach John McKissick and former Woodruff coach W.L. Varner for the most state titles in a career according to **Palmetto's Finest**.

"Well I think it means I'm old, but that's pretty cool," Knotts said. "It's special and a great tribute to those players and the great group of supporters we have. I have a lot of respect for Coach McKissick. I've visited him a couple of times and had a great time with him. I learned a little bit from him and I'm honored to be in his company."

Dutch Fork jumped out to a strong start as safety KJ Dupree intercepted two Green Wave pass attempts, both after a deflection by a teammate, in the opening quarter to help the Silver Foxes jump out to a 14-0 lead. The picks set up a 33-yard touchdown run by **Kye Fulton** and a 25-yard pass from quarterback Jaxon Knotts to Wyatt Warner.

Summerville regrouped and drove 80 yards on its ensuing possession to score on a 6-yard pass from Max Stafford to Jaiden Kelly-Murray with more than nine minutes remaining in the second quarter. Later in the quarter, Dutch Fork blocked a 40-yard field goal attempt and the Silver Foxes took a 14-7 lead into the half.

Kellly-Murray got the Green Wave right

back in the game in the first two minutes of the third, picking up a Dutch Fork fumble and returning it 43 yards for a touchdown. Unfortunately, Summerville didn't have as much success running the ball from that point as it did in the first half.

"We just played a little more sound defense," Knotts said. "We had to shut down the run. They were handing the ball off left and right and getting big yardage. Once we kind of shored up the run it made them more one dimensional."

Dutch Fork went on top again when **Bray**don Johnson took a forward pitch on a misdirection play and dashed 27 yards for a TD. The extra-point kick was wide, leaving the Silver Foxes ahead 20-14. The game was tight up until then, but Dutch Fork scored three touchdowns in the final 12 minutes.

The final quarter started with a play that got the Summerville fans riled up as Dutch Fork fumbled the ball on a punt. However, the Sliver Foxes managed to recover the ball and go on to score twice before Summerville could get much going for a 40-14 lead.

Knotts rushed for a one-yard TD. Shortly after, Julian Walker recovered a Summerville fumble and returned it 19 yards into the Green Wave end zone. **Kyle Henry** added a one-yard TD run with 3:01 remaining to seal the victory.

"We got some momentum there in the third quarter and we just couldn't capitalize on it," said Summerville coach Ian Rafferty. "We had a hard time blocking their guys up front. You know, when you have two Power 4 guys up front it can make it difficult. Still, I'm proud of our kids. We were right there in it and the wheels just kind of fell off."

Summerville had a late touchdown drive that featured a heavy dose of running back **Jayvyn Williams**. He had a 40-yard run to get the ball inside the 10-yard line and capped the drive with a one-yard TD run.

"I told coach Knotts we are going to keep coming," Rafferty said. "We are going to keep trying."

RBSTALL

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Final Region Standings

		, com		
REGION 1-AAAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
T L HANNA	7-0	10-2	415	253
GREENWOOD	6-1	9-2	431	211
HILLCREST	5-2	8-4	428	203
GREENVILLE	4-3	7-5	278	282
MAULDIN	3-4	5-6	280	241
EASLEY	1-6	3-7	229	371
WOODMONT	1-6	2-8	163	373
J L MANN	1-6	1-10	116	452
REGION 2-AAAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
DORMAN	6-1	10-3	443	182
GAFFNEY	6-1	9-4	392	256
JAMES F. BYRNES	5-2	8-4	374	214
SPARTANBURG	5-2	7-5	350	292
RIVERSIDE	3-4	4-7	276	340
BOILING SPRINGS	2-5	5-7	251	270
EASTSIDE	1-6	4-7	348	316
WADE HAMPTON	0-7	0-10	78	397
REGION 3-AAAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
NORTHWESTERN	6-0	13-1	687	373
INDIAN LAND	5-1	11-2	428	237
ROCK HILL	4-2	7-5	298	299
CLOVER	2-4	5-6	282	304
CATAWBA RIDGE	2-4	6-6	225	275
FORT MILL	1-5	5-6	311	222
NATION FORD	1-5	4-7	320	328
REGION 4-AAAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
DUTCH FORK	5-0	12-1	673	200
IRMO	4-1	12-2	522	258
WHITE KNOLL	3-2	8-4	327	158
RIVER BLUFF	2-3	6-6	248	282
LEXINGTON	1-4	3-8	181	285
CHAPIN	0-5	0-10	72	382
				-
REGION 5-AAAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
SUMTER	6-0	9-2	454	249
RIDGE VIEW	5-1	8-4	401	190
WEST FLORENCE	4-2	6-6	293	252
WESTWOOD	3-3	7-5	363	273
LUGOFF-ELGIN	2-4	6-6	319	328
BLYTHEWOOD	1-5	4-8	322	340
SPRING VALLEY	0-6	2-9	63	367
REGION 6-AAAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
CAROLINA FOREST		10-2	516	199
MYRTLE BEACH	4-1	8-4	355	415
ST. JAMES	2-3	4-7	219	379
SOCASTEE	2-3	3-8	145	353
N MYRTLE BEACH	1-4	3-8	204	293
CONWAY	1-4	2-9	164	338
REGION 7-AAAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
STRATFORD	5-0	10-2	495	226
BERKELEY	4-1	10-3	464	213
LUCY BECKHAM	3-2	7-4	309	213
CANE BAY	2-3	3-8	223	258
WANDO	1-4	4-7	134	252
GOOSE CREEK	0-5	0-10	71	362
DECION A STATE	PEC		0==	P
REGION 8-AAAAA		ALL	OFF	DEF
JAMES ISLAND	4-1	11-2	534	208
SUMMERVILLE	4-1	12-3	428	209
ASHLEY RIDGE	4-1	6-5	355	254
FORT DORCHESTER		5-7	209	422
WEST ASHLEY	1-4	2-8	173	374

Williamsburg, continued from pg. 58

Junior Marlin Morris had a strong season at right tackle on the O line and at defensive end. He graded out at 88 percent and 15 pancake blocks. Defensively, Morris had 37 tackles, three TFLs, three hurries and five passes

Sammy Tomlinson was another key contributor in the trenches on both sides of the ball. As a left guard, Tomlinson finished with a grade of 86 percent and nine pancake blocks. Also a defensive end, Tomlinson had 35 tackles and 3 1/2 TFLs.

Gaffney, continued from pg. 20 ■

catches the ball well, and she is just a superior athlete."

Coach Wright was very complimentary of Mathis, a combo guard who has been on the varsity since the 8th grade. "In all my years of coaching, including coaching football, she is the most mentally tough athlete I have ever been around," said Coach Wright. "She is also in the top six of her class academically

"She also placed third in individual singles tennis competition in South Carolina this past Fall," said Coach Wright. "She brings to the table steady leadership with a been there, done that positive attitude. We need her to take, and make, a lot of shots because she is our best shooter.

Gaffney went into their second game against Fort Mill averaging 51.2 points a game and Harris, Hopper and Mathis were collectively averaging 36.4 points a game of

The remaining starters include first year soph guard starter **Kaylin Houze** who is averaging 10 points, 2.8 rebounds, and 1.4 steals a game. Houze has been on the team for three seasons. Sophomore Taylor Smith rounds out the

Florence Area, continued from pg. 23

three sacks and three interceptions, one of them a Pick

WILSON

Wilson finished its season with a 7-5 record in its first season under head coach Brian Wilson. The Tigers finished 3-3 in Region 5-AAAA, good for a 3way tie for third.

"From 1–9 to the second round of the playoffs this season proved what belief, hard work and culture can build," Coach Wilson said. "I'm proud of this group, and even more excited knowing we return 17 starters. The foundation is set."

The Tigers had three players selected to the All-Re-

Florence Christian, continued from pg. 23 burg Academy). Our young people battled and com-

peted with great determination and character. I am proud of our growth and will really miss our seniors." The Eagles were 2-3 in the games against the five

title contenders. They beat Heathwood Hall 14-13 and Pee Dee 21-0 while losing to Williamsburg 34-21, Wilson Hall 34-15 for the region title and Pinewood Prep 45-6.

Florence Christian had five other players selected to the All-Region 2-AAA team. They were senior Brooks Poston, senior Pierce Boykin, senior Parker Watson and juniors Josh Davis and Andrew Miller.

Poston, who started in the secondary on defense,

Belton-Honea Path, continued from pg. 61 line, senior **Jakyri Anderson**, junior **Ty Dubose** and sen-Thomas averaged 36.0 yards on 22 attempts. ior **KJ Miles** at linebacker, junior strong safety **Dee Chester** at defensive back and senior free safety **Grady**

Thomas threw for 2,221 yards and 33 touchdowns while rushing for 762 yards and 11 scores. As a punter,

Melton as a defensive all-purpose player.

Barnwell, continued from pg. 14 team for three years and he is a starter averaging six points and two rebounds a game. The remaining

starter is PF Henri Creech who leads the team, rebounding at 11 per game and he is averaging around six points a game. Two other players are playing major minutes

each game. They are sophomore big man transfer **Zamel Ellison** who defends the paint well along with senior wing Nehemiah Brown who is best known for his defense.

Freshman Caden Morris was selected to the team as a kick returner and wide receiver. He had 402 return yards and had seven catches for 125 yards and three touchdowns. One of those TDs was a 38-yarder in the championship game in which Morris went over a Colleton Prep defender in the end zone for a score with 10 seconds remaining in the second quarter that gave the Stallions a 22-8 halftime lead.

"We practiced that all year, and he just went up and made a play," Balder said. "The trust is there that he can

come down with the throw."

Furse said the play is run specifically from the left hash mark, so when the ball was spotted on the left hash mark, Furse decided to load up.

"I'd been wanting to run it, so I thought it was the right time for it," Furse said. "Micah made a great throw and Caden made that fantastic catch. He's going to be a special one."

starting line-up as a 5-8 starting forward who is averaging 4.6 points, 2.6 rebounds, and 1.6 steals a game.

Senior guard Korbyn Lydia, who recently signed a softball scholarship to attend USC Upstate, tore her ACL earlier in the fall and she will miss the basketball season.

A sixth player off the bench is soph shooting guard **Kalee Church** who is averaging 5.4 points and 2.2 rebounds a game. Freshman forward **Delaney Wilson** is averaging 3.5 points a game. Other key reserves include soph forward Makaylee Otey, junior forward Naquasha Garrison, soph center Azoriah Davis and soph forward Cay-

The Gaffney girls will compete in the Andrew Johnson Bank Lady's Classic in Greenville, Tennessee starting on December 26. Their first of five games will be against Up-

"We wanted to take the team to a competitive Christmas tournament to play against some quality teams to give the players some lasting memories outside of their home area," said Coach Wright. "This is a first-class event, and

the competition should make us better as a team."

In terms of team goals for the 2025-26 season, Coach Wright just encourages each of his players to be the best version of themselves each and every time they run on the court. "This group has established a culture of winning, and I hope that they just go out on the court and enjoy what they have helped create with the team's success over the past two seasons," said Coach Wright. "They just need to play in the moment and have fun playing the game.

"Of course, we hope to defend our back-to-back region titles and compete for a state title with a deep playoff run," said Coach Wright. "This team has awesome potential. If every player understands their role, and if we continue to work hard as a team and play as a team this can be a special season for us. This team is a fun group to be around, and they all work hard at doing things the right way."

Coach Wright is assisted by Renee Carter, Antonio Douglas, Christopher Lee, and Tiffany Mayes.

gion 5 first team. They are senior wide receiver Myquan McWhite, senior linebacker Jaden Boston and junior defensive back Brian Wilson II.

White had 62 catches for 937 yards and eight touchdowns while rushing for 259 yards and three TDs on 63 carries Boston led the defense with 122 tackles and 16 TFLs and two fumble recoveries. Wilson II had 38 tackles and six TFLs.

West Florence went 6-6 in its first season under head coach Chad Wilkes. The Knights finished third in Region 5 with a 4-2 record.

"We had a solid year this year," Wilkes said. "We lost a few really close games (three by six points or less) that really could've taken the year from good to great. We leaned on a veteran defense that won us

some ball games as our very young offense was learning how to produce at a high level. I'm excited to see how our offense/season develops into next year."

West Florence had six players selected to the All-

Region 5-AAAAA first team with senior linebacker Romello Patterson chosen as the Defensive Player of the Year. Patterson, who signed with Coastal Carolina and

was a Touchstone selection, finished with 94 tackles, five sacks and two interceptions. The other All-Region picks were senior left guard

Jamie Williamson, junior cornerback Derrick Austin, senior running back Tristan Collins, senior linebacker Clayton Folse and junior placekicker Zach

finished with 40 tackles, two interceptions, two passes defended and two fumbles caused. As a wide receiver and running back on offense, Poston caught 11 passes for 187 yards and a score and had 84 carries for 502 yards and seven touchdowns.

Boykin had five sacks, 72 tackles and 10 ½ TFLs as a defensive lineman.

Davis and Miller both were starting running backs on offense as well as starters in the secondary. Defensively, Davis had 37 tackles, 5 ½ TFLs, one PD and caused three fumbles, while Miller had 37 tackles, five TFLs and three sacks.

Miller was FCS' leading rusher with 884 yards and

14 touchdowns on 143 carries. Davis had 82 carries for 389 yards and four touchdowns. Watson was the starting left offensive tackle and

was a 2-year starter. The Eagles look to have eight starters back on de-

fense and six on offense. One of the returners on offense will be sophomore quarterback Riley Minton,

In his second season as a starter, Minton completed 68 of 113 passes for 978 yards and four touchdowns while running for 163 yards and five scores on 45 car-

Melton had 35 tackles and two TFLs, Chester had 28 tackles, four picks and four TFLs, Anderson had 56 tackles and 10 TFLs, Rainey had 27 tackles, eight sacks and

Earl rushed for 1,246 yards nd 24 touchdowns, while

Jaden Glenn had 25 catches for 339 yards and seven TDs, and Paul had 19 catches for 177 yards and four TDs. On defense, Miles had 66 tackles and nine TFLs, Du-

bose had 78 tackles, two picks, three sacks and 11 TFLs,

12 TFLs, Kamarion Glenn had 28 tackles and 11 TFLs, and Bryant had 18 tackles, three sacks and nine TFLs.

The team has a total of 13 players. Other contributors are senior guard **Tyren Wallace**, senior wing Kenneth Tyler, junior forward/center Treven Wilson, freshman wing Jaiden Patterson, and junior guard/forward Jason Chislom.

"I have always been a coach who hangs my hat on man-to-man defense," said Coach LeRoy. "We are spending a lot of time in practice on improving our defense.

"On offense we are working hard to be more of

an up-tempo offense because we do not always shoot the ball that well and by speeding the game up we hope to get more open shots," said Coach

The team will compete in the Hawk Invitational hosted by Blackville-Hilda starting on December 27 with a game against **Bamberg-Ehrhardt**.

Isaac Cooper and Andrew Smith assist Coach LeRoy.

forward Tres Mixson

James Island, continued from pg. 57

that can handle the close games in the fourth quarter will be most successful. I expect us to be in the mix. We need to be ready by January.'

The James Island wrestling season also is underway

AJA Boys, continued from pg. **29** ■

been on the team since the 8th grade. Sease (6-3, 175) is the team's second leading scorer to date averaging 14.6 points, 14.7 rebounds and 1.6 steals a game). Sease has been a varsity player since the 8th grade.

Other starters include junior forward Eli Mathys who is averaging two points and 6.6 rebounds a game. Senior guard **Landon Godina** is a starter who is averaging 6.5 points and 2.5 rebounds a game. The 5th starter is junior power forward Elizuh Davis (6-4, 175) and he is averaging 8.7 points and 9 rebounds a game.

The remaining four contributors on the team include

Hartsville, continued from pg. 61 Bishop, junior Justin Hines and junior Eli Lynch.

Hartsville competes in region 6-AAAA, a highly competitive basketball league. Earle sees Crestwood and Wilson as two of the top teams and is hopeful his team can join in the mix for the region title.

"The region should be a real battle every night," the coach said.

Northwestern, continued from pg. 5

12 yards for a touchdown. The onslaught ended after an Irmo fumble at the 50-yard line which was recovered by **Kobe Neely.** Means connected again with Flood on a 35-yard pass that gave the Trojan's a first and goal at the Irmo three. Means finished the drive and the onslaught with a one-yard run and the teams went to the half with Trojan's lead at 49-

Dillon, continued from pg. 12

athletic with good length. She should develop into a key player for us at the wing or the post as the season moves along."

"We have stressed to our team this season the motto of being 1-0 in each and every game we play," said Coach McMillian. "We know the key is to keep playing unselfish team ball and to also stay healthy. We know that a lot of the teams we will play have got better and that makes us needing to get better also."

Coach McMillian is starting year 10 as the head coach at Dillon. He is assisted by former players Khamele Manning and Chyna Pouncey along with Leon Sturkie, Damu Ford and new assistant Michelle Gibbons.

White Knoll, continued from pg. 50 stepped up to be a great leader."

With White and Daniel poised to lead the team this season, the rest of the team is competing for starting

"Not a lot of the girls have logged varsity time," he said. "We had some girls play in some spots for a while, but I think we've got some girls who can start. Valentina Paniagua is a junior and she stepped up for us and we're looking for some good things from her. She's had some injuries but she had a good game last night (the second win over Aiken)."

Freshman Center **London Thompson** is one of the better players in the class of 2029.

"She's come along really well and is a great rebounder," Luster said. "She's going to go quite a bit further with her skills development before she leaves

Junior guard **Desiree Butler** has been a part-time

Fort Dorchester, continued from pg. 19

Junior Laurez Matthews lead in receiving with more than 400 yards and several TDs. He also led in kick returns. Warthen, Durant and sophomore Derrick Simpson all have more than 150 receiving yards.

Senior Savon Garrett, freshman Josiah Single-

Lamar, continued from pg. 23 ■

Another senior, wide receiver Julian "JuJu" Morris, had a solid final game. He had six catches

and the Trojans look to be a state contender this season. The program returns five grapplers who were state qualifiers in the individual tournament last season.

Returning as state qualifiers are Max Johnson, Jacob

Rasamee, Mikah Brown, Copeland Grooms and Luke Ridgeway. Johnson placed third at 132 pounds last season while Grooms placed third at 165 pounds. James Island is the defending region champion.

senior forward Tanner Chassereau, junior guard Dylan Mahoney, 8th grade point guard Will Barnes, and senior The team started the 2025-26 season 2-0 with wins

over Faith Christian (60-58) and Curtis Baptist (75-69). However, the Warriors then lost four games in a row before getting back in the win column with a win over **Jefferson Davis Academy** (72-22) on December 8.

As of December 13, the team had a 3-7 record. Without Sease in the line-up they lost a highly competitive double overtime loss at home to Patrick Henry (66-61)

on the 13th. Against Patrick Henry, Davis stepped up with 24 points and 16 rebounds while Ollie Barnes had 19 points, 16 rebounds, three assists and four steals. Mathys contributed six points and 13 rebounds against Patrick

The Warriors will next play at Colleton Prep on December 18 before playing the next day at **Dorchester** Academy. They start playing in a Christmas Tournament hosted by **Orangeburg Prep** starting on December 22

The girls team opened the season at 1-1 and also looks to contend for a playoff berth this season. The top returning player this season is junior guard Nay **Gibson**, who is averaging 17.4 points per game early on. Senior Sha'Niyah Richardson contributes offensively as well, along with junior Ariel Leatch, each better than six points per game.

The only other senior on the girls roster is Kamori Williams. Juniors are Aniyah Robinson, Zariyah Spann, Makayla Chapman, Brianna Watson and Chaniyah Thompson. Rounding out this year's team are sophomores Zanaya Blakney and Trinity Thomas, and freshman Chassidy

The Trojan's Mean's and Vance hooked up from 10 yards and for Irmo Dopson hit Ethan Single-

tary from 12 yards out to finish out the scoring.

The second half was played with a running clock. Means finished the game going 14-17 for 188 yards and two touchdowns while rushing for 60

yards and four touchdown. Nigel Smith rushed for 104 yards and Flood had six receptions for 92 yards and a touchdown.

For Irmo, Dopson was 12-26 for 124 yards while Amire White rushed for 102 yards. Miller had 6 receptions for 64 yards.

Dillon Football Finishes At 9-4 In 2025

Head football coach **Kelvin Roller** just completed his 5th season in Dillon that saw the Wildcats finish 9-4 and advance to the third round of the AAA playoffs.

Coach Roller is now 51-11 at Dillon through five

Dillon defeated Fox Creek (49-8) and Silver Bluff (42-7) in the first two rounds of the playoffs before losing to eventual state champion Oceanside Collegiate in the third round.

Six Dillon players earned all-region honors for their play in the 2025 season. They included North Carolina WR signee **Zay Robertson** who was also named to the Shrine Bowl. Robertson caught 72 passes for 1,367 yards and 15 TD's this season.

Shrine Bowl linebacker Daniel Capehart also earned all-region honors with 107 tackles and 12 TFL North-South LB Keren Brown earned all-region after leading the *Nasty Cats* with 114 tackles and five TFL. Center **Kyle Pompey** was also named all-region after being a three-year starter.

WR **JJ Campbell**, also earned all-region along with DE Donterious Rogers who had 59 tackles and 10 TFL. Rounding out the all-region team was freshman quarterback K. Sam Fong-Talia who shattered all freshman passing records in the history of the Wildcat program. He completed 149-of-237 passes for 2,315 yards and 25 TD's this season.

starter for the Timberwolves. Luster said she's struggled a bit but added that he likes what he's seen from her and will likely be a regular on the floor.

"Other than that, we've got a lot of little pieces to fit," Luster said. "We've got to figure out what they

White Knoll looks to have as balanced a team as it can be on the court by the time region play opens in 2026. With Luster taking the job so late in the cycle, he said he wasn't able to put the team through summer

"November was the first time I got the team out on the court," Luster said. "We go out on the court against teams who have had a whole summer and fall, and we're still installing and learning stuff. We know we're behind the 8-ballbut we're playing hard."

Luster said the goal for the team is to be .500 going into region play. By then he thinks the team will be

playing its best basketball, and would head into the second round of region play holding it's own.

"It doesn't get any easier for us, but I like that we have a talented group of juniors and freshmen," Luster said. "I think we can surprise teams. We have a bright future. We're excited about the season.'

The White Knoll boys are coming off a 13-14 season in which they reached the 5A Division 2 playoffs but lost to Myrtle Beach in the first round. The Timberwolves (5-3) got off to a 1-3 start but have won four straight, including wins over 5A Division 1 state runner-up Blythewood (68-66) Dec. 2 and Lower Richland (70-50) Dec. 5. White Knoll played at Lower Richland Friday and at Blythewood on Saturday, and plays Laurens, Brookland-Cayce, and North Augusta before heading into the Lexington Roundball Classic

ton, senior Thomas Wamer and senior Jeff Jefferson were the team's leading tacklers. Garrett, junior Tyrell Pearson, sophomore Kameron Geathers and Wamer led in sacks.

Senior Eric Mittag averaged 48 yards per punt

and per kick off. He was 19 of 23 on extra-point

kicks and 4 for 4 on field goal attempts.

The Patriots will lose 25 seniors to graduation. However, the team stands to return as many as 27 varsity letterman next season.

for 42 yards and a TD. Morris' final season saw him finish with a team

high 33 receptions for 609 yards and nine touch-

AAAAA Div. II Football Championship

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

Northwestern cruises past Irmo to claim second straight title

By Neill Kirkpatrick **Special to the HSSR**

Orangeburg – After last season's instant classic in the AAAAA DII state championship game between **Northwestern** and **Irmo** many were looking for the same in Friday night's contest but as coaches will tell you each year is different and this game was as the Trojans scored 35 unanswered points in the second quarter to win their seventh state title 55-13.

The Trojan's evened their state championship record at 7-7 but this was the first time they had gone back-to-back. They also became just the 16th team in state history with 7 or more state championships joining area rival South Pointe in

"To do something that had not been done at Northwestern, I'm still in a bit of shock over it" said head coach Paige Wofford. "This goes beyond description. I never thought that the game would have gone like that. I'm so proud of our players. We had a bunch of new guys when the season started. They worked hard and continued to improve each week and this is the end result."

The Yellow Jackets were looking to win their first state championship since 1980 but this game was all about "Murphy's Law" for them as nothing they did could turn the tide and stop the Trojan's in the second quarter.

"Sometimes things don't go your way but you still have to stand by the road," said Irmo head coach Aaron Brand. "This game doesn't take away the accomplishment of the season or the last three years. This group has won 37 games in that time which is the best three-year span in school history.'



Northwestern Trojans

Brand continued, "The team didn't quit and played hard all night. I'm proud of their effort and fight. This game was a teaching moment. Despite the outcome of the game the sun will come up to-

The Trojan's scored on their first two drives of the game going 59 yards and 46 yards to go up 14-0. **Xavier Means** capped off both drives with runs of three and two yards, respectively. Means hit **David Flood** for a 29-yard gain on the first drive and then connected with Kameron Vance for 25 yards on the second drive.

Irmo would take their second drive and go 84 yards in 13-plays to cut into the Trojan lead at 14-6. Maleek Miller would finish the drive with a three-yard touchdown run. The drive was aided by two pass interference penalties on the Trojan. The

touchdown brought the Irmo crowd to it's feet and the Yellow Jackets were back in the game. Then the second quarter began!

The Trojan's began the second quarter by finishing off a 74 yards drive when Mean's scored his third touchdown of the night from the eight. The score mad it 21-6 Trojans and then the roof fell in on the Yellow Jackets.

Irmo punted and the Trojan's Jonathan Spur**geon** returned it 34-yards to the Yellow Jackets 28. Two plays later Means hit Flood from 14 yards out Then Tamarion Watkins (Texas A&M signee and 17th ranked player by HSSR) stepped in front of a **Dre Dopson** pass and returned it 39 yards for a touchdown. Score 35-6.

Next Vance blocked a Irmo punt and returned it See Northwestern, pg. 68

Touchstone Energy Bowl

North defeats South 35-27 in all-star game; Northwestern's Watkins named SC Mr. Football

By David Shelton Senior Writer

Myrtle Beach – High school all-star football games can be somewhat vanilla but this year's Touchstone Energy Bowl was a surprisingly entertaining game.

The 78th Touchstone Energy North-South all-star game was won by the North, 35-27, on Dec. 9 in Myrtle Beach.

The game featured big plays on offense, defense and special teams with two blocked punts and a kickoff return for a touchdown.

""We just played an all-star game and threw it to the endzone for a chance to go to overtime and that's what people want to see," said South head coach Brian Smith of Barnwell. "Nobody wants to see 7-3 or 10-7 and nobody wants a game 40-10. I think it was an exciting game. Proud of the way our kids played and proud of the way their kids played."

Pickens head coach John Boggs directed the North all-stars. The win for the North gave them a 42-33 edge in the overall series.

"What an effort on both sides," Boggs said. "One team refusing to give up and the other team refusing to give up. Just two teams battling it out. Heck of a football game. Obviously I am glad to come out on the winning side but just proud of how hard all of these kids played."

Bluffton quarterback Aeden McCarthy was

named the South's most valuable offensive player while **South Florence's Terry Gordon** was the South defensive mvp. McCarthy completed seven of 17 passes for 193 yards and two touchdowns. Stratford receiver **JQ Crosby** had eight catches for 115 yards. Gordon had six tackles.

South Pointe running back RJ Brown was the North offensive mvp and Indian Land defensive end **Mike Foster** was the defensive myp for the North team. Brown had 88 yards rushing and two touchdowns on 20 carries. Quarterback Roper Wentsky of A.C. Flora completed nine of 11 passes for 102 yards and one touchdown.

Wentsky connected with Stone Furrey (Dutch Fork) on a seven-yard scoring pass to give the North a 7-0 lead with 7:14 left in the first quarter.

The South answered with a McCarthy 34 yard pass to Marcus Cann (Bamberg-Ehrhardt) with four minutes left in the quarter.

Brown's six-yard run in the second quarter pushed the North back in front. South kicker CJ Falatico (Philip Simmons) booted a 25-yard field goal with :15 seconds left in the second quarter to make the halftime score 14-10.

With 5:18 left in the third, Ware Shoals running back Jayden Johnson scored on a one-yard run to make it 21-10 in favor of the North. A blocked punt by Foster set up another North touchdown as Brown's two-yard run gave the North a 28-10 lead

McCarthy hit Carter Coleman on a 13-yard pass to make the score 28-17 early in the fourth quarter. Falatico's 25-yard field goal pulled the South closer at 28-20 with 8:44 left in the game.

Clinton's Javen Cook returned the ensuing kickoff 94 yards for a touchdown, giving the North a 35-20 lead. Bishop England quarterback Quinn Mahoney eight-yard rushing score with 5:06 left in the game made it 35-27. The South had one last possession in the final two minutes and reached the North 13-yard line but was unable to score.

Watkins named Mr. Football

At halftime of the all-star game, the South Carolina Coaches Association named Northwestern safety Tamarion Watkins the 2025 Mr. Football honoree. Watkins has signed with Texas A&M. The other finalists for the award included Zay Robertson of Dillon, Zion Guiles of Carver's Bay, Kentavion Anderson of Dorman, and J'Zavien **Currence** of **South Pointe**.

"The opportunity to hold this trophy and know it is mine, I am blessed," Watkins said. "I just thank my community, coaches and family for everything they have done for me."

Watkins had 80 tackles and three interceptions this season. Northwestern won its second straight AAAAA Division II state title on Dec. 5.

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AAAA Football Championship



South Pointe Stallions

Currence, Brown power South Pointe past South Florence in AAA title game

By WORTHY EVANS

ORANGEBURG—J'zavien Currence and the South Pointe Stallions ran, ran, and ran again on a rainy Saturday afternoon at South Carolina State's Oliver C. Dawson Stadium Saturday afternoon.

All **South Florence** seemed to be able to do was watch as Currence, a Mister Football finalist who signed with South Carolina three days before, and **R.J. Brown**, run away with the Bruins' hopes for a second straight 4A state championship.

Currence accounted for 124 yards and two touchdowns on 18 carries, and 5 tackles on defense. Brown bulldozed past South Florence defenders for a personal best 193 yards and two TDs on 21 carries to lead the Stallions to a 35-14 victory, their first state title since 2021 and eighth state title in South Pointe's history.

"It was a super special week for us," Currence said about his signing while working to finish the season with a championship. "A week of focus and a week of having fun at the same time. It means everything to me. Going out fighting with the guys I came in with, that's it."

Brown's productivity came after a week of focusing on the team's rushing attack.

"We worked for this. I did a lot of film study, I did a lot of work on my body, I worked for this," Brown said. "It means the world to me and I know it means the world to my teammates and my coaches."

Fourth-year Stallions head coach **Bobby Collins** praised his team's year-round work ethic, which showed in the final week of preparation.

"These are blue-collar kids. They come to work every day," Collins said. "No ego guys. Nobody on the sidelines with bad body language, coaches pushing them to the next level, I'm excited for my kids. They deserve this moment."

South Pointe (14-1) limited South Florence (13-2) to 113 total yards. **Messiah Jackson**, who led the Bruins with 1,628 passing yards and 22 touchdowns in addition to 660 rushing yards and 22 scores going into Saturday, was 8-for-16 with for 36 yards, a touchdown and three interceptions.

Currence, who is set to be in the Gamecocks' secondary in 2026, had 2,764 yards and 24 touchdowns along with 1,497 rushing yards and 18 touchdowns before Saturday.

The Stallions enjoyed a free rushing attack in the first half and finished the afternoon with 316 rushing yards on 47 snaps.

"I told every coach on my staff that we're not throwing this football right now," Collins said. "It's either going to be in 0's (Currence's number) or 4's

(Brown's number) hands."

The Stallions opened the game with Currence leading a 9-play, 80-yard scoring drive, and he finished it with a 12-yard touchdown run.

Later in the first quarter **C.J. Wherry** intercepted a Jackson pass in the end zone, and the Stallions kicked off another 80-yard scoring drive, with Brown's 47-yard touchdown run putting South Pointe up 14-0 with 11:39 in the second quarter.

Currence closed out a third scoring drive with 1:31 left in the first half with a 9-yard TD.

While the Stallions offense ran wild in the first half, South Pointe held the Bruins to 61 rushing yards and minus-1 yard passing in the first two quarters.

The defensive onslaught continued when **Kadin Watkins** snagged his second interception on the Bruins' first possession of the second half and returned it 13 yards to the end zone to put the Stallions up 28-0 with 10:23 mark of the third quarter.

South Pointe looked to continue the rout, but two Stallions fumbles, both recovered by Bruins Defender **Willie Kennedy**, put South Florence back into the game.

Currence fumbled to set up South Florence at the Stallions' 29-yard line. Jackson capped the short drive with an 11-yard TD run with 2:59 left in the third.

The next turnover came on a bad snap that resulted in Jackson's 22-yard touchdown pass to **Gabe McLaughlin** at the 1:10 mark.

South Pointe stopped the Bruins rally with a grinding 14-play, 80-yard scoring drive that ate up most of the fourth quarter.

"That last drive, it was all 0. His perseverance on that last run, they stropped him three yards in the backfield, but his legs kept moving."

On the run that Collins described, the Stallions faced a fourth-and-3 at midfield and Currence kept driving his legs over the first-down marker for a 5-

"He's the most humble, hardworking kid I've ever been around," Collins said of Currence. "Him making the plays in the end, that was no shock for me, he'd do that every day in practice."

Brown broke free on that drive with a 29-yard run to the 1-yard line, then closed it out on his push through the goal line with 4:54 left in the game.

"It was super important to us," Currence said.
"Coach always tells me to be a thermostat, not a
thermometer. When times get tough just keep the
guys cool and level headed. We had been in moments like these before and we had to rally together
to get it done."

After that score South Pointe forced the Bruins

Final Region Standings

REGION 1-AAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
WESTSIDE	5-0	9-5	429	364
WREN	4-1	8-4	455	311
FOUNTAIN INN	3-2	6-6	417	258
EMERALD	2-3	5-6	335	286
LAURENS	1-4	1-9	146	368
SOUTHSIDE	0-5	0-10	46	475
REGION 2-AAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
DANIEL	6-0	10-2	456	215
SENECA	5-1	10-2	472	201
GREER	4-2	4-7	309	324
BLUE RIDGE	3-3	6-5	372	407
PICKENS	2-4	3-8	365	461
BEREA	1-5	2-8	65	394
TRAVELERS REST	0-6	2-8	171	322
REGION 3-AAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
SOUTH POINTE	6-0	14-1	582	117
A C FLORA	5-1	11-2	497	208
CAMDEN	4-2	9-4	459	273
YORK	3-3	4-7	183	354
LANCASTER	2-4	2-9	132	372
DREHER	1-5	3-8	153	311
RICHLAND NE	0-6	0-10	156	431
REGION 4-AAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
GRAY COLLEGIATE	7-0	11-3	544	245
NORTH AUGUSTA	6-1	11-2	547	209
MIDLAND VALLEY	4-3	7-4	339	298
GILBERT	4-3	6-6	252	300
SOUTH AIKEN	3-4	5-6	207	357
BROOKLAND-CAYCE	3-4	3-8	162	395
AIKEN	1-6	2-8	173	294
AIRPORT	0-7	0-10	86	470
REGION 5-AAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
SOUTH FLORENCE	6-0	13-2	658	202
HARTSVILLE	5-1	7-5	463	400
LOWER RICHLAND	3-3	6-5	272	231
WILSON	3-3	7-5	259	276
CRESTWOO	3-3	6-5	301	273
DARLINGTON	1-5	3-8	210	347
LAKEWOOD	0-6	0-10	49	403
REGION 6-AAAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
HILTON HEAD	5-0	11-2	527	132
BLUFFTON	4-1	8-3	384	223
MAY RIVER	3-2	7-4	298	204
BISHOP ENGLAND	2-3	8-4	360	185
BEAUFORT	1-4	3-8	175	307
COLLETON CO.	0-5	1-9	89	380

to turn the ball over on downs. From there the Stallions

"They're such a great football team," South Florence head coach **Drew Marlowe** said about South Pointe. "Our first-half offense really struggled to do anything. We couldn't separate from them and couldn't get away from them.

Marlowe, who led the team to the last four 4A state championship games and winning two of them, credits the seniors with finishing their final game as Bruins with a trip to Orangeburg.

"It says a lot about this senior class," Marlowe said. "They maxed out their careers, they got to play in 60 football games and four state championships. They came up short today, but I'm so thankful that the Lord brought me to Florence and has allowed me and us to experience this incredible ride."

Midlands Feature, continued from pg. **36** outscored their opponents 522-258, and their only loss in the regular season came from Dutch Fork.

Heathwood Hall makes first title appearance since 2009

In SCISA, **Hammond** has been the 4A team of record in the SCISA state championship history, with 22 state titles, including eight straight wins in the state final going into this season.

Heathwood Hall snapped that streak.

The Highlanders (9-4) fell 9-7 to the Skyhawks in the regular season after playing an inspired defensive game. In the state semifinal game Nov. 14, Heathwood Hall ended Hammond's season with the same defensive effort.

The Highlanders held Skyhawks quarterback **Ben Muela Kiser** to 66 passing yards and intercepted him twice, while Heathwood Hall's **Patrick Belk** passed for 268 yards and a touchdown. Belk also had two picks, but the Highlanders overcame a 13-3 second-quarter deficit to win 16-13 with **James Richardson's** field goal in the final seconds.

Richardson booted three field goals on the night, including one before the half that closed the deficit to 13-6. Belk's 40-yard touchdown pass to **Jamonie Batts** tied the game at 13 early in the fourth quarter.

Heathwood Hall reached its first state final since 2009 and looked to win its first state championship since winning back-to-back titles in 2003-2004.

In the 4A state final at Oliver C. Dawson Stadium in Orangeburg Nov. 21, **Northwood** (11-1) ended the Highlanders' hopes with a 61-7 victory.

Belk opened the game with a 57-yard pass play to **Keon McKinley** on the opening drive, and later scored a touchdown on a 5-yard run.

After that score, it was all Chargers, who intercepted Belk twice and held Heathwood Hall to 57 passing yards and minus-4 rushing yards on 13 attempts. Northwood quarterback **Kevin Johnson** was 17-for-25 for 305 yards and five touchdowns with no interceptions.

Recruiting, continued from pg. **37** also signed **Spartanburg** QB **Trey Burke** (6-3, 205), the number 36 prospect.

North Carolina State helped drive up the signees in the Palmetto State by signing three instate players. They include number 30 rated Clinton OL Tre Aiken (6-4,265), number 34 rated Crescent WR Amiri Acker (6-2, 185) along with number 38 DB Jordyn Best of Ridge View.

North Carolina signed three in-state players in early December and they have already targeted numerous rising seniors to attend their prospect camps this upcoming summer.

The Tar Heels signed the top two 2026 receivers in number five rated **Zay Robertson** of **Dillon** who was a Mr. Football Finalist and he is also on the Shrine Bowl team after hauling in over 1,350 yards of receptions this season. **Bluffton** WR **Carnell**

Lake City, continued from pg. **59 Kierstyn Hanna**, senior **Kailey Graham** and sophomore **Ja'Kyla Boyle**.

Cooper said there is plenty of room for improvement with the team.

"There's still a lot more work to be done," she said. "Everybody has to be a star in what they do best. Also, there has to be hard work, dedication and being coachable."

BOYS BASKETBALL STARTS 2-4

The Lake City boys basketball team won two of its first six games and lost its region opener.

The only returning starter from last year is senior

For as long as the Highlanders' night was, head coach **Tymere Zimmerman** kept a positive outlook on his team's success this year after going 2-8 the year before

"We were able to get this far. Nobody picked us when the rankings came out, and the prediction of our record, they picked us to win three games," Zimmerman said. "I'm so happy for my team and happy for my seniors. We won nine games this year. That's the most games they (the seniors) won in all four years put together. They set a standard for Heathwood Hall football and that's all that matters. The kids coming up will be back."

Other top teams around the Midlands

Gray Collegiate (11-3, 7-0 Region 4-4A) had a resurgent season after being banned from the post-season last year. Freshman **Xavier Wright** stepped up under center and passed for 2,202 yards and 22 touchdowns to five interceptions, and Junior **Traven Williamson** had 1,662 ayrds rushing with

Trevon Williamson had 1,662 ayrds rushing with 25 TDs.

The War Eagles won the Region 4-4A championship and beat **Brookland-Cayce** and **Hartsville** in the first two rounds of the 4A playoffs. They hit the road to **Hilton Head Island** and beat the Seahawks 31-28 to get to the lower state final.

At **South Florence**, the War Eagles season came to an end. The Bruins (13-2) beat Gray 55-14 to advance to the 4A state final against **South Pointe**, which beat the Bruins 35-14 to win the 4A state title.

The 2A upper state football championship came down to the final play at Strom Thurmond Nov. 28.

Down 15-7, **Fairfield Central** (10-4) executed a quick drive in the final 1:16 and scored on **Derek Cammon's** one-yard run. The Griffins needed a 2-point conversion to send the game into overtime, but the Rebels stopped **Er'Dreus Walker** about a football helmet short of the goal line, and the Rebels (12-2) surged onto the field to celebrate a 15-13 vic-

tory.

Strom Thurmond went on to beat Hampton County 28-7 to win the school's first football state title since 2005

The only single-A school playing football in the Midlands went a long way in the lower state bracket of the 1A playoffs. Under first-year head coach **Rodney Barr, C.A. Johnson** (7-6) ended the season vastly improved after winning just twice last year. The Green Hornets opened the postseason with a 12-0 road victory over **Calhoun County**, then followed up with a 28-0 shutout at **Blackville-Hilda**. **Lewisville**, which fell 48-27 to **Lamar** in the lower state final, ended C.A. Johnson's season with a 42-14 win.

Sophomore **Stacey Isaac** led the team with 1,479 passing yards and 18 touchdowns. Junior **Terrell Golson** had 1,037 yards and nine touchdowns on the season.

A.C. Flora (11-2, 5-1 Region 3-4A) lost 56-14 to South Pointe (13-1) in the third round of 4A upper state playoffs

Ridge View (8-4, 5-1 Region 5-5A) lost 35-14 to **Dorman** (10-3) in the third round of 5A Division 1 upper state playoffs

White Knoll (8-4, 3-2 Region 4-5A) lost 28-14 to Irmo in the third round of 5A Division 2 lower state playoffs

Newberry (12-1, 4-0 Region 4-3A) lost 51-21 to **Loris** (13-1) in the third round of 3A lower state playoffs

Camden (9-4, 4-2 Region 3-4A) lost 24-21 to **Westside** (9-5) in the third round of the 4A upper state playoffs

Swansea (8-3, 2-2 Region 4-3A) lost 49-13 to **Marlboro County** in the first round of 3A lower state playoffs.

Warren (6-4, 196) is rated number 7 and he is also on the Shrine Bowl team. Orangeburg-Wilkinson LB **Jordan Avinger** (6-3, 222) has also signed with North Carolina and he rated 2 on the Top 100 list.

UNC Charlotte has signed number 45 **Richland Northeast** WR **Jarrell Turner** (6-0,185) along with number 64 rated LB **Gray Patterson** (6-3,210). They have had a verbal commitment from MVP WR **Kadarus Hainsworth** (6-1, 161) but he has yet to sign.

The **HSSR's** number one rated player **Timberland** OL **Desmond Green** (6-5,333) signed with **Florida** while number 8 player **Tamarion Watkins** of **Northwestern** has signed with **Texas A & M.**, **He** was named the SC Mr. Football by the Coaches Association on December, 13.

Orangeburg Prep TE Tilden "T" Riley 6-

5,203) has signed with **Vanderbilt** as the number 17 player in the 2026 class. Number 23 player **Jeremaih Favorite** (5-10,170) is a DB headed to **Michigan State**, Riverside athlete Somad Eaddy (6-0,165) is headed to Wake Forest, and Duke has signed number 28 WR/DB **Jayden Boyd** (6-0,180) from **Fairfield Central**.

In the next six weeks, look for highly regarded players like **Ridge View** QB **Jayvon Gilmore** (6-6,200) and the state's top tackler this season LB **Michael Boulware** ((6-2, 210), and **Thomas Heyward** 6,500 career yardage rushing RB Tony O-Banner (6-1,210) to possibly sign major college offers.

Graham and sophpoint guard Amari Hanna. He is averaging 15.3
points to go with 3.0 steals.

Senior **Jeffery Burgess**, senior **Ka'Jon McClary** and senior **Shayon Shavers** came off the bench last season. Burgess was averaging 8.5 points, McClary 4.2 and Shavers 2.7.

Freshman **XyKenan Hickson** was averaging 5.3 **LECTIONS** points, 4.3 assists and 2.5 steals.

The other eight players on the roster are all new-comers like Hickson. Other players in the rotation are junior **Tracey Benjamin**, freshman **Zyrie Mc-Fadden** and senior **Da'Jon McClary**.

"We have played good in moments, we have played bad in moments, we also have played very good at times and we also have played very bad at times," said head coach **Senneca Barron**. "With so many new players, we are really trying to find our identity as a team."

3 PANTHERS All-REGION FOOTBALL SE-LECTIONS

The Lake City football team had three players selected to the All-Region 7 first team, all on offense.

They were 4-year starting senior quarterback **Amari Hanna**, senior wide receiver **J'Mari Jones** and senior athlete **Shayon Shavers**.

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AAA Football Championship



Oceanside Collegiate Landsharks

Landsharks top Belton-Honea Path 28-7 to win third straight state crown

Orangeburg – The Oceanside
Collegiate Academy football team won its third
consecutive state championship on Friday. The
Landsharks beat Belton-Honea Path for the second
straight year for the AAA title, winning by a 28-7

count on Willie Jeffries Field at South Carolina State's Oliver C. Dawson Stadium.

However, the significance of their accomplishment was quickly overshadowed when a fight during the postgame handshake broke out. The brawl moved around the field and lasted several minutes.

Order was restored and the awards ceremony took place. Both teams remained on their sidelines, which is the normal procedure.

"They came after us," OCA head coach Brent **LaPrad** said. "I had my kids on the side. They were going that way and we were going this way. Four of their guys came after our kids. It is all on video. We got it. We left the cameras running.

"It is upsetting what happened. It is not right. I know their coaches didn't want it to happen. Nobody wanted it to happen. It is unfortunate. Nobody wants to lose, but you've got to take your loss like a man. They just had some kids that acted out of character. It's not good for anybody."

Bears head coach **Russell Blackston** was disappointed with what happened.

"It is really sad," Blackston said. "This is where high school football is at. You see it in the NFL (National Football League) and in college. You've just got to be able to do better."

Oceanside had a dominating defensive performance. BHP, which entered the game with a 14-0 record, was averaging 48.5 points per game. It was averaging 388 yards of total offense, 231 rushing the football and 157 through the air.

Belton-Honea Path was limited to 204 yards, 82 on the ground and 122 passing the football. The Landsharks also forced four turnovers, recovering three fumbles and coming up with an interception.

"Our defense has been shut down all year," said senior defensive end **Sawyer Arnold**, who has signed to play collegiately with **Appalachian State**. "We kind of knew we were the better team. We had to come in with confidence, but be humble."

LaPrad, the son of former Fort Dorchester head coach Steve LaPrad, said his defense came into the game with a chip on its shoulder.

"Our defense was fired up," Brent LaPrad said. "We heard all week in the papers and on social media about their high-powered offense, and our defense just wanted to show they're good players too."

Senior linebacker **Rhys Meredith** led the OCA

defense with 11 tackles to go with one tackle for a loss. Junior linebacker **Romaun Parson** had seven tackles and a team high two TFLs. Senior defensive lineman **Joey Harriott** and sophomore linebacker **Tyler Staffford** both had four tackles, one TFL and one forced fumble. Arnold finished with three tackles, one TFL, one forced fumble and two quarterback hurries.

Junior safety **Michael Strickler** had an interception, and senior cornerback **Jordan Wright** had three pass breakups.

Blackston said there is no secret to the talent OCA possesses, alluding to the fact it is a charter school and doesn't have a defined student body from which to draw athletes.

"They're that good, they're that good," Blackston said. "All my kids come from either **Belton**Middle (School) or Honea Path Middle. We grow ours; they're our kids."

LaPrad is in his first year as head coach after serving as the defensive coordinator the two previous championship seasons. OCA, which won the AA crown in 2023, has had a different head coach in each of the title games.

Someone who has been there for each of the state titles is junior quarterback **Aiden Manivian**.

"It means a lot to be able to win three in a row, especially for our seniors," Manavian said. "We're going to try and come back improved and better and hopefully we'll win again."

The Landsharks, who finished the year with 13 straight victories after losing their first two games, were no slouches offensively either. They came into the game averaging 40.6 points.

OCA came up empty on its first three possessions though, one of them starting at the Belton-Honea Path 29-yard line after Stafford forced a fumble. However, Oceanside fumbled the ball right back with junior linebacker **Ty Dubose** recovering at the 6 after freshman cornerback **Malachi Bohler** knocked the ball loose from Manavian following a 20-yard run.

OCA's fourth possession was its worst field position, starting at its 4 following a punt. Running back **Zakhi Muncey** broke off an 18-yard run on first down followed by an 8-yard run by Manavian. A 3-yar run by Muncey gave Oceanside a first down before **Shrine Bowl** wide receiver **Terence Johnson** had a 20-yard run to the BHP 47 on the final play8 of the first quarter.

On the first play of the second quarter, Manavian went deep to junior wide receiver **Anthony Williams** for a touchown. Sophomore placekicker **Jackson Summey** added the extra point

Final Region Standings

П	REGION 1-AAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
П	BELTON-HONEA PATH		14-1	686	152
П	CRESCENT	3-1	8-4	457	299
П	PENDLETON	2-2	6-6	303	269
П	WALHALLA	1-3	2-9	193	500
П	WEST-OAK	0-4	4-7	128	333
П	WEST-OAK	0-4	4 -7	120	333
	REGION 2-AAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
П	POWDERSVILLE	5-0	11-3	529	311
П	SOUTHSIDE CHRIST	4-1	6-6	274	294
П	CHRIST CHURCH	3-2	8-4	410	297
П	ST. JOSEPH	2-3	5-6	352	380
П	PALMETTO	1-4	1-10	126	421
П	CAROLINA	0-5	2-9	74	461
Ц					
1	REGION 3-AAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
1	WOODRUFF	4-0	11-2	482	256
1	MOUNTAIN VIEW	3-1	10-2	539	276
1	GETTYS BROOME	2-2	5-6	286	388
1	CHAPMAN	1-3	1-10	183	426
1	UNION COUNTY	0-4	1-10	180	477
1					
1	REGION 4-AAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
1	NEWBERRY	4-0	12-1	532	214
1	SILVER BLUFF	3-1	7-5	336	289
1	SWANSEA	2-2	8-3	328	216
1	W J KEENAN	1-3	3-8	166	320
1	FOX CREEK	0-4	5-6	329	227
	REGION 5-AAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
1	LORIS	5-0	13-1	645	209
1		4-1		477	224
1		3-2			192
1					238
1				186	365
1	GEORGETOWN	0-5		134	422
1					
1	REGION 6-AAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
1	OCEANSIDE	4-0	13-2	597	219
	ORANGEBURG-WILK.	3-1	9-2	350	166
	HANAHAN	2-2	6-6	320	332
	N CHARLESTON	1-3	5-5	220	252
	BATTERY CREEK	0-4	2-9	194	390
l	to make it 7-0 with 11:52 remaining in the first half.				

to make it 7-0 with 11:52 remaining in the first half.

The next time the Landsharks got the ball they put together an 11-play, 55-yard scoring drive. It ended with Johnson scoring from two yards out for the first of his three TDs operating out of the Wildcat formation.

"We played good," LaPrad said of the offense. "We were a little too fired up. We had to settle in a little bit. In games like this you get a little too jacked up."

That score came just 45 seconds before halftime and sucked 6 minutes, 44 seconds, off the clock. OCA's next score started in the middle of the third quarter and ended in the first minute of the fourth quarter.

Oceanside put together a 13-play, 54-yard scoring drive that ate up 6:42 of the clock. Johnson ended it with a 4-yard run to make it 21-0 with an even 11 minutes left in the game.

The Landsharks' final score came on a 1-yard run by Johnson with 9:10 to go.

Belton-Honea Path got on the scoreboard on a 52yard touchdown pass from senior quarterback **Noah Thomas** to junior wide receiver **Tajeh Watson-**Martin with 4:27 remaining. Senior placekicker **Benji**Ward added the extra point for the final 28-7 score.

Oceanside finished with 329 yards of total offense, 177 on the ground and 152 passing. Manavian completed 11 of 21 passes for the yardage and a TD while rushing for 43 yards on nine carries.

See AAA Football, pg. 71

AA Football Championship



Strom Thurmond Rebels

Strom Thurmond dominates Hampton County in AA championship

By Neill Kirkpatrick **Special to the HSSR**

Orangeburg – In the game of football it is the skill players (QB's, RB's, WR's) that are highlighted and talked about but every coach will tell you that it is who wins in the trenches, has the best chance of winning the game.

The **Strom Thurmond** Rebels owned the trenches Saturday afternoon at Oliver C. Dawson Stadium on the campus of SC State University as they captured the schools second class AA state championship defeating the **Hampton County** Hurricanes 26-7. The championship was

their third overall and improved their record to 3-5 in state championship game appearances. The Rebels finished the year 13-2/5-0.

"This is honestly amazing. I have been doing this for long enough, I have been following the good lord long enough that I know he had a hand in this for our team. When you play Strom Thurmond Rebel football there is a brotherhood that expands beyond these young men. All the guys that came before that made Strom Thurmond football special. It was our job to continue to hold the standard," said Rebel head coach Andrew Webb.

Coach continued, "The key to us winning were the boys up front. Coach Addison did a great job of getting them ready to play. They have gotten better and they played outstanding again tonight."

The Hurricanes were in their first state championship game in just their third year of existence finished the year 11-4/4-0.

"Strom Thurmond is a great football team and they were able to control the line of scrimmage. We felt all week that the team that did that would win the game and hats off to them they took it to us," said Hampton County head coach Rob Hanna. "We also had five turnovers which is not what we do and you can't win a game doing that against a team like Strom Thurmond. They made us pay for our mistakes "

The game started well for the Hurricanes. After their defense forced a three and out. The offense started at their 24 and moved the ball out to midfield where Jaylen Singletary ripped off a 57-yard touchdown run but the run was wiped out by an egregious penalty on the play. The flag wasn't dropped until Singletary had reached the 10-yard line. The Canes regrouped and moved the ball down to the Rebel 24. The official's then sent Singletary to the bench for what coach Hanna said was a mouth piece issue. It also caused a delay of game moving the ball back to the 25.

On the next play Cane's quarterback Tarell Grant took off around the left but as he neared the first down a Strom Thurmond came in with a hard tackle knocking the ball free. It was picked the

Rebels **Kalib Simpkins** and he returned it 63 yards to the Cane's 30. It was his first big game changing play of the game.

After a holding penalty against the Rebel's gave them a first and 20 at the Canes

40. **Deonte Phillips** took the hand off up the middle cut to the right and raced to the right pylon for a 40-yard touchdown run. The Rebels missed the PAT but led 6-0.

The Rebel's defense started to gain control of the line scrimmage causing a couple of penalties forcing the Cane's into a fourth and 20. On the punt the Rebel's ran over Cane's

punter Rafe Sullivan which liked a certain roughing the punter penalty. Somehow the official felt the hit wasn't hard enough for the right call.

The Rebel's would take strike again when Bri'shaun Lee threw a beautiful pass down the left side that just dropped into the waiting hands of Simpkins for a 55-yard touchdown. This play was an example of why football is such a great game. Everybody on the play did their job, QB delivered the pass under pressure, the coverage was excellent, the ball was placed perfectly and the receiver finished it off. The Rebels were stopped on the two-point try but led 12-0.

After Singletary had a 23-yard kickoff return to the Rebel 47. The Cane's would move the ball to the Rebel 28 where on fourth and two Singletary was stopped for a one-yard game turning the ball over on downs. The ate of five minutes with no

The Rebel's took over at the their 14 and would move 86 yards in 9 plays eating up all but 24 seconds on the clock to take an 18-0 after being stopped on the two-point try, the drive was highlighted by a Lee to Simpkins 50-yard completion to the Canes's 27. The rest of the drive was Deonte as he scored his second touchdown from the four.

"Players make plays and Kaleb and Deonte have come up big for us all year," said coach Webb.

The Cane's finally got a big play on the kick off when **Tyler Davis** returned 65 yards to the Rebel 10-yard line. On second down Grant hit Desmond Mathis with a 10-yard touchdown pass as time expired. Sullivan's PAT made the score 18-7 heading into half team.

The Canes would take the second half kick off and drive into Rebel territory but again the Rebel's would turn them over on downs.

The Rebels offense would had the game over to their defense after their next drive. They would drive 51 yards in 12 plays eating up almost seven minutes off the clock. Lee hit Sha Williams with a 11-yard touchdown pass. The Rebels converted the two-pointer making the score 26-7.

See AA Football, pg. 71

Final Region Standings

REG ALL OFF DEF

REGION 1-AA

KEOION 1-AA	ILLO	ALL	011	DLI
CLINTON	4-0	9-4	515	267
LIBERTY	3-1	8-4	400	306
CHESNEE	2-2	5-6	351	348
BLACKSBURG	1-3	1-10	98	401
LANDRUM	0-4	3-7	237	319
REGION 2-AA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
STROM THURMOND	5-0	13-2	537	200
BATESBURG-LEES	4-1	8-4	463	213
SALUDA	2-3	6-6	335	221
PELION	2-3	5-6	284	345
NINETY-SIX	2-3	3-8	206	347
AMERICAN LEAD	0-5	2-8	106	356
REGION 3-AA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
FAIRFIELD CENTRAL	3-1	10-4	480	206
CHESTER	3-1	8-5	403	245
MID-CAROLINA	3-1	5-6	221	306
EAU CLAIRE	1-3	5-6	188	252
COLUMBIA	0-4	3-7	130	276
REGION 4-AA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
CENTRAL	4-1	11-2	525	229
ANDREW JACKSON		7-5	311	244
CHERAW	3-2	7-5	328	249
NORTH CENTRAL		7-4	221	250
CHESTERFIELD	1-4	4-7	212	382
BUFORD	0-5	1-7	133	381
REGION 5-AA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
HAMPTON COUNTY	4-0		616	252
LAKE MARION	3-1	5-6	172	279
BARNWELL	2-2	4-7	171	304
WHALE BRANCH	1-3	3-8	180	377
EDISTO	0-4	4-6	191	241
REGION 6-AA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
PHILIP SIMMONS	5-0	10-3	513	199
TIMBERLAND	4-1	9-3	369	209
ANDREWS	3-2	4-7	235	234
WOODLAND	2-3	5-6	248	255
ACADEMIC MAGNET	1-4	5-6	232	309
BURKE	0-5	0-8	44	421
REGION 7-AA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
MANNING	5-1	9-4	450	292
EAST CLARENDON	4-2	9-3	321	141
ATLANTIC COLL.	4-2	5-7	179	261
KINGSTREE	3-3	4-7	170	311
LAKE CITY	3-3	3-8	237	364
MULLINS	1-4	2-6	184	227
MARION	0-5	0-10	115	397

Holly Hill Academy girls look to be improved

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

By David Shelton Senior Writer

take the next step.

Holly Hill – Third-year head coach **Heath Prescott** has seen his **Holly Hill Academy** girls basketball make solid improvements in his first two seasons. He is hopeful that his 2025-26 team can

"We basically started from scratch two years ago, building a culture of hard work and success,' said Prescott, a 2001 graduate of the school who has spent the last 20 years in various coaching roles. "Last year we got a little taste of winning and I think the players started to get a better understanding of our goals and expectations. I am hoping this year can continue the growth. We play a pretty tough schedule so our record during the regular season may not be impressive but we should be battletested by February and that should help us in the playoffs."

Holly Hill has only one other team in their conference, Ridge Christian. That has forced Prescott to schedule several teams from higher classifications as well as some other SCISA class A programs they may see in the postseason.

"There's some long trips to schools like Curtis Baptist (defending class A state champions) Richard Winn, Wardlaw and Jefferson Davis but I expect all three to be in the playoffs," he said. "Those are the

teams we will measure against. The results when we play bigger schools really don't mean a lot but improving will be important."

Many of the players also play other sports like softball and volleyball and have experienced success. Prescott has seen that competitive spirit transfer to basketball as well.

"They are good athletes with a good work ethic," he said. "They have a great attitude and they are trying to learn and improve. I can't ask for much more in terms of effort.'

starter that averaged 10 points per game as a seventh-grader varsity player. She has averaged 13.5 points through the first four games of this season.

and has been a top defender this season. Junior Essie Wolpert averages 6.3 rebounds as a forward and freshman Caitlyn Crisp averages 6.3 points per game as the other forward. Junior Kloie Mizell is the other starting guard.

Prescott uses all nine players on his roster in most games. Seeing playing time are senior captain Peyton Strickland, who averages about four points and four rebounds per game; junior Taylor Wright, sophomore Kaylee Cuttino and freshman Bailey

Eighth-grader Milly Kate Prescott is a returning

Point guard Kaley Bell is the lone senior starter

Saints will have no varsity hoops this season

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Summerton – Both the boys and girls basketball programs at Clarendon Hall knew they'd be facing a dilemma coming into the 2025-26 season: no juniors or seniors on the rosters.

So instead of slogging through seasons that likely would have led to terrible win-loss records and a slew of non-competitive games, Clarendon Hall decided to cut its losses and not field varsity teams for this year only. Instead, the Saints have junior varsity and B

For the boys, it would have more than likely been another winless season. They went 0-15 last year and had just seven players on the roster – four seniors and three freshmen

The Saints forfeited four games due to injury or illness. When a meeting was held to see who was interested in playing this year, no one from the two highest grades attended.

When the idea of going JV only was broached, boys head coach Rick Atkinson had no issues.

"Last year we were facing teams with 10 on the varsity, 11 on the JV and 15 on the B team<," said Atkinson, who is in third year in one of several tenures at Clarendon Hall. "I was for it. I want to thank Mr. (head of school **Russ**) **Jordan** and (athleti director) Coach (Shane) Wallace for supporting this and for Coach Wallace putting the schedule together.

"I think it so going to be awesome for the program. The kids get to be competitive when we weren't competitive last year. You can't get in th3e habit of winning close games and react to it when you're never in

For the girls, it's a different story. The Lady Saints played for the SCISA Class A state championship in 2024 under head coach Johnny Horton. Clarendon Hall moved up to AAA in basketball last year, and the girls went 8-10 although they didn't make the state

However, the girls lost four seniors and had no rising juniors or seniors participating. It too decided to follow the same route even though Horton had reserva-

J. Daulton Dubose, DMB & **Family are Proud to Salute** the Clarendon Hall Saints!

"At first I was kind of skeptical," Horton said. "The more we've gotten into it though, I think it's a great idea. It's allowing us to develop girls, and I don't know how much we could have done that with a team full of freshmen playing varsity."

When the boys get three players healthy from football injuries after the first of the year, Atkinson will have an 11-man roster.

"We'll be able to practice 5-on-5 for the first time in three years," said Atkinson, who is Methodist minister who uses his coaching job as an opportunity to share his faith. "That is more important than you may think. They're now getting to go against players who are more along their size, strength and physical maturity. They're getting a chance to develop their skills."

Horton is taking the same approach.

"Being that we're not going to compete for playoffs or the state tournament, we've turned our focus more to development," Horton said. "We've tried to hone in on that and fundamentals, sharpening our craft."

Each team had played four games through December 9, the boys winning three of theirs and the girls splitting their contests.

The three freshmen on last year's varsity boys team - Wyatt Simpson, Bobby Singleton and Andrew **Pritcher** – are on this team.

"I thought that showed a lot of maturity when they could have been on the junior varsity and probably been all-stars," said Atkinson, who is being assisted by **Kade Elliott**, who is the B team head coach.

The rest of the roster includes sophomores Willson Epps and Sawyer Edge, freshmen Cameron Dixson, TJ Young, Conway Welch and Hayden Collins and eighth-graders Rylan McRoy and Reid McGuire.

The girls roster is made up of sophomore **Brynli** Brewer, Emery Earnhardt, Kamlyn Haley, McKenna Jeffreys, Logan Osteen, Aubree Richardson and Ella Stukes, freshmen Lily Grace Harris and Ellie Horton, eighth-graders AC Martens, Liza Barwick and Sunshine Brown and seventh-graders Montgomery Jeffreys and Tatum Keels.

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Talking about the big turnaround in the May River football program with Bonneville

Publishers Note: We asked May River head coach **Richard Bonneville** to describe in his own words the total transformation of his football program, between the losing 2023 season, and the turnaround seasons of 2024 and 2025. Hopefully, his shared thoughts might give some other programs around the state the courage to make changes in their own programs as they soul search for ways to find success. While communicating with Coach Bonneville about this article he informed the *HSSR* that this was his 28th year in the school system and that he would be retiring from coaching duties at May River on Monday, December, 15. He did say he would be coaching somewhere next season.

By Coach Richard Bonneville: Head Coach May River High School

(In His own Words)

Bluffton—Question To Coach Bonneville: After becoming head coach at **May River** in 2023, the team had a losing record, and you did some soul searching and decided to switch from a Spread to a Slot T pound and ground offense? At the time why was this the right decision? Also, why did Slot T appeal to you and your staff?

Response: After each season, the staff and I sit down and evaluate what went right and what went wrong; personnel, and all the analytics that everyone does at the end of a season. We knew we had some special athletes, and we had to find a way to get them the ball in the most efficient manner possible. We were not great at throwing the ball and we had kind of worn counter and power out in our region. So, we really needed to find the best offense that we could to fool the defense without having to dominate the line of scrimmage. We reached out to some Coaches around the state who had run or are running the wing-t and they asked if we had seen a team out of Texas doing some good stuff. Coach **Thomas Dyer**, after those conversations, looked up Liberty Hill High in Texas, and reached out to their Offensive Coordinator. He sent us some films, and we looked to see if we could do it with our personnel. It was a great fit for us. The rest is history. We could fool a few, block a few, and hopefully make a few miss!

Question 2. The switch to Slot T, for the 2024 season, caused several skilled athletes to transfer out of the program. and you used this fact to motivate the players who bought in to the changes and stayed with the team. Just how satisfying was it to rebound with an 8-3 season in 2024, under the new system, and how exciting was the play-off win against Bluffton after



Coach Richard Bonneville

you had just lost to them at the end of the regular season?

Response: We had already lost a couple of guys to transferring before we switched and when we made the switch we pushed some more out the door. In the long run it was what was best for our program. We had the right kids on the bus at that time. It was extremely rewarding to see a gamble pay off and the win against Bluffton was awesome for our players and fans. Slot T allows us to even the playing field when other teams have such elite skilled athletes.

Question 3. How did you decide to have practices at 6 a.m. during the week? What advantages do you feel this gave your team over teams you were playing each week?

Response: Down here in the Low Country you can count on two things. You are going to get wet bulbed in the summer and there are going to be afternoon thunderstorms. So, we did this out of necessity to get our practices in. We knew we would lose a few more kids, however we knew once again that the kids that were there, were committed to the program. It became a badge of honor, and a testament to the toughness of our kids. It certainly helped with our mindset.

Question 4. Talk about some of the athletes, on both sides of the ball, who helped the program win 15 games over the past two seasons? Just how much sacrifice and hard work did they have to put in to have the success they had?

Response: We have always had a great defense, and we think we have found an offense that fits our personnel. However, neither scheme works without players to run them. We had some really good high school players over

Wishing the Sharks the best of luck in the 2025 football season!

Courtesy
May River High School
Boosters!

Go Sharks!

the last two seasons, maybe not college prospect football players, but good high school players. Tanner Macy, Gage Duncan, Asa Haskins, Hudson Flanigan, and the 2024 group of seniors were great. They really set the standard for the groups coming up after them. This year's group of seniors were led by OL Cam Jordan, Pavin Denton, Sean Zardroga Mcnulty, Chris Beckman, and David Heitman, RB's Sean Mitchell and Andrew Johnson did a great job. On defense, we had **Zavier** Polite, Elijah Yeager, Charlie Crace holding down the DL. LB's Jackson Miller and Devin Ryan played really well. In the Defensive back area Hudson Tanner did a great job. Eric Robertello and Wesley Turtle did a fantastic job for us in the kicking game.

Question 5. Looking towards the 2026 season, who are some of the returning players you are counting on? Also, will you still practice at 6 a.m.?

Response: Luc Tran at Q, Brayden Harris at inside linebacker. Ethan Seabrook, Braihlyn Paylor, and Justin Head in the secondary. Mason Sweigart as an athlete somewhere. The entire Offensive Line is returning with Falco Kelly playing Strong End will be helpful. Henry Santiz along the Defensive Line. Mason Campbell and Michael Poole will Help at OLB. Tony Cooper in the backfield. The season looks extremely bright for May River. I am not sure if they will practice at 6 a m

I resigned from my football duties a couple of weeks ago. It will be released to the public on December 15. I hit my 28 years of service and I can retire. I will be coaching somewhere next year, in some c. city.

Final Question: Has your success generated interest from a few coaches around the state looking for ways to have success in their own programs?

Response: We have had several coaches throughout the state reach out about implementing Slot T, or some of the things that we do with our offense.

You must have a loyal supportive staff around you also. I couldn't do it without the help of these guys: **Ashley Powell-** DB DC, Jay Dyer- Backfield/DL OC, **Thom Dyer-**Backfield/DL SC Football operations, **Andre Swinton-** DB's, **Hunter Singletary** OLBs and Quickside, **Grant Laseter-** JV OC, **Kolb Whitley** JV DC, **Xavier Morris-** DL, **Davon Gilmore-** LB's, **Hunter Brown-** Do it all, and **Alexis Bennett-** Trainer.

Class A Football Championship



Bamberg-Ehrhardt Red Raiders

Red Raiders dominate second half, claim first state title since 1990

From Staff Reports

Orangeburg – When Lamar High

School punched the football into the end zone on the final play of the first half, that made the score 14-13 in favor of **Bamberg-Ehrhardt** in the Class A state championship game on Friday. Never mind that the Silver Foxes failed to convert the extra point attempt, a back-and-forth affair appeared likely in the second half.

The Red Raiders had other ideas.

They scored on their first two possessions of the second half and didn't let LHS score until late in the fourth quarter on the way to a 35-13 victory on Willie Jeffries Field at South Carolina State's Oliver C. Dawson Stadium.

B-E completes the season with a perfect 15-0 record in winning its first state championship since 1990

"This is big for our town, our town deserves this," said Bamberg-Ehrhardt head coach **Corey Crosby**. "We've been close. We went there a couple of years with my brother (**Kevin Crosby** as head coach in 2010 and 2014) and with Coach (**Robert) Williams** (in 2021), but we haven't been able to win it. Our town deserves this. This town deserves this state championship."

"It means a lot to win it," said junior wide receiver Jason Youmans. "It's been 35 years since we've won one, so it means a lot to be that team that brought it back home."

Lamar finishes the season with a 12-3 record in making their first championship game appearance since 2018. Silver Foxes head coach **Tyler Boyd**, in his first year as head coach at his alma mater, was pleased with how his team developed throughout the year.

"I'm proud of these guys from where we started 1-2 to get here and reel off 11 straight wins," Boyd said. "I'm proud of the way they got better throughout the season, and that's what it's all about, improving."

The Raiders quickly asserted themselves in the second half. They started at their 43-yard line following the second half kickoff, and junior quarterback **Brian McMillan** connected with junior wide receiver **Charles Anthony Williams** for an 18-yard gain to the Lamar 39 on the first play. On third down and seven yards to go, McMillan connected with Youmans for a 16-yard gain to the 20.

McMillan took off on a 20-yard scoring run on the next play. Junior placekicker **Charles Breland** added the extra point to make it 21-13 with 10:49 still remaining in the third quarter.

B-E forced the Foxes to punt after three downs

and took over at its 46. Bamberg-Ehrhardt drove 54 yards in six plays, taking over 3 ½ minutes off the clock. The drive ended with McMillan again scoring, this time from 13 yards out, to make it 28-13 with 6:12 left.

"We weren't playing well in the first half," Crosby said. "We were making mistakes. We had to come in and clean those mistakes up, and that's what they did. They cleaned the mistakes up, they trusted the process of what they were doing and they bought in. They came out and showed it in the second half."

And it was McMillan leading the way. He had a huge game, completing 16 of 23 passes for 275 yards and two touchdowns while carrying the ball 14 times for 49 yards and two more scores.

"I was just reading the defense," said McMillan who finished the year with 47 touchdown passes and 23 rushing scores. "If they come up and press, I was taking a shot, a deep shot and making a play.

"We just came out strong in the second half. We didn't let up, we kept up with the pressure."

"This kid's special," Crosby said. "We've got another year with him. He just makes plays., and you can't beat that. He's just a great player."

Bamberg-Ehrhardt's final touchdown came after LHS had to punt from its 11 and Williams returned it 15 yards to the 27. On the next play McMillan went up top to Williams for the touchdown to make it 35-13 with 7:22 to go in the fourth quarter.

"They made more plays than we did," Boyd said. "They just took it away from us. We've got to get in the weight room and get stronger."

Lamar finally got back on the scoreboard with 3:17 remaining in the contest. Senior quarterback **Zori Pierce** threw a 15-yard TD pass to senior wide receiver **Julian "JuJu" Morris**. Pierce then ran for the 2-point conversion for the 35-21 final

Youmans was B-E's leading receiver with six catches for 105 yards, while junior wide receiver **Rakeem Walker** had three catches for 87 yards and a touchdown, and Williams had four catches for 49 yards and the other TD catch.

Senior running back **Jalen McGraw** rushed for 83 yards and a score on 10 carries.

Junior linebacker **Darion Sease** led the defense with 11 total tackles and one quarterback hurry. Senior safety **Christopher Washington** had nine tackles, McMillan had seven tackles at the other safety slot, and Youmans had six to go with an interception at cornerback. McGraw also had an interception at outside linebacker, and senior nose tackle **Darren Carter** had a 14-yard TFL among his

Final Region Standings

REGION 1-A	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
ABBEVILLE	5-0	9-3	508	158
WARE SHOALS	4-1	10-2	410	200
DIXIE	3-2	7-4	335	282
MCCORMICK	2-3	2-9	124	426
WHITMIRE	1-4	3-8	164	388
CALHOUN FALLS	0-5	3-8	281	434
REGION 2-A	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
LAMAR	5-0	12-3	552	367
LEWISVILLE	4-1	9-5	469	279
C A JOHNSON	3-2	7-6	300	373
LEE CENTRAL	2-3	4-7	252	352
MCBEE	1-4	2-8	181	386
GREAT FALLS	0-5	2-9	190	403
REGION 3-A	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
HUNTER-KINARD-TYLER	5-0	10-3	560	192
BLACKVILLE-HILDA	4-1	6-6	182	237
RIDGE SPRING-MONETTA	2-3	4-7	145	206
WAGENER-SALLEY	2-3	5-7	159	336
CALHOUN COUNTY	2-3	2-9	109	336
WILLISTON-ELKO	0-5	0-10	73	335
REGION 4-A	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
BAMBERG-EHRHARDT	4-0	15-0	758	122
RIDGELAND	3-1	4-6	204	232
HARDEEVILLE	2-2	4-7	245	310
ALLENDALE-FAIRFAX	1-3	1-10	52	459
DENMARK-OLAR	0-4	1-9	82	418
REGION 5-A	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
CROSS	6-0	11-2	470	96
SCOTTS BRANCH	5-1	8-3	330	221
BAPTIST HILL	4-2	6-5	304	177
BETHUNE-BOWMAN	3-3	4-8	228	464
BRANCHVILLE	2-4	3-8	222	284
ST. JOHNS	1-5	1-10	32	514
MILITARY MAGNET	0-6	0-10	20	407
IIIIEITAKI IIIAONET	0-0	0-10	20	407
REGION 6-A	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
CARVERS BAY	5-0	11-1	395	169
JOHNSONVILLE	4-1	9-3	334	225
LATTA	3-2	8-3	354	234
LAKE VIEW	2-3	5-5	195	202
HANNAH-PAMPLICO	1-4	2-7	141	190
GREEN SEA-FLOYDS	0-5	0-10	92	476
three toolslos				

three tackles.

The Silver Foxes received the opening kickoff an marched straight down the field. They covered 80 yards in 12 plays, taking 5 minutes, 15 seconds, off of the clock. Pierce ended the drive with a 2-yard scoring run and senior placekicker **Isaiah Chacon** added the extra point with 5:45 left in the first quarter.

LHS was winning the field position battle, having the Raiders start from their 9 following a punt late in the opening stanza. After getting a first down, they went for bear to start the second quarter.

McMillan connected with Walker for a 79-yard touchdown pass. Breland added the extra point to tie the game at 7-7 with 11:49 to go in the first half.

B-E got to start at the Lamar 44 on its next possession and needed just four plays to get in the end zone. McGraw scored on a 9-yard run to make it 14-7 with 8:26 remaining.

The Silver Foxes' score before halftime started at their 6 with just 2:09 left following a 49-yard punt by Breland. A few chunk plays got LHS out of the hole before Pierce connected with tight end **Lamont**Williams for a 43-yard gain to the Bamberg 2. On third and goal, but more importantly with a handful of seconds on the clock and no LHS timeouts left, Pierce ran it in from two yards out. A wet ball caused the snap on

See A Football, pg. 71

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SCISA AAAA Football Championship



Northwood Chargers

Northwood rolls past Heathwood Hall

By WORTHY EVANS

ORANGEBURG—The Northwood Academy football team did Friday night at Oliver C. Dawson Stadium what it's been doing throughout the season-controlling the football and scoring as much as possible.

The Chargers easily overcame a 7-0 deficit to Heathwood Hall in the SCISA 4A championship game and ran, passed, and pushed their way to a 61-7 victory over the Highlanders.

It's the first state championship for Northwood (11-1) since 2014.

"I tell you, you can't ever take these for granted.," said head coach Johnny Waters, who won the SCISA 2A state championship in 2016 as head coach of **First Baptist**. "I've been blessed to be able to do it at two different schools but it takes a lot of things, it takes the head administrator, your board, and the faculty and staff for that to happen and they're a part of this too."

Junior quarterback Kevin Johnson completed 17 of 25 passes for 305 yards and five touchdowns Four of those passing scores went to senior **ETSU** commit Aydan Hogan, who finished the night with six catches for 117 yards.

"I think he's the best junior in the state quarterbacking, and I'll fight anybody with that," Waters said. "Aydan Hogan is the best wide receiver in the state of south Carolina and there's no question in my mind about those two right there."

Besides Hogan, **Drew Wolfe** also had a 100-plus yard night, grabbing five balls for 105 yards.

Johnson credits his receivers for making the night special.

"I threw the ball to whoever is open. They make me look good by catching the ball every time," Johnson said, adding how those catches made the team shine in the state championship game. "It was

amazing, it feels great. We've just got to keep working for the one next year.

Heathwood Hall (9-4) got off to a hot start when Patrick Belk connected with Keon McKinley for a 57-yard pass play that set up Belk's 5-yard touchdown run in the first minute of the game.

"We had a missed assignment when they made that long play," Waters said. "After that we settled down and then it was over."

For the next 23 minutes of the first half Northwood controlled the game. After Heathwood Hall's chunk play, the Chargers held the Highlanders to minus-4 total yards the rest of the way.

"We're a high-scoring team but our defense puts us in position for that," said Waters, whose team beat Heathwood Hall 39-20 in the regular season. "They have more credit than they actually get but they're a stellar defense."

After the Highlanders' score, Johnson led the Chargers on a 7-play, 71-yard drive that he capped with his 36-yard touchdown pass to Wolfe.

Jordin Carter picked off a Belk pass on Heathwood Hall's next possession. Johnson worked the Chargers down the field again and connected with Hogan for a 7-yard score late in the first quarter.

Carter later scored from three yards out to give the Chargers a 21-7 lead at the 10:21 mark of the second quarter.

On Heathwood Hall's next possession, Quincy Lingard recovered a dropped lateral pass inside the Highlander 20-yard line early in the second quarter. Kaven Ford ran the ball in from eight yards out to give the Chargers a 27-7 lead.

Johnson connected with Hogan for touchdown passes two more times late in the second quarter to give Northwood a 40-7 lead at halftime.

With a running clock in the second half, North-See SCISA AAAA, pg. 70

SCISA AAA Football Championship

Pinewood repeats in SCISA AAA title

felt as if it had something to prove in the SCISA AAA state championship game on Saturday at South Carolina State's Oliver C. Dawson Stadium.

The defending state champion Panthers were facing Wilson Hall, the team they beat for the crown, again. However, in a regular-season matchup, the Barons had come away with a 28-21 victory.

Pinewood made its point – emphatically.

After not scoring on their first possession, the Panthers scored touchdowns on their next six possessions for a 42-7 halftime lead on Willie Jeffries Field. When it was said and done, Pinewood Prep had a 55-13 victory and the title of 2-time defending state champion.

"We just really competed against each other, knowing what we had to do," said Panthers junior wide receiver Lavoris Lucas, who had eight catches for 142 yards and three touchdowns and five rushes for 56 yards. "We were really dialed in as a team. We knew

Orangeburg – The **Pinewood Prep** football team what the outcome was going to be if we all played to-

Pinewood head coach **Devonte' Holloman** said in the first meeting it was Wilson Hall that controlled the pace of the game with its run-oriented single-wing offense. That, along with turnover issues, was the reason

"They controlled the clock, wasted a lot of the clock," said Holloman, whose team finished the season with a 10-3 record. "They executed their game plan really, really well. Tonight, we executed our game plan really well. We scored first and kept it

The game plan was pretty much junior quarterback Silas Brawner getting the ball into the hands of Lucas, senior wide receiver Jaden Alexander, junior tight end Heyward Moore and junior wide have the receivers who can make the plays.' receiver **Tre Green**. Brawner completed 19 of 30 passes for 331 yards and five touchdowns. Like Lucas, Alexander had over 140 yards receiving as well, fin-

Final Region Standings

ľ					
١	SCISA CLASS 4-A	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
П					
۱	NORTHWOOD ACAD	6-0	11-1	491	150
۱	HAMMOND	6-1	9-2	294	77
۱	HEATHWOOD HALL	5-2	9-4	298	196
۱	LAURENCE MANNING	3_3	6-5	274	212
۱					
۱	PORTER-GAUD	2-4	5-7	308	214
۱	BEN LIPPEN	2-5	3-8	155	295
۱	CARDINAL NEWMAN	1-6	1-9	69	423
۱					
۱	AUGUSTA CHRISTIAN	0-4	1-9	45	192
۱					
1	SCISA REGION 1-AAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
١	PINEWOOD PREP	3-0	10-3	594	247
١		~ ~			
١	HILTON HEAD CHRIST	2-1	6-6	369	439
١	JOHN PAUL II	1-2	5-6	239	328
١	FIRST BAPTIST	0-3	1-10	145	448
١					
١	COICA DECION C AAA	DEO	A. I	055	DEE
١	SCISA REGION 2-AAA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
١	WILSON HALL	4-0	11-2	482	256
١	FLORENCE CHRIST	3-1	8-3	296	204
١	TRINITY COLLEGIATE	2-2	5-6	289	275
١		T T			
١	CAMDEN MILITARY	1-3	1-7	122	294
١	NORTHSIDE CHRIST	0-4	3-8	200	358
١					
١	COICA DECION 4 A A	DEC	A 1 1	OFF	DEE
- [SCISA REGION 1-AA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
١	BETHESDA ACADEMY	4-0	12-0	556	122
١	PEE DEE ACADEMY	3-1	8-4	378	341
١	DILLON CHRISTIAN	2-2	3-7	210	318
١		T T			
١	HILTON HEAD PREP	1-3	3-9	139	346
١	ST. JOHNS CHRIST	0-4	0-9	156	429
١					
١	SCISA REGION 2-AA	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
١			·		
١	CALHOUN ACADEMY	5-0	9-2	428	186
١	GREENWOOD CHRIST	4-1	9-3	333	200
١	ORANGEBURG PREP	3-2	7-4	296	238
١	THOMAS SUMTER	1-3	4-8	252	347
١					
١	SPARTANBURG CHR	1-3	2-8	197	279
١	CLARENDON HALL	0-4	0-10	59	439
١					
١	SCISA REGION 1-A	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
١	WILLIAMSBURG	3-0	11-1	422	160
١					
١	DORCHESTER	2-1	9-2	413	163
١	CAROLINA ACADEMY	1-2	5-6	275	341
١	LEE ACADEMY	0-3	2-8	222	364
١					
- [COLCA DECION O A	DEC	A1.	OFF	D==
	SCISA REGION 2-A	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
١	COLLETON PREP	4-0	9-3	398	222
-	THOMAS HEYWARD	3-1	4-6	293	287
١	BEAUFORT ACADEMY		6-5	332	239
١					
١	PATRICK HENRY	1-3	2-9	146	416
١	ANDREW JACKSON	0-4	1-8	169	316
١					
١	SCISA 8-MAN REG 1	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
١					
١	W W KING ACADEMY	4-0	12-0	568	222
١	LAURENS ACADEMY	3-1	9-3	472	351
١	WARDLAW ACADEMY	2-2	3-6	212	281
١					
١	RICHARD WINN	1-3	4-7	383	450
- [NEWBERRY ACADEMY	0-4	0-8	144	316
-	CHRISTIAN ACADEMY	XXX	0-5	65	188
-					
-	SCISA 8-MAN REG 2	REG	ALL	OFF	DEF
-					
-	HOLLY HILL ACADEMY	4-0	11-1	522	266
- [JEFFERSON DAVIS	3-1	8-5	466	422
- [KING'S ACADEMY	2-2	6-4	293	252
		1-3			
	0,1111221012110112	. •	5-5	304	302
	CROSS SCHOOLS	0-4	0-10	142	449
-	PALMETTO CHRISTIAN		3-7	238	340

ishing with 146 and two TD receptions on five catches. Moore had three catches for 41 yards, and Green had two receptions for 21 yards and a score.

Brawner credited his teammates for the success he

"It's easy to do what I do when I have the O(ffensive) line that I have," Brawner said of seniors Cameron Wren, Hayden Presley and MacGregor Tuten and juniors **David Harper** and **Carlie Muckelvaney**. "Then I

For Wilson Hall, it was its third straight loss in the



2025 Pinewood Prep Panthers football

Panthers football aims to remain a contender

By Roger Lee

Special to the HSSR

Summerville – While it surely won't be easy, **Pinewood Prep** aims to chase a three-peat in football next season.

The Panthers (10-3) dominated the 2025 SCISA **3A** title game Nov. 22, scoring eight touchdowns while limiting **Wilson Hall** (11-2) to only two to claim a 55-13 victory and the Panthers' second consecutive SCISA 3A Football Championship.

"At the start of the year with all the new people we had and the guys we lost it felt kind of iffy, but we got better and better each week," said Pinewood coach **DeVonte Holloman**. "I'm really proud of the kids and my coaching staff. There are a lot of unselfish guys in both of those groups. Our kids did a good job of staying focused and really ramped it up in the playoffs."

The Panthers only had about a dozen seniors this season so it stands to reason many contributors will be back with more experience. That doesn't mean the seniors, particularly the starters, won't be missed.

Junior quarterback Silas Brawner completed 182 passes this season for 3,414 yards and nine touchdowns. His favorite target was senior Jayden **Alexander** who had 58 receptions for 1,296 yards and 16 TDs. Junior Lavoris Lucas had 52 catches for 975 yards and 13 TDs. Junior **Heyward Moore** has 31 catches for 560 yards and five TDs. Junior **Tre Green** has 31 catches for 457 yards and 10 TDs.

Junior Grayson Salego led the team in rushing with 106 carries for 814 yards and 14 TDs. Lucas had 40 carries for 349 yards and four TDs. Freshman Jeremy Kendall had 49 carries for 215 yards and

four TDs.

Senior Will Watson led the team in tackles with 88 including 52 solo stops and 21 tackles for a loss. Freshman Nathan Good had 78 including 28 solo stops and 11 tackles for a loss while junior Jacob Sweet had 68 tackles including 32 solo stops and 20 tackles for a loss. He also led the team in sacks with

Sophomore Mikey Williams and Watson both had three interceptions and Sweet had three fumble recoveries.

Panthers Wrestling

While Pinewood wrestlers have competed as individuals, it has been more than 10 years since the school had enough athletes come out for the sport to field a full team. That changed this season and the Panthers are having some success.

"Pinewood Wrestling is back as a competitive dual team and we are just getting started," said Pinewood coach Van Collins. "When I came here last year one of my goals was to get us back to competing in this setting. We started with just a couple of kids and the word started spreading and the team started building."

As an athlete, Collins was a member of three Summerville Wrestling state championship teams and a multiple-time state qualifier for the Green Wave.

"I have a great support system here and a great coaching staff helping me out," he said. "We started out with just me and some of the parents and then brought Cedrick Stewart on from the football team and he comes from a wrestling background so that has really helped."

First Baptist girls will contend for state title again

By David Shelton **Senior Writer**

James Island – Another high school basketball season has arrived and once again the girls team at First Baptist School expects to be a state title contender in SCISA class AAAA.

First Baptist reached the state championship game last season, losing to Trinity Collegiate, and has been a title contender for the last several seasons under coach Presley Singleton. The roster returns solid experience and talent but may not match last year's 29-3 record due to a tougher non-region schedule. Singleton says preparing for the postseason is the focus, not wins and losses.

"I want this team to be mentally and physically prepared for the playoffs," Singleton said. "I am not worried about what our record is in December. If getting a few losses against high level competition helps us in the playoffs, I'll take it. We just need to keep improving and be at our best when the playoffs come around."

First Baptist opened the season by winning

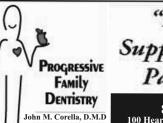
six of their first eight games. The two losses came to AAAAA public schools Goose Creek and Mauldin. Goose Creek is ranked No. 1 in AAAAA Division II while Mauldin began the season as the top-ranked team in Division II. The Hurricanes have a win over AAAAA Division II state champion Berkeley, and also beat Ashley Ridge and Gray Collegiate early on.

Playing experience and the ability to score points are the strengths of this year's team. Three of the starters are returning senior starters while the other two starters were starters a year

Junior Gabby Moore returns at point guard and is averaging nearly 13 points and 6.4 assists per game through the first eight contests. Sophomore shooting guard **Maddy Pajani** is one of the top three-point shooters in the state and is averaging 24 points per game. She has topped 30 points twice in the early season.

Senior guard **Paige Pouyat** averages 10.5 points per game while 6-6 senior post **Dyarri** Braddick, who has signed with Clemson, is av-

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Pinewood Prep Athletic **Booster Club Salutes Our Student Athletes!**

Pinewood picked up two wins earlier this month. On Dec. 10, it hosted a tri-match with Thomas Sumter and Porter-Gaud. The Panthers defeated Thomas Sumter 51-30 and nearly beat their Lowcountry rival, but lost the match on a tiebreaker as the Cyclones walked away with a 43-

"I feel like we should have won the Porter-Gaud match; we were so close," Collins said. "The energy we brought and the excitement is a success for me considering this is our first home match."

Pinewood only has one senior on the team, but Collins says the Panthers do have some guys on the rise. Senior Tanner Smoak has wrestled yearround since last season. Heavyweight Carlie Muckelvaney transferred from Summerville and has only lost one match this season. Nico Guarino is only a seventh-grader, but Collins says he has a lot of heart and fight. Wyatt Rucker got a big win at 165 against Thomas Sumter.

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Senior forward Ellie Blitch also returns as a starter and is a key scorer and rebounder inside. Senior **Reagan Conrad** is first off the bench.

eraging 10.4 points and 8.6 rebounds per game.

Others that see time as reserves include senior Jessica Rooke, and juniors Emily Easterlin and Blair Acker.

"This is a good group that works hard every day," said Singleton. "We are not as deep as we were last year but we have some talent. We score the ball pretty well and we can play fast. We need to improve on the boards. That was our biggest concern coming into the season."

See SCISA AAA, pg. 70

Heathwood Hall made great strides in football, cross country teams also performing well

By Billy G. Baker **Publisher**

Columbia—The Heathwood Hall (9-4) football program make great strides during the 2025 season, under the tutelage of head coach **Tymere Zimmerman**, with the Highlanders competing for the SCISA AAAA state title for the first time since their last appearance in the AAA finals back in 2009.

Despite losing to Northwood Academy, in the state finals at South Carolina State University in late November, the Highlanders advanced to the state finals with a historic final second's win over Hammond the week before, to earn a spot in the championship game.

After his team's loss against the Chargers, Coach Zimmerman told the HSSR, "We gave everything we had, they're just a better team," he said. "That's what happens in football. We're okay with that. We're not upset; the seniors are probably mad because it's their last game, but other than that, we're going to celebrate because we had a great year.

"The 2025 season was just the start of where we want to take this program," said Coach Zimmerman. "The kids worked hard all year and brought into what I was asking of them. We went out every game not chancing wins and losses, but to give 100 percent attitude and effort. No matter the games we did not win, we still gave everything we had and lived with the results. with the same kids that had been at the school since they were two and three years old.

"I am thankful that the team last year help build the foundation no matter what the record was," said Coach Zimmerman. "We went out and played hard, and it rubbed off on our seniors this year and they got us where

"Next season, we return a lot of our offensive line along with rising senior **Hill Belser** whom is the ultimate leaders in our program," said Coach Zimmerman. "He brings motivation and hard work each day. Alongside him, there will be AJ Morgan, Oliver Logsdon, Levi Glass, and Dub Taylor.

"Keon McKinley will be the go-to in our receiving corps.," said Coach Zimmerman. "Keon is Mr. Everything to our team and will be ready to lead. **Heyward Belser** will be one of the top linebackers in the state next year. At 6'4 205, he produced 130- plus tackles this season. His recruitment is picking up, and everyone is on notice how good he can be.

"Christian Hitchcock and Charlie Hudson will

help complete one of the best linebacking groups in the state next year," said Coach Zimmerman. "Liam Edwards will be the leader in the secondary next year. Cole

> lead these guys." The team was led on offense by senior quarterback Patrick Belk. Belk completed 165-0f-297 passes with 20 TD's during the season. He added 484 yards rushing and seven TD's on the ground. Belk also led the team in scoring with 42 points.

Moore and Evan Johnson will anchor our defensive

line, and they were monster players for us this year. Next

year we continue to put the work in, and I am excited to

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

Senior Julian Hughes led the running backs with 400 yards and four TD's. The top four receivers on the team were talented junior **Keon McKinnley** (56-756-3 TD's), senior Jamonie Batts (37-539-4 TD's, senior Jackson Noble (20-318-4 TD's) along with senior Char**lie Hudson** (17-227- 3 TD's). Senior WR starter **Chip** Ravenell added 139 yards in receptions with three TD's.

The captain of the offensive line was senior and three- year starter LT Xander Pertile. He was joined upfront by LG Brady Murphy, soph center Oliver Logsdon, junior Rt Hill Belser, and junior RG AJ Morgan.

Senior **James Richardson** was the Highlander's place kicker who kicked the last-minute field goal for the thrilling win over Hammond in the playoffs. He made 7of-9 field goals with a long of 36 yards during the season. Junior Liam Edwards also made 23-of-25 PAT's during the season.

On defense, the leading tacklers were soph LB Hevward Belser (116 tackles, 18 TFL) along with senior FS Julian Hughes (71 tackles, 9 TFL) and LB Morris Henry (60 tackles, 8 TFL).

The next seven tacklers on the hit index included: junior LB Christian Hitchcock (48 tackles, 6 TFL), senior FS Jackson Noble (42 tackles), junior CB Liam Edwards (37 tackles, 4 TFL), junior LB John Thompson (33 tackles, 7 TFL), soph Charlie Taylor (32 tackles, 5 TFL), senior CB Ryan Pfister (28 tackles, 2 TFL) along with senior LB Thomas Scurry (25 tackles, Six TFL).

Other defensive starters included ends junior AJ Morgan, soph Cole Moore and soph Evan Johnson. **Levi Glass** was the junior nose guard.

In 40 punts, Noble averaged 37.5 yards a boot with 9 inside the 20-yard line.

In the state title game, Heathwood Hall started seven seniors on offense and four seniors on defense. They are expected to return five starters on offense for the '26 sea-

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son while 8 starters will return on defense.

Saluting The Heathwood Hall Cross County **Teams On Their Success**

The **Heathwood Hall** girl's cross-country team won first place in the annual SCISA Cross Country state finals hosted at Heathwood Hall November 1 with a low score of 42 points.

The girls' team was led by third place over-all finisher Dorothy Hutchins (18.55.28), fourth place finisher Annabel Martin (18:55.58), sixth place finisher Cate Leppard (19:01.85), 14th place finisher Lydia Smith (19:40.46), 15th place finisher Mary Widener (19:48.59), and 19th place finisher Lily Martin (20:12.83). All runners in the top 20 earned SCISA all-

The Highlander boy's cross team placed fourth overall at the meet with a team score of 96 points.

Soph Jack Willcox led the Heathwood Hall boy's runners with a strong second place finish (15:34.29) at the state meet. Other runners in the top 29 included 16th place finisher **Jack Ford** (16:43.74), 23rd place finisher Lee Caplinger (17:08.39), 26th place finisher Gus Rohde (17:14.46) and 29th place finisher Everatt Martin (17:20.75. Caden Norman and Ben Gisewhite also represented the team at the state meet finishing 30 and 35, respectively.

selfish player, and he is always asking me how he help Barr is averaging seven points and seven rebounds the team get better."

The remaining tri-captain is senior guard/forward **Brice Henderson**, and he is averaging 10 points, seven rebounds, and three assists a game, "Brice can play anywhere on the floor," said Coach Jordan. "We call him our glue guy because his leadership helps keep the team

together. He makes things happen on the court."

Spartanburg Day, continued from pg. 60

The leading scorer on the team is senior power forward/center **Duece Williams** who is averaging 20 points a game. "Duece started school at Spartanburg Day many years ago, but he left for a few years," said Coach Jordan. "He wanted to graduate from Spartanburg Day, and we are delighted he is playing his senior season at Spartanburg Day. "He brings a lot of energy to the court, and he can explode to the basket."

Senior 6-2 power forward, **Matt Barr** is the most versatile athlete on the team. He is no doubt a versatile athlete, as he is a year-round hockey player with a goal of playing the sport in college, all while also having an avid interest in playing basketball at a competitive level.

per game along with three assists a game. "Barr brings a lot of energy to the court also," said Coach Jordan. "He is just a natural born athlete."

Freshman forward/shooting guard Malcolm Cleland is usually the sixth man off the bench. "Malcom is like a gym rat, and he is always working on improving his game," said Coach Jordan. Cleland is averaging around five points a game.

Senior guard/forward **Evans Taylor** is also one of the first players off the bench. "Evans can play 1-4 on the court so we use him in several roles on the court,"

The Griffins are comprised of 12 hard-working players. Other contributors include freshman forward Camden Teel who is cited as a good rebounder. Trent Williams is coming along well as an 8th grade point guard while junior **Evan Bourla** is also developing well

Freshman Nick Querin is a very coachable power forward/center and junior Brienn Daniel Ayerdi is considered one of the best pure shooters on the team.

In terms of goals and expectations for the team, Coach Jordan said, "First and foremost we want to establish a culture of winning," he said. "We need to learn to compete at a high level with very good teams in our region like Spartanburg Christian and Greenwood

The Griffins will participate in a Christmas tournament hosted by Charlotte Latin over December 19-21. They will play Charlotte County Day in the first game

"We need to play as many games as possible because every time we play it is an opportunity to correct mistakes and show steady improvement," said Coach

Coach Jordan is excited to be assisted by one of his former college teammates Kojack Thompson and **John Beecy** played with him in high school at Charlotte

SCISA AA Football Championship

Bethesda claims second SCISA AA state title in three years

By WORTHY EVANS

ORANGEBURG-Bethesda Academy took on **Pee Dee Academy** in the SCISA 2A championship football game for the second straight year.

This time around, the Blazers rolled past the Golden Eagles 54-15 at Oliver C. Dawson Stadium Saturday afternoon to capture their second 2A title

"They beat us last year and we were very hungry to come back and finish the deal," head coach **Antwain Turner** said. "This group of seniors, they got in the weight room, they ran track, they did everything we asked them to do and I can't be more proud of what they've done to accomplish this goal. Three state championship appearances for the senior class and two out of three wins is not bad. I'm very proud of these guys today."

Bethesda (12-0) fell 52-14 to Pee Dee (8-4) in last year's matchup, but this time around the Savannah, Ga., school took advantage of three Golden Eagles turnovers and struck quickly.

"I knew we were going to have a (big) game today," senior running back Jordan Cheever said. "I was wishing for more yards but he took us out (in the second half).

Cheever had 145 yards and three touchdowns on iust nine carries.

Sophomore quarterback **Jordan Turner** was 4for-5 for 132 yards and threw three touchdown passes, two to Raleigh Wesley and one to Braylen

"We felt disappointed last year, about not getting it (a state title)," Turner said. "But we put in a lot of work, a lot of practice, coming in on Saturdays in the offseason. We just had that mentality."

That mentality showed just after the kickoff.

"We kept thinking about what changes they would make," Coach Turner said. "They made a few changes and our guys did a really good job of making the adjustments and we came out and executed. Our coaches did a phenomenal job of preparation. It was just a great team effort today."

Bethesda needed just 17 plays and seven first downs to build a 46-8 halftime lead on Pee Dee.

The Golden Eagles fumbled on their first possession, which set up Turner's 67-yard touchdown pass to Wesley and a 2-point conversion run from Wesley to get things started.

After a second Pee Dee fumble, Cheever capped a short drive with a 1-yard touchdown plunge. The conversion attempt failed but the Blazers closed out the first quarter with a 14-0 lead.

In the second quarter the Blazers defense forced another turnover, this time on downs, and on their next possession Turner dashed into the end zone on a 25-yard run.

The Golden Eagles pulled things together and cranked out an 11-play 72-yard scoring drive for their only score of the first half. Tristan Heckman scored on an 8-yard touchdown run at the 3:29 mark of the second, then passed to Judson Martin for the 2-point conversion.

See SCISA AA, pg. 70

Page 11

SCISA A Football Championship

Stallions force five turnovers to claim SCISA A championship

Orangeburg - Williamsburg Academy football player Micah Balder said this back in August prior to the start of the 2025 season.

"The past two years we've lost state, so this year every day. This made all that worth it." we're just trying not to lose state," Balder said of the Stallions, who had played in four consecutive SCISA state championship games but had won only once, in 2022. "We've got the experience of playing in the state championship game, but we don't have the experience of winning it. I guess that's the overall goal. I guess they've got to learn winning is a whole lot better than losing.'

Mission accomplished

WA made it five straight title game appearances in a row and used an opportunistic defense to come away with a 34-14 victory over Colleton Prep **Academy** for the Class A crown on Saturday on Willie Jeffries Field at South Carolina State's Oliver C. Dawson Stadium.

"It means everything to win it again," said

Balder, a senior starting at quarterback and safety. "All the hours we put in over the summer, all the hours we put in after school, It was like 5-hour days

Balder was a freshman on the '22 AA state championship team. Fellow senior Jay **Kellahan** was also on that team, making the duo the only two players in school history to be on two championship teams.

"It means a lot," said Kellahan, who starts at tight end and inside linebacker. "We lost the last two, which sucked. We've been working hard all season, and it finally paid off. We're super happy."

The title comes in Williamsburg's first season with **Will Furse** as head coach. The title is the first for Furse as a head coach. He led Laurence Man**ning Academy** to two SCISA AAAA title game appearances during his two seasons there.

Furse is happy his team was able to accomplish the feat, knowing the work that had been put in in

"It means a lot," said Furse, who guided WA to an 11-1 record. "I'm so happy for the kids and our program. They've come up short a lot, losing this game the last two years.

"It means a whole lot for our program. We put in a ton of work starting June 1, and we never stopped And they didn't want to stop.'

It was defense that spurred the Stallions on to victory. They forced five turnovers, two of which led directly to scores. Sophomore cornerback Gamble Wilson returned an interception 36 yards for a touchdown, and fellow sophomore cornerback Lane Patrick grabbed a fumble and returned it 42 yards for a score.

The other two interceptions, coming from Balder and junior inside linebacker Michael Ard, set Williamsburg up for quick scores.

SCISA 8-Man Football Championship

Knights finish 12-0 for first perfect season in school history

Greenwood — W.W. King Academy completed its first perfect season in school history on Friday with a commanding

50-36 victory over Laurens Academy iin the SCISA 8-man state championship game at the Greenwood Christian School field. The Knights, who finishe the season with a 12-0

record, defeated the Crusaders for the third time on the season. Laurens closed the season 9-3.

King Academy head coach Brian Kneece, in his first season as head coach, stated "I don't that it's quite sunk in yet. I am just blessed to be part of a special group. I am just glad that all of the hard work has paid off."

Kneece, who played for Laurens Academy head coach Jolly Doolittle in high school and coached with him at King Academy and Greenwood Christian, added, "He is very special to my life and I am very appreciative of him."

as the Knights led 8-0 midway through the first quarter. Laurens would answer to tie the game when Caleb Hardy scored on a 1-yard run on the opening play of the second quarter.

King would retake the lead with :19.7 econds to play in the half when quarterback Elijah **Hutto** scored on an 18-yard run to give the Knights a 14-8 halftime lead, as the Crusaders controlled the clock and kept it close.

In the third quarter, the Knights began to wear down the Crusaders behind the running of the sophomore Morse. Morse had just 54 yards on 12 carries in the first half but dominated the second half en route to a game high 295 yards rushing on 24 carries to go with four touchdowns.

When asked about Morse, Kneece stated, "He is a special player. What is so great is he is so humble and

King opened the scoring with a 54-yards scoring he works hard. He always gives the guys around him drive with Joseph Morse scoring from six yards out credit. The offensive line Josh Oswald, Wyatt Burbank, Smith Kirby, Dallas Hill, Landell Anderson, Jacob Busey, Jacob Clamp, Ty Doolittle, all those guys blocking for him. I don't think you can talk about his game without talking about their game and everybody out their working together. Joseph Morse is a special player and a special kid and I am glad he is on our side."

In the third quarter, Hutto, after scrambling away from pressure, connected with Luke Harvey for a 15-yard touchdown to make it 22-8. On the next possession, Morse broke free for a 51-yard touchdown run as King extended the lead to 28-8. Laurens would answer with a 10-yard scoring run from Elijah Hornberger to make it 28-16 in the final seconds of the quarter.

See SCISA 8-Man, pg. 70

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DIMENSOR IN SOLUTION

Dillon girls basketball focused on another title run

By Billy G. Baker **Publisher**

Dillon—After going 10-0 in region play last season, the **Dillon** girls' basketball team went on to play for a AAA state title at the Florence Civic Center against Walhalla, and their 52-37 loss to the Razorbacks has motivated them to get back to the gold medal round this

Veteran head coach James McMillian has the lady Wildcats off to a 3-1 record at the start of the 2025-26 season with two wins over Lake View (65-44 & 60-20) and they have also defeated **Carvers Bay** (57-21). Their lone loss came against Camden on the road December, 3 (71-42).

"Last season we made history by being the first girls' basketball team at Dillon to ever play for a state title," said Coach McMillian. "We won the region title with a 10-0 perfect record and our two= point comefrom-behind win over Oceanside that advanced us to th championship game is a game we will never forget.

"However, losing to Walhalla like we did motivate us to work extra hard in the off-season," said Coach McMillian. "We graduated two veteran players in Ayona Lester and Mariah Campbell but we have three starters back and a core group of talented newcomers so we are focused on another run this season.'

Early on in the 2025-26 season, Coach McMillian says he is still looking for the best five players to start that will give Dillon their best chance to be successful. "We have been playing a lot of different combinations of players in order to get a feel of what group gives us the best chance to be successful," said Coach McMil-

There are two *HSSR* all-state players back from last season who rarely leave the court. Sophomore SG **Treasure Davis** has been a starter since the seventh grade. She is currently leading the team in scoring, and several other categories. Davis is averaging 20.7 points, five rebounds, an incredible 6.7 steals and 4.3 assists a

"Treasure is a lot stronger and quicker this season and she has lost some weight and that has made her move even faster on the court," said Coach McMillian. "She plays all aspects of the game very well and her ball sills off the chart. Her defense has improved and she likes to put pressure on the ball.

"She knows how to break down a defense and on offense she knows when to take a shot and when to pass to an open teammate," said Coach McMillian. "We expect Treasure to have her best season yet at Dillon."

Junior PG Khw-Nylahi McKinnon is having an outstanding season thus far also. McKinnon is currently averaging 20.3 points a game, 5.3 rebounds, 6.3 steals and 5.7 assists a game.

"McKinnon's mid-range game has really improved," said Coach McMillian. "She can pull up and shoot or stay back and shoot a three pointer. She has worked hard at improving her shot over last season.

"As our point guard she is a good ball handler and she distributes the ball really well," said Coach McMillian. "Her shot selection has improved this season and she is always looking to pass to a teammate that might have a closer shot to make inside."

With Davis and McKinnon producing over 40 points a game between them, Coach McMillian would like to see some of the younger players step up on offense also. Dillon has been averaging 55.7 points a game this sea-

Junior guard Azyriah Ford returns after being a part-time starter a year ago. She is currently averaging 4.7 points and 1.7 rebounds a game. The two newcomer

Rep. Jackie E. Hayes **House District #55** Dillon, SC 843-229-3661



Treasure Davis

starters are senior power forward Jiana McGill who is averaging 1.3 points and 4.3 rebounds a game. The fifth starter is senior combo guard **Zyniah Pernell** and she is averaging 5.7 points and 3.7 rebounds a game.

Numerous other players have started games this season on the 10-man roster. The sixth person off the bench is usually third year varsity member 5-10 senior power forward Alyssa Lee. Lee is contributing 2.7 rebounds a

The remaining players on the team include sophomore small forward Kai Bethea, freshman guard Pilar Ouick, senior power forward Jaleah Bethea, and 5-11 freshman forward Nylann Jones who is averaging 3.7 rebounds a contest.

In the team's season opener against Lake View on December, 2, Davis led the way with 26 points and seven rebounds while McKinnon had 18 points while Ford contributed 11 points against the Wild Gators. Pernell and Lee each had four rebounds against Lake View.

As the HSSR was going to press Dillon had an away game against Latta on December 11. They will host Marion on December, 13 before playing at Darlington on the 16th. Dillon will play in a tournament hosted by Purnell Swett, NC on December, 17. Between December, 26 -29 the team will participate in the District IX tournament hosted by **Manning** High School. The teams they will play at this event are TBA.

After the tournament in Manning the team is off until January, 9 when they have a key region game at **Loris**. Their next two games will be at home against Aynor on the 9th and Marlboro County visits on Janu-

Coach McMillian says the further development of six-foot freshman post player Nylann Jones might just

determine how deep his team can advance in the playoffs this season. "If I am wrong, I will certainly stand to be corrected but I feel like Nylann is getting better with every game this season, and her development could give us a dominant inside player we really need because we have been a guard oriented team for so long," said Coach McMillian. "She is so



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Marlboro County football gets back on track in '25

By David Shelton Senior Writer

Bennettsville – After an 8-4 season, it would appear the Marlboro County football program is back on a positive track in their goal of being a state championship contender.

The 2024 season ended in bitter disappointment as the program had to forfeit seven wins and missed the AAA state playoffs. But second-year head coach **Cory Johnson** and his staff righted the ship in 2025, advancing into the second-round of the AAA state playoffs this season. The Bulldogs were eliminated from the postseason with a 24-7 loss to eventual AAA state champion Oceanside Collegiate Academy, which won a third consecutive state title in early December.

Marlboro County's other three losses came to Gray Collegiate, Dillon and Loris. Dillon and Loris also lost in the playoffs to Oceanside Collegiate.

Perhaps the most encouraging aspect of this season for Marlboro County was the number of underclassmen that played significant roles in 2025. The bulk of the heavy lifting came from underclassmen with only a handful of starting seniors in the lineup.

Offensively, the entire starting offensive line was made up entirely of underclassmen when the season began. The unit consisted of juniors Camden Jack-

Rep. Jackie E. Hayes **House District #55** Dillon, SC 843-229-3661

Hartsville – Now in his third season, Hartsville

High boys basketball coach Jason Earle feels his re-

The Red Foxes won four games in Earle's first

building project is starting to see positive results.

season and improved to six wins last season. The

2025-26 season saw Hartsville win their first three

games, giving Earle a reason to be optimistic about

"Most of these guys have been playing for me

Most of the heavy lifting this season comes from

while taking their lumps. Junior guard Kayson Daw-

son and junior forward **Derion Gattison** are setting

the early pace as scoring leaders. Dawson is averag-

ing 14.5 points and 6.0 rebounds per game early on

up just shy of a football state title again this year. The

Bears fell to Oceanside Collegiate Academy in the AAA

Longtime Bears head coach Russell Blackston said he

"I mean they finished 14-1, and I'm so proud of these

championship game for the second straight season, this

couldn't be prouder of his team, the seniors in particular.

guys and what they've been able to do," he said. "They

have 50 wins in their careers, and the sun's going to come

The Bears dominated the awards for Region 1-AAA as

well as its All-Region team. Junior Tajeh Watson-Martin

Kylan Dixon was chosen as the Defensive Player of the Year, senior **Keylan Dixon** was the Lineman of the Year,

senior Benji Ward was the Special Teams Player of the

Watson-Martin was selected to the All-Region team as

Year and Blackston was named the Coach of the Year.

was selected as the Region Player of the Year, senior

now for three years," reports the coach. "We have

expectation that I have for this team is to play re-

seniors and juniors who have gained experience

continued to get better each year. The

ally hard and make the playoffs."

By Dennis Brunson

time by a 28-7 count.

hssr.com Associate Editor

By David Shelton

the chances of improvement.

Senior Writer

Hartsville boys hoops looks to be improved

son, Jawan Taylor, Dymiek Covington and Zirell McIver-Barker, and sophomore Hayden Heywood

Sophomore Tre Blakeney gained valuable experience as the starting quarterback. Blakeney completed 63 percent of his passes for 1,639 yards and 17 touchdowns, and also was a threat in the running game with 761 yards and 11 touchdowns on the

Senior Troy Hailey finished the season as the team's leading rusher, totaling 931 yards and 10 scores while averaging 7.1 yards per rush. He also caught 18 passes.

Senior **Tremayne Ashford** added nearly 300 yards rushing and caught 28 passes this season. Sophomore Krishawn Smith rushed for 451 yards (6.7 average) with eight touchdowns, while LaQuincy Leatch caught 26 passes for 407 yards.

Defensively, many of the top performers were juniors. Myjae McCoy was the leading tackler with 107 total hits and nine tackles for loss. Layton Chavis was in on 80 tackles while Patrick Williams, Jr., had 46 tackles, 16 tackles for loss, and five sacks.

Junior **Tehvin Easterling** had 42 tackles with 11 tackles for loss and Jaden Ashe had 48 tackles with 12 coming behind the line of scrimmage.

while Gattison is at 13.5 points and nearly five

boards per game. Dawson averaged 11 points per

aging 7.5 points early on. Senior Tristian Spann

at forward and contributes 5.5 points and 5.5 re-

bounds per game in the early going. Earle says the

leadership this season comes primarily from Daw

Sophomore CJ Hickmon is first off the bench

and can play guard or forward. Remaining players

include junior Kelly Price, junior Zi'yon Mason

junior Karmelo Pooler, junior Jamyari Scipio-

son, Gattison and Mason.

game a season ago while Gattison scored 5.1 points

Senior Zaries Huggins is a starting guard, aver-

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GO RED FOXES!

Courtesy Hartsville High School & Athletic Dept. & the Hartsville Community

BELTON-HONEA PATH

Bears dominate region 1-AAA football awards

See Hartsville, pg. 68

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tions for 1,101 yards and 11 touchdowns while coming up Honea Path – Belton-Honea Path High School came with 27 tackles, two tackles for loss, one quarterback sack and four interceptions at cornerback.

both a wide receiver and defensive back. He had 58 recep-

Kylan Dixon, a defensive tackle, finished with 41 tackles, 14 TFLs and five sacks. His brother, Keylan, was the leader of an offensive line that helped the offense average 45.7 points per game. He was a 4-time All-Region

Placekicker Ward scored 89 points, connecting on 80 of his 86 extra point attempts while going 3-for-4 on field The other All-Region goals with a long of 40 yards. selections were senior Noah Thomas both at quarterback and punter, junior Brody Riddle at tight end, senior MJ Earl at running back, junior Jaden Glenn and senior Jacus Paul at wide receiver, senior center Brady Spearman and junior right tackle Carter Burgess on the offensive line, juior noseguard Kamation Glenn and senior ends Ty Rainey and Kanaza Bryant on the defensive

See BHP, pg. 69

Spartanburg DAY SCHOOL

Home of the Griffins



2025-26 Spartanburg Day girls basketball

Konrads, girls hoops focused on improvement

By Billy G. Baker **Publisher**

Spartanburg—With seven of the nine **Spartan**burg Day School girls' varsity basketball players, either 8th or 9th graders for the 2025-26 season, the future certainly looks bright for first year head coach Elizabeth Konradi.

Coach Konradi was a stand-out prep player at the **Episcopal School** in Dallas, Texas where she set school records for blocks (273) and rebounds (352) that helped her earn a basketball scholarship to The University of the South (Sewanee). She was a noted leader on her college team and earned All-Academic honors throughout her college career.

"With such a young team, we do not have many set positions just yet, and we are just working with each player to help them develop roles that will bring us success as we grow and develop, this season and beyond," said Coach Konradi who is very positive about all of her players.

The team's lone win thus far in the season was a 73-16 win over **Palmetto Christian Academy** from Gaffney in the team's second game of the season on November 18. In that victory junior guard/forward **Katelyn Bopp** led Griffin scorers with 21 points. Right behind on the scoring index was freshman center Clara Matz with 20 points and seven re-

Freshman point guard Maren Diez contributed 13 points in the PCA victory while 8th grade **Dorothy Dobson** contributed 8 points with six rebounds. In addition, 8th grade 4-5 position player Madeline Saleski aided in the win with six points and seven rebounds.

The young team is currently 1-5 starting the season with a narrow three-point loss to **Westminster** Catawba Chrsitian on November 14 (24-27). They have had other competitive games against **Gaston** Day, NC, Northside Christian, Laurens Academy and Carolina Day.

Spartanburg DAY SCHOOL

The alma mater of NBA star Zion Williamson is proud to be joined by our athletic booster club, athletic department and the Spartanburg Day School Administration in proudly recognizing the hard work of our student athletes in the High School Sports Report.

The Spartanburg Day Griffins athletic program is on the move with varsity football coming in 2026

After playing at **Charlotte Latin** on December 12 (as the HSSR was going to press) the Griffins will be off until they resume play on January 9 when they host Westminster Catawba Christian from Rock Hill. They will be at **Oakbrook Prep** on the 13th before hosting Laurens Academy on the 21st and Oakbrook Prep pays a visit to the Griffins on the 23rd.

Going into the Christmas Holidays break the Lady Griffins are led in scoring by Bopp (10.8 points, 3.7 rebounds, 1,8 assists and 1.5 steals a game). Maren Diez is right behind averaging (10.5 points, 3.7 rebounds, with 1.8 assists and 1.5 steals a game also).

Dobson went into the break at 5.4 points and 4.6 rebounds a game while Matz was at 5.2 points and three rebounds per outing.

The 5th starter on the team is the only senior, fouryear team member shooting guard Aiala Diez who went into the break averaging 2.8 points and 3.3 re-

Other contributors on the team include freshman 1-3 position player **Ella Gray Holland**, 8th grade utility player Kathryn Spivey, and versatile freshman Leighton Cooper who can play positions 2-3-4.

"Our goals and expectations, in this first season together, is to learn and develop one game at the time, with a focus on steady improvement," said Coach Konradi. "While we are not participating in a Christmas tournament we are planning to practice a lot over the break."

Jordan takes over Griffins' boys basketball program, focused on winning

By Billy G. Baker Publisher

Spartanburg—The Spartanburg Day Griffins have started the 2025-26 basketball season at 2-2, under first year head coach Caleb Jordan, who spent the last five seasons as an assistant at his alma mater, tradition rich Charlotte Latin, NC.

"I learned an awful lot about the teaching of basketball fundamentals, and so many complex aspects of the game, under head coach Chris Berger at Charlotte Latin, the five years I worked with him," said Coach Jordan. "I want to thank him for preparing me to be a head basketball coach."

After a successful high school career at Charlotte Latin, Jordan earned a scholarship to Roanoke College where he was a four-year starter, ending his career with 881 career points and 240 assists. When he talks about coaching basketball, one can feel his passion for the

Through four games through December 9 the Griffins had defeated Palmetto Christian Academy of Gaffney (77-22) and Northside Christian (66-39). Their two losses were to Westminster Catawba Christian (65-57) in the season opener on November, 14. They lost to Carolina Day of Asheville, NC (84-62) on



2025-26 Spartanburg Day boys basketball

team is led by three captains. Coach Jordan calls senior shooting guard **Thomas Hyde** "the sparkplug" of the team. "Thomas sets the standard for our team, on and off the court," said Coach Jordan. "He is averaging 12 points a game, and he is making 40 per cent of his threepoint shot attempts. He plays the game with a lot of

confidence and when he is hot the team is hot."

Junior combo guard Gabe Smith is also a tri-captain. "Gabe is a two-year starter on the team, and he is averaging around six points a game," said Coach Jordan. "He is an excellent leader on the court, a very un-

See Spartanburg Day, pg. 62

LAKE VIEW Wild Gators

Lake View boys basketball building for success

By David Shelton Senior Writer

Lake View – The 2024-25 season was a tough journey for the Lake View boys basketball team. The Wild Gators finished with an 0-18 record.

The 2025-26 season may be a little better but with only four seniors (one starter) on the roster the wins may be hard to come by. But head coach **Jeffery Ceasar**, now in his 13th season, feels the program is on the rise and can only improve as the youth matures.

"We will compete better this year and next year we should be pretty good," the coach said. "This team will grow as the season pro-

Lake View will start just one senior, guard Landon King. Junior forwards Terrence Alford and Cameron Wheeler are expected to carry the offensive load. Junior Ammiel Rowland will start at guard and junior Jalen Clarke will direct the action as the point guard.

Ceasar says the addition of King and fellow senior **Bryce King** to the team will be helpful in terms of hustle and effort. The coach also expects every player on the roster to contribute in some way. The other seniors on the roster are Joshua Roundtree and Jamere Atkinson. Rounding out the roster are juniors **Yuri** Richardson, Balin Rice, Christopher Rice, and William Newell; and sophomore Aiden Blue.

Ceasar feels his team can compete in a tough region if they play hard and put forth great effort in practice.

"This region will be really strong," he says. "Carver's Bay, Latta, Johnsonville, Green Sea, Pamplico, and Hemingway will give us their best effort every night. We have to rise to the occasion and compete with them."

Volleyball team makes state playoffs

Lake View's volleyball team earned a spot in the Class A state playoffs but lost their firstround contest to Charleston Math & Science. The team finished with an overall record of 8-10, 6-6 in region play.

Senior **Kirsten McClellan** led the team with 157 kills as a middle hitter. Freshman Sophia Rogers had 57 kills and Callie Smith totaled 52 kills. Sophomore **Sarah Price** had 44 kills and 188 digs and junior Chloe Cox had 151 digs. Junior Riley Barfield had 142 assists and 88 digs. Senior Neveah Price had 232 digs and freshman Lauren King totaled 139 digs.

Other team members include sophomore Hanna Coburn, junior Madison Strickland, and senior Desiree Dawkins.

The football team also made the Class A playoffs, picking up one postseason win before losing to Carver's Bay. The Wild Gators finished with an overall record of 5-5.

This year's team was fairly young overall but gave great effort throughout the season, ac-



Senior Landon King

cording to head coach Daryl King.

"There was never a question of effort. This team practiced well and played hard," the coac

More than half of the starting units were underclassmen this season, including a handful of freshmen and sophomores who gained valuable experience for the future.

One of the key seniors to replace is quarterback Chase Price, who finished the season with more than 1,000 passing yards and a combined 21 touchdowns via the passing game and running game.

Linebackers Landon King and Seth Deese also were experienced veteran performers. King led the team in tackles in each of the last three seasons. Senior defensive linemen **Tyree Fore** and Nick McNeil were solid players on the defensive front, and Bryce King was a key leader in the secondary. One of the leaders on the offensive line was senior Farrion Seymore.

Jalen Clarke will be a key returner next year as a running back. Yuri Richardson will return at wide receiver while Riley Mc-Cormick and Alonzo Hamilton will return on the offensive line. Freshman Gabe Lee gained valuable playing time at linebacker and Terrance Alford saw action at receiver and defensive back. Balin Rice and Elijah Paradise were junior starters along the defensive front.

Sophomores **Richard Thomas** and Isaiah Blue saw action along the line and freshman **Tyro**n Bethea saw plenty of action at linebacker. Junior **Peyton** Hilburn saw time along the trenches as



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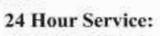
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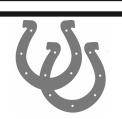
Good Luck Wild Gators!



Good Luck Wild Gators!



BARNWELL Warhorses



Hammonds begins 10th season as girls' hoops coach

Coach Hammonds Starting Season Ten As Barnwell Head Girl's Basketball Coach

By Billy G. Baker **Publisher**

Barnwell—In the nine seasons that Banwell High girls' basketball coach William Hammonds has headed up the program, the Lady Warhorses have won a region championship outright, and on another occasion, they were co-region champions with Batesburg-Leesville.

With all-region senior point guard **Gabby Thomas** back for her fourth season, and the next four starters being juniors or seniors, the War Horses certainly have awesome potential to make a run despite starting the 2025-26 season with a 0-4 record.

"If we would just cut down on turnovers and work a little harder at making our free throws, we would certainly have a better record now," said Coach Hammonds. "We are working hard to get better. We are progressing and showing improvement.

"We lost a tough one by six points to Willison-**Elko** the other night, and in that game we had so many opportunities to win the game," said Coach Hammond. "In our recent loss to Blackville Hilda the light bulb came on with our sophomore center **Bre'Yanna Bostick** and she scored a season high 8 points and grabbed five or six rebounds. We need her to keep that up the rest of the season."

Thomas is a team captain her starts at point guard where she is currently averaging five points, two assists, and three steals a game. "We are focused on trying to get Gabby to be our primary ball handler," said Coach Hammond. "She is so capable of setting the tone for our offense and making good decisions as our quarterback of the offense.'

Junior co-captain **Maddie Brown** is a 5-10 small forward who has also been on the team for four years. "Maddie's job is to rebound and be a force in the paint on defense," said Coach Hammond. "She has a high- motor and she brings a lot of energy to the team."

Through four games, Brown is averaging two points and four rebounds a game.

Junior shooting guard Savannah Rountree could be headed to earn all-region honors as she is currently the leading scorer on the team at 14 points, two rebounds, and two assists a game. "Rountree really shoots the ball well," said Coach Hammond. "She is making 50 per cent of her three- point shots so far this season also."

Aurielle Sanders is a senior starting transfer combo type guard to the program this season. "More Hammonds.

and more we are counting on her to share the load with Gabby as a main ball handler on the court," said Coach Hammond

Junior wing Gracie Carter is in her third season on the team. "We need Gracie to score more but she has all the tools to contribute more on offense," said Coach Hammond. Carter is currently averaging two points and three rebounds a game.

Junior guard **Sharon Smalls** is usually the first player off the bench, "Recently in a game with Williston-Elko she scored a season high 9 points, and we need for her to keep that up," said Coach Hammond. Smalls is currently averaging three points and four rebounds a game.

Coach Hammonds is also very complimentary of junior power forward Juliyah Brown citing her rebounding talent at four per game. Sophomore center Bre'Yanna Bostick is also starting to rebound better, and she verified her scoring potential with the e8 points she earned in a recent game.

Other contributing players on the team include freshman guard **Zy'Cariah Devoe**, 5-10 sophomore center Taliayah Jones, junior guard TreBryanna Glover, freshman forward Kennide Williams, freshman guard Zamari Williams, and senior small forward Samariona Mayes.

Barnwell has been competitive in every game they have played so far this season.

They lost to Williston to start the season on December 2 (38-24), and Blackville-Hilda nipped them 42-40 on December 5. Then on December, 10 they lost a six-point game against Williston-Elko (50-44) Better free throw shooting might have won two of

"Our goals are to keep improving with every practice and every game and to make the playoffs at the end of the regular season," said Coach Hammonds. "This team has so much potential. All we need to do is to cut down on the turnovers and make more of our free throws."

The Lady Warhorses will participate in the Hawk Invitational Tournament hosted by Blackville-Hilda over December 29-31. In the first game of this event Barnwell will play **Ridge-Spring-Monetta**.

Prior to the Hawk Invitational, Barnwell will host Bamberg-Ehrhardt on December 16 and then they play at **Blackville-Hilda** on December 19.

In January, they will start things with an away game at Lake Marion on January 6 before playing away at **Bridges Prep** on the 9th.

Alicia Davis and April Robinson assist Coach

LeRoy beginning his second season at Barnwell

By Billy G. Baker **Publsiher**

Barnwell-Coach Allen LeRoy begins his second season as the head varsity boys' basketball coach at Barnwell High School, and with only three players returning to the team this season with any significant playing time from last season, the team is likely **Devoe** is the team's top scorer at around 14 points, to be in rebuilding mode.

After four games of the 2025-26 season, the Warhorses are 2-2 with wins over Williston-Elko and Blackville-Hilda. Their losses came against Williston-Elko and by two points to Bamberg-Ehrhardt.

"With such a young team we are working hard to gain experience with every game," said Coach LeRoy. "We also need to learn how to win and we

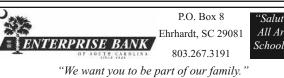
are hoping to position ourselves to make the play-

"We are working to improve our on- ball defense and our rebounding," said Coach LeRoy. "We also need to become a better free throw shooting team."

After four games junior point guard **Damahjai** seven rebounds and five assists a game. "He is our best shooter, and he also does a good job at distributing the ball," said Coach LeRoy. "When we need a basket, he is our go-to guy."

Senior team captain **Jamarcus Coleman** is the team captain with three years' varsity experience. Coleman is averaging five points and five rebounds a game. "All the players on the team look up to Jamarcus and he leads by example," said Coach

Randy Reece - Class of '98 Salutes the Warhorses! Pressing Club Cleaners (803) 259-0708 R.I.P Tim Moore, You Are Missed The Will Davis family salutes Barnwell!





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LeRoy.

Coleman does not always start, depending on if Coach LeRoy wants to go with a bigger, or smaller line-up, but when he does not start, he is usually the first player off the bench. When Coleman does not start junior center Jacobie Schultz starts in his place. Schultz is averaging six rebounds a game.

Senior guard David Adams has been on the

See Barnwell, pg. 69

Carolina Academy wraps up fall; basketball begins

By David Shelton

Senior Writer

Lake City – A fall sports season highlighted by a state championship, has ended at Carolina Academy and the focus now turns to the basketball sea-

The girls tennis team was the state champion on campus this fall as the Bobcats won their second consecutive title, Carolina Academy won the SCISA Class AA state championship, defeating Lowcoun**try Prep**, 6-0, to claim the top prize. The Bobcats also defeated Lowcountry Prep in the finals of the 2024 state tournament.

Carolina Academy finished the season with a 12-

The Bobcats were led by three seniors at the top of the singles lineup. Carlie Anne Smith was the No. 1 singles player for the second straight season.

Blythe Smith played the No. 2 singles position and Savannah McCutcheon played No. 3 singles.

Freshman **Kaylie Lyerly** played in the fourth spot and freshman Madelyn Matthews played No. 5. Freshman **Scarlett Evans** played No. 6 singles with Kiki Hanna and freshman Mary Kearsten Hanna also getting some time.

Eighth-grader Harper Drew Richardson and seventh-grader Ava Johnson also competed in vari-

The junior varsity tennis team completed its season with a 6-5 overall record. Anne Scott Johnson played No. 1 singles and Maecy Gamble played No. 2.

Peyton Prosser played three singles while Carly Watts was at number four. Emily Lyerly played five singles and Molly McElveen plays six singles.

Gamble and Johnson combined for No. 1 doubles and Prosser and Watts played two doubles. Lyerly and McElveen were the number three doubles.

Meanwhile, the volleyball team participated in the SCISA state tournament but came up short in their bid for a state title. The Bobcats finished the

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

magic, it will just be the status quo.

Lake City – The **Lake City High School** girls

basketball team is looking for another magical run to

the AA lower state championship game this year.

However, if the Panthers do it again, it won't be

In its first year under head coach Shaquetta

Cooper, LCHS went 17-8, won the Region 7 title

and three playoff games before running into even-

tual 2-time defending state champion Andrew Jack-

season with nine wins.

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

Seniors leading the way this season included Abby McCutcheon, Alana Altman. Raeley Frye and Jennifer Vargas. The rest of the roster is of junior varsity age but that youth is showing a lot of growth.

Sophomores included Lauren Sims, Emma Amos, Lindsey Ward, Abby Walker and Ella Ham. Rounding out the roster were freshmen Paisley McCutcheon and Natalie Braveboy; and eighth-grader Ella Grace Johnson.

The team was coached by Ashley McClam-**Todd** in her second season as head coach.

The **football team** closed its regular season with wins over Thomas Heyward (30-27) and Lee Academy (34-23), which evened their 2025 regular season record at 5-5. That was good enough to earn a spot in the state playoffs where they faced a rematch with Thomas Heyward in the first-round game on Nov. 7. The two wins at the end snapped a fourgame losing streak and sent the Bobcats into the postseason with a lot of confidence. However, Thomas Heyward got some revenge with a playoff victory.

The other losses this season were to Dorchester Academy, Beaufort Academy, Williamsburg Academy, Calhoun Academy and Pee Dee Academy.

Walker McCutcheon had a solid season at quarterback this fall. Handling the running back duties were Luke Cook. Chandler Prosser and Carson Hanna. Receivers include Cole Tanner, Tanner Floyd and Ryker Rhodes.

Working along the offensive line were tackles Ryan Cox and Dawson Daniel, guards John Cumbee and Charlie Teal, and Kyle Cox shared center duties with Luis Vargas.

Working on the defensive line were Cox, Teal and AJ McDougal, Linebackers include Dawson Daniel, John Cumbee, Hanna, and Prosser.

Henry Campbell started in the secondary, along with Tanner Floyd, Rhodes and Cole Tanner.

son High in the lower state title game.

Lake City won four of its first six games this

shooting guard Hannah Riles, who is already re-

averaged 12.2 points per game as an eighth-grader.

Na'Shira Starks, senior wing Jada Robinson and

senior point guard Trayana Burgess. The new-

2025-26 Lake City girls basketball

Lake City girls looking to continue success

CAROLINA ACADEMY

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ceiving interest from NCAA Division I schools. She comer to the lineup is senior **Tyra Jones**.

Other members of the playing roation are senior The other returning starters are senior post player Jayda Burgess, senior Amani Singletary, senior

See Lake City, pg. 67

Williamsburg Academy STALLIONS



2025 Williamsburg Academy Stallions football

Defense guides Stallions to SCISA Class A crown

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Kingstree – After falling just shy of winning a state title the past two years, the Williamsburg Academy football team got over that hump this year.

The Stallions, playing in their fifth consecutive SCISA state championship game, defeated Colleton Prep Academy 36-14 on November 15 at South Carolina State's Oliver C. Dawson Stadium in Orange-

And Williamsburg did it with defense. The Stallions forced five turnovers, two of which led directly to scores. Sophomore cornerback Gamble Wilson returned an interception 36 yards for a touchdown, and fellow sophomore cornerback Lane Patrick grabbed a fumble and returned it 42 yards for a score.

The other two interceptions, coming from senior safety Micah Balder and junior inside linebacker Michael Ard, set Williamsburg up for quick scores.

While the Stallions have had a stout defensive unit all year, Balder thought it played at a different level against the War Hawks.

"Our defense has been great all year," said Balder, who was also the starting quarterback. "Our coaches have put us in a great position. We've been doing a lot of studying. We've been so focused on how we can lean on one another. We just do that. If one player messes up, we just pick them up, and we're right there with them.

"Our defense has played great all year but not to an extent like that. We've made people turn the ball over on turnovers, we/ve made them turn it over on fourth downs, but never like that."

Williamsburg head coach Will Furse said his team just took advantage of opportunities presented to it.

"It was really just be ready, stay ready. And that's what our guys were doing," said Furse, who is in his first year as Williamsburg's head coach. "There were plays to be made and we made them. That's what a good team

The victory helped Williamsburg cap off an 11-1 season with the only loss coming to eventual AA state champion Bethesda Academy by a 28-26 count.

The Stallions had 10 players selected to the All-Region 1 team, and those same 10 were selected to participate in the SCISA North-South All-Star Game as well. Two of them are Balder and senior Jay Kellahan, the

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

only two players in school history to have two championship rings. Each was a member of the 2022 AA championship team as freshmen.

Balder had a tremendous season on both sides of the football. At quarterback, he completed 59 of 96 passes for 1,130 yards and 14 touchdowns while also carrying the ball 63 time for 610 yards and seven touchdowns. Defensively, Balder finished with 46 tackles, three interceptions, two fumble recoveries and four passes de-

As an inside linebacker, Kellahan had 86 tackles, one interception and seven tackles for a loss. He had 13 catches for 239 yards and two touchdowns as a tight end.

Junior running back Grant Small had an outstanding season. He went over the 2,000-yard mark in the title game, finishing with 140 yards and a touchdown on 26 carries. Small finished the year with 2,080 yards and 27 touchdowns on 224 carries while catching three passe for 93 yards and two more scores.

Junior Charlie Caulder had a strong season as a wingback on offense and an outside linebacker on defense. He led the team in receptions with 32 to go with 600 receiving yards and eight scores. Defensively, he led the Stallions in TFLs with 13 ½ among his 63 total stops. He also had four quarterback hurries, one quarterback sack, one interception and two forced fumbles.

Ard was Williamsburg's leading tackler, finishing with 141. He also had four TFLs, two sacks, three hurries, two interceptions and one forced fumble. Ard was also the starting right guard on the offensive line.

Wilson was selected and finished the year with six interceptions, one of them the Pick 6. He also had 36 tackles, one TFL, four passes defended and two fumble

Senior defensive tackle **Connor Morris** had 3 tackles and four tackles for loss His production goes beyond mere numbers, according to Furse.

"He's a great player who commanded double teams all year," Furse said. "He was the best defensive lineman

See Williamsburg, pg. 69

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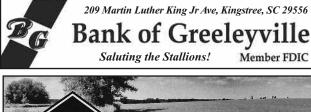
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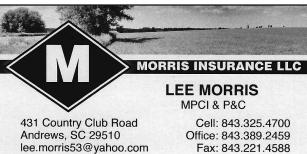
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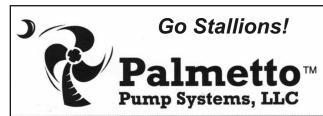
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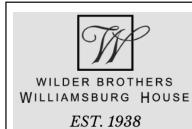


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Bamberg County Feature Page

Bamberg-Ehrhardt has eyes on a region crown

By Neill Kirkpatrick

Special to the HSSR Goose Creek - Head coach Willie Carter is enter-

ing his third year at Bamberg-Ehrhardt and with a good mixture of returning talent and new talent he is excited to see how far this team can go in the class A playoffs but first he need to get his team in basketball shape because he and his players are coming off a 15-0 season and a Class A state Championship.

"We have some hard-working, blue-collar kids here in Bamberg. They are going to work hard every day but we missed all of the preseason stuff because of the 15week football season. Coming out of the state championship game on Friday we played our first basketball game on Monday (12-8). We were going to try and move some games around so we could get into basketball shape but our kids said no. They wanted the chance to compete on the court without a break. That is the type of kids we have in Bamberg, they always want to compete," said coach Carter.

Coach continued, "Monday night they went out and competed against a good Barnwell team and stole a two-point victory 51-49. Our goal now is get in basketball shape over Christmas so we can go out and win the regional championship and get back to the playoffs."

The Red Raiders played their second game against Edisto but they came up short 43-37 on the road to even their record at 1-1. They will play both teams again as well open region play against Hardeeville before Christmas. Then they will have two weeks to get into basketball shape.

Senior captain **Darius Walker** is the leader of the team. The 6-1 guard is a retuning starter, who hit 40%

Goose Creek – The 2024/25 basketball season saw

the Denmark-Olar boys basketball team capture the

52, the Vikings also said good bye to 9 seniors and

longtime head coach **Hercules Davis** so the 2025/26

season is about continuing the success and tradition

on the court after a brief absence. He coached the

Barnwell Warhorses from 2018-2023 before stepping

down to become the first African-American mayor of

Vikings as the cupboard was bare when he took the

job. He has just two players returning from last sea-

son's championship team but because the team was

senior dominated they did see a lot of playing time.

Coach Riveria steps into a rebuilding mode for the

The Vikings have gotten off to a slow start this sea-

son as the 1-4 after dropping a game to Bethune Bow-

man. The Vikings started last season at 5-5 before they

Senior Geontae Staley and junior William Ross

embarked on a 15-game winning streak ending with

are the two returning players and both came off the

bench to give the Vikings solid minutes. Staley (5-11,

165) plays on the wing while Ross (6-7, 170) is force

DaMarcus Wheeler, Christian Collins and

Kaiden_Major are the teams other seniors. Wheeler

paint to provide inside scoring, rebounding, and de-

Joining Ross in the junior class are Christian

Rivera (5-8,135), Nyheem Williams (5-9,145), and

Khamari Moody (6-4,225). Rivera and Williams play

in the back court while Moody in another big body in

the paint for coach Rivera.

(6-4,165) is one of the team's captains. He plays in the

Collins (5-9,130) and Major (5-8,135) play in the

the championship trophy in their hands.

schools first State Championship beating Abbeville 58-

New coach head coach **Marcus Rivera** steps back

By Neill Kirkpatrick

Special to the HSSR

that is Vikings basketball.

Barnwell.

in the paint.

from beyond the arc last season. Coach says he has embraced the leadership royal. Last season he led the team in steals with 45

Jamarius Jenkins is also a retuning starter. The 6-4 senior provides a low post threat on offense and is a

Junior guard Brian McMillian is back earning all regions last year after averaging 9 pg, which led the Red Raiders last year he also led the team in assists with 40 and was second in steals with 37. McMillian is coming off one the best season performances in state history as he had over 5000 yards in total offense, accounted for 60 touchdowns while leading the Red Raiders in interceptions with and passes defended with 8. He will also be looked to for leadership after leading the football team to a championship.

Travis Dwight and Nasir Singleton, a sophomore and freshman respectively, that round out the early season starting lineup. In his first varsity action Singleton scored 10 points.

Coach Carter pointed to one change in the starting lineup that will happened this week. Marcus Cann Jr decided to return for his senior season. He was at the Touchstone Energy North/South game in Myrtle Beach. The 6-3 senior gives the Red Raider an athletic body in the paint.

"I feel like once we get into basketball shape we will be able to compete for the region championship. Last year we only lost region games to Denmark so we feel that experience will help our team this year. Now we have kids that know what it is like to win a championship and they want another one," said coach Carter.

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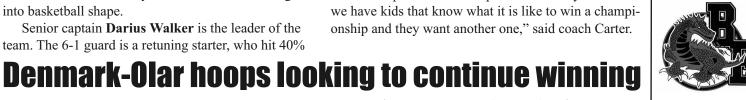
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Moody and Kanyia Jones round out the Lady Vikings

Captain Markel Rivera (6-1, 200) and Dilan Hammonds (6-5,200) make up the sophomore class. Rivera plays both in the back and front courts. He gives the Vikings versatility and plays solid defense. Hammonds is solid in the front court for the

The early part of the season has been a learning experience and the team has been getting to know each

They will play in two Christmas tournaments the Chester Christmas Classic and BHHS Christmas tournament. They open region play in between those two tournaments against Royal Live Oaks Academy. They enter the season on a 15-game region winning streak.

The Lady Vikings failed to reach the state finals for the first time in four years last season as they fell in the lower state championship game to eventual state champ Military Magnet. They finished the year at 23-5/11-0. They enter the 2025/26 season with an eye on another deep playoff run and a 53-game region win-

Head coach Candace Jones takes over the Lady Vikings program looking to keep the program at a championship level but she will have to do it with an extremely young squad. She has one senior and one junior with rest of her squad being made up of two sophomores, freshman, and three eighth graders.

The lone senior is **Kalen Mayes**. Mayes is the team's leading returning scorer as she averaged 13.9 points per game last season. The guard was a solid defender last season also and she averaged 3.9 thefts per

Junior Joy Johnson is a very versatile players who sees time at several positions. Last season she averaged 8 ppg, four rpg and 2.5 steals per game.

Sophomores Keamanni Drayton and I'Leah Brown also saw valuable playing time last season. Drayton averaged 4 points per game and 5.5 rebounds per game last season.

Talita Jerido is the team's lone freshman. Eighth graders Zyriah McMillian, Maliyah

MANNING HIGH SCHOOL

Manning football has another outstanding year

By Dennis Brunson

Hssr.com Associate Editor

Manning – The Manning High School football team won two fewer games than a year ago and advanced one round less in the AA state playoffs. From where the season started and how the journey unfurled though, it was another satisfying year.

After going 11-2 on the season, going undefeated in winning the Region 7 title and winning 11 straight games before losing in the AA lower state championship game, the Monarchs went 9-4 and defended their region title before falling to eventual lower state champion **Hampton County** in the quarterfi-

"Getting nine wins after we lost 28 seniors and to finish the way we did, excluding the last ball game, it says a lot about our team," Manning head coach **Reggie Kennedy**. "I'm pleased with the progress we made over the season.'

The Monarchs opened the year with a 48-14 loss to AAAA **Crestwood**. That was followed by a 40-38 loss to Clarendon County rival Scott's Branch, the first time the Eagles had won the game in 60 years.

Manning beat **Lake Marion** 34-22 the following week, but Kennedy made the decision to take over the play-calling duties for the defense and hand the offensive play calling over to offensive line coach King Cutter. The defense improved significantly as the Monarchs won eight of their next nine games before falling to Hampton County 56-6.

The other regular-season loss came to **East** Clarendon by a 26-12 score in the region opener. Manning won the next five region contests to defend its title.

"That was really special," Kennedy said. "We just wanted to go in and defend our title. That's our goal every year, to win and compete for the region title. We want to be one of the powerhouses when the playoffs come around, having home games. I think we've got the program in a good spot."

Manning was led by senior Jontavious Canty, who was selected as the Region 7 Overall Player of the Year. He was a standout as a running back on offense and as an inside linebacker on defense for the second straight year.

Canty, who was recently selected to play for the South Carolina squad in the Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas, had rushed for 943 yards and 15 touchdowns on 125 carries entering the Hampton County game. He had those numbers even though he didn't play on offense in the first five games of the season due to an injury.

Defensively, Canty had 65 tackles, 10 tackles for a loss and three fumble recoveries, taking two of them back for touchdowns

Canty returned on defense in the loss to East Clarendon as Manning fell to 2-3. He played both ways after that, and the Monarchs didn't lose again until the quarterfinal game.

"He was the heart and soul of the team," said Kennedy, who was named the Region Coach of the Year. "When he came back we started playing better and the players rallied around him. He did everything we asked him to do. He was never late, never

missed a practice, would come early and stay late. He was a great example, and I think a lot of kids tried to follow in his footsteps."

While he didn't win Player of the Year honors, Manning's **CJ Robinson** was a first-team selection at three spots on the All-Region team: wide receiver, defensive back and kickoff returner.

As a returner, Robinson returned 15 kickoffs for 340 yards, a 22.7 per-return average, and one touchdown. As a cornerback, he had two interceptions, returning one for a touchdown, caused two fumbles, had six pass deflections and 29 tackles. On offense, he had 43 receptions for 843 yards and 13 scores.

The other first-team selections were junior offensive left tackle **Isaiah Hamilton**, junior defensive end Lavon Stevenson and junior inside linebacker Ethan Lowder.

Lowder led the defense in tackles with 114 and tackles for loss with 18, while Stevenson had 72 tackles and 17 tackles for loss. Stevenson had three sacks and three fumble recoveries, while Lowder recovered two fumbles and caused another.

Named to the second team were the brothers of Lovon and Jontavious, respectively, junior Lovell Stevenson at quarterback and senior Dontavious **Canty** at outside linebacker. Others selected were junior center Semaj Bush-Rankin and junior free safety Jordyn Thompson.

Lovell Stevenson, who is a few months older than Lovon, had completed 72 of 121 passes for 1,206 yards and 15 touchdowns while rushing for 314 yards and eight touchdowns on 67 carries.

Stevenson had no varsity quarterbacking experience to speak of entering the season and just a little bit at the junior varsity level, according to Kennedy. He was pleased with the development of the 6-foot-2-inch left-hander.

"In our offense, the quarterback is kind of the key to your offense," said Kennedy, who was having to replace 2-year starter Ja'Rae Mitchell. "That was the key to the season. He didn't have any experience on the varsity level. We didn't know what we'd get, but he did a great job in his development."

Dontavious Canty, Jontavious' younger twin brother by just a few minutes, had 62 tackles, nine tackles for a loss, one interception and two fumble

Thompson finished with one interception, three passes defended, and 26 tackles.

While the players had to go out on the field and perform, Kennedy credited his staff for having them ready to do so as the season progressed.

"I think they did a good job preparing them week in and week out," Kennedy said. "Our kids grew up as the season went along, and they helped them develop week in and week out."

Besides Cutter, Manning's other assistant coaches were Marco Thompson, Dontavis Miller, Kevin Miller, Calvin McClary, Calvin Giles-McClary Jr., Gregg King and Marcus Lloyd.



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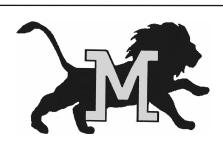
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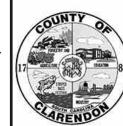


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Porter-Gaud boys hoops looks to defend crown

By David Shelton Senior Writer

Charleston – A season ago, the **Porter-Gaud** boys basketball team got hot at the right time and won the SCISA class AAAA state championship.

As the 2025-26 season gets underway, head coach **John Pearson** sees the potential for a repeat. However, he says there is much work to be done before February.

"We certainly have the potential but we're not there yet," Pearson said. "We are talented but we're young and immature right now. What this team needs is time on the court to figure things out. Right now, the goal is to make positive strides and develop

The Cyclones are off to a solid start, winning four of their first five games. That includes hard-fought wins over Summerville, Oceanside Collegiate and Burke, with the lone loss coming to Fort Dorchester.

Pearson entered this season with just one returning starter, that being junior guard Kateaux Miller. While the roster has seven seniors and seven juniors, along with a sophomore and a freshman, many of the players are taking on new roles this season.

"These early games are good for us to see who we are and where guys fit into what we are doing," Pearson said. "It's a good group, a fun group to

coach. They are willing to put in the work and they play hard. We'll lose a few games along the way but if we learn from our mistakes I think we can be a formidable team at the end of the year."

Though changes can and likely will be made as roles are defined, the current starting mix of players includes three seniors, Sebastian Mendez, Wilson Grueneberger and Greg Daniels. Junior Smith Ferguson has been highly productive early on in his role as a starter and junior Jase Howell is seeing extensive action early on.

Other seniors on the roster include **George De**scherer, Mike Mazzoli, Nate Cappell and Kayden Pryor. Remaining juniors are Amir Chisolm, Andrew Savage and Daven Brown. Rounding out the roster are sophomore Allen Chisolm and freshman Cole Grueneberger.

"Building a solid rotation and depth is something we are working hard at early in the season," Pearson said. "We will typically play between eight and 11 players. We need to have guys ready to step in when needed and make sure they understand the system."

will be solid contenders within the region, stating will be a strong contender for the state title.

The coach feels Pinewood Prep and First Baptist

both are improved over last year. Heathwood Hall

Tennis state title highlights fall success at AH

By David Shelton Senior Writer

Charleston - There is no better way to complete an undefeated season than with a state title, and the Ashley Hall tennis team did just that with a SCISA AAAA state championship victory over Trinity Collegiate on Oct. 10.

The title win capped a 23-0 season for the Panthers, who successfully defended the state title they won last season.

"Just a dream season for a group of girls who work so hard," coach Charlotte Hartsock said. "We beat a lot of good teams, some public schools as well. This team worked for everything they got and they deserve this."

Highlights were winning the pre-season tournament in Florence, defeating Myrtle Beach, T.L. Hanna and A.C. Flora in that tournament.

"I knew after that tournament that we had a good chance,' Hartsock said. "You never know how a season will play out but I felt like we had a state championship team."

Ashley Hall also won the Bishop England tournament, posting wins over Charlotte Latin, Mauldin and Wando. The Panthers also beat Lucy Beckham, a state title contender in Class AAAAA of the SCHSL, twice during the season.

Hartsock had an experienced team this fall. The starting singles lineup included seniors Lily Sloan,

Emma Tedford and Grace Taylor. Sloan, who played the No. 1 singles position, posted a 14-6 record this season and was named the region player

"Lily was on the team for five years and played No. 1 for the last three seasons," Hartsock said. "She played every team's best player and she was such a

Tedford played No. 4 singles and had a 21-0 record, while Taylor was 20-1 in the No. 5 singles slot. Kate Strenck was the team's fourth senior. "We had great leadership from our seniors and

they made sure we had the right chemistry," Hartsock said. Junior Emily Kaye was 19-2 at No. 2 singles and

freshman **Bridgette DeWolf** was 19-1 at No. 3. Sophomore Charlotte Guffey was 13-1 as the No. 6 singles player.

"We will miss those seniors but we should be fine next year," said Hartsock. "We have some good young players in the program and the junior varsity team has some good talent."

Swim team places second at state meet

Ashley Hall's swim team competed in the SCISA AAAA state meet, finishing as the state runner-up in the final team standings.

Among the top individual performers was Reves **Sidebottom**, who took second in the 100-yard freestyle and third in the 50-yard freestyle. Amelia

James Island hoops rebounding into shape

Senior Writer

James Island – Coming off a region championship season, the **James Island** boys basketball team has high expectations and lofty goals for the 2025-26 campaign.

James Island adjusted well to the move up from AAAA to AAAAA Division I last season and coach **Travis Smith** feels his team can continue to progress this season. The Trojans are off to a 3-4 start this season but there are better days ahead says the coach,

"We're not 100 percent healthy right now and I think when we have everyone we're going to be a solid team," Smith said. "We've played with basically eight guys so far and we were down to six at one point. We'll be getting guys back as we move along and that's going to help

"I like the pieces we have so now we have to put it all together. It's a process and we are sticking to it. We're going to be a lot better team in January than we are right

now. We want to get into a good rhythm by the time we hit region play and take it from there."

The Trojans return some experience and have several underclassmen that will play key roles as the season progresses. Leading the list of returning players is senior Matthew Gladden, an all-region 8-AAAAA selection last season. Gladden is an excellent defender and allaround performer, according to Smith.

Seniors Owen Alden and juniors Malachi Singleton and Josh Gladden also return as veteran players. Jeremiah Triplin, a 6-9 freshman forward, and 6-4 sophomore Cal Fairfield are expected to play major roles this season. The team's sixth man is senior Malachi Brooks.

Seniors Bryce Ward, Jay Morris, Neal Johnston and Grady Renault see time off the bench, along with juniors Ry Dangerfield and Rob Grant.

"We have good balance offensively and several guys can score,' Smith said. "We're long and athletic, which helps defensively. We're still defining roles and getting

PORTER GAUD

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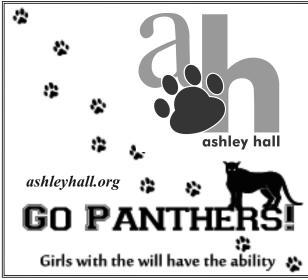
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ASHLEY HALL



Lennon took third in the 200-yard freestyle and swam fifth in the 100-yard butterfly.

Amelia DeWolf placed fifth in the 200-yard freestyle and fifth in the 200-yard individual medley. Ella Sidebottom finished fifth in the 100freestyle. In relay events, Ashley Hall placed second in the 400-yard relay and fifth in the 200yard relay.

JAMES ISLAND



James Island Charter High School Athletic Department and Booster Club **Proudly Salutes the Trojans!**

everyone comfortable with playing with each other. This is the best team I've had talent-wise. We just have to put

Region 8-AAAAA will again be very competitive. Summerville, Ashley Ridge, West Ashley and Stall are capable teams with Ashley Ridge ranked in the top 10 of the state's AAAAA Division I rankings.

"It's a good region with some really good players and coaches," Smith said. "Any team can win on a given night and there will be a lot of close games. The teams

See James Island, pg. 68

Alphin believes DCS seniors set good standards

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Dillon – The **Dillon Christian School** football team didn't have a particularly noteworthy season in regards to numbers. The Warriors finished with a 3-7 record, finished third in SCISA Region 1-AA and lost to Greenwood Christian School 31-7 in the first round of the state playoffs.

Yet DCS head coach Chris Alphin believes a firm foundation was set for the future of the pro-

"I'm super proud of the standard that our seniors have set," said Alphin, who just completed his first year as head coach. "We had some youth in key positions, and I just respected how the seniors demanded a certain level of play instead of making excuses for the young players on our team. That kind of thing carries over and when those young players grow up they'll hold that same standard, and our youth will always be expected to step up big

"We aren't in a position to start 10 seniors and have guys play only one side of the ball, so it is imperative that guys focus on their development in the offseason and regardless of age they find a way to contribute to the success of the team. That's the standard that I feel our seniors helped us set as a staff."

Dillon Christian had five players selected to the All-Region 1-AA team. They were quarterback **Jor**dan Blackmon, wide receiver/defensive back Zack Ellis, offensive lineman/defensive lineman Braxton Cummings, wide receiver/outside linebacker Reese Bracey and placekicker/punter Scott Bugarin.

Blackmon, a sophomore, completed 108 of 207 passes for 1,676 yards and 10 touchdowns against

seven interceptions. Blackmon was the leading rusher, picking up 645 yards and scoring nine touchdowns on 102 carries.

Ellis, a senior, caught 24 passes for 387 yards and three touchdowns. Ellis had 51 tackles, six tackles for loss, two interceptions and three passes der-

Bracey, a senior, was Blackmon's top target with 47 caches for 817 yards and eight touchdowns. Defensively, Bracey had 24 tackles, six TFLs, three quarterback sacks, caused a fumble and recovered a

Cummings, a senior had 46 tackles, 12 TFLs and three sacks.

Burgarin, a junior. connected on 17 of 26 of his extra point attempts. He connected on his only field goal attempt of the year, and it was good from 40 yards out. Burgarin ppunted 30 times and averaged 38.8 yards per attempt. Three of his punts were downed inside the opposition's 20-yard line.



THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

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Lee Academy basketball teams starting out slow

By Dennis Brunson

Hssr.com Associate Editor

Bishopville – Both the boys and girls basketball teams for Lee Academy got off to 1-3 starts, but neither of the head coaches are close to making a determination on what the season holds for their squads.

"I am really excited about the team we have for this season," said boys head coach Kemp DeWitt, who is in his second season at Lee. "We return four players that gave us crucial minutes last season. Brayden Davis, Cain June, Gavin Makela and **Paxton Greene** give me a solid base surrounded by the new faces we have this season.

"We look to find our identity as a team before we head into Christmas break, so we can come out strong when region play starts."

Davis, a sophomore point guard, and June, a senior small forward, are the two returning starters. Davis was averaging 9.3 points per game, while June was scoring at a 9.0 clip.

Makela is a junior center while Greene is a senior shooting guard. The other starter is junior power forward Aiden Fitzgerald. Greene was averaging 6.3 points, Fitzgerald 3.5 and Makela 1.6.

Other members of the boys team are senior Collins Drayton, junior Cannon Hopkins, who was averaging 5.0, junior **Tucker Rodgers**, junior James Watson, junior Matthew Inabinet and junior Keegan Gainey.

Girls head coach Kim Langston, a decades-long veteran of the SCISA wars, said she hadn't seen enough of her team to form an opinion.

The Lady Cavaliers are young with just one senior starter in Mazie Tomlinson. The other starters are junior Mallori Frye, sophomore Karagan Melton, freshman Kaisley Melton and eighthgrader Beth Whiteside.

Karagan Melton was the leading scorer with a 9.5 average to go with 3.8 rebounds. Tomlinson was averaging 6.3 points, 3.3 steals, 4.3 assists and 9.5 boards, Whiteside was at 5.0 points, 1.0 blocked shots and 6.8 rebounds, Frye was averaging 2.0 points and 3.3 rebounds, and Kaisley Melton was averaging 2.3 steals, 2.3 points and 2.5 rebounds.

The rest of the roster includes sophomore Emma Beasley, senior Sara Bell, senior Zana Brazell, senior Raylee Catoe and junior Addie Grace

4 CAVALIERS FOOTBALL ALL=REGION

The Lee football team had four players selected to the All-Region 1-Class A team.

The selections were wide receiver/linebacker Cain June, senior quarterback/defensive back An**drew Bowers**, senior offensive lineman/defensive lineman **Hampton Layton** and senior linebacker/running back Tucker Boyce.

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Cornelius happy with Wolverines football program

By Dennis Brunson

Hssr.com Associate Editor

Turbeville – The **East Clarendon High School** football team had one of its best seasons in years in 2025. The Wolverines went 9-3 and advanced to the second round of the state playoffs for the third consecutive season.

However, EC head coach Larry Cornelius can't help but feel like he and his players left something on the table that was there for the taking.

"Overall, we are happy with another winning record and making it to the second round," Cornelius said. "But we are disappointed we let the region championship slip away."

East Clarendon's losses came to Lake City by a 20-14 count and to Atlantic Collegiate Academy 12-6. Those two teams combined for one less vicory than the Wolverines.

EC finished in a tie for second with ACA at 4-2, one game behind 5-1 **Manning**. East Clarendon handed the Monarchs their only region loss with a 26-12 victory.

Despite that, Cornelius believes EC played at a high level over the course of the season.

"We won nine games despite losing our most dynamic player," he said. That player would be Takoda Cornelius, the head coach's son. He was lost for the season in the first half of the season opener.

East Clarendon placekicker Diego Gomez-**Cortez** was named the Region 7-AA Specialties Player of the Year. Six of his teammates were named to the All-Region 7 first team in freshman running back Skyler Cornelius, offensive linemen Walker Kirby and Xavier Smith, defensive lineman Jaylon Barron, senior outside linebacker Mike Woods and long snapper Colten Baker.

Gomez-Cortez connected on 26 of his 28 extra point attempts and was 2-for-7 on field goal attempts. His makes went for 29 and 36 yards, respectively.

Skyler, Cornelius' younger son, ran for 907 yards and 11 touchdowns on 153 carries. He also had five

catches for 23 yards and another score.

Barron, a senior defensive end, led the team in tackles for loss with 16 and fumble recoveries with three to go with 37 tackles, one quarterback sack and one forced fumble.

Woods led the Wolverines in sacks with four, was second on the team in tackles with 45 and had 11 TFLs. Woods forced three fumbles and recovered

Smiith, a senior, started at right guard. Kirby, a junior, was the right tackle. Baker, a senior, also was the starting center along with handling the lone snap-

Skyler Cornelius and Smith were both second team selection on defense, Cornelius as a defensive back and Smith as a defensive lineman.

Smith had 16 tackles, eight TFLs, one sack and one fumble recovery as the noseguard. Cornelius had 36 tackles, two interceptions, two TFLs, two forced fumbles and one fumble recovery at strong safety.

Other second team selections were sophomore **Jordan Green** and sophomore **Jamal Prince** as wide receivers and junior Crosby Timmons at tigh end/H back.

Honorable mention selections were junior Picasso Brown and junior Braylon Brown as cornerbacks and junior Blease Hardy as an athlete.

Coach Cornelius believes the East Clarendon program is on an upward trend.

"I feel that we are moving in the right direction," he said. "We've increased our win total in each of the last three years. We just need to find a way to get

"Next year should be a very promising one since we have 10 starters returning on offense, losing one offensive lineman.Prince



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Scott's Branch improves, but still not satisfied

aBy Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Summerton – After going winless in the season prior to **Patrick Fleming's** arrival as football head coach, Scott's Branch High School won four games in 2024 and made the Class A state playoffs.

This year the Eagles made another big jump, going 9-3 and winning a first-round playoff game. They finished second in Region 5 as well.

For Fleming, that's all nice and good, but

"We had a good season, but we are not satisfied," Fleming said. "The program is headed in the right direction. We are thankful and will continue to work hard to improve."

Scott's Branch went 5-1 in Region 5 play with the only loss coming to **Cross** by a 38-14 count. The Eagles beat Baptist Hill 20-14 and Military Mag**net** 48-0 to secure second and a home game in the first round of the playoffs.

They beat Hannah-Pamplico 32-14 before going on the road and falling to **Johnsonville** 38-14 in the second round.

Scott's Branch had six players selected to the All-Region 5 first team. They were senior quarterback Javien Conyers, junior tight end Danny Ragin and junior wide receiver Keith Rogers on offense and junior defensive back Quintin Jackson, junior linebacker Nyren Bowman and senior linebacker Naziah Richardson on defense.

Convers, who was lost for the last few games of the season due to injury, passed for 1,400 yards and 18 touchdowns against just two interceptions. He ran for 215 yards and three touchdowns on 57 car-

Rogers had 43 catches for 802 yards and 10 touchdowns. Defensively in the secondary, Rogers had 50 tackles and four interceptions, returning one for a score. Rogers returned three kickoffs for touchdowns as well, which earned him the Palmetto Champions Class A Special Teams Player of the

Ragin's main job as a tight end was to use his 6foot-2-inch, 245-pound to open holes and offer protection for the rest of his teammates. As a defensive end, Ragin had a tremendous season with 92 tackles, four quarterback sacks and 25 tackles for a loss.

Bowman had 90 tackles, 12 tackles for loss, two sacks, one interception and two forced fumbles, one fumble recovery and one defensive touchdown. Jackson had 52 tackles, two interceptions and two defensive touchdowns, and Richardson had a team high 124 tackles, five tackles for loss, two sacks, one fumble recovery and one defensive touchdown

Eagles who were second-team picks were senior wide receiver Christian Green, senior right offensive tackle **TyQuan Williams**, senior defensive back Montrell Sessions, junior linebacker Jaden **Dixon** and senior defensive lineman **Zymire Coard**.

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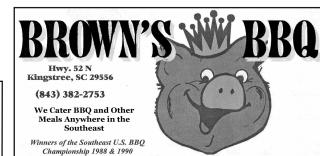


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Courtesy Superintendent Shawn Johnson and Clarendon **County School District** Athletic Director Reggie Kennedy

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GREENWAVE

Summerville aims to remain a top team in AAAAA

By Roger Lee Special to the HSSR

Summerville – Dutch Fork has stood in the way of the Summerville Football program's mission of winning a state championship the last few years, but nothing last forever.

The Green Wave (11-3) fell to the Silver Foxes (12-1) 40-20 during the **2025 5A, Division 1 Foot**ball Championship at Oliver C. Dawson Stadium in **Orangeburg** Dec. 6. The loss marks the second consecutive year Summerville has fallen to Dutch Fork in the state finals.

"You can't turn the ball over in a state championship game," said Summerville coach Ian Raf**ferty**. "We turned the ball over three times and they only turned it over once, but I'm proud of our kids. I don't think the final score indicates what type of game it was. It just kind of got away from us at the

The good news for Green Wave fans is Summerville should return some talented starters next

Junior running back Javyen Williams rushed for more than 2.000 yards and 24 touchdowns this season and had 18 receptions for nearly 200 yards and another two TDs. Senior Cam Grayson rushed for more than 500 yards and 12 TDs.

Junior receiver Jaiden Kelly-Murray led the Wave receivers with more than 1,000 receiving yards and 14 TD receptions.

"Jaiden Kelly-Murray is one of the best athletes on our team," Rafferty said. "He plays his guts out. A lot of people don't realize late this season he played almost every single snap on offense and defense and played special teams. He is phenomenal."

Sophomore receiver Teru Davis had more than 500 receiving yards and three TDs.

Senior quarterback Max Stafford threw for approximately 2,000 yards and 20 TDs. Senior QB Cooper Kafina threw for approximately 700 yards and five TDs.

Junior linebacker Eli Pressley and senior JT Williams were the leading tacklers. Senior Josiah Taylor had a team-high four interceptions.

The team's feeder programs have a long history of preparing athletes for the varsity gridiron.

"Our JV team finished the season 10-0 and outscored their opponents by an average score of 40-6," Rafferty said. "I feel good about the future of Green Wave Football. We'll be back. We will get back to work and keep coming until we get a championship.

Wave Wrestling

Summerville is out to a strong start on the wrestling mat.

This month, Green Wave coach **Daryl Tucker** surpassed the 350-wins bench mark for his wrestling coaching career. As of Dec. 13, he has led Summerville to 359 dual wins. Tucker already had the most coaching wins in program history.

"That's a big number, but I tell people all the time I don't do this by myself," Tucker said. "I've had a lot of great wrestlers along the way. I've had some really good assistant coaches and a really supportive administration."



THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

Running back Javyen Williams Photo by Roger Lee

Summerville placed second during last weekend's 2025 Cane Bay Duals. The Green Wave defeated Hanahan (63-18), Chapin (47-25) and Wando (53-26) to advance to the semi-finals. There, it defeated rival **Ashley Ridge** (42-30) to advance to the championship match.

In the title match, Summerville fell 44-28 to Lu**goff-Elgin**. Ashley Ridge is ranked third in the 5A, Division 1 preseason poll while Summerville is ranked sixth. Lugoff-Elgin is ranked fourth in 5A, Division 2. It was the first loss of the season for Summerville, which enters this week with a 10-1

"We aren't going to hang our head about losing to Lugoff," Tucker said. "They have a really good program and there is a lot to learn from losing to a really good opponent."

The win over the **Swamp Foxes** is Summerville's most prestigious of the season.

"It was a really good high school match," Tucker said. "The first three or four matches were decisions so it was tight until we hit 165."

Summerville had one wrestler too sick to wrestle, a few injuries and the members of the team who also play football have only been able to participate in a few practices so overall the team's performance in the event shows promise.

"My 150-pounder, Kayleb Pinckney, is wrestling on another level," Tucker said. "He has really put some things together and he does things I can't coach because he is so athletic. Another senior, Brayden Herman, had five wins today. won all five of his matches Ridge Rollison and Mason Whisen**hunt** stepped up at 157. Right now, we are just trying to get some guys more consistent and get better one day at a time."

Seth Seprish and **Dexter Chavous** are grapplers expected to make a difference in heavier classes this season. **Trinton Morris** didn't participate at Cane Bay, but is expected to help strengthen the middle part of the lineup when he returns from injury.



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Hammond girls hoops are on the upswing

By WORTHY EVANS

Special to the HSSR

Columbia - What a difference a year makes for the **Hammond** girls basketball team.

The Skyhawks' 1-16 run in the 2024-2025 season is clearly in the past, with a 4-1 start under new head coach Mark Goddard calling the plays.

Goddard, who was an assistant for the boys team under head coach David Ross, succeeds Roshan

"I certainly learned a lot from Coach Davis and have been putting in a lot of things we did with the boys program to have success and build on the girls program," Goddard said. "Coach Myers had a very good program for many years. Last year was just a down year for the program, but historically it has been a good team.

Hammond opened the season with the **Heath**wood Hall Thanksgiving Classic Nov. 24-25, beating Edisto 52-4 and following up with a 55-38 win over **Aiken**. The Skyhawks then beat Laurence Manning Academy 56-44 Dec. 2 and Orangeburg Prep 52-31 Dec. 8.

First Baptist handed the Skyhawks their first defeat Friday, a 69-52 loss.

"We are still building, but I have a group of girls who are really doing a great job at buying into what I want them to do, and I want them to do what it takes to turn the page and really become competitive."

It started for Hammond over the summer. Goddard was named head coach in April, and the first thing he instituted was a summer program for the girls, which had not been done historically.

"We had a pretty extensive program this summer, and got in a bunch of games beginning June 3," Goddard said. "It was really top-to-bottom buying into the program, and it's been great with the other coaches helping me."

The one returning starter to the team is senior post player Madge Miller.

"She has been a fantastic leader for us on the team," Goddard said. "She does a lot of things for the team that doesn't always show up I the scorebook, but she's played a big part of getting the rest of the girls to buy in.

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

A newcomer to the team is junior guard **Jazzlyn** McMillan from Fairfield Central. McMillan, a 1,000-point scorer, had been playing for the Griffins since she was a seventh grader and was the top scorer for the team last season with a 17.3 scoring average.

"She's had a very successful career and has been a phenomenal player in all aspects of the game for us," Goddard said. "She averages around 20 points per game and is leading us with assists and steals. She's been a big addition to our program. She's definitely a future college athlete.'

Two other returners are Reily and Sami Campbell, junior twins who are both guards. They bring a tenacious, physical style of play to the court, God-

The makeup of the team is young, with Miller being the only senior leading five juniors, a sophomore and six freshmen.

"We're excited that we have young players in that you see glimpses of greatness," Goddard said. "(Freshman guard) Amelia Bradley is a great shooter. (Sophomore forward) Dansby North is playing well. We have a lot of players who didn't play a lot last year but they've been buying in. I know there's tons of basketball left and we haven't accomplished anything yet, but we're going to."

The boys team, 3-4 after Friday's 64-53 loss to First Baptist, returns starter Jackson Ross from the Skyhawks' 19-6 run last season.

"He's the only player on our team who has played significant minutes for us," Head coach David Ross said. "We will rely on him a lot for this

Ross added that junior **Hugh Manning**, who played for A.C. Flora last year, will play in the post, and freshman Austin Kelly will support the back-

Besides Jackson Ross, Manning and Kelly, eight players move up from a successful junior-varisty team that won the region championship. Among them are Leyton LaMotte, MacMcWilliams, Wham Walker, Walker Cason, Wilkes Smith, and **Kayden Proctor Bates.**

Wilson Hall senior class is 32-7 last 3 years

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Sumter – The **Wilson Hall** football team played in its third straight SCISA AAA state championship game in November. And for the third straight year, the Barons came out on the short end of the stick.

WH lost to Pinewood Prep for the second consecutive year, falling by a score of 55-13. That being said, Wilson Hall head coach Adam Jarecki could only praise his team, especially the 17-man senior

"This group of seniors graduates with three trips to the state championship and not many people can say that," Jarecki said of the Class of 2026, which went 32-7 over that 3-year stretch. "I'm extremely proud of them. They're our leaders at the school. They're the influential people at our school. We'd love to see them go out with success in the end, but what they accomplished is pretty special, and they've got to take pride in that.

"They had a great year (finishing with an 11-2 record for the second straight year) and they've had a great career. It's tough not to come out on top, but they know what it takes to get here and they bought into it."

Six of those seniors were among the eight Barons named to the All-Region 2-AAA team. Leading the way was quarterback Ford Wilder, who was selected as the Region Offensive Player of the Year.

Wilder completed 41 of 79 passes for 565 yards

and five touchdowns while rushing for 483 yards and 12 TDs on 87 carries.

Senior running backs Ben McLaurin and Milling Galloway were selected. McLaurin rushed for 1,234 yars and 16 scores on 121 carries. Galloway rushed for 585 yards and 11 touchdowns 62 carries despite missing three games and the majority of a fourth due to injury.

The other senior All-Region picks were free safety Harris Naylor and defensive linemen Walker Wilson and Andrew Howle.

Naylor had 35 tackles, one tackle for loss, two interceptions and three pass deflections. Wilson had 39 tackles, seven TFLs, two quarterback sacks and one PD. Howle had 28 tackles, a team high nine TFLs and two sacks.

The other two All-Region selections were junior defensive lineman Reese Wilson and junior linebacker Peyton Gilley.

Reese Wilson shared the team lead in sacks with four to go with 21 tackles, eight TFLs, one PD and one fumble recovery. Gilley had a team high 61 tackles and shared the team lead in interceptions with three, returning one for a touchdown, to go with three sacks and six TFLs.

Along with being All-Region picks, each of the eight were All-State selections and were chosen to play in the SCISA North-South All-Star Games.

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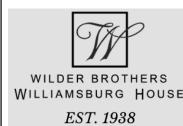


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SCISA Top 60 Football Prospects

(all grades considered, non- seniors noted)

(nominate with stats to <u>hsreport@aol.com</u>)

(As of 12-15-2025)

- 1. Tony O'Bammer-Thomas Heyward-RB/LB-6-0,210
- 2. Tilden "T" Riley-Orangeburg Prep-TE-6-5,203-Vandy
- 3. Kevin Johnson-Northwood Academy-QB-6-1,185 (JR)
- 4. Garrison Vaughn-Laurens Academy-OL/DL-6-4,255
- 5. Davidson Lynch-Trinity Collegaite-QB-6-1,200
- 6. Jackson Ross-Hammond-LB-PK-6-3-210 (JR)
- 7. Grant Small-Williamsburg Academy-RB-6-0,185 (JR)
- 8. Silas Brawner-Pinewood Prep-QB-6-4, 215 (JR)
- 9. Heyward Belser-Heathwood Hall-MLB-6-2,185-(SOPH)
- 10. Ford Wilder-Wilson Hall-OB/WR-6-4,195
- 11. Cale Owens-Colleton Prep-QB-5-11, 170 *JR)
- 12. Lavoris Lucas-Pinewood Prep-S-WR-5-11,170 (JR)
- 13. Aydan Hogan-Northwood -WR-6-1,170 -E Tenn St.
- 14. John Stokes-Hammond-OL/DL-6-1,265 (JR)
- 15. Will Watson-Pinewood Prep-FS-6-3,190-
- 16. Milling Galloway-Wilson Hall-RB/DB-5-11, 175
- 17. Ralo Wesley-Bethesda Academy-WR-5-10,160-
- 18. Kaven Ford-Northwood Academy-RB-5-10,185
- 19. Michael Ard-Williamsburg Academy-LB-6-0,190 (JR)
- 20. Connor Morris-Williamsburg Academy-OL-6-1,300
- 21. Allen Chisolm-Porter-Gaud-6-1, 185- RB-CB (SOPH)
- 22. Andrew Howle-Wilson Hall-DE-6-0,225
- 23. Tristen White-Laurence Manning-OL-6-2,265-(JR)
- 24. Kaeden Wagner-Northwood-OL-C-6-2,265 (JR)
- 25. Jayden Alexander-Pinewood Prep-WR-6-0,155
- 26. Scoop Dennis-Laurence Manning-WR-6-2, 180 (SOPH)
- 27. MJ Davis-Northwood Academy-FS-6-0,165
- 28. Charlie Caulder-Williamsburg TE/WR-6-3,185 (JR)
- 29. Grainger Powell-Laurence Manning-QB-5-11, 165 (JR)

- 30. Joseph Morse-WW King-RB-6-0,200 (SOPH)
- 31. Nych Underwood-Beaufort Academy-RB-5-9,175
- 32. Isaiah Redmond-Bethesda Academy-DE-6-0,215
- 33. Jacob Bussey-WW King-LB-6-0,180 (9th)
- 34. Colt Layton-Calhoun Academy-RB-5-6,140 (JR)
- 35. Julian Buxton-Porter-Gaud-LB-SS-5-11,180 (JR)
- 36. Milling Galloway-Wilson Hall-RB-5-11, 185
- 37. Cooper Taylor-Calhoun Academy-ILB-8-1,185
- 38. Tristan Heckman-Pee Dee Academy-RB-5-10,180
- 39. Jordan Turner-Bethesda Academy-5-11,165 (SOPH)
- 40. Parker Kizer-Holly Hill Academy-RB-5-6,135 (JR)
- 41. Rob Minton-Florence Christian-QB-6-0,160-(Soph)
- 42. Hall Sease-Andrew Jackson Academy-QB-FS-6-4,185
- 43. Daniel Vargas-Laurence Manning-PK/P-5-7,181-(SOPH)
- 44. Judson Martin-Pee Dee Academy-LB-6-0,180- (JR)
- 45. Reece Still-Jefferson Davis-RB/CB-6-0,170-(JR)
- 46. Cade Amell-Hammond-QB-6-0,190 (9th)
- 47. Patrick Belk-Heathwood Hall-5-11,190-
- 48. Perry Corbett-Colleton Prep-R-5-11, 176
- 49. Dawson Drew-Thomas Heyward-OL/DE-6-6,230 (JR)
- 50. Muela Kiser-Hammond-QB-5-01,165
- 51. Grayson Salego-Pinewood Prep-RB-5-10,180-(JR)
- 52. Cole MeLeod-Northwood Academy-P-49.6
- 53. Jacob Bussey-WW King-LB-5-11,175 (9th)

55. Drake Porter-Ben Lippen-LB-6-1,187

- 54. Jace Williams-Thomas Sumter-QB-6-2,170 (JR)
- 56. Sam Petrauschle-Thomas Sumter-WR-5-10,150
- 57. John Thompson-Nen Lippen-LB-6-3,210-(JR)
- 58. Caden Morris-Williamsburg Academy-WR-5-11,168-(9th)
- 59. Elijah Hutto-WW King-QB-FS-5-10,160) (JR)
- 60. Peyton Gilley-Wilson Hall-LB-5-11,175 (JR)
- 61. Charles Wilson-Spartanburg Day-Athlete-5-10,162

Fort Dorchester means business on the hardwood

By Roger Lee **Special to the HSSR**

North Charleston – The Fort Dorchester Boys look to play a larger role on the hardwood this sea-

"We have been young for the last few years," said Fort Dorchester coach Thomas McElveen. "I expect those guys who stuck with us to carry us this season and to put this team back on the map."

The **Patriots** finished 9-17 last season and 13-10 two seasons ago. Region wins proved hard to come by for the team both seasons and it was eliminated from the playoffs during the first round two consecu-

However, the team is out to a 4-2 start this season with wins coming over Porter-Gaud, Timberland, Berkeley and Oceanside Collegiate. The losses came to Lucy Beckham and Cane Bay.

Senior guard **Maricious Dawson** is a three-year starter back with leadership skills. He was named to the 2024-25 5A Region 8 Boys Basketball All-Region Team after averaging 12.6 points, 3.4 rebounds, 2.4 assists and 1.8 steals per game last

Senior forward **Jaden Polite** and senior wing **De-**Ondre Haynes are experienced and taking on leadership roles. The Patriots will also lean heavily on senior forwards Ty'Quez Jenkins and Peter Burton as well as senior guard Myles Brunson and junior guard Juan Concepcion.

Other members of the team include **juniors** Jaylen Porter, Dominic Brown, Ryan Simmons and Linster "Bear" Burgess.

By Roger Lee

Special to the HSSR

ley Ridge Football team.

eliminate them.

said. "I think the key will be our defense. We look forward to showing everybody who we are."

Summerville – Considering all the uncertainty

preseason, things turned out fairly well for the Ash-

The school district suspended coach **Jeff Tate**

for this school year after allegations of illegal re-

cruiting arouse. Had the district not done so, this

year's team may have been prohibited by the High

School League from participating in the playoffs.

several football players transfer in during the off-

season. Coaches not only had to figure out how to

split the duties Tate normally performs but also had

to figure out exactly how the transfers would fit into

While that may not seem impressive, consider

their program. Still, the Swamp Foxes finished

their 2025 season above .500 with a 6-5 record.

all the teams Ashley Ridge lost to advanced to at

least the third round of the playoffs. Those losses

came to Berkeley, Oceanside Collegiate, Carolina

Forest, James Island and Summerville, which de-

Ashley Ridge claimed **5A**, **Region 8's** top play-

off seed to earn a bye in the playoffs. Had it not

been for a 28-21 loss at James Island Oct. 24, the

Swamp Foxes would have captured the region title

outright, but they have as much bragging rights as

Ridge coach Ashley Haskins. "Over the last two-

the other two teams that tied for first place in the re-

"We are very proud of these guys," said Ashley

feated the Swamp Foxes in the second round to

Adding to that was the fact Ashley Ridge had

"I feel very good about this team," McElveen

During the fourth annual Lowcountry Showcase

Basketball Tournament Dec. 13, the Patriots held off a feisty Oceanside Collegiate team in the second half to prevail 64-43. Polite drained a team-high 14 points to claim game MVP honors Dawson finished with 11

Photo by Roger Lee Fort Dorchester forward Jaden Polite is looking to make the most of his senior season.

Fort Dorchester

points while

Jenkins added

10 for the Pa-

triots.

Ashley Ridge football finishes season strong

hosts Stratford Monday, Dec. 15, Baptist Hill Wednesday, Dec. 17 and Goose Creek Friday, Dec.

Fort Football

Fort Dorchester notched one playoff win before running into the top seed for the Lower State Nov.

The Patriots opened the playoffs by duking it out with Lexington to claim a 24-21 win. The momentum didn't carry into the team's second-round game at Carolina Forest, which showed why the Pan**thers** earned the top seed for the Lower State bracket. Carolina Forest eliminated the Patriots with

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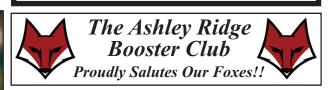
Fort Dorchester finished the 2025 season with a 5-7 record, but played some stiff competition including Stratford, South Florence, Ashley Ridge, James Island and Summerville. The Patriots' other wins came over Beaufort, Goose Creek, West Ashley and Stall.

Fort senior quarterback Thomas Adamsky passed for more than 900 yards and eight touchdowns this season. **Damon Brown** also played QB late in the season and passed for more than 200 yards and four TDs while rushing for more than 200

Junior Mykell Warthen led the team's rushers with more than 600 yards and five TDs. Senior Kyrome Durant rushed for more than 400 yards and three TDs.

See Fort Dorchester, pg. 68

ASHLEY RIDGE







who had approximately 50 receptions for 500 yards and two TDs. Josiah Mitchell and Jaylin Grant both had more than 300 receiving yards.

Senior running back Ryan Campbell topped the 1,600-yard rushing mark for the season and had more than 200 receiving yards. With 20 TDs he was the team's leading scorer. Senior Camren Garner topped the 500-yard rushing mark for the season and scored three TDs.

"When we were able to run the things we wanted, get the ball moving and put plays together we did well," Haskins said. "When we ran into a good defense like at James Island and with Summerville it created some confusion. We are real good when we are in a rhythm, but if you can take us out of that rhythm sometimes we struggle to find a new one. Our defense was strong all season."

Ashley Ridge will lose approximately half of its varsity lettermen, but that means it stands to return the other half. Some of its key players who will graduate including Kalisz, Grant, Campbell, Gardner, lineman Cody Peterson and defenders Malquan Pimentel, Malachi Mitchell, Jaykwon Simmons, Stephen Jefferson and JT King.

Some experienced offensive weapons expected to return include Josiah Mitchell, Caleb Sharo, Jagger Spivey, Brett Boberg and Monte Brown.



Key wins for AR include a regular-season 42-19 win over Summerville, a 37-23 win over Cane Bay (which some consider the Foxes' arch nemesis) and and-a-half years we established a process that led to a 44-14 win over cross-town rival Fort Dorchester.

some success. Coach Tate will be back next year and he will continue that process. I hope the school and fans are proud of everything we are doing and all they accomplished this year. Now we have some big-time goals to pursue. The bar has been raised so we will see if we can jump over it."

Senior quarterback Trevor Kalisz threw for approximately 1,900 yards and nine touchdowns this season while rushing for more than 500 yards and a TD. His favorite target was junior Jagger Spivey,

GAFFNEY HIGH SCHOOL



2025-26 Gaffney Indians girls basketball

Indians girls hoops are unbeaten so far in 2025

By Billy G. Baker Publisher

Gaffney—Veteran Gaffney basketball head coach Mark Huff, who once led the boy's teams to three straight state titles, retied after the 2024-25 season, after leading the Lady Indians teams to consecutive back-to-back region ti-

Former Gaffney player Julian Wright, who assisted **Coach Huff** last season with the girl's team, is the new head coach of the Lady Indians this season and through games of December 10 the team was 6-0 and showing great potential for the rest of the season.

"First, I played for Coach Huff between 2007 and 2009, and we were the team that lost in the state finals to Goose Creek my senior year," said Coach Wright. "We grew up in the same area of Gaffney, and we attended the same church when I was growing up. We have been close friends for a

"My oldest sister even cheered for Gaffney during the three- state title runs under Coach Huff," said Coach Wright. "When I started college at South Carolina, Coach Huff called down to the Gamecock basketball coaches and that call helped me become a team manager in the program under Darin Horn, and later Frank Martin.

"When I finished college, it was Coach Huff who gave me my first job as a junior varsity basketball coach at Gaffney High," said Coach Wright. "Last year was my first year back at Gaffney and it was an honor to be an assistant with him on the girls' varsity. Coach Huff has taught me a lot about the game of basketball.'

Over the past two seasons the Lady Indians are 46-9. "Girl's basketball has become a well- supported program at Gaffney High, and in our community if you win, the fans will show up in groves and support you," said Coach Wright. "Varsity girls' basketball is a big deal in the community these days."

In fact, four of Gaffney's girl's home games this season

with Byrnes, Riverside, Dorman, and Spartanburg are scheduled to start at 7:30, after the boy's games have been played starting at 6 p.m. "This shows you just how popular the girl's program is right now at Gaffney," said Coach Wright. "All four of these games should be completely sold out and we really appreciate the support also.'

Through games played through December 10, the Lady Indians are 6-0 with two wins over Clover (54-48 and 43-40) along with a season opening win over **Seneca** on November 21st (60-32). The teams have also defeated Woodmont (40-37), Fort Mill (59-35) and their most recent win was over Fort Mill for a second time (60-36).

The team is led by three veteran players. Senior combo guard Shirah Harris is currently averaging 14.8 points and 8 rebounds a game, along with three steals and 2.8 assists per outing. Junior guard **Tianah Hopper** is averaging 13.6 points, 9 rebounds, along with 2.2 steals, 1.8 assists and 2.8 blocked shots a game. Veteran junior combo guard Lauren Mathis rounds out the "Big Three" with a current average of 8 points, four rebounds, and 1.5 assists a game. Harris and Hopper are returning to all-region players and they both were named to the HSSR all-state team after last season.

Coach Wright said that Harris is starting for the fourth straight year on the team. Harris recently signed a basketball scholarship to attend Gardner Webb. Harris was the Region Player of the Year last season after her junior sea-

"Harris is just a great female athlete who is very athletic, with great leaping skills with a huge upside that helps make her a tremendous all-around player," said Coach Wright. "She is playing more off the ball this season as a shooting guard, and she attacks the basket very well."

Coach Wright said that Hopper has been a key player on the varsity since her 9th grade season. "Hopper is playing more off the ball also this season, and she will play most of the time on the perimeter," said Coach Wright. "She is simply a great athlete who runs the floor well, jumps well,

See **Gaffney**, pg. **69**



Congratulations to all Gaffney athletes pictured who signed next level athletic scholarships recently in a ceremony at the school. They include: Zvon Rtchford-ECU football, Scotland Dover-App State Football, Banks Bouton-Furman Football, Kelton Smith-ECU football, Shiriah Harris-Gardner Webb basketball, Korbyn Lydia-USC Upstate softball, Gabrielle & Bella Leigh-Both with Ferrum College Volleyball



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Green Acres Turf Farm Prospects Page







HSSR 2025 Top 100 Senior Football Prospects

(As of December, 15 2025)

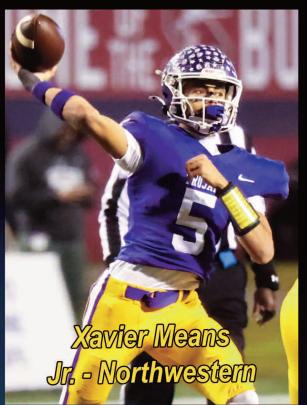
(Coaches Only: Nominate 2026 Top 100 Nominee, with stats: hsreport@aol.com

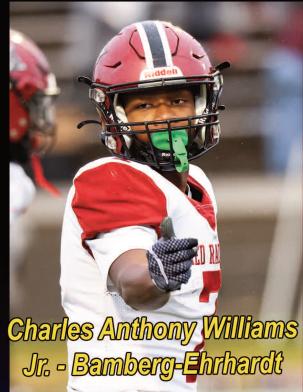
- 1. Desmond Green-Timberland-OL-6-5,333-Florida
- 2. Julian Walker-Dutch Fork-DE-6-6,220- South Carolina
- 3. J'zavien Currence-South Pointe-QB-DB-6-3, 205-South Carolina
- 4. Zyon Guiles-Carvers Bay-OL-6-4,295-South Carolina
- 5. Zay Robertson-Dillon-WR-6-0,165 (4.4)-North Carolina
- 6. Kentavion Anderson-Dorman-FS-6-2,181-Clemson
- 7. Carnell Warren-Bluffton-WR-6-4,196-North Carolina
- 8. Tamarion Watkins-DB-Northwestern-6-4, 200-Texas A&M
- 9. Franklin Whitley-Greenville-DL-6-6,270-Florida State 10. Jaemin Pinckney-Woodland-WR-6-5,217-Florida State
- 11. Michael Boulware-Gray Collegiate-MLB-6-2,205- STUD
- 12. Tony O'Banner-Thomas Heyward- RB-Ath-6-1,215
- 13. Caden Ramsey-Cross-TE-FS-6-5,200-South Carolina
- 14. Tristian Lewis-Greenwood-QB/DB-6-4,200-South Carolina
- 15. Anthony Baxter-South Pointe-OL-6-3,330-South Carolina
- 16. Seguel Patterson- Indian Land-WR-6-0,165-South Carolina
- 17. Tilden "T" Riley-Orangeburg Prep-TE-6-5,203-Vandy
- 18. Jamel Howze-Newberry-TE-6-3,215-App State
- 19. Scotland Dover-Gaffney-OL 6-5,305-App State
- 20. Jaiden McDowell-Gaffney-RB-5-10,165
- 21. Malcolm Gaston-North Augusta-OL-6-5, 330-Liberty
- 22. Jayvon Gilmore-Ridge View-QB-6-5,200-
- 23. Jeremiah Favorite-Boiling Springs-CB-5-10,170-Michigan St.
- 24. Jude Hall-Christ Church-WR-6-3,185-Arkansas 25. Michael Foster-Indian Land-DE-6-2,220-CLEMSON
- 26. Somad Eaddy-Riverside-Ath.-6-0,165-Wake Forest
- 27. Jordan Avinger-Orangeburg-Wilkinson-LB-6-3,222-UNC
- 28. Jayden Boyd-Fairfield Central-WR/DB-Duke 29. Kelton Smith-Gaffney-DT-6-5,290-East Carolina
- 30. Tre Aiken-Clinton-OL-6-4,265-NC State
- 31. Azel Bang-AC Flora-DB-6-0,170-Oregon 32. Kam Taylor-Woodruff-TE-6-6,230-Liberty
- 33. Jachin Davis-Stratford-QB-6-1,185-Liberty
- 34. Amiri Acker-Crescent-WR-6-2,185- NC State
- 35. Trey Burke-Spartanburg-QB-6-3,205-East Carolina
- 36. Caden Muskus-Chapin-OL-6-5,280-App. State
- 37. Chris Doyle- Bluffton-DL-6-1,29—App State 38. Jordyn Best-Ridge View-DB-5-11,180-NC State
- 39. Zyon Ratchford-Gaffney-LB-6-4, 200-East Carolina
- 40. Terry Gordon-South Florence-ILB-5-11,225
- 41. Connor Dantzler-James Island-QB-6-0,205-
- 42. Kadarus Hainsworth-Mountain View-WR-6-1,161-UNC Char
- 43. Chris Stewart-Andrews-DE-6-4, 230-Western Michigan
- 44. Christian Waring-Dorman-DL-6-2,300-App State
- 45. Jam Jarrell Turner-Richland Northeast-WR-6-0,185-UNC Char.
- 46. Jamarion McKinney-Greenville-DB-5-10,175-Cincy
- 48. Terence Johnson-Oceanside Collegiate-WR-6-2,205
- 49. Bristol Biegenzahn-West Ashley-DE/TE-6-5,240- Elon
- 50. Gehad Sneed-Berkeley-LB-6-1,210
- 51. Aiden McCarty-Bluffton-QB-6-5,210
- 52. Trevor Kalisz-Ashley Ridge-QB-5-11, 215
- 53. Roper Wentsky-AC Flora-QB-6-0,175
- 54. JT King-Ashely Ridge-DE/TE-6-4,240
- 55. Nyterrious Greer-Harrison-Crescent-WR-FS-6-0,170
- 56. Sawyer Arnold-Oceanside Collegiate-DE-6-4,220-App State
- 57. Romello Patterson-West Florence-LB-6-3,224-Coastal Car.
- 58. J'Qwan Crosby-Stratford-TE-6-4,215-Ga. Southern
- 59. Messiah Jackson-South Florence-QB/Ath—6-2,230
- 60. Kaleb Simpkins-Strom Thurmond-DB-6-1,175-
- 61. Jalen McGraw-Bamberg Ehrhardt-LB-6-3,206
- 62. Reid McCollum-Hilton Head-LB-6-4,215-Navy 63. Tylin Drakeford-Camden-WR-5-10-175-Georgia Southern
- 64. Gray Patterson-Fort Mill-OLB-6-3,210-UNC-Char
- 65. Walker Kelly-TL Hanna-TE-6-5,220-Wofford

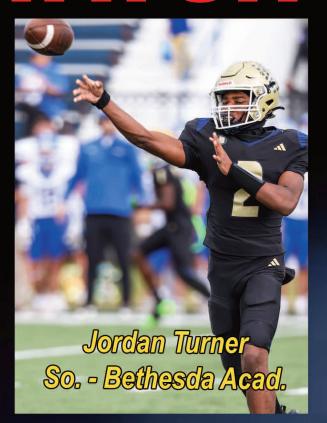
- - 67. Anthony Atkins II-Christ Church-Ath-6-1,180-Navy
 - 68. Daniel Capeheart-Dillon-OLB-RB-6-1, 200-
 - 69. Will Love-Spartanburg-PK-6-2,205-Va. Tech
 - 70. Keryien Brown-Dillon-LB-5-11,210-
 - 71. Kam Vance-Northwestern-WR-5-8,170-Lafayette
- 72. Mike Jones-Oceanside Collegiate-OL-DL-6-2,285-Wofford
- 73. Da'Shan Scriven-Crestwood-DB-5-10,175
- 74. Stone Furrey-Dutch Fork-WR-5-10,176
- 75. Marcus Cann-Bamberg-Ehrhardt-DB-6-2,180
- 76. RJ Brown-South Pointe-RB-5-9,175 77. Terry Radford-Chester-DE-6-1-230
- 78. Lamareon Thompson-Oceanside Collegaite-OL-6-5,305
- 79. Bryson Moore-Irmo-OL-6-2,305-CSU
- 80. Bryson Connor-Indian Land-DB-5-10,180-Hampton 81. 82. Ashten Wilson-Central-RB-5-7,165
- 83. Josiah Mason-South Floence-OL-6-4,260
- 84. Amandre Wooden—Batesburg-Leesville-RB-5-11,205
- 85. Jakari Holloman-Central-LB-6-1,205 86. Justice Hopkins-Byrnes-DL-6-2,240
- 87. Cameron McMillon-Keenan-QB-6-2, 187
- 88. Bryson Ginn-South Pointe-LB-6-2, 215
- 89. Quinn Mahoney-Bishop England-QB-6-3,205
- 90. Michael Doe-North Augusta-RB-5-9,180-Gardner Webb
- 91. Garrison Vaughn-Laurens Academy-OL/DL- 6-4,251 (Sleeper)
- 92. Dallas Williams-Greer-OL-6-4,275-
- 93. JT Williams-Summerville-OLB-6-0,200
- 94. Josh Singleton-Northwestern-DB-6-2,170
- 95. Jayden Johnson-Ware Shoals-RB-6-0,195
- 96. Nehemiah Brown-Barnwell-RB-5-11,173 97. Jaden Baylor-Abbeville-DB/WR-6-0,170
- 98. Kenshon Speaks-Beaufort-OL-6-3, 295
- 99. Kemori DeWeese-Summerville-WR-5-11,170
- 100. Jaylin Baylor-Abbeville-WR-6-1, 170 101. Cody Peterson-Ashley Ridge-OL-06-5,315
- 102. Brayden Williams-Saluda-RB-5-11,175
- 103. Kylif Miller-Hartsville-RB-5-10,180
- 104. Kaleb Sutton-Hillcrest-QB-6-3,185-
- 105. Chris Coleman-Northwestern-OL-6-3, 280 106. Alec Belk-Fox Creek-OL-C-6-1, 285
- 107. Amari Verner-Seneca-RB-5-8,171
- 108. Nick Sapp-Denmark-Olar-DL-6-0,300 109. Damais Seegars-Andrew Jackson-RB-5-11,175
- 110. Jadyn Rice-JL Mann-DB-WR-5-9,180
- 111. Bryce Seaborn-Greenwood-DB-RB-5-11,190-
- 112. Kamyron Jones-Abbeville-OL/DL-6-2, 280 113. Jason Brigham-Johnsonville-DL-6-0,230
- 114. Quashaun Hampton-Keenan-OL-6-4,290-
- 115. Tyleek Dukes-Kingstree-RB-6-0,190
- 116. Terrence Wilson-Lake City-RB-5-10,200 117. David Rogers-Lakewood-OL-6-2, 280
- 118. Zori Pierce-Lamar-QB-Ath.-6-0,170
- 119. Marquis Copeland-Laurens—WR-DB-6-0,165
- 120. Jordan Roseborough-Dutch Fork-OL-5-11, 215
- 121. Jordan Jenkins-Conway-WR-6-4,190 122. Domonick Felton-Dillon-RB-5-11,170
- 123. Lucas Tankersley-Travelers Rest-MLB-6-1, 205
- 124. Jaylon Davis-Union County-OL-6-0,290 125. Chase Price-Lake View-QB-6-1,205
- 126. Harris Stone-Wando-QB-6-2,280 127. Jordan Strong-Lewisville-DB-5-8,160
- 128. Jadyn Rice-JL Mann-DB/WR-5-9,180
- 129. ZavarionJenkins-Summerville-WR-6-5,180
- 130. Christian Hewitt-Summerville-OL-6-0,300 131.Jaxx Wilson-Westside-LB/SS-6-0,185
- 132. Speedy Taylor-Eastside-WR-5-7,171
- 133. Wynn Meetz-Gilbert-FS-5-9,160 134. Jaylon Davis-Union County-DL-6-1,290
- 135. Dy'lon White-Green Sea Floyds-6-3,310
- 66. Ryan Campbell-Ashley Ridge-RB-5-9,182

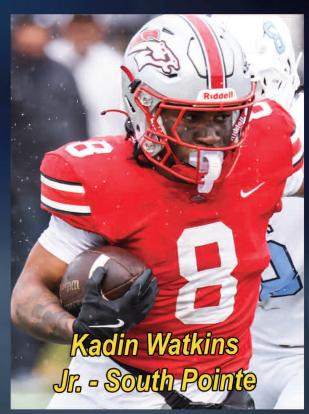
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TALENT TO WATCH

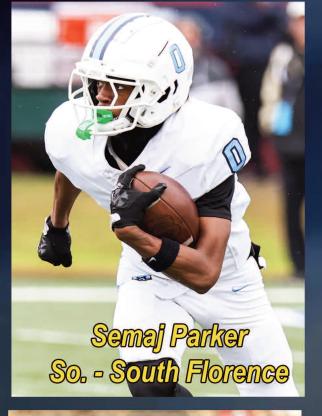
















NETC Student Athletes of the Month

McBee's Hanna McLeod

McBee—Hanna McLeod is a senior and tennis player at McBee High, where she has been team captain and this year she made it to state for her singles play. She started playing tennis in the eighth grade and the last two years her team made the playoffs, including winning the regional title in her junior year.

In the classroom, she carries a 5.294 GPA and after high school, she does look to continue playing tennis but as a club sport at the college level. Her focus to earn degree in Public Health from the University of South Carolina.

For all her athletic and academic accomplishments, McLeod has been chosen the "NETC" Female Student Athlete of the Month."

This honor is bestowed through a partnership between the Northeastern Technical College and "The High School Sports Report" with the publication communicating with athletic directors and guidance counselors at high schools in the counties of Dillon, Marlboro, and Chesterfield, where NETC serves the needs of high school students seeking to earn dual credits in various subjects that can be transferred to colleges after a student's high school graduation. The "NETC" is currently offering over 44 online

courses for the 2025-26 school year to students in the three counties they serve.

McLeod

as a dual

started taking classes Hanna McLeod

enrolled high school student her sophomore year. So far, she's completed eight classes including US History, Algebra, English Composition, Computer technology, and Public Speak-

"Taking online courses through NETC has acclimatized me to the college level workload and it's giving me a good idea of how much work I'll have to do at college," said McLeod. She continued, about it being a "good experience with NETC, the professors are nice and they respond to my questions via email." She went on to explain that she is "trying to take many of the required classes that aren't core classes for my degree and that should help tremendously so I can get ahead in my studies."

See McLeod, pg. 41

McBee's Alex Bergman McBee—Alex Bergmn is a junior seeking to earn dual credits in

and two-sport athlete at McBee High, where he was a designated hitter during the Baseball playoffs leading up to McBee earning the SCHSL Class A State Championship trophy, plus he is plays on the Basketball team. Bergman, who is a Pitcher and plays

first base, readily admits baseball is his favorite sport and started playing the game when he was first able to join tball teams. Last season, his held a .308 batting average. He also enjoys basketball which he started playing it in the seventh grade.

In the classroom he carries a 5.080 GPA and he has a strong desire to play baseball at the next level if presented the opportunity. His two favorite schools for continuing his education after next year are University of South Carolina and Duke.

For all his athletic and academic accomplishments, Bergman has been chosen the "NETC" Male Student Athlete of the Month."

This honor is bestowed through a partnership between the Northeastern Technical College and "The High School Sports Report" with the publication communicating with athletic directors and guidance counselors at high schools in the counties of Dillon, Marlboro, and Chesterfield, where NETC serves the needs of high school students

various subjects that can be transferred to colleges after a student's high school gradua tion. The "NETC" is currently offering over 44 on-

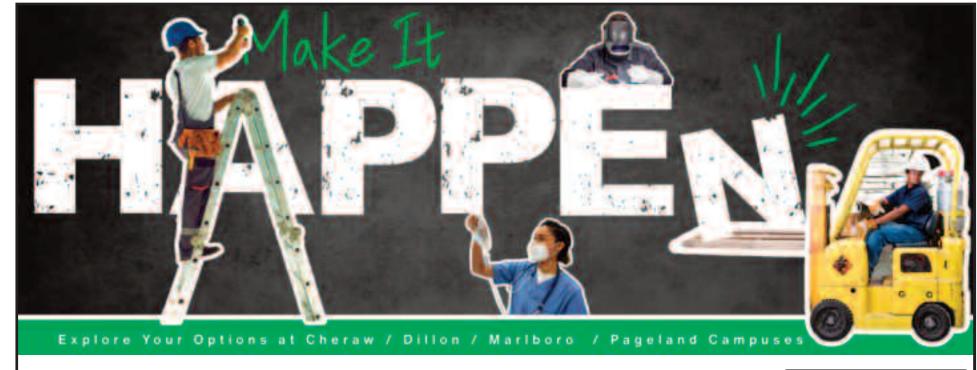


line dual credit courses for the 2025-26 school year to students in the three counties they serve.

Bergman started taking classes as a dual enrolled high school student his freshman year. He completed several courses offered by the NETC so far. Courses he's taken include English 101, Public Speaking, US History, Macro Economics and two Biology classes. He says he plans to continue taking NETC classes this year and again during his senior year.

"Taking online courses through NETC has really helped me get used to the difference in workload at the high school level and college level. This is really preparing me for that next step up," said Bergman. He continued saying. it's been a good experience with NETC. "It's different than in-person

See Bergman, pg. 41





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 - Transfer to 4-Year Universities
 - **High School Dual Enrollment**
 - Continuing Education



FALL SEMESTER START DATES: OCTOBER 15 **NOVEMBER 3**

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LAURENCE MANNING ACADEMY

LMA boys basketball team off to strong start

By Dennis Brunson hssr.com Associate Editor

Manning – The Laurence Manning Academy boys basketball team got off to a very promising start, winning four of its first five games. The victories came against Calhoun Academy, Marlboro County High School, Hammond and Ben Lippen.

The loss came to South Carolina High School League AAAAA Division I school Carolina Forest. Swampcats head coach Patrick Anderson believes if his players maintain their focus, they can have a very

"Our expectations this season are to compete every single night, play with toughness and continue raising the standard of our program," said Anderson, who is in his second season as head coach. "We've got a strong core returning, and we expect our guys to grow in their roles, trust each other and embody the culture we've been building. If we commit to doing the little things right—defending, rebounding, sharing the ball—I believe this group can take a big step forward.

"Ultimately, our expectation is to represent Laurence Manning the right way and we want to compete for a region championship year in and year out."

Laurence Manning returns four starters led by the brother guard duo of senior Zy Dennis and sophomore **Scoop Dennis**. Both were selected to the SCISA All-Region 3-AAAA team last year.

Zy Dennis led the Swampcats in assists with an average of 3.4 per game. He also averaged 7.0 points to go with 3.4 rebounds and 1.4 steals.

Scoop led the team in scoring, rebounds an steals. He averaged 15.2 points, 5.8 rebounds and 2.5 steals to go with 1.9 assists.

The other returning starters from last year's squad that went 13-15 overall and finished third in the region are senior guard Charlie Duvall and junior forward **Ben Sanders**. The newcomer to the starting five is junior forward Wesley Lyles.

Duvall was second on the team in scoring, averaging 10.2 points. Sanders averaged 5.9

points.

Others in the rotation are senior guard Walker Cribb, senior guard Whitley Boykin, senior guard Shawn Thomas Moore and junior forward Tristen White.

Other members of the team are junior Nathan Hyde, junior Robbie Robertson and junior Eli Gamble.

"The biggest keys for us are chemistry, consistency and embracing our identity," Anderson said. "We need to communicate, defend at a high level and play with the energy and effort that has become the standard in our program. If our guys stay bought in, play unselfishly and bring GRIT to everything we do, we'll put ourselves in a position to have a successful season."

T&S Construction

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213 East Boyce Street Manning, SC 29102 (803) 433-7946 (SWIM) Proudly Saluting the Swampcats!

LADY 'CATS OFF TO 2-2 START

The Laurence Manning girls basketball team split its first four games. The Lady 'Cats have two returning starters who are loaded with experience in senior Lyza Prickelmyer and senior Ashley Rae Hodge. They are both 4-year starters.

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

After that though, Laurence Manning has several players learning on the job. That's where second-year head coach **Lisa Ard** comes in to play.

"To be successful this year, we will have to trust our teammates," said Ard, who is a veteran head coach. "We have two starters who have started varsity for four years now and they rely on each other because they have played together. The younger players will need to step it up to gain their trust.

"We have a lot of talent, but we still need to learn to work together and that is coming with time."

Prickelmyer averaged 10 points, six rebounds, five assists and four steals last year. Hodge was the leading scorer at 11.0 per game to go with four rebounds, two assists and three steals.

The Lady 'Cats have an all-senior starting lineup The other starters are Marlee Black, Maggie Welch and Lilv Wellborn.

Other members of the team are senior forward Autumn Bryant, junior guard Gracie Lyles, junior forward Sarah Margaret Ferriell, junior Camdyn Geddings, sophomore forward Irelyn Conyers, freshman point guard Kendall Tanner and freshman guard/forward Olivia Welch.

5 SWAMPCATS SELECTED TO AAAA FOOTBALL ALL-STATE FIRST TEAM

Junior offensive lineman Tristen White, sophomore wide receiver Scoop Dennis, sophomore placekicker **Daniel Vargas**, senior athlete Zy Dennis and senior strong safety Shawn Thomas Moore were selected to the AAAA All-State football team.

White played left tackle and graded out at 92 percent on the season. He led the Swampcats in knockdown blocka, pancake blocks and rhino blocks. As a defensive lineman, White had 33 ½ tackles, eight tackles for a loss, six quarterback hurries, one fumble recovery, four passes broken up and one blocked

Scoop Dennis led LMA in receptions with 32, receiving yards with 582 and touchdown catches with six. He had 16 punt returns for 243 yards and one touchdown while coming up with 29 tackles, one TFL, five PBUs, three interceptions and one defen sive touchdown as a defensive back.

Vargas had a great year handling the kicking chores. He was 10 of 15 on field goal attempts with a long of 46 yards and was perfect on 19 extra point at-

See Laurence Manning, pg. 71

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Camden extends streaks with win over Daniel

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Camden – The **Camden High School** football team finished the season with a 9-4 record and reached the quarterfinals of the AAAA state playoffs. That means the Bulldogs had their seventh consecutive season of nine or more wins and reaching at least the quarterfinals of the state playoffs.

This one was a little more special though because of how Camden extended the streak. The Bulldogs traveled to Pickens County and hammered playoff nemesis **Daniel** 52-14 in the second

"Winning at Daniel High School, especially in the way we did, was a very fulfilling win for us," said Bulldogs head coach Brian Rimpf. "Another second-round win, and this time on the road, meant that we were the lower seed. Our team played really well and was able to do something that no team in Camden High School history has done, win at Daniel. Camden had been 0-5 all time at Daniel.

"To be able to score the most points by an opponent in their stadium and have a running clock in the fourth quarter was definitely one of the highlights of the season. We have a long history with them, and in the most recent history it has not gone the way of the Bulldogs. We were able to change that this year at their place in the playoffs."

Camden had seven players selected to the All-Region 3-AAAA team. Senior Tylin Drakeford led the way as he was named the Region Special Teams Player of the Year.

As a wide receiver and cornerback, Drakeford had a tremendous season as well. The Shrine Bowl

Hemingway—The Carvers Bay football team

"I am very proud of all of my players for helping

us have a 12-win season," said head coach Matthew

Richard who wrapped up his 15th year at Carvers

Bay, the past seven years as the head coach. "We

5, 290) and he will be hard to replace for sure.

will miss senior offensive lineman Zyon Guiles (6-

much in the mold of several other local players like

Robert Geathers," said Coach Richard, "I know he

will have an immediate impact on the offensive line

at South Carolina. He has all the tools to play in the

for the Bears. He was also named the WPDE All-

school record with 47 pancake blocks. Guiles is a

North-South game as the *HSSR* is going to press

Mr. Football Finalist this season. The winner of the

coveted award will be announced at half-time of the

Zone Player of the Year. This year Guiles had a

Guiles was named the Region Player of the Year

"I feel like Zyon will be a Sunday player one day

finished 12-1 during the recently completed 2025

road at **Bamberg-Ehrhardt** in the Class A third

By Billy G. Baker

Publisher

NFL down the road."

Raiders.

selection finished with 63 catches for 1,000 yards and 10 touchdowns, ran the ball 18 times for 304 yards and two scores and completed his two pass attempts for 98 yards and two scores. Defensively, Drakeford had 37 tackles, two interceptions and four passes defended.

The other All-Region selections are seniors **Don**trell Wilson, Navier Boykin and Thomas Bishop, juniors Greyson Rimpf and Ryan Lawson and sophomore Lavay Penny.

Wilson, a defensive lineman, had 53 tackles, 12 tackles for a loss, four quarterback sacks and one interception. Bishop, also on the D line, had 71 tackles, a team high 16 TFLs, two sacks and caused two fumbles. Boykin ran for 1,172 yards and 16 touchdowns on 187 carries as a running back.

Rimpf, the head coach's son, was the quarterback, completing 148 of 236 passes for 2,390 yards and 28 touchdowns against just six interceptions. The 6-foot-2-inch, 270-pound Lawson offered protection for Rimpf and opened holes for Boykin at right tackle. Penny led in tackles from his linebacker slot with 128 to go with six TFLs, three sacks, four fumble recoveries and one caused fumble.

Honorable mention selections were sophomore wide receiver Bernard Green, sophomore wide receiver Isaiah Smith, junior wide receiver Will Haunert, senior linebacker Tyler Edwards, senior defensive back **Denarri Halley**, junior center **Worth Thomasson** and sophomore offensive tackle dogs are expected to. **Tyler Atkinson**

Coach Rimpf credited his senior class for helping Camden continue its impressive run despite moving up to the AAAA classification after several

Carvers Bay enjoys deep run in Class A playoffs with this issue on December 13.

Coach Richard will be leaving to coach defensive backs in the Shrine Bowl on December 14th and he will be joined by Guiles who should start at a season, and the Bears concluded their season on the tackle slot in the game to be played in Spartanburg on December 20. round, losing 48-20, to the eventual state champion

"We will return 9 starters on offense and nine starters back on defense next season, so we are looking forward to having another great season," said Coach Richard. "Going on the road to play a great team, and a well-coached team, like Bamberg-Ehrhardt was a challenge for us. It was a tough place to play for sure.'

The Bears defeated Allendale-Fairfax (59-0) and Lake View (56-8) in the first two rounds of the play-offs to advance to face the Raiders in the third

Carvers Bay had 15 different players selected for all-region honors from the 2025 season. Guiles was the Region Player of the Year while senior RB Kenard Heyward was the Region Offensive Player of the Year. Senior Clark Jones was selected the Special Teams Region Player of the Year after averaging over 40 yards per punt and managing snapping duties for extra points and field goals. Senior Jaden **Bell** was also named the All-Region Special teams return man. The region Athlete of the Year was RB

CAMDEN



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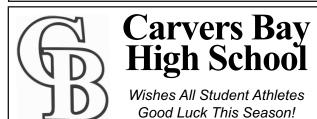
years at AAA.

"We had another successful season at Camden this year," Rimpf said. "Our seniors had a tough task of being moved up to the AAAA classification the last two years, and despite being one of the smallest schools in the classification, competed like the Bull-

"We are proud of our nine wins this season and thank our seniors for stepping up to the challenge and changing classifications, yet still continuing a tradition of excellence."

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Julius McCrea.

Earning all-region honors were senior DE Jy'-Jaeh Moore, junior LB Sammy Milton, junior DT Xavier Fredrick at DT, Triston Diggs at C/DT, junior Jasius Davis at DT, along with junior DE Jaquan Hannah and junior WR Mekhi Bromell. Bryce Cokely was also an all-region DB.

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Staff Writer

Lexington - Last season the **White Knoll** girls basketball team broke through with 17 wins and made the 5A Division 2 playoffs. Shortly afterward, head coach Coretta Ferguson left to coach the Irmo girls. Also departing the Timberwolves were seniors Shae**lyn Hayes**, who averaged 14.4 points per game, and Emory Waters-Inman, who averaged 11.9 points.

Under first-year head coach Mark Luster, the 2025-2026 White Knoll girls have a lot of returners on the roster, but are considerably young. Even so, Luster is hopeful that the team (2-4) can come together in time for Region 4-5A play.

The Timberwolves opened the season with a 63-22 loss Nov. 21 to a powerful Rock Hill team led by senior guard **Chloe Hudson**, but held their own in a 43-29 loss against another top team, **Sumter**, Nov. 22

"The Rock Hill game, we got handled, but we played Sumter pretty well," Luster said.

White Knoll scored its first victory of the season with a 65-26 win over **Aiken** Dec. 1, but a 79-34 loss to **Blythewood** came Dec. 2 and a 45-27 loss to **Lower Richland** came Dec. 5. The Timberwolves got victory No.2 with a 50-22 defeat of Aiken Dec. 10.

"We're a young team and we're still making mistakes, but we've played some good competition that's been a lesson for us," Luster said. "The good thing about it is that we're going to see how well we've improved when we play these teams the second time

Having played Aiken twice, the Timberwolves traveled to Lower Richland Dec. 12 and to Blytheing region play against River Bluff Jan. 9.

While losing Hayes and Waters-Inman, White Knoll has a returning leader in senior point guard Sidney White. White has been benched with an ACL injury last year.

"She's one of our better players even though she hasn't played a game yet," Luster said. "She's been practicing with the team and hopefully get cleared if she passes an exam tomorrow (Dec. 12)."

Another of the team's more experienced players is junior guard Jaliyah Daniel, who played on the varsity team her freshman and sophomore years.

"She's our leading scorer right now," Luster said. "With the ball in her hand as a point guard, she's

See White Knoll, pg. 68



2025 Northwood Academy Girls Basketball

Northwood girls basketball starts 10-0, football claims football state title

traffic.'

The wins have not come over cupcake teams at all. Some of their wins to date have come over Bishop England (59-24), Wando (36-32), Keenan (53-38), Stratwith a win over **St. Johns Chrsitian** on November 17 (69-10), and the other wins were over **Trinity Collegiate** (62-22), John Paul II (73-45), St. Joseph's Catholic (54-41), and **Ben Lippen** (60-42).

"We are trying to win a state championship," said Charger head coach Ginnell Curtis starting her 10th season at Northwood, just five wins away from 200 career wins, all with the Chargers." You have to compete against the best to give yourself a chance to compete for a state title later in the season.'

Northwood will play their next game on December at Ashley Ridge. The Chargers are scheduled to play Ashley Ridge, Berkeley, Mill Creek, Ga. Over the three-day event.

sonville, Florida before starting region play at home

Birch (16.2 points, 7.3 rebounds, 5 steals and 4.8 assists a game) along with senior point guard Jada Bates, a transfer from a high school in Alabama. Bates is averaging 15.3 points, 3.1 rebounds, four assists, and 3.8 steals

of college interest. "Maliyah is leading us in scoring, rebounding, steals and assists and as a player she fills in all the gaps," said Coach Curtis. "She also plays very good defense, guarding team's top two guard, and she is an excellent three-point shooter.'

wood Dec. 13. White Knoll heads to Laurens Dec. 16 and plays Brookland-Cayce Dec. 19 before open-



By Billy G. Baker **Publisher**

Summerville—The Northwood Academy Lady Chargers basketball team has sprinted out the gate of the 2025-26 basketball season with a 10-0 record, as of mid-December, and the team has all the makings of a state championship contender.

ford (75-18), and Burke (76-29). They started the season

27th in the Carolina Classic Christmas Tournament hosted

On January 3 they host the Bolles School from Jackagainst Ashley Hall on the 8th.

The team is led by junior combo guard **Maliyah**

Birch is a four-year starter who is getting a great deal

Coach Curtis has been just as impressed with the play of Bates. "Jada and Maliyah are very similar in their styles of play on the court," said Coach Curtis. "Jada does all the little things right. She is very unselfish and sets up other players for high percentage shots. She also plays 94 feet of excellent defense. She also shoots the three very well and can drive to the basket and score in

Freshman combo guard Kylee Clarke is a transfer from Fort Dorchester where she earned all-region honors as an 8th grader. Clarke is averaging 11.4 points, seven rebounds, 4.3 steals and two assists a game. "Clarke is a very versatile player who can do many things on a basketball court," said Coach Curtis. "She is a true defensive specialist who handles the ball very well. She is also our second leading rebounder.

Senior small forward Alyvia Tocco has been on the team for four seasons, and she is in her second year as a starter. Tocco is averaging 7.3 points and 4/3 rebounds along with 3.2 steals a game. Rounding out the team's starting five is 5-10 senior small forward Isabella **Heaton** who is averaging 4.1 points and 3.8 rebounds a

Freshman SG Lauren Cosman is among the first players off the bench, and she is averaging 4.8 points a game.

The team only has 8 varsity players with the potential of a couple junior varsity players playing up-and-down as needed. The remaining players are 5-11 junior center Ella Bennett Rogers along with freshman PF Sarah Font.

"I feel like one of the strengths of the team is our defensive intensity," said Coach Curtis. "We play good defense for all 94 feet and this creates turnovers for us that leads to a lot of transition baskets. Our goal is to constantly disrupt our opponent's offense.

To date the Charger defense has averaged 19.3 steals a game. On offense they are averaging 13 assists a game. Team stats like this certainly will help teams win games. Northwood Academy Football Team Wins SCISA

The Charger football team, under the tutelage of head coach Johnny Waters, defeated Heathwood Hall (61-7)

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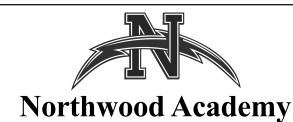


White Knoll High School

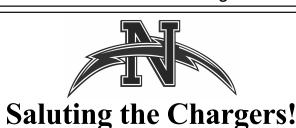
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n mid-November at SC State University to top off an 11-1 SCISA AAAA championship season. (Please see article on the big win on page 10 of this

Some of the offensive stats leaders for the 2025 season included junior QB Kevin Johnson who completed 180 asses for 2,499 yards and 24 TD's. East Tennessee WR commitment, Ayden Hogan led receivers with 73 receptions for 1,033 yards and 11 TD's. Junior WR Drew

Wolfe had 35 catches for 691 yards and 7 TD's also. The top three rushers were senior **Kaven Ford** (161 for 1,148yds and 22 TD's), senior Jordin Carter (48-for-579 and 9 TD's) along with senior Michael Polite (82for-489 and 6 TD's).

Junior Kenny Robbins (13 pancakes) and junior captain Kaeden Wagner (8 pancakes) led the OL.

The top six tacklers on defense were senior LB Dominic Russell (78), senior FS MJ Davis (59), senior DB Antwaun Henderson (55), senior LB Cody McCleary (54), senior nose **Hammer White** (49), senior LB Quincey Lingard (41) and senior DB Jordin Carter (40).

Senior punter Cole McLeod averaged 48.9 yards a punt on 27 boots while making 56-of-60 PAT's including three-of-five field goals with a long of 30 yards.

Florence Area Feature Page

South Florence's Jackson, Gordon win hardware Greystone Properties (843) 615-2358

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Florence – The South Florence High School football team made its fourth straight appearance in the AAAA state championship game. The Bruins were unable to defend their championship though, falling to South Pointe 35-14.

However, that doesn't take away from what the senior class accomplished, according to head coach **Drew** Marlowe. The Class of 2026 closes out with two championship rings and a 54-6 record.

"It says a lot about this senior class," Marlowe said. "They maxed out their careers, they got to play in 60 football games and four state championships. They came up short today, but I'm so thankful that the Lord brought me to Florence and has allowed me and us to experience this incredible ride."

The Bruins has 10 players selected to the All-Region 5-AAAA first team with senior quarterback **Messiah** Jackson tabbed the Player of the Year and senior linebacker **Terry Gordon** the Defensive Player of the Year.

Jackson, who was selected to play in the **Shrine Bowl**, completed 120 of 193 passes for 1,664 yards and 23 touchdowns while rushing for 23 scores and 712 yards on 139 carries.

Gordon was chosen to play in the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives Bowl all-star game. He finished with an amazing 31 tackles for a loss among his 91 total tackles. He had 16 quarterback sacks and 23 quarter-

Florence - Florence Christian School junior de-

Schwaub, who was the only returning starter on the

fensive lineman Hayden Schwab was selected as the

SCISA Region 2-AAA Defensive Player of the Year.

D line for the FCS football team, had team highs in

back sacks with eight, returned an interception 43

tackles with 97, tackles for loss with 11 ½ and quarter-

yards for a touchdown, caused two fumbles and recov-

Lamar – The **Lamar High School** football team

The Silver Foxes reached the Class A state cham-

didn't get the final result it desired, but it did play in

the final game of the Class A season for the first time

pionship game where they lost to undefeated Bam-

berg-Ehrhardt 35-21. Lamar finished the season

with a 12-3 record. Head coach Tyler Boyd, in his

pleased with how his team developed throughout the

1-2 to get here and reel off 11 straight wins," Boyd

said. "I'm proud of the way they got better through-

out the season, and that's what it's all about, improv-

Lamar rebounded from the slow start to win the

"Maybe surprise isn't the right word because we

just didn't know what to expect," said Boyd. "There

may be a little surprise from how we started the sea-

The Silver Foxes only trailed 14-13 at halftime

but could do nothing offensively in the second half

until late in the fourth quarter with B-E in control at

"They made more plays than we did," Boyd said.

son. We had to get a lot better than we were at the

beginning of the season and we did."

Region 2 title and then roll to the upper state title.

"I'm proud of these guys from where we started

first year as head coach at his alma mater, was

By Dennis Brunson

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

ered another.

since 2018.

hssr.com Associate Editor

The other first-team selections were junior running back Cameron James, senior wide receiver JayAun Perkins, senior H back/tight end Bruce Thompson, senior left tackle Josiah Mason, senior right tackle Ethan Cash, junior defensive end Marquez McKithen, sophomore linebacker Warnell Prew and senior strong safety Amare Reaves.

James rushed for 1,466 yards and 19 touchdowns on 178 carries while catching 13 passes for 106 yards and one TD. Perkins had 55 catches for 956 yards and 13

Thompson had seven catches for 42 yards and two touchdowns and was part of the blocking troupe that led the way for an explosive offense. Cash and Mason each had one game left, Mason playing in the Shrine Bowl and Cash a Touchstone selection.

Reaves had an amazing season. He has eight interceptions with four of them being returned for

touchdowns. He also returned a fumble for a score and had 46 tackles and five TFLs.

McKithen had 26 tackles, four TFLs, one interception and two sacks. Prew had 94 tackles, three TFLs,

The Eagles finished the year with an 8-3 overall

record and reached the semifinals of the state playoffs.

Veteran head coach **Neil Minton** was pleased with the

five games against teams who played for state titles

(AAA state champion Pinewood Prep in the semifi-

Dee Academy and Class A state champion Williams-

"They just took it away from us. We've got to get in

career as a starter by completing 16 of 28 passes for

tions. He just missed rushing for 100 yards, finishing

169 yards and a touchdown against two intercep-

For the season, Pierce completed 111 of 184

passes for 1,823 yards and 17 touchdowns while

rushing for 872 yards and 21 touchdowns on 146

said of Pierce, who was selected to play in the

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives Bowl all-star

"He's been solid and consistent all year," Boyd

Senior quarterback Zori Pierce finished his 4-year

the weight room and get stronger."

with 99 and two TDs on 14 carries.

game. "He tells half the

team what to do along

with trying to see what

crucial to our success."

back Nygel Eady rushed

for 74 yards on 13 carries.

paign, rushing for 1,342

yards and 17 touchdowns

catching eight passes for

115 yards and another

Senior running

He had a strong cam-

on 173 carries while

See Florence Christian, pg. 69

nals, AAA runner-up and region foe Wilson Hall,

"We had a great season," Minton said. "We played

See Florence Area, pg. 69



team's performance.

Lamar makes run to first title game since 2018

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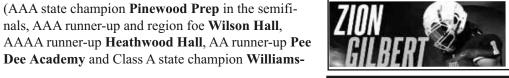
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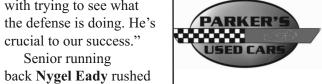
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See Lamar, pg. 68



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Page 49

By David Shelton Senior Writer

Moncks Corner – The 2024-25 basketball season was one to remember at Berkeley High School as both the boys and girls teams won at least 20 games and played deep into the playoffs.

In fact, the girls team played all the way to the state finals where they defeated Greenwood to win the AAAAA Division II state championship. It was the first state title in school history and Berkeley finished with a 24-4 record.

The boys team advanced to the Lower State championship game before their season ended with a loss to Goose Creek. The Stags finished with a 20-7

Both programs look for a repeat season of success and both entered this season ranked among the top 10 Division II teams in the state. The boys team is off to a 4-1 start, picking up early wins over Timberland, Socastee, James Island and First Baptist. The loss came to Fort Dorchester.

Coach **Matthew Mullins** is in his fourth season at Berkeley and returns a solid core group of veteran players mixed in with some young talent. The team's best player, senior small forward Damien Kinloch is out of action as he recovers from a torn ACL suffered during the summer. Kinloch could return to play in mid to late January but Mullins says he won't rush his star player back.

"He wants to be out there and he's with us everyday," Mullins said. "I'm not going to rush it. He has a future in this game so we have to be sure and the doctors will have to clear him. Right now he's an assistant coach and he's a big help to our younger players."

Another key returner is junior forward **John** Cleveland, who was a double-digit scorer last season. Cleveland and four other players got out late due to football but are getting into basketball shape.

Two other senior starters, both returners from last year, are Jordan Livingston and Travino Reid. Sophomores Omega Green and Jamaal Anderson round out the starting lineup.

Mullins is known for playing deep into his bench and the coach feels this year's team has quality depth. The sixth man is senior Kaison McFadden,

who excels as a defender. Senior Justin Suarez and junior Markeith Porcheia also see significant playing time. Junior Jameir Brown, Quincey Green and Ja'kai Chapman also figure into the rotation in

"We have a lot of guys who are pretty even as far as what they can so there is real competition within the team to get time on the floor," Mullins said. "That's a good thing. Everyone is making each other better. Our depth is better overall this year."

Berkeley plays in a very competitive region 7-AAAAA environment with Goose Creek and Cane Bay both ranked in the top 10 statewide. Mullins says his team can contend for the region title if they remain focused and continue to work.

"If we can bring great effort into every practice, we can compete with any team on the schedule," the coach said. "But we're not good enough to just show up and win. We have to play to our strengths and everyone has to contribute."

The Berkeley girls are off to a 4-2 start this season and are ranked in the top 10 of the statewide Division II rankings. Coach Crystal Peace returns several key players from last year's team, but also has several new players taking on key roles.

Senior Madison Thomas and sophomore Alaina **Carter** are the top returners. Carter is averaging 15.5 points per game through six games, up from 12.3 points last season. Thomas is scoring 10.5 points with 5.5 rebounds per game this season.

Junior Amani McCray is another key returner and is averaging about seven points and nine rebounds per game this season. Junior Imani Levey returns in the post and is scoring 9.1 points and bringing in 6.5 rebounds per game this season. The team's other senior, **Demi Gray**, adds 7.5 points per

The only other junior is **Abie Hayes**. Rounding out the roster are sophomores Kennedy Caldwell, Jakia Burton and Kaelynn Caldwell; and freshman Alana Everette.

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Cane Bay boys basketball off to great start

By David Shelton

Summerville – With a bevy of talent and experience returning from a 20-win team, the **Cane Bay** boys basketball team has high expectations for the 2025-26 season.

Head coach Shawn McKeen has watched his team reel off eight straight wins to open the season and the Cobras are ranked among the state's top 10 teams in AAAAA Division I by the South Carolina Basketball Coaches Association. A great start for sure but plenty of work to be done says McKeen.

"We definitely expect big things from this team," McKeen said. "We have good talent and we're very deep. We're off to a good start but we know that playing our best basketball in February is the goal. We have to continue to put in the work and continue to improve. There's plenty of things we can improve and they want to do special things." on for sure."

Cane Bay's strengths are size, athleticism and depth. McKeen has 12 players back from last season and says every player on the roster could start if

Leading the way is sophomore **Jamel McKinley**, against Goose Creek. a 6-7 guard who averages 13 points and six rebounds per game this season. Junior Jaleel Sanders returns at point guard as a third-year varsity player. He is scoring 10.9 points and averages 5.1 assists

per game this season.

The lone starting senior is **Amare Merrell**, good for 9.1 points per game, while junior center **Jackson** Lilly averages 9.1 points per game. The fifth starter is 6-4 power forward Christian Davis, who is averaging 6.6 points per contest.

Rounding out the 25-26 roster are seniors Tristan Ford, Jayden Waring, Andre Hagler and Brayden Vereen; juniors Landon Thompson, Terry Truesdale and Devin Cobbs; and freshman Jamerious Dukes.

"This is a good group to coach because they put in the work," McKeen said. "We need to become more consistent on the defensive end and that's the focus right now. We can score points but being consistent defensively will be very important as we get more into the season. But this is a confident group

The Cobras have posted several blowout wins in the early going but the schedule in region 7-AAAAA will be very competitive. Goose Creek and Berkeley are both ranked in the Division II poll in AAAAA. Cane Bay's region opener in January is

"We know what to expect in our region, good teams and good coaches," McKeen said. "We've been in some battles over the last few years and this year will be more of the same."

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Kingstree girls hoops ready to take the next step

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

was 9-3 and the Blazers 8-4.

fense," Price said.

of the Year.

two interceptions.

to the second team.

marco Major-McCormick.

siderable minutes as well.

on Dec. 27.

PLAYER OF YEAR

Kingstree actually finished third in Region 7. Lake

City won the title with a 10-2 record wile Marion

"The keys to success will be staying committed

MALEEK DUKES REGION 7 DEFENSIVE

Kingstree junior strong safety Maleek Dukes

Dukes led the Blazers with 60 tackles, 11 quar-

terback sacks and eight quarterback pressures to go

with two fumble recoveries and three pass breakups.

a first team All-Region selection at both running

to play in the **Touchstone Energy Cooperatives**

Bowl all-star game, rushed for 896 yards and five

passes for 68 yards and two TDs. Playing in the sec-

ondary on defense, Tyleek shared the team lead in

PBUs with 10 while coming up with 25 tackles and

Senior defensive tackle **Adeigeon Archie** was

Archie, who played right guard on offense, was a

the other first team selection. He had 28 tackles and

second-team selection as an offensive lineman. Sen-

Those who received honorable mention honors

ior defensive back **Bryson Epps** was also selected

were senior inside linebacker Travis Bennett Jr.,

junior inside linebacker Mark Pickard, senior

senior outside linebacker/tight end BJ Washington.

noseguard Terrell Keels and senior right tackle De-

touchdowns on 153 carries while catching seven

back and defensive back. Tyleek, who was selected

Dukes' older brother, senior **Tyleek Dukes**, was

was selected as the Region 7-AA Defensive Player

to the process. continue to have a team-first mental-

ity and build on our strengths in the offense and de-

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Kingstree – The **Kingstree High School** girls basketball team has proven itself to be one of the better AA teams in the state, reaching the quarterfinals of the state playoffs each of the last three years.

That, however, is getting a bit stale.

"We have been fortunate to play in the Elite 8 the past three seasons," said Blazers head coach **James Price**. "This season is about breaking through and reaching the Final 4 (the lower state championship game) and then the ultimate prize is to play for and win the state championship.

"These are lofty goals, but with a veteran-led team that has been in the program now for four years, it's time to make the next step."

Kingstree, which went 22-6 last season, got off to a 3-2 start. The Blazers return three starters from last year in junior Nay'dia Shaw, senior Demia Mosley and junior Nyla Wallace.

Shaw averaged a double-double last year, scoring 18.6 points per game while grabbing 11.8 rebounds. She also averaged 3.1 assists and 3.8 steals. Mosley averaged 11.8 points, 3.9 rebounds, 2.4 assists and 2.4 steals, while Wallace averaged 6.2 points, 2.3 steals and 1.6 assists.

The other starters are seniors **Kylee Kelty** and Toshonda White, both of whom saw significant action. However, Price has several players seeing significant minutes off the bench in junior **Kamarie** McCrea, junior Alicia Jefferson, senior Lashonda Cooper and sophomore Kalee McCrea.

Price said he and his players are still trying to figure out exactly where they stand as a team.

"We are in the early stages of trying to find our identity offensively and defensively," he said. "The team has embraced the opportunity to really become the best version of themselves. If we do the little things right daily, then it will show up in a positive way on game day."

Despite being in the quarterfinals last year,

Chesterfield – A young but up and coming

in the early part of their 2025-26 schedule.

Chesterfield girls basketball team is competing well

The Rams notched four wins in their first seven

games to open the season and is being led by under-

"We are playing pretty well so far," said head

coach **Nick Jolly**. "This is a competitive team.

We're still fairly young overall but we have some

talented girls. We will make youthful mistakes but

we will learn from those mistakes and work hard to

correct things as we go. I definitely feel good about

Jolly's top two players are sophomores Reagan

Rivers and Yaya Robinson. Rivers was a class AA

all-state selection as a freshman, averaging 14 points

Robinson averaged 13.9 points last season and is

Sophomore Alivia Honeycutt scores about three

and eight rebounds per game. This season, through

at 11.4 points per game this season. Eighth-grader

Le'Asia Brown is adding six points and nine re-

bounds per contest this season.

seven games, she is averaging 16 points and 8.4

Chesterfield regularly starts four sophomores and

classmen. Chesterfield posted an 11-12 record last

Nutrien

Ag Solutions

By David Shelton

Senior Writer

season.

the potential.

boards per game.

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Young Chesterfield girls team competing well

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points and pulls down 4.5 rebounds per game. She

per game. Seniors Jaylen Evans and Jordan

also averages close to four blocked shots per outing.

Evans, along with junior Kaylee Leonard, see con-

Freshman Taylee Clyburn, sophomore Ava

lison Brown, sophomore Ki'yonna Peurifoy and

senior Jenna Kelly round out this year's squad.

early season has been physical toughness.

Knight, freshman Kamari Patterson, freshman Al-

Jolly says his biggest point of emphasis in the

"With the youth, sometimes they play a little

to play tougher. They are responding well. I'm

timid," the coach said. "I keep telling them we have

pretty happy with where we are and I know we are

going to continue to grow and improve as we play

more. We will compete with most of the teams that

Chesterfield already has two wins over AAAA

Hartsville, a win over AAA Marlboro County and a

win over McBee. The Rams will host a post-Christ-

mas tournament with seven other teams, beginning

"It's a good schedule in December against some

solid teams that will make us better," Jolly said. "We

just want to be playing good basketball come region

play and we should be able to compete."

Sophomore **Tayler McCoy** is adding six points

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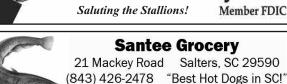
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ORANGEBURG PREP INDIANS

Stoudemire likes progress of OP girls hoops

By Dennis Br=unson

Hssr.com Associate Editor

Orangeburg – Orangeburg Prep lost four players to graduation from its girls basketball team that went 24-2 on the season and played for the SCISA AAA state title. That quartet combined for over 50 points per game and between 30-35 rebounds, according to head coach Jan Stoudenmire.

Stoudenmire isn't entertaining the idea the Lady Indians might be in a rebuilding mode though.

"We've had a good start to the season," said Stoudenmire, the veteran head coach who had OP off to a 5-3 start. "We're just trying to figure it out. There's just a lot of growing pains.

"I love this team. The top six can play with anyone. We just don't have the depth we had last sea-

Senior **Hannah Lambrecht** is the lone returning starter. Seniors Kate Holstein and Prestan **Schurlknight** are the starting forwards. The guards are senior Jayme Culler and junior Mary Legare

Delaney, who is a track and field and volleyball standout, is the leading scorer. Schurlknight is the top

Sophomore Gee Gee Riley is coming off of the bench as the sixth man.

Other team members are junior Madison Damron, junior Emmaline Dangerfield, junior Morgan Gue, sophomore Ziva Keyter and sophomore Naomi McCutchen.

Stoudenmire credits the Lady Indians' feeder system for the sustained success. Her daughter, **Barkley** Stoudenmire McNair, is the junior varsity head coach while **Angie Patterson** is the B team coach.

"They do a great job developing our girls and our girls really work hard for all of our teams," Stoudenmire said. "It looks like we have another good JV team this season, and I know some of those girls can help us."

The losses for OP so far have come against South Caroliana High School League teams in AAA Oceanside Collegiate Academy and AAAA Brookland-Cayce. The other loss came to SCISA AAAA **Hammond**. Stoudenmire believes that will prove to be a benefit.

"Playing great competition is going to help us later this season," she said.

VANDERBILT SIGNEE RILEY REGION 2 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Orangeburg Prep standout wide receiver **Tilden** "T" Riley is signed, sealed and delivered for Vanderbilt of the Southeastern Conference. He will head to **Nashville** in January, but on the way out the door he picked up an outstanding honor.

Riley was named the Region 2-AA Player of the Year. He caught 55 passes for 1,050 yards and 17 touchdowns and had 30 carries for 309 yards and three scores. Playing in the secondary on defense, Riley had 68 tackles, four tackles for a loss, two interceptions and one caused fumble.

The other Indians selected to the All-Region 2 team were senior J'Syri Parker, sophomore Cholly

Parker was the leading rusher, picking up 554 yards and scoring six touchdowns on 99 carries. As an outside linebacker. Parker ha 67 tackles, seven TFLs and three quarterback sacks.

omore Mac Strickland.

Williams, sophomore Council Burroughs and soph-

Williams was in his first season at quarterback and completed 104 of 185 passes for 1,739 yards and 22 touchdowns. He also ran for 292 yards and four scores on 53 carries. In the secondary, Williams had 61 tackles, one TFL, one interception and five passes

Burroughs had 15 catches for 242 yards and three touchdowns. Burroughs returned an interception 84 yards for a touchdown playing in the secondary to go with 45 tackles and one TFL

St4icklani was the leader of the defense, finishing with 150 tackles and 15 TFLs. Hie had three sacks and 13 quarterback hurries. He stated on the offensive line as well.

Strickland, Burroughs and junior Blake Inabinet were selected to play in the SISA North-South Futures All-Star Game. Riley and Parker were selected for the Senior game.

OP BOYS BASKETBALL STARTS 2-3

Speaking of the 6-foot-5-inch Riley's early departure to Vanderbilt, that means that OP boys basketball head coach Michael Delaney doesn't him as an op-

"It sure would be nice to have "T" this season," said Delaney, who guided the Indians to the semifinals of the AAA state tournament last season with the help of Riley. "We are excited for him and his future at Vanderbilt, but his production and presence is difficult to replace."

The Indians won two of their first five games. They've lost more than Riley though as senior guard **Avery Ravenell** is the only returning starter. He is joined in the backcourt by Burroughs with sophomore **Aarav Patel** at center. The forwards are Williams and Parker.

Ravenell is far and away the leading scorer so far with a 22.0 average. He's averaging 4.4 rebounds, 3.2 assists and 2.8 steals as well.

Burroughs is scoring in double figures at an even 10.0. Parker is the leading rebounder at 11.0 to go with 5.4 points, while Williams is averaging 9.8 rebounds and 4.8 points.

Patel is averaging 4.4 points and 5.8 rebounds. Other members of the team are senior **Cooper Pound**, junior **Thomas Fanning**, junior **Parker** Gray and junior Chris Jackson.

"So far this season we are about where I expected to be," Delaney said. "Some guys have performed better than I expected and some have performed below my expectations, but as I said we are a young team and some players are drinking from a fire hose right now in what they are being asked to do.

"The best thing we have going for us right now is that every player is a competitor and they leave everything they have on the court. We just have to keep working in practice and learning from our mistakes in games. We have some talent and guys are

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going to have to buy into what we are trying to do." How does losing him change what you do sc-

OWANGEBURG, SC 29116

chem-wise and why? We are a young team and very inexperienced. Starting three sophomores we have some growing to do and I expect we will learn some hard lessons early in the season. Without T I am counting on all the guys to step up in different areas. We will have to replace his production by committee. Jysiri Parker and Cholly Williams right now have been filling the void for us on the boards averaging over 10 per game.

Timberland girls basketball off to torrid start

By Rob Gantt

Special to the HSSR

ST. STEPHEN - Timberland High School's girls basketball team has started off the season with a 7-0 record.

Coach Roger Greene's club recorded a dominant, 61-18 victory at Stratford High School Wednesday, Dec. 10, in a non-region game for the latest victory.

The Lady Wolves wreaked havoc on the defensive end of the floor, their trademark this winter.

"I expect them to play defense first," said Greene, whose squad shared the region championship last season. "Nothing else we want to do happens if we don't play defense first. We haven't played a complete game yet but we have hustled. That hustle completes the easy opportunities that you need to get some momentum and get yourself going."

Leading Timberland's group of returning starters this season is guard **Zion Prioleau**, who was named one of Class 2A's top senior players in the preseason by the South Carolina Basketball Coaches Association. Prioleau has been on the roster since seventh grade and garnered all-state honors as a junior. She averaged 14.7 points, 4.8 rebounds, 2.6 assists and 2.8 steals per game in 2024-25.

Prioleau poured in a game-high 29 points versus Stratford.

China Greene is another sixth-year player in the backcourt for the Lady Wolves. She averaged 9.3 points, 5.6 rebounds and 4.1 steals as a junior. Senior forward Samara Scott, who led the squad in rebounding with 7.3 boards a game as a junior, is in her fourth season on the varsity. She tallied 8.2 points per game as a junior. Scott reached double digits with 10 points in the game against Stratford. Sophomore wing **Kennahdi Murrell** is in her third season on varsity and averaged 7.3 points, 5.7 rebounds and 2.8 steals as a freshman.



Step No. 1 in Greene's mind this season is getting through the region slate without a blemish.

"The first thing we've got to do is take care of the region," Greene said. "If we take care of the region, you get home playoff games. You don't have to travel. You have practice time. We can have walkthroughs before games happen. Getting the homecourt advantage is the first step. You've got to have steps. You can't just say I'm going to do all this and not have a plan to get there.'

Timberland's other wins this season came against C.A. Johnson (61-15), Scott's Branch (70-25), Cane Bay (44-17), Fort Dorchester (53-35), Cross (68-8) and Lake Marion (59-53).

SJCA eyeing a region title in boys basketball

By Neill Kirkpatrick Special to the HSSR

Goose Creek – The past couple of years the St. John's Christian Academy's boys' basketball has taken it's lumps as the team was young and short on experience but they have grown and gotten better and now this class enters their senior year with high expectations.

"This team has played together for a few years and they have spent time getting better in the off season in the weight room and playing AAU ball," said Head coach Bob Winters. "They give great effort every night. We don't have a lot of depth. The guys stay focused and pay attention to the little things that are the difference between wins and

Coach continued, "We don't turn the ball over and we play solid basketball. Our goal is to win the region championship and see if we can make a playoff run but there is a long way to go."

The Cavaliers have gotten off to a good start at 6-2 after beating Christian Academy 69-66. It was their fourth win in a row. They have a two-game series with Palmetto Scholars Academy (4-4) before playing in a Holiday tournament.

The team's six seniors are the heart and soul of the team and our led by captains **Thomas Hester**, Tradd Laws, and Isiah Antley. Hester leads the team in scoring at 25ppg, rebounding at 8.6pg, and steals at 3pg. The 5-11, 174 lb. senior is a returning All Region performer but was somehow over looked for any All-State teams last season despite being the second leading scorer in the state at 29.4ppg. This

was an egregious miss by the people who pick these teams. He has scored over 1500 points for his career and if he continues on his present scoring pace he will top the 2000-point mark which is a mark very few reach in their high school careers and he has done 95% of his scoring has been in the last three

"Beside being a good basketball player, Thomas a great kid. He leads by example and is the hardest working player on our team," said coach Winters.

Law (6-1, 180) is the team's second leading scorer at 20ppg and he leads the team in assists and is second in steals. He provides stability and solid decision making. He has a chance to top the 1000point barrier by the end of the season.

"Tradd is solid. He played a lot of AAU ball and improved his game over the summer," coach said.

Antley (6-4,190) provides offense and defense the post for the Cav's. He has a soft touch around the basket and cleans the glass on both sides of the court. He is second in rebounding at 8.3rpg and leads the team in blocks at two per game.

The teams most improved player is **Aiden** McCoy (5-10,165) and has become a solid 3rd scoring option. He is averaging 9.6 points per game and 5.5 rebounds per game.

Senior **Jacob Glover** (6-1,165) is the Cav's point guard and handles the ball and distributes it well. He has played multiple games without a turnover and is a good rebounder from his guard positions.

Dor Reichley (5-8,175) is the Cav's 6th man. He can come in and play any position on the floor. He also leads the team in 3-point percentage shooting

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and is often called on to be the team's defensive "stopper". One of the top athletes in the school he led the football team in rushing with over 1000 yards and finished his career with 3432 yards and 35

The rest of Cav's are underclassmen in sophomores Quentin Grant, Will Droillet, and Grayson Reichley and junior Logan Colbert.

Hanahan girls team hoping to jell this season

Special to the HSSR

HANAHAN – Hanahan High School's girls basketball team was hit hard by transfers in the offseason, but Lady Hawks coach Alison Cappelloni anticipates another solid season on the hardwood for the Murray Drive school after the team develops the first half of the

"We want to continue to set that standard of not only making the playoffs, but also hosting and winning a playoff game, and having a winning season," Cappelloni said. "We want to keep building on that. It's tough when you have people transfer and you have a young team, but the girls we have have a good work ethic. They've come ready to play. The energy at practice has been great. The scrimmages have been successful and shown us what we need to work on."

Cappelloni's squad returns four lettermen: senior forward Syniah Rivers, sophomore forward Kaleigh Taylor, senior guard Vanessa Covell and senior guard Dulce Dominquez Morales. In all, the Hawks are replacing their top five scorers and rebounders off the 2024-25 squad that finished 15-9 and made the second round of the Class 3A playoffs for the second straight

If Rivers gets the ball in the high post, she's quick enough to get downhill for a layup or knock down a shot from there.

"She's been working on her up-and-unders and spin moves, too," Cappelloni said. "If she gets it on the block, she's going to be tough to stop.'

Taylor worked on her outside shooting in the offseason and is a threat to drop it in from beyond the 3-point

"She's developed an outside game and that's a huge advantage," Cappelloni said. "She's got the height to



Kaleigh Taylor

bang around inside. She's aggressive. She's tough. She'll battle for the rebound. She's got so much growth

Four more players on the 10-person roster suited up for the junior varsity team last winter: sophomore forward Camryn Walker, sophomore guard Cailyn Pollard, freshman wing Reese Wilber and freshman guard Maddy Reed. Freshman guard Alyna Shuler and junior guard Gabby Kay are newcomers.

"Everybody just needs more experience under game pressure but we are excited," Cappelloni said. "There will be some growth and development as the season goes on, but we still plan to live up to what we've done the last couple years. We've got a well-balanced crew, which is a good problem to have."

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Cross playoff run ends with loss to Red Raiders third-year starters in 2026. Harris finished this sea-

By David Shelton Senior Writer

Cross – For the second straight season, the **Cross** High football program made a run in the Class A playoffs. Only this year's run fell one step short of reaching the state finals

Cross won the Lower State last season before losing to Abbeville in the state championship game. This season ended in the Lower State finals as the Trojans dropped a 29-26 decision to Bamberg-Ehrhardt, who went on to win the state championship a week later.

Cross finished 2025 with an 11-2 record overall, winning the region championship with an unbeaten record for the second straight season. Head coach **Shaun Wright** says his program will continue to trend upwards even with some key losses to gradua-

"We are blessed here to have kids who love football and they love to compete," Wright said. "That love for the game trickles down to our rec league team and those guys are building their own foundation to bring with them in the near future.

"We lose some key pieces but really, overall, we had a lot of underclassmen on the field this year. We'll return some guys who contributed a lot to our success so I don't expect too much of a drop off, if any. We're going to remain a competitive program."

The Trojans did indeed start a lot of underclassmen this fall. Quarterback **Tyler Harris** and running back Mah'ky Green were juniors and both will be

son with 1,619 passing yards and 17 touchdowns. He completed 68 percent of his pass attempts.

"Tyler is a leader in this program," Wright said. "He's a mature kid and he's a competitive kid." Green finished this season with 1,601 yards rush-

ing, scoring 16 touchdowns. "He just continues to get better and better. He should have a big season next year," Wright said.

Juniors Jeremiah Smith and KJ Levine also will return. Levine had nine rushing touchdowns while Smith had 26 pass receptions on offense and 57 tackles on defense.

Several linemen who played both ways will return next season as well. Two of the top returning linemen will be Jailyn Broughton and Kenji Polite

Among the key leaders to replace are safety/receiver Caden Ramsey, linebacker William Grant, and two-way starter along the front Michael Ben-

Ramsey, who has signed with South Carolina and will play in the Shrine Bowl, caught 55 passes for 778 yards and nine touchdowns. He also tallied 59 tackles and collected seven interceptions. Ramsey had 21 interceptions over the last two seasons.

Bennett, who was selected to play in the North-South all-star game, led the defense with 98 total tackles, including 27 tackles for loss and 11 sacks.

Grant finished this season with 64 tackles, nine for loss while also rushing for 374 yards and six



Cross High School

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Courtesy Matthew Bradberry, Athletic Director







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Hampton County football falls in state title game

By Neill Kirkpatrick Special to the HSSR

Goose Creek – In just three season (23-25) the Hampton County Hurricanes have established themselves as one of the top-class AA programs in the state as they have complied a record of 31-9 and have played in two lower state championship games, winning one this season before falling in the state championship game.

"We are going to lose 15 seniors that were a big part of our program over the last three years but as I told the team we do not rebuild, we reload," said head coach Rob Hanna after the state championship game."

"We didn't play our best game but Strom Thurmond has a lot to do with it. I told our team that sometimes things don't go your way but I would never questions their heart. They fought in every game until the end and had a great season," said coach.

One of the key's to the Cane's success has been their ability to run the ball. This year their offensive line paved the way for 4287 yards rushing and for the second time in three years they had a running back go over 2500 yards. They will only lose senior center **Hunter Law**-

The Cane's also say good bye to two times All State player **Jaylen Singletary**. He will earn his second All State selection at running back this season. As a sophomore he was All State as a defensive back. This season he rushed for a state high 2623 yards and 42 touchdowns. Both marks broke the school record of 2574 yards and 40 touchdowns set in

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THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

Tarell Grant, Desmond Mathis, Karinton Sabb and Tyler Davis will all be missed. They were standouts on both sides of the ball. Grant had over 1500 yards of total offense and accounted for 20 scores and defensively he tied for the team lead in interceptions with Singletary at 5 while leading the team in passed defended with 6.

Davis also made the class AA All State team defensive team and should make it again. He is a vicious hitter who led the Canes secondary in individual tackles with 46 and total tackles with

Mathis and Sabb made big plays in the running game and the passing game. They both averaged over 10 yards a carry and over 17 yards per receptions.

The defense will miss senior linebackers Malik Terry and Braydon Blake. They finished one, two in tackles with Terry accounting for 103 while Blake had 79. Terry also had 12 tackles for loss.

Gavin Polite is another senior play maker that will be missed. He led the team in tackles for loss with 17, sacks with four and quarterback hurries with 12.

Nose tackle Jazmir Goines was a runner stopper in the middle and mad some big catches during the season.



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Patrick Henry boys hoops off to good start

By Dennis Brunson hssr.com Associate Editor

Estill – The **Patrick Henry Academy** boys basketball team struggled through an 8-16 campaign a year ago even though it did end the year with a pulsating 71-68, triple-overtime loss to a **Calhoun** Academy team that came into the first round of the AA state tournament with a 22-5 record.

With four starters returning though, the Patriots are hoping to make amends. They already had five victories on the resume' through the first eight games. PHA head coach Claude Terry is not sur-

"We have played as well as expected so far this year," Terry said "The keys to us being successful is playing as a unit and cutting down on turnovers and being able to rebound the ball on the defensive end of the court. I'm looking forward to an exciting

Leading the way among the returning starters is senior Daivon Glover. He was averaging 19.6 points through the firat eight games to go with a team high 4.0 assists. He was grabbing 2.8 rebounds and had 1.5 steals.

The other returning starters are senior Tray Adkins, junior Michael "Scoot" Mizzell and senior Warren Williams. Adkins was also scoring in ouble figures at 13.0 and was the leading rebounder at 8.6 to go with 2.3 assists and 1.6 steals.

Mizzell was averaging 7.5 points, 3.9 rebounds and 2.5 steals, while Williams was averaging 2.5 points and 2.6 rebounds.

The fifth starter is a newcomer to the school in senior Chris Woods. He's averaging 6.9 points, 2.1 rebounds and a team high 3.9 assists.

Senior Jacob Corley is the first man off the bench and he was off to a nice start. He was third in scoring at 7.6 and second in rebounding at 6.7 to go with 1.3 steals.

"Jacob Corley has been a spark off the bench and has brought a lot of energy to the team," Terry said. Other members of the team are senior **Keagan**

Lee, junior Jay Bishop, junior Miles Peeples, junior Quinn Lawton and junior Connor Walsh.

Patrick Henry is in Region 4-AAA along with St. John's Christian Academy, Colleton Prep Academy and Hilton Head Prep. HHP is the 2-time defending AAA state champion.

The Patriots went 3-3 in the region last season, sweeping Colleton Prep, splitting with St.John's Christian and getting swept by Hilton Head Prep.

Patrick Henry will open its region schedule on the road against St. John's Christian on January 12,

HAMPTON COUNTY



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Proud To Salute the Hurricanes!

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O'Banner finishes up stellar career with Rebels

By David Shelton Senior Writer Ridgeland – A stellar

playing career for **Thomas Heyward Acad**emy standout Tony O'Banner ended with a playoff loss to Williamsburg Academy in the SCISA Class A semi-finals.

O'Banner has been one of the top players in SCISA since earning a starting nod as an eighth-grade sensation. He rushed for 848 yards that season and added 695 yards and 11 touchdowns as a freshman.

Things really took off as a sophomore when the 6-1, 215-pounder rushed for 2,369 yards and 37 touchdowns. He added 1,970 yards and 27 touchdowns as a junior and this season he rushed for 1,220 yards and 11 touchdowns in eight

O'Banner was a part of two state championship teams, finishing his career with 7,102 rushing yards and 96 career touchdowns. He averaged 10.6 yards per carry over his career. Add in receiving and return yards and O'Banner totaled 8,019 all-purpose yards.

"He's a once in a lifetime type of player," coach Daniel Bryan said in August.

This season, the Rebels finished with a 4-6 record but did notch a playoff win over Carolina Academy before the loss to Williamsburg, the eventual state champion.

O'Banner was part of a solid senior class that enjoyed championship success during their career.



2025-26 Thomas Heyward Rebels football

Another key senior this season was Josh Gibson. who played several positions during the year. Gibson finished with 980 yards and nine touchdowns, averaging a whopping 13.7 yards per carry.

Senior **Tyler Hymon** was the team's leading receiver with 16 receptions for 215 yards. Seniors Dodge Peeples, Miles Stanley, Mackie Bowers, Tanner Reed and Antonio Grether were key per formers along the offensive and defensive lines. Owen Palazzo performed as a linebacker and receiver. **Drew Willis** was a multi-purpose athlete and Jace Bessinger worked in the secondary and also at running back.

Thomas Heyward compiled a 31-16 record over the last four seasons.





2025 Beaufort Eagles boys basketball

Beaufort boys basketball continues to rebuild

By David Shelton **Senior Writer**

Beaufort – Coming off a 1-19 season of a year ago, **Beaufort High** boys basketball coach **Jeremy Huff** is optimistic about his team showing marked approvement in the 2025-26 season.

Huff, in his seventh season, says the rebuilding process continues but better results should be expected this winter.

"The sky is the limit for these young guy," Huff says. "They have been working hard, but with our schedule and region, the competition is tough. We are expecting to be middle of the region and contend for a playoff spot."

Huff has several returning players and the playing experience gained last season, despite the record, should lead to improvement overall. As the season begins, Huff lists only one senior, guard **Austin Miles**, as starting. Miles is a returner from last season and is a team captain.

starting guards as well, and junior **Qualeek Isnar** is the region title. Among the top performers early on

the starting center. Isnar should be one of the top scorers and rebounders this season. Sophomore forward PJ Davis rounds out the starting lineup. Davis played significant minutes as a freshman.

Senior guard Jakaree Wilson will be one of the first players off the bench. Senior Jason Prayer is a backup forward that will see extensive playing time, along with sophomore forward **Stanley Humphries** and freshman guard **Keaton Layman**, who averaged 7.5 points over the first two games of this sea-

Rounding out the roster are Anthony Kahler, Cody McGee, Michael Chives, Jason Brunson, **Chris Cummings and Nick Johnson.**

Beaufort competes in region 7-AAAA and Huff expects Bluffton and May River to be among the top teams. Bishop England and Hilton Head are not far behind. Bluffton, with the returning region player of the year Harry Skinner, is the favorite.

The Beaufort girls team is off to a 5-2 start, look-Juniors **Kobe Hernandez** and **Willis Watson** are ing to better last year's 16-9 record and contend for

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this season are junior Amiyah Brown (11.2 ppg), sophomore **Jania Hayward** (19.1 ppg), freshman Da'Leah LaBoard (7.9 ppg) and freshman Zaria **Coaxum** (9.3 ppg).

Knights wave goodbye to large senior class

By Rob Gantt **Special to The HSSR**

GOOSE CREEK - Stratford High School's football season was one to remember on Crowfield Boule-

The Knights captured the Region 7-5A title and finished up in the third round of the Class 5A Div. I playoffs. Stratford recorded an impressive 10-2 record.

"It was definitely a tremendous season by our guys," Stratford coach Dennie McDaniel said. "That's because of the leadership we got from our seniors. It was a culmination of all the hard work our guys put in for a long time. To see it come to fruition like that was

The game was the last one for 30 Stratford seniors, including many who had been around a while. Of the contingent, a half dozen garnered all-region recogni-

"This senior class put us back in the upper echelon of programs around the state," McDaniel said. "We were in the final four in the Lower State. There are no moral victories, but you compare yourself a little bit. Summerville won its Lower State game by one point. We lost ours by three. Those are four pretty evenlymatched teams, and everybody is good at that point and

Running back Meliq McGowan earned region offensive player of the year honors after rushing for 1,896 yards on 200 carries and catching nine passes for 198 yards. He scored 26 touchdowns for the Knights.

Ouarterback Jachin Davis, who is headed for Liberty, started for four seasons, and wide receiver **JQ Crosby**, a Georgia Southern signee, was his primary target through the air. More All-Region 7-5A picks moving on are offensive lineman Antonio Gantt, offensive lineman Jameson Pelham and defensive back Trenton Fordham.

As for next season, the Knights can return three allregion players who will be seniors: defensive back Jonah Coleman, linebacker Bryce Clemons and kicker Renzo Gorritti, who was named the region's specialist of the year.

Replacing the dual-threat Davis under center figures to be a tough job. Freshmen Caleb Lott and Dathan Haywood will get the first crack at the starting

GOOSE CREEK – Goose Creek High

The Gators return seven lettermen who were

team easily moved to 8-0 Friday, Dec. 12, easing

"Your hardest years are after your successful

there. Younger guys think it's easy, but they've

never been to practice. Older guys can forget the

work and sacrifice it took to get there the year be-

fore. Complacency kills. That's what you're con-

court are the biggest things for every team. If this

team wants it, they have the ability as much as any

Hall is in his 14th season at Goose Creek. He's

taken three teams to state finals, including two of

Senior guard **Ja'Quell Brown** headlines the

ing region player of the year, was all-state and all-

region as a junior by averaging 16.6 points, 4.2

group coming back for the Gators. Brown, the reign-

competitiveness near, and the choices on and off the

stantly fighting. The practices and the

team we've had.

the past three.

By Rob Gantt

Special to The HSSR

the win column again this season.

Gators anticipating big season on the hardwood



Running back Meliq McGowan

job going into spring practice. Lott saw action in a handful of games and went 6-for-9 for 40 yards through the air and scored one touchdown on the

Junior Jayden Lee is the top receiver coming back. He caught 20 passes for 266 yards and scored twice. Junior tight end Micah Adams grabbed nine passes for 198 yards and a touchdown. He also ripped off a 62yard touchdown scamper.

Juniors Logan Kizer and Gavin Stament figure into the mix on the 2026 offensive line, where the Knights will be hit hard by graduation.

With Coleman and Clemons returning on defense, the Knights have more pieces to build around on that side of the ball. Sophomore ends Kermit Davis and **Landon Simmons** are good players up front. Juniors Cameron Gibbs and Jarrett Hearne are back on the second level with Clemons. The Knights also lose linebacker Mason Morris, who was one of the top tack-

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Good Luck in the 2025-26 Season! Go Knights!



County Supervisor

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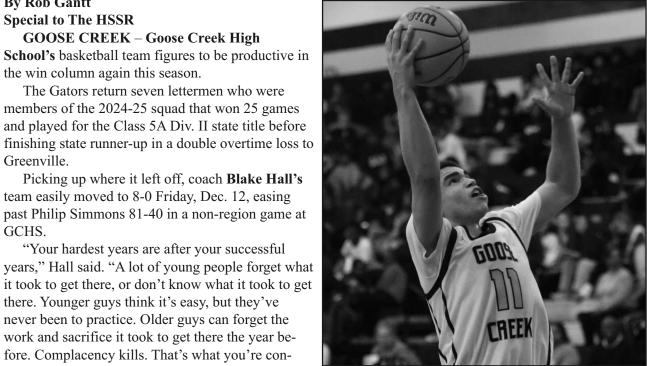


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Johnson powered the Gators with 19 points. Hoist and Grant tallied 12 points apiece and Cane Bay transfer **Jarvis Roper** contributed nine points. Brown chipped in eight points.

Goose Creek crank up the Region 7-5A schedule at Cane Bay Jan. 9. The Gators also encounter Berkeley, Lucy Beckham, Wando and Stratford in league play. The regular season winds down Feb. 10, and the Gators aim for another deep playoff run.

The Gators also have wins over Easley, South Pointe, North Charleston, Charleston Math & Science, Pinewood Prep and Kingstree this season.



Ja'Quell Brown

rebounds, 2.6 assists and 2.3 steals. Junior guard Reggie Dozier (6.5 ppg, 2.5 rpg) and senior forward Taveion Scott (5 ppg, 5.5 rpg) are also returning allregion selections for Goose Creek.

In the win over Philip Simmons, Brown led the way with 24 points, scoring 19 in the middle two quarters. Senior wing Terrell Johnson and junior guard Idreyiss Hoist added 12 points apiece, while senior guard **Brandon Grant** chipped in 11 points.

In a 75-10 victory over Beaufort two days earlier,

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Reitenour pleased with Jefferson Davis football

By Dennis Brunson hssr.com Associate Editor

Blackville – The **Jefferson Davis Academy**

football team finished with an 8-4 record. That was down a bit from the two previous seasons when the Raiders won in double figures each year, going 23-4 overall and claiminig the SCISA 8-man state title in

However, JDA head coach Anthony Reitenour considered it to be a pretty darn good year.

I was happy with the season," said Reitenour, who just completed his fourth season at the helm. "I'm proud of these guys. A lot of people came into the season and didn't expect us to be very good at all with all of the people we lost. To have an 8-4 year, go to the semifinals while all the while dealing with so many injuries, I think they have a lot to be proud of."

Jefferson Davis had six players selected to the All-Region 2 team in Reece Still, Davison Owens, Nolan Craig, Gregory Lihan, Harrison Ray and Dalton Nix.

Still, a junior, moved around on offense. He ran for 452 yards and six touchdowns on 34 carries while catching 11 passes for 200 yards and four touchdowns. Still had 57 tackles and a team high six interceptions on defense as a defensive back.

Ray, a junior, had 297 yards and two scores on 47 carries while catching 27 passes for 728 yards and 12 touchdowns. Defensively, Ray had 66 tackles playoff run, if not go all the way." and two interceptions.

Nix, a senior quarterback, completed 47 of 113 passes for 1,098 yards and 18 touchdowns while running for 505 yards and 11 scores on 101 carries.

Craig, a senior, had 62 tackles at defensive end. Lihan was the leading rusher with 784 yards and 12 touchdowns on 86 carries. Owens a junior, was responsible for opening holes for the backs from his right tackle position.

JDA BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM STARS 0-

The Jefferson Davis boys basketball team was slow coming out of the gate, losing its first three games. Reitenour, who is also the boys basketball head coach, isn't overly concerned.

"This is one of the largest teams I've ever had since I've been coaching," Reitenour said of his 12man roster. "There are a lot of them still in football mode. We're just trying to find our groove. With the

numbers, I hope we can get back to playing my style, which is more pace, more pressure."

Sophomore Will Stillinger and junior Corbin Perry are the leading scorers in the early going, averaging 9.0 points per game. Perry is the leading re-

Craig is averaging 8.9 points, while senior Lan**don Williams** is at 5.0 points, 4.5 rebounds and 2.5

Each member of the team has played in at least one game. The rest of the roster includes Owens, junior Connor Sandifer, sophomore Jake Harrington, senior Tanner Page, junior Judson Bowers, junior Stance Youngblood, sophomore Leighton **Lihan** and Ray.

Still, who was a key performer last year, is recovering from football injuries and is expected to be back after the first of the year.

JDA GIRLS WIN REGION OPENER

The Jefferson Davis girls basketball team split its first six game but won its opener in Region 3-Class A. JDA head coach Larry Johnson believes the best is yet to come though.

"Our team is playing fair," Johnson said. "But we will be all together and of one accord by the start of the playoffs. We've been battling sickness, but I think we have a really good chance to make a deep

Peyton Hutto is the only senior in the starting lineup and the only returning starter. She is joined by junior Rynn Fickling, sophomore Brooke Fogle and freshmen Rileigh York and sophomore Riley

Hutto was averaging 12 points, eight rebounds and six blocked shots. Fickling was averaging 7.0 points while York was averaging 6.0 points an a team high 10.0 rebounds.

Fogle is averaging around five points and five assists, while Williams is averaging 4.0 points an 5.0

Other members of the team are junior **Kaylee** Crouch, junior Abbie Deering, junior Esmeralda Montejano, freshman Kelsey Croft and eighthgrader Raelyn Youngblood.

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Go Raiders!

Fox Creek boys hoping for continued success

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

North Augusta - The Fox Creek High School boys basketball team won four of its first six games and is in hopes of having another strong season

The Predators have won 39 games over the past two seasons and reached the quarterfinals of the AAA state playoffs both years.

FCHS was averaging 69 points a game with three players scoring in double figures. Senior Chanze **Allen** was leading the way at 14.0 followed by junior **Justin Vining** at 12.5 and junior **Kobe Sims** at 11.5

Junior **Randy Robinson** was the leading rebounder at 5.7 while scoring at a 6.8 clip. Senior **Keori Atwell** was averaging 6.7.

Vining was the assists leader at 3.2.

FOX CREEK GIRLS OPEN 4-5

The Fox Creek girls basketball team won four of its first nine games. However, points have been hard to come by for the Predators as they are averaging just 37 points a contest.

Fox Creek returns its top three scorers from last

a game last season, is leading the way with 9.2 per game. Sophomore Mia Price, who led the team with a 10.6 average last year, is off to a slow start. She is only putting up 3.6 a game.

The second leading scorer is senior **Avery** Schwarz at 8.3 per game. She is also the second leading rebounder at 5.6

The leading rebounder is junior Maya Kryshtalowych at 7.9. As she was last year, Kryshtalowych is the third leading scorer at 5.2.

Jennings is averaging 4.2 rebounds.

Fox Creek is looking to improve upon a 9-14 overall record and a 4-4 mark in region play. The Predators had to go on the road in the firt round of the playoffs and lost to **Hanahan** 45-38.

2 PREDATORS SELECTED FOOTBALL **ALL-REGION**

Running back **Bryson Crawford** and offensive lineman/defensive lineman John Truesdell were the Fox Creek football players selected to the All-Region

Crawford, who is a junior, had a tremendous seaseason. Junior **Jada Jennings**, who averaged over 10 son. He rushed for 1,391 yards and 21 touchdowns

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on 198 carries. He also caught three passes for 21 vards and a score.

Truesdell, a senior, finished with 50 tackles, 15 tackles for loss, a team high six sacks, two forced fumbles and one fumble recovery.

Predators who were honorable mention were junior athlete Mehki Quiller, senior outside linebacker Noah Gaines, senior offensive lineman Alec Beck, sophomore outside linebacker Kamal Grant, senior defensive back Riley Howell and junior defensive back Char'tavious Weaver.

2025-26 Dorchester Academy Raiders basketball

Dorchester football put in the work all season long

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

St. George – The Dorchester Academy football team came up shy of the ultimate goal of winning the SCISA Class A state championship. The Raiders reached the semifinals of the playoffs before losing to Colleton Prep Academy 22-16 to finish the year with a 9-2 record.

That being said, DA head coach Michael Nelson could find no fault in the effort put forth by his players to achieve that goal

"I'm proud of the work our guys put in all offseason and all season long to give us a chance to compete for a state championship," Nelson said. "We fell short of our goal, but we are excited about getting back next season."

Dorchester won its first eight games of the season, including a 28-14 triumph over Colleton Prep. However, the Raiders lost to eventual state champion Williamsburg Academy 36-21 to decide the region championship in the regular-season finale.

Dorchester had 12 players selected to the All Region 1-Class A team. They were senior quarterback/free safety John Quattlebaum, senior running back/defensive end John Whetsell, senior tight end/middle linebacker Abe Shuler, senior cornerback/wide receiver Landon Holly, senior tight end **Bradley Sievert**, junior offensive guard/defensive tackle Will Quattlebaum, sophomore fullback/noseguard Warren Judy, sopho-

more running back **Reed Almers**, sophomore guard/noseguard Jac Carn, freshman guard/noseguard Matthew Byron, junior center/defensive tackle Jack Whetsell and junior wide receiver Noah Risher.

John Quattlebaum completed 81 of 116 passes for 1, 162 yards and 10 touchdowns against just two interceptions. He also rushed for 117 yards and one touchdown on 16 carries.

John Whetsell was the workhorse of the offense. Whetsell carried the football 200 times and rushed for 1,607 yards and 18 touchdowns.

Shuler was Quattlebaum's favorite target as he had 31 receptions for 462 yards and four touchdowns. Risher had 21 catches for 368 yards and seven touchdowns, and Holly had 10 catches for 110 yards and one score.

Almers and Judy took full advantage of their opportunities to run the football. Judy rushed for 492 yards and seven touchdowns on 53 catches, while Almers ran for 399 yards and six scores on 58 carries. Judy also caught five passes for 64 yards and two touchdowns.

The Raiders will graduate six seniors from this team, five of which were All-Region selections. However, Nelson expects the beat to simply go

"We are losing six seniors and have some big shoes to fill, but our guys are ready to accept the challenge and continue the strong tradition of winning football at Dorchester Academy," he said.

PCA Eagles looking to build on recent success

By Neill Kirkpatrick Special to the HSSR

Goose Creek - The Palmetto Christian Academy girls basketball program has gone through a few changes since last season as they hired a new head basketball coach in **Jimmy Tyson** and they said good bye to one of the top players in the state in Cokey Suddeth but even with those changes the expectations remain the same.

"It is definitely an honor to be hired here at PCA and to take over for Raygon, who is a good friend of mine. She did a real good job building the program." said coach Tyson. "The team this year will be different than team's the past couple of years as we will be more balanced."

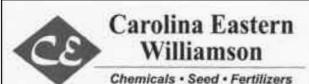
"We have to get the girls how to play as a team and not to depend on one person for the majority of the scoring. We have had some success so far this year. A couple of losses from some big schools (Wando and Bishop England) but I'm starting to love watching them develop as a team," coach Tyson said.

Coach continued, "You never like to lose but I told the team that those losses would help us as the season goes on. We have some of the top teams in the state in our region. This games will prepare us for the challenges ahead."

The Eagles return most of their team as Cokey was the only senior. They have added a couple of transfers at the guard positions in sophomore Elsie Newton and junior Ellie Tyson. They have played their way into starting positions for coach Tyson. Tyson is second on the team in scoring at 7.6 a game while Newton is tied for the team lead in steals at two a game. Tyson is the team's top three-point shooter, hitting 54% (15-28)

Also in the starting line up are senior Avery Clark (Post) and juniors Audrey Bright (Guard) and Adelaide Suddeth (Forward). Suddeth is coming off a solid sophomore season and is one of the players coach Tyson looks to lead the Eagles. She leads the team in scoring at 9.4pg, is second in rebounding at 7pg, leads in steals at 2.6pg and blocks at 1.6 pg.

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Bright leads the team in assist at 2.5 a contest and is averaging over two steals a game while Clark grabs over five rebounds a night

"All these girls are good players who are trying to figure out their roles on the team. The girls have worked really hard at that and I have seen glimpses of what this team can be which is exciting to see and to what the future holds for this group, "said

Anna Grace Works comes off the bench and provides an instant spark for the Eagles. The sophomore forward is second on the team in scoring knocking down 7 ppg while leading the team in rebounding at 8rpg.

Senior Josie Hurley and freshman Ripley Sud**deth** have come off the bench to provide solid play at the guard position.

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Wolverines girls hoops are overcoming injuries

By Billy G. Baker **Publisher**

Dorchester—It was just two years ago that the **Woodland** girls' basketball team won a region title under first year head coach Austin Jefferies, and the team advanced to the third round of the SCHSL AA playoffs that season.

Four games into the 2025-26 season the Lady Wolverines are 1-3 but they have been in most of their games. An example of this is their close, 55-49 lost to tradition rich Orangeburg-Wilkinson on December 10.

"We just have to find ways to be playing better in the fourth quarter with the game on the line," said Coach Jefferies, now in his third season. "We just need to learn how to win and get over the hump of not playing as well as we can in the fourth quarter.

"I stress to the team all the time about playing together as a team and working hard with a laser focus on doing the right things," said Coach Jefferies. "I am always telling my players to give the team their very best effort, and to keep putting in the work to get better."

The teams who won over **Branchville** to start the season (63-3). Their other two losses were against Bethune-Bowman (41-30) and Lake Marion (38-

The team is led by 5-11 freshman forward **Lenaya Ross** who has been an active player on the Lady Wolverines team since the 7th grade. Ross is currently averaging 14 points, 8.5 rebounds and 2.5 steals a game.

"Ross is very dominant in the paint whether we are on offense or defense," said Coach Jefferies. "She defenses the post area very well. Against Orangeburg-Wilkinson I know she had four or five blocked shots in the paint. She is also very good at making layups."

Junior combo guard Jalina Goodwin is the lone returning all-region player from last season. This is her third year on the varsity, and she is currently av-



Girls basketball coach Austin Jeffries

eraging 8 points, 3.5 rebounds, and 2.5 stealing a

"Jalina's strong points on the court are her ability to get steals on defense, and she is very good in transition," said Coach Jefferies. "She uses her quickness sophomore center Brianna Jenkins. Also, 8th grade to her advantage on the court."

Eighth grade forward/guard Lateriah Calhoun was a starter until a dislocated shoulder shut her season down. She was averaging 2.5 points and three rebounds a game at the time of her injury.

Calhoun was replaced in the line-up by senior guard Carmen Allen who came into the game with Orangeburg-Wilkinson averaging 5.5 points, one rebound and 1.5 steals a game.

"Allen scored 16 points against O-W, and we hope she keeps this up," said Coach Jefferies. "Her stepping up for the team on offense will help us have his team become a late addition to a Christmas success the rest of the season.'

Essence Walker is an 8th grade starter at point guard, and she is currently averaging three points, two rebounds, 3.5 steals, and two assists per game. Junior Sh'mya **James** is 5-10 center, and she rounds out the starting line-up averaging four points and 2.5

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rebounds a game.

Senior forward Makaila Adgerson and junior SF **Brazil Nelson** are the first two players off the bench in most games. When junior guard Damani **Johnson** comes into a game it is for her shooting skills and she is a three-point shooter. Adgerson is known for her defense and rebounding.

The team is made up of 15 players. Other key reserves include junior guard Emani Smalls, junior forward Paisley Wolfe, junior guard Chanelle Simmons, junior forward Jakyhia Martino and guard Tiana Wamer is playing up-and-down between jayvee and varsity. She is averaging five points and three rebounds a game.

As the HSSR was going to press the Woodland girls were preparing to host Cane Bay on December, 12. During the rest of December the team will be hosting Cross on the 15th, host Orangeburg-**Wilkinson** on the 17th, then they play an away game at Bethune-Bowman to close out the month on December, 20.

Coach Jefferies said that he is hoping to have tournament in the region. "We have a 13-day break after we play Bethune-Bowman before we play at **Cane Bay** on January 3rd and that is too long for us to be idle," said Coach Jefferies. "I am looking around to see what might be available right now.'

Henry begins first year as Woodland boys basketball coach this winter

By Billy G. Baker **Publisher**

Dorchester—The **Woodland** boys' varsity basketball team enters the 2025-26 season under the direction of first year head coach Henry Berry who came to the school after spending 20 seasons as a varsity coach in Loganville, Ga.

He has two main goals in rebuilding the program. "I am working hard to change the culture of the basketball program here and the best way to accomplish that is to compete for and win a region title," said Coach Berry. "We are working hard at how to become more competitive and play the game at a higher level.

"The strength of our team is our togetherness," said Coach Berry. "All our players get along very

The team is currently 1-3 as of mid-December. The Wolverines lone win came over Lake Marion 31-28 at the start of the season. Their losses have come against Branchville (66-39), Bethune Bowman (57-41), and Orangeburg-Wilkerson (67-20).

6-3 junior leads the team wing/forward **Jervase Salley,** and he is back on the team after not playing last season. As a freshman he averaged in double figures. To date, Salley is averaging a double-double

with 13 points, scoring a game along with 10 rebounds per game.

"Jervase brings leadership to the court," said Coach Berry. "He plays hard and he is a leader on

Junior wing **Lakye' White** is a returning starter from last year's team. Sophomore combo guard Kymonte Goodwin was cited by the coach for bringing good leadership from his experience as a football player at Woodland

Coach Berry has named freshman wing **Jhailen** Herrin as the captain of the team. "Jhailen is a yearround player who is devoted to the game of basketball," said Coach Berry. "He has a high basketball I-Q, and he brings a lot of leadership to the team."

Herrin is currently averaging five points and five rebounds per game.

The 5th starter for the Wolverines is newcomer junior point guard Juan Forrero. He averages seven points and five assists per game. Junior 6-8 center Daniel Balzan also starts most games, and he is averaging seven rebounds a game as a newcomer to the varsity this season.

The first two players off the bench are usually junior wing Elijah DeLee who is a good shooter, and he plays solid defense when he enters a contest. Senior combo guard **Jamin Brown** is a returning player from last season. He is averaging around six points a game while playing good on defense.

Other contributing players on the team include senior guard Al-Casio Teel, junior guard George Perry, senior wing/forward Jaylen Simpson, and iunior center/forward Samuel Gadson.

In the Lake Marion win, Goodwin led the Wolverines in scoring with 15 points while Balzan contributed 8 rebounds and blocked seven shots

Coach Berry describes Forero as the team's best all-ball defender; the team's best free throw shooter is Balzan, and the best three-point shooter is also

Remaining games in December include four straight home games starting with Cane Bay on the 12th, Lake Marion on the 13th, Cross on the 15th, and Orangeburg Wilkinson rounds out the home stretch of games on the 17th.

The team will participate in the Carolina Invitational between December 27-30, and they will be at Stratford High site, and they play the Knights on December 27 and on the 29th they face **Landon** High from Bethesda, Maryland.

Coach Berry is assisted by Rania Thompson.

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Injuries hindering progress for AJA girls hoops

By Billy G. Baker **Publisher**

Ehrhardt—In his first season as the head girls' basketball coach at Andrew Jackson Academy, in 2024-25, **Zach Boltin** coached the team to a respectable 12-12 record but early season injuries have hampered the team's goals for improvement this sea-

As of December, 10 the Lady Warriors were 1-6, 0-1 and they had played four games without the services of top player 5-11 junior SF McKinnley **Beard**, who has been out with a quad injury.

"We play a 2-3 defense and McKinnley plays in the middle of our defense, and she does an excellent job for us," said Coach Boltin. "She is also our top rebounder, so with her out the past four games we have not been as competitive. We expect to have her back in a couple weeks hopefully.

"McKinnley has been on the varsity team since the 8th grade and she was all-region and all-state last season," said Coach Boltin. "We will definitely be a better defensive team when she is able to come back."

At the time of her injury Beard was averaging 6.3 points, seven rebounds and 3.8 blocks per game.

"This team has a lot of potential and I truly feel like we will get better when we get over our injuries and get further along into the season," said Coach Boltin. "I feel like we can make the playoffs and win a game or two also. We just need to get our younger players more game experience. I feel like we will be a much better team down the stretch after the new year."

Currently the team is led in scoring by second year varsity performer Kinslie Carson. Carson is a junior shooting guard averaging 11 points and 4.3 rebounds a game. "Kinslie is great at driving to the basket where she gets to the free throw line a lot," said Coach

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

Bella Carigg is a junior point guard averaging 8 points, 3.2 steals and 2.4 assists a game. "Bella is our main shooter," said Coach Boltin. "This is her third year on the varsity team and she has shown steady improvement."

A third returning starter from last season is sophomore guard Harlo Sease who is in her fourth season on the varsity despite being just a sophomore. She is currently averaging 6.1 points and 5.4 re-



bounds a game. "Harlo has been filling in for Beard in the middle of our defense and it is not where she is use to playing on defense," said Coach Boltin. "Her experience is a big asset to the team."

With Beard sidelined two younger players have been sharing time in the starting line-up. "We have been rotating sophomore Abby Ayer and freshman Brianna Jacques in Beard's place, and both came into the season with no prior varsity playing experience," said Coach Boltin. "Ayer starts a little more and Jacques is normally the first person off the bench." Ayer is averaging 4.1 rebounds a game.

See AJA Girls, pg, 4'

Warriors hoops dealing with injuries early on

By Billy G. Baker Publisher

Ehrhardt—After playing for a SCISA AA boy's state title in 2024-25 the **Andrew Jackson Academy** Warriors team have been hit by injuries and graduation losses, so this could be a rare rebuilding season for veteran head coach **Josh Barnes** as he enters his 15th season as head coach in the program.

"Our basketball team has done well but our current record does not show the progress of this team," said head coach Josh Barnes, "Playing without Hall (Sease) the past few games has been most challenging on the rebounding side of things.

"We have challenged others to step up to fill that void and they have responded of late," said Coach Barnes. "Elijuh Davis and Ollie Barnes both had 16 rebounds each in **Saturday's** (December, 13) double over-time loss to Patrick Henry. Eli Mathys stepped up with double digit rebounds as well.

'Hall also leaves a void as a secondary ball handle for the team," said Coach Barnes. "Will Barnes, an 8th grader stepped up earlier to help fill this void. Tanner Chassereau has logged in key minutes as well to help fill

"I am always proud to see kids filling in other roles other than their usual standard roles," said Coach Barnes. "It shows growth and maturity of your student athletes when they can step into new roles and help the team and that is one of my primary focuses as a coach.

"Davis has provided as inside presence for the team also," said Coach Barnes. "He is focused on improving



every day. I feel that Hall having his unfortunate injury forced us into a fire and caused some to get burned but in the end the team will be stronger for it. We look forward to having Hall back as he is one of our most experienced players who has been through everything with me.

"Either my brother, or myself have coached Hall since the 5th grade and we understand what talent Hall brings to the court," said Coach Barnes. "One constant has been Ollie Barnes. He is willing to do whatever is asked of him and he rolls with the punches. He is a high character guy on and off the court. He is dependable in all aspects of the

"My goal is for the team to be completely healthy by January," said Coach Barnes. "Hall has been out and Ollie has played though an injury that took him off the court this past week," said Coach Barnes. "Getting those two back to full strength will help us compete in our re-

"Also, Landon Godina, a key transfer starter, has helped the team with high percentage shooting and quality ball handling," said Coach Barnes.

Junior combo guard Ollie Barnes is having an outstanding season as he leads the team in scoring (18.8 points, 6.5 rebounds, and 2.4 assists a game). Barnes has

See AJA Boys, pg, 68







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COLLETON PREP

Page 43

Marion girls start 4-4 under new coach Gee

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Marion – The Marion High School girls basketball team got off to a 4-4 start to its season. The Swamp Foxes have three returning starters and a starting lineup with four seniors.

However, they are having to find their way without the graduated **Jaeda Davis**, who averaged 18.7 points

Along with adjusting to the absence of Davis, Marion is also having to adjust to the presence of new head coach Justice Gee.

Gee, who is in her first varsity head coach job and inherited a team that went 17-9 and reached the second round of the AA state playoffs, believes everyone is starting to figure things out.

"What impresses me most about this team is how athletic we are and the willingness to buy into learning new things, especially with a new coach and a whole new playing system," said Gee, whose previous coaching experience came at the middle school level.

The returning starters are all seniors – **Maliyah** Williams, Kristin Shaw and Sheteira Bethea. Williams is the leading returning scorer with a 10.6

average. She also averaged 4.6 rebounds, 1.3 assists and 1.8 steals. Bethea is the leading returning rebounder at 7.2

and averaged 4.9 points. Shaw averaged 2.8 points and 5.2 rebounds The other starters are senior Sharnya McKelvy

games last season, averaging 1.2 points. Other members of the Swamp Foxes roster are junior Ja'niyah Hall, senior Ayoni Malloy, junior Keamani McClellan, junior Nevaeh Shaw, junior Lariah Avant and junior Keirstin Woodberry

Marion is off to a 0-2 in Region 7, in which it finished second last season. The two losses came against defending region champion Atlantic Collegiate Acad**emy** by a 56-34 count and 51-46 to third place **Kingstree**, which finished one game the Swamp

Gee believes if her players stay the course, the team will be fine.

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

"To be successful this season, we need to 1) believe in the system, 2) stay disciplined, 3) always be aggressive on offense and defense. 4) have great communication with one another on and off the court, 5) star in the role you have while working for the role you want," Gee said.

MARION BOYS START 3-4

The Marion boys basketball team won three of its first seven games and split its two region games. It los to ACA 50-46 before defeating Kingstree 58-39.

The Swamp Foxes had a balanced scoring attack through the first six games. Junior Joshaun Grant was averaging 10.8 points with sophomore Ian Gause right behind at 10.7. Sophomore **Rodrick Dickerson** was scoring at a 9.8 clip, Charles White II was averaging 8.3 and freshman Jayden Nowlin was averag-

Nowlin was the leading rebounder at 7.0 while Gause was pulling down 6.3. Grant was leading in assists at 2.5 and steals at 3.3. Gause was averaging 2.7 blocked shots.

3 SWAMP FOXES ON ALL-REGION 7 SEC-

Three Marion football players were selected to the and sophomore Ashanti Gause. McKelvy played in 20 All-Region 7-AA team. They were sophomore offensive lineman Ka'Montev Kirton, iunior defensive lineman Derrion Baccous and junior outside linebacker Benjamin Watford.

> Swamp Foxes named honorable mention were sophomore linebacker **Kaleb Moore**, junior defensive back Ka'Mari Watson, sophomore offensive lineman Kendrick Brown and sophomore linebacker Kameryn Davis.

Aucs' Lowery happy with program's direction

By Dennis Brunson

Hssr.com Associate Editor

playoffs in Marc Lowery's second year as head coach, the Mullins High School football team struggled this year. The Auctioneers finished 3-6 overall and lost its final four games in Region 7 to miss out on the playoffs.

Despite that, Lowery likes the state of the program as he prepares for his fourth season.

"Even though we didn't have the season we had hoped for, we like the direction the team is headed and the potential we have in our returning players," Lowery said. "This will be our first class to go through our program from ninth grade until now.'

Mullins will have to do it without **Ka'Nazzion** Bethea though, the starting quarterback throughout Lowery's tenure. He closed out his career being selected as the Region 7 Offensive Player of the Year.

Bethea completed 79 of 162 passes for 1,179 yards and 14 touchdowns. He was also the Auctioneers' leading rusher with 876 yards and six touchdowns on 124 carries.

Lowery has nothing but words of praise for Bethea, as much for his leadership as for his physical

"He had the ability to extend plays with his legs and once again was the team's leading rusher," Lowery said. "He has had 55 touchdowns over the past three seasons and over 5,000 yards rushing and passing. There are definitely some things I would like to have seen him improve on, but with such an inexperienced offensive line it was hard at time to work through his progressions.

"Ka'Nazzion has been the heart of the Mullins football program for the past three seasons. He bought

into what we wanted to do as a staff from Day 1. He is one of the best athletes I have coached over the past **Mullins** – After going 7-4 and making the AA state 25 years. His commitment to our program and willingness to do whatever is necessary to get better has been inspirational. His presence will be missed."

> Joining Bethea on the All-Region first team were his two main targets, senior wide receiver Amir Lee and junior wide receiver **Keith** Bridgett. Making the defensive first team were senior outside linebacker Braden Hughes, senior inside linebacker Andre Littlejohn and senior defensive back Deyon Ford. Junior Da'Karai Worley was the first team kicker and the second team punter.

Lee had 19 receptions for 417 yards and seven touchdowns. Bridgett had a team high 22 catches for 365 yards and three scores.

Littlejohn led the defense in tackles with 96 and tackles for loss with 22. Hughes had 36 tackles, three TFLs and one fumble recovery, while Ford had a team high four interceptions to go with 20 tackles and two

Lowery said Worley earned first team kicking honors for his ability to place the football in specified areas on kickoffs.

"With his kicks and our coverage, teams never tarted with good field position or started a drive after kickoff in our territory," Lowery said of Worley, who averaged 36.2 yards per attempt as a punter.

The only other Auctioneer on the second team was sophomore offensive lineman **DeAndre Stackhouse**

Honorable mention selections for the Auctioneers were senior defensive back Terrion Grant, senior linebacker Nathan Peracki, senior offensive lineman Javion Howard, junior wide receiver Jayln Mills and senior outside linebacker Ayntwain Crawford.

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Baskethall season underway at Colleton County

By David Shelton Senior Writer

non-region games.

Walterboro – Basketballs are bouncing at Colleton County High as the 2025-26 prep season begins with the boys and girls teams already playing

Both teams hope to improve during December and look to compete in region 7-AAAA. Last season was a struggle for both teams in region play. The girls team finished 1-9 in the league and 6-18 overall while the boys team went 3-7 in the region and posted an 8-15 overall record. Region play this season begins on Jan. 9th against Beaufort.

The boys team has opened this season with a 4-5 record as coach Dominic Kahee works on developing team chemistry. The roster is pretty much evenly split between seniors and underclassmen but only a handful of players contributed last season.

Through the first nine games, the top scorer is senior Jaqueas Martin, who averages 7.5 points per game. Sophomore **Akai Martin** averages 6.8 points per outing and junior Michael Witkin averages six points per game. Junior Galil Frazier and freshman Jair Doctor are scoring about five points per game. Frazier has been the top rebounder at 4.3 boards per game.

Remaining seniors on the team include Christopher Platts, Kaidyn Ballard-Frazier, and Ronald **Youmans**. Filling out the roster are freshman Jamal Garrett, junior Anthony Hamilton, freshman Jordan Linnen and freshman Reginald

Colleton County's early losses came to Stall, Stratford, Ashley Ridge, Charleston Math & Science and North Charleston. The Cougars beat Lowcountry Leadership twice, and knocked off Gilbert and Baptist Hill in the first three weeks of the sea-

matched last year's win total in the first few weeks of the season, going 6-4 early on. Several underclassmen are contributing early on as the team has only three seniors on the roster.

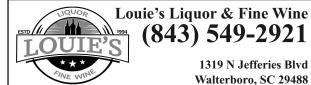
Seniors this season include Angel Mosley, Trinity Drayton and Xiomara Oxney, who is the top returning scorer from last year when she averaged 7.5 points before injury ended her season after 14

erah Koger, Destiny McMillian, and Jah'Nyiah White. The sophomores are Kashanti Glover, Shaneyshia Kelly, Kemori Williams and Tierra

Rounding out the roster are eighth-graders Lillian Mitchell and Khylei Doctor.

The wrestling season also is underway. Colleton County has two wrestlers returning that were state qualifiers as individuals last season. Preston Hogan qualified in the 106-pound weight class and Jordan LaPresta qualified at 132 pounds.

Colleton County is also looking for a head football coach this winter. Adam Kinloch will not return in 2026 after three seasons as head coach. A new coach should be in place by the end of February.



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The girls team, coached by Charles Lindsey,

The juniors on the roster are Lalia Yates, Key-

Colleton Prep football looks to have bright future the season with more than 2,000has been ultra-pro-

By David Shelton Senior Writer

Walterboro – Colleton Prep came up a little short in their bid for a state title but the future is bright for head football coach Greg Langdale and his program.

The Warhawks lost to Williamsburg Academy, 36-14, in the SCISA Class A state championship game, finishing with a 9-3 record. But with 16 underclassmen starting this season, next season looks promis-

"We got a little better every week and we played our best football at the end, which is what you want, Langdale said. "I'm really proud of this group. We were not very big so we really had to focus on the fundamentals and play with effort."

Langdale, the head coach since 2019, knew coming into the season that his team was very young overall and wondered if the lack of experience at key positions could hold his team back.

When the Warhawks opened the season with a loss to John Paul II, the coaches and players knew there was plenty of work to be done.

"I think that first loss really kind of shook us up and we realized we really needed to get to work," Langdale said. "We had a young group. We had one returning lineman and our offensive line had a bad game in that opener. We knew we had to get better across the board if we wanted to have a good season. Credit to the kids, they went to work. This team had a great attitude and a willingness to work."

Championship-level teams are good at quarterback and the Warhawks had solid play and leadership from junior Cale Owens, who saw varsity action as a freshman and was the starter in 2024. Owens capped

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ductive this season, passing for more than 2,116 yards and 21 touchdowns while rushing for 1,215 yards and 19 touchdowns. Senior **Tanner Wolf** also produced in the running

game with 835 yards and 13 touchdowns. The trio of Perry Corbett, Charlie Walker and Hartman Fisk will return next season after solid campaigns this fall. Corbett had 41 receptions for 828 yards and 10 touchdowns while Fisk had 42 catches for 494 yards and Walker had 11 receptions for nearly 200 yards.

The lone returning starter along the offensive line when the season began was senior Steven Crosby, a third-year starter. Crosby played center for two seasons before moving to guard this fall. Tackle **Grayson Catterton** was the other starting senior. Sophomores Austin Murdaugh, Fripp Smoak and Aden Willis round out the starting unit.

What the defense lacked in overall size, they made up for with quickness and effort, says Lang-

"We were under 200 pounds at most positions. We played hard and physical. We had to play wide open to be competitive. We bent some but we didn't break. They played their best game against Dorchester (in the semi-finals).

Wolf, Braeden Hiers (51.5 tackles), Everett Temple (44.5 tackles) and freshman Kaiden Kinard were key players up front. Sophomore linebacker **Ben Cain** was the leading tackler with 56 total hits. Smoak started at linebacker and had 49 total tackles. **Tre Ferguson** was the other linebacker.

Corbett, Owens and Fisk start in the secondary, along with senior Jack Broderick.

Bethea returns on mission to get back to state

By WORTHY EVANS

Special to the HSSR Columbia -Six games into the season, the Gray Collegiate boys basketball team is looking to return to

its state championship pathway at the 4A level. The War Eagles (4-1) reached the third round of the playoffs under head coach Carlos Powell in their first year in 4A, but with the return of **Dion Bethea** comes a reset. Bethea, the team's first coach who led them to six 2A state championships, left in 2024 to serve as an assistant to head coach Charlie Henry at Georgia **Southern**. One year later, he's back at Gray Collegiate and committed to returning the War Eagles to the state championship game.

"We're just trying to build the championship culture back," Bethea said. "With me leaving for a year, it kind of got broken up a little bit."

The War Eagles lost just two seniors from last year. The big returner is **Kennesaw State** signee and 6-foot 6 power forward Levi Ball, an all-Region 4-4A, allstate player who's surpassed the 1,000-point mark for his career. Ball, who averaged 13 points and 8.2 rebounds per game last year, is joined by **Irmo** transfer Jayden Rivers, another 6-6 power forward who averaged 6.8 points and 4.2 rebounds per game for the Yel-

"Those guys are really good players," Bethea said. "We've got a great group coming back to us from last

Bethea brings with him a few lessons from his time at Georgia Southern. While stressing that college basketball is far different from high school hoops,

"C.H. taught me a lot. I'm coming back with ideas on better spacing on the court and the importance of making shots versus taking shots, and defensive rotations. The college game is really different from high school, but I learned a lot.'

Gray Collegiate opened the season with a doubledigit loss to defending 5A Division I Ridge View, but posted wins over Houston (Tenn.), St. Michaels (Austin, Tx, 14-3) and **Midland Valley** (4-2) in the runup to the Bojangles Bash at Ridge View Dec. 13-14. **Freeman** (10.3 points and 3.6 rebounds). The War Eagles beat The Burlington School (N.C.) 70-

58 Friday and played with Davidson Day (N.C.) Satur-

Playing schools outside the state is important for

"Since I've been at Gray it's always been about exposure," Bethea said. "It's good for the kids to paly against really good competition in games like that. You don't always see 6-11 or 7-0 (athletes) and four stars like the point guard for Houston. It's a gauge of where we're at, just like playing Ridge View."

Gray opens the region with 4A state runner-up the nonregion games against Tullahoma Dec. 18 and determination of how the team handles.

"We talk to them and tell them we haven't done anything yet," Bethea said about his team. "North Augusta is No.1 in 4A, and we've got to beat those guys to prove we're the best. We've got to beat them twice in order to win the region, and a third time to get to the state championship.'

accomplish this task, and he knows that he has a coaching staff that can make it happen.

"I've got a great staff and that's so important," Bethea said. "Coach (Louis) Dreher and Mark **Cooper** have been with me forever, I've got Coach (Elliott) Pope, Sam Fritzer, and Khalil Robinson, those guys relate to kids the best, and shooting coach Steve Heaton is great with the kids. I'm really excited about this season and competing in 4A."

are led by senior **Kadence Walker-Lee** (15.4 points and 10.5 rebounds per game) and sophomore **Kiley**

38-7 win over an undefeated Loris in the Lower

lethal passing attack and the offense was unstop-

worker in the run game with 1,265 yards and 13

touchdowns. He also had 30 receptions on the sea-

Junior quarterback Aiden Manavian won his

third state title as the starting quarterback has passed

for more than 8,000 yards in his career. This season,

Manavian completed 70 percent of his attempts for

Five receivers have caught at least 25 passes this

pable. Senior **Zahki Muncey** was the primary

The running game brought a healthy balance to a

Oceanside wins third straight state crown

By David Shelton

Mt. Pleasant – The third time was certainly a ball team in 2025.

The Landsharks defeated **Belton-Honea Path**, 28-7, to capture their third consecutive AAA state championship on Dec. 5 at Oliver C. Dawson stadium in Orangeburg.

"I'm so honored to be a part of this," LaPrad all the credit. We also have great support from our

The Landsharks ended 2025 with a 13-game winning streak after opening the season with losses to Irmo (35-28) and Calvary Day of Georgia (59-49). While the two early losses raised some eyebrows around the Palmetto State, LaPrad remained title contender.

"I knew what we had in terms of character and I knew we would get our share of wins," the coach said. "I also knew our guys would put in the work to get better. These kids have a very competitive spirit.

After allowing 94 points in the first two games, the Landsharks allowed just 9.8 points per game during the 13-game winning streak. The first-team defense allowed just three touchdowns in the playoffs, which included a 42-0 shutout of Dillon and a showing the players a range of top athletes as well as

North Augusta (5-0) Dec. 16. The Yellow Jackets are the primary competition in the region. That game, and **Newton** Dec. 30, will give Bethea and his team a good

Bethea believes that his players have the ability to

The girls team (5-2) fell to Goose Creek in the season opener Nov. 21 and to Military Magnet Academy Nov. 29, but beat James Island Nov. 22, River Bluff Nov. 28 and Legacy Earl College Dec. 5 and again on Dec. 9. Coming off a 17-7 season and finishing second in the region, the War Eagles under Brandon Wallace

State championship game.

4,027 yards and 41 touchdowns.

Senior Writer

charm for the Oceanside Collegiate Academy foot-

The title was first-year head coach **Brent** LaPrad's first as a head man but he was the defensive coordinator for the previous two title runs, and also won as an assistant at Fort Dorchester in 2015.

season, led by senior **Terence Johnson** and junior said. "The assistant coaches and the players deserve Anthony Williams. Johnson, a Shrine Bowl all-star game selection, had 57 catches for 1,153 yards and administration, our teachers, and our parents. Everyone played a part in this season." 17 touchdowns, while Williams had 62 receptions for 1,070 yards and 12 touchdowns. Johnson also

had nine rushing touchdowns. Sophomore Tyler Garner (35-580-5 TD), junior Cooper Webb (37-533-4 TD) and senior Ethan Ranew (25-441-4 TD) were added threats in the confident that his team would rebound and be a state passing game.

Senior left tackle **Mike Jones**, a four-year starter, anchored the offensive line while also playing on the defensive line. Guard **JB Crady** also was a returning starter while Luke Crady started at center. Senior Lamareon Thompson started at right I wasn't worried." tackle and **Grant Castello** was the other starting

> Jones and senior end Sawyer Arnold were leaders along the defensive line as returning starters. Jones, headed to Wofford, had 43 tackles, eight tackles for loss and 3.5 sacks. Arnold, who has

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signed with Appalachian State, had 36 tackles, seven for loss, and 4.5 sacks.

Senior **Joey Harriott** (42 tackles, 10 for loss, 6 sacks) and junior **Jaxson Bean** (26 tackles) also started up front. Senior linebacker Rhys Meredith led the team with 102 tackles, and junior **Michael** Strickler had 61 tackles from the secondary. Junior **Cole Gasper** had a team-high four interceptions. Senior Romaum Parson and sophomore Tyler Stafford also worked at linebacker while Jordan Wright and Titus Gilliam worked in the secondary.

Jackson Summey and Nate Thrift, both sophomores, handled the kicking duties.



2025 Pee Dee Academy Eagles football

Eagles happy with second straight trip to title game

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Mullins – After going undefeated and rolling over **Bethesda Academy** 52-14 in the SCISA AA state championship game last season, the Pee Dee Academy football team had the favor returned to it

The Golden Eagles were on the receiving end of a 54-15 whipping from undefeated Bethesda in the championship game. Though he didn't particularly enjoy it, PDA head coach Jonathan King pointed out that it occurred with the state title on the line.

"Bethesda is a great football team, great program, well-coached. They deserved to win the game, but our kids put in a great year," King said. "From what we lost from last year, most people wrote us off before the season ever started. We've had a lot of questions all summer long and preseason, but I knew we had a potential with the kids we have on this team. They worked hard, had a great summer, great practices. These kids didn't want to be written off, and they showed it in the way they played."

Pee Dee lost 18 seniors from the championship squad and started the season 1-2. The Eagles finished 8-4 with the last two losses coming to Bethesda, their Region 1 foe.

PDA had 10 players selected to the All-Region 1-AAA team with senior **Tristan Heckman** leading the way. He was selected as the Region Defensive Player of the Year for his play in the secondary and was the offensive star.

Heckman had 71 tackles, one tackle for a loss

and three passes defended. Offensively, Heckman rushed for 1,397 yards and 17 touchdowns on 152 carries. He caught six passes for 93 yards and three TDs.

The other All-Region selections were senior Ryan Small, senior Cole Pursley, senior Chandler James, junior Judson Martin, junior Walker Trussell, junior Miles Wiggins, junior Gavin McGill, junior Holden Lane and junior Brayden

Small had 56 tackles, one TFL, two interceptions and two passes defended as a defensive back. He rushed for 413 yards and five TDs on 75 carries to go with six caches for 112 yards and two TDs.

Martin ran for 831 yards and 11 touchdowns on 126 carries. He had 84 tackles, three TFLs, one sack and two fumble recoveries as a linebacker.

Wiggins had 44 tackles at linebacker to go with four PDs. He rushed for 259 yards and three TDs.

James played linebacker and had 57 tackles, two TFLs, one sack and one FR. Trussell started on the defensive line and had 22 tackles, one TFL and one

Lewis finished with 60 tackles, three TFLs and three sacks.

Pursley was a standout guard on the offensive line along with McGill at a tackle and Lane at the other guard.

Pursley, Hames, Heckman and Small were selected to play in the SCISA North-South Senior All-Star Game. Martin, Wiggins, McGill and Trussell played in the Futures game.

Basketball season underway at Andrews

By Neill Kirkpatrick **Special to the HSSR**

Goose Creek – The Andrews Yellowjackets girls basketball team has had a tough time since head coach **Tevin Wallace** took over the program three years ago as they have managed to win just four games in that time but it was also a time that coach Wallace was getting a young team to play hard every time out on the court no matter the score.

The lumps they have taken are starting to show the growth of the team as these young ladies have gotten older and stronger as well as the understanding of what coach Wallace expects of them. It has translated into a 4-3 start to the season and expectations

"Our growth has been huge. Being thrown into varsity competition so early forced them to learn quickly, and now you can see the difference in their confidence, their decision-making, and their toughness. They understand the speed of the game, they communicate better, and they're starting to take ownership as leaders," said coach Wallce. "The physical development has been noticeable too—stronger, faster, and more comfortable under pressure."

Coach continued, "This year, I expect us to take a major step forward. We've spent the last two seasons rebuilding, and now the experience is finally catching

up with the talent. My expectation is that we compete every night, play with discipline, and show the maturity we've been developing. I believe this group is ready to turn the corner and establish a new standard for our program.'

The Yellowjackets top three returning players have plenty of varsity playing experience despite all being under classmen in juniors Chole Skipper and Camaria Gibson and sophomore Makayla Singleton. Gibson currently leads the team in scoring at 15.7 ppg. And in steals with 10 on the year. She is a very versatile player who handles the ball, can defend and impacts the game in several ways.

Singleton is second in scoring on the team at 11.1ppg. Coach Wallace says she improved in her ability to score and defend. She has become a steady presence on both ends of the court.

One of the team's top three-point shooter has been Skipper. She brings leadership and consistency to the team. She is averaging 7.9ppg.

Joining the Yellowjackets top three players are several other players who have started during the year in seniors Ariel Holloway, Jade Wallace and Miracle Myers, junior forward Christin Cooley and eighth grader Nyla Brown. Wallace is the teams top rebounder at 4.3 a game.

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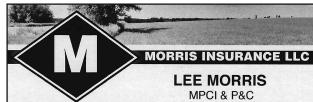
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Rounding out the Yellowjackets roster are junior Christin Cooley and freshman Elisa Dunmore.

Coach said this about his teams playoff chances this year, "Absolutely. I believe this is the year we put ourselves back in that conversation. We've taken our growing pains, but now the experience and chemistry are in place. If we stay healthy and continue to buy in defensively, we can compete for a playoff spot and surprise some people along the way."

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Pageland – The Central High School football team had to deal with an unspeakable tragedy just a month before the start of the 2025 football season: the murder of a teammate.

Senior defensive back Sean Davis, who would have been a 4-year starter and was being recruited, was shot to death at the Watermelon Festival in Pageland in July. Davis' teammates dedicated the season to him and all they did was post an 11-2 record and reach the AA lower state championship

"This season was a special season," said Central head coach Jonathan Eason. "Our team faced a terrible tragedy over the summer with the loss of Sean Davis. That tragedy could have torn the team and community apart, but it is something that brought us all together. I was very proud of how our team rallied together and played for each other this season."

The Eagles had 18 players selected to the All-Region 4-AA team. Leading the way was senior Jakari **Holloman**, a linebacker and running back who was named Co-Region Player of the Year.

Defensively, Holloman led Central in tackles with 104 and in tackles for loss with 17. He shared the lead in quarterback sacks with four, had an interception and caused three fumbles. On offense, Holloman rushed for 741 yards and 14 touchdowns on just 50

The other All-Region selections were junior quarterback **Dwayne Louallen Jr.**, senior running backs Ashten Wilson and Aiden Short, senior wide receiver/defensive back **Taveon Moore**, junior tight end Cody Branham, junior offensive left tackle Brandon Streater, senior right tackle Jared Melton, senior center Brandon Rollins, senior right guard Jordan Caldwell, senior left guard Dominic Deese, senior defensive lineman Eric Maddox, sen-

ior linebacker MJ Allen, junior linebacker Zee Allen, junior defensive back Dylan Tomberlin, senior defensive back Scoot Coyler, freshman linebacker Jalyn Davis and sophomore defensive lineman Cohen Phillips.

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

Louallen completed 102 of 166 passes for 1,665 yars and 17 TDs while rushing for 637 yards and 11 more scores. Wilson was the leading rusher with 1,300 yards and 14 touchdowns on 147 carries while catching 12 passes for 209 yards and two TDs. Short rushed for 638 yards and nine scores while pulling in 26 passes for 424 yards and three touchdowns.

Moore was the leading receiver with 33 catches for 631 yards and seven TDs. Defensively, Moore ha 44 tackles, five tackles for loss and one interception. Branham had five catches for 105 yards and two

MJ Allen had 87 tackles, three sacks, one interception and nine TFLs, Zee Allen had 36 tackles, four sacks, one INT and seven TFLs, Maddox had 51 tackles, four sacks and 10 TFLs, Colyer had 29 tackles, two picks and one TFL, Tomberlin had 40 tackles and three TFLs, and Jalyn Davis had 50 tackles and one TFL.

Sean Davis was an honorary selection to the All-Region team. Eason said his presence was felt throughout the season.

"Sean Davis was the embodiment of what a Central Eagle is supposed to be," said Eason, himself a carries and caught five passes for 138 yards and three Central graduate. "He did everything 100 percent. He was the hardest worker on the field, in the weight room and in the classroom. Our team and community have rallied around his memory, and the impact that he has had on all of us will last forever.

> "We felt his presence and memory every day. Our kids made this season special for him. It was the best season at Central since 2011, and even though we didn't finish with the final goal, I believe these guys should be extremely proud of the way they represented Sean and his family this season."

Myrtle Beach basketball looks to take next step

By David Shelton Senior Writer

Myrtle Beach – Myrtle Beach High boys basketball coach Eric Lyon is not quite sure what to expect from his 2025-26 squad.

Lyon begins his fourth season looking to continue the improvement of the first three seasons. The Seahawks won just one game in his first season, improving to nine wins in year two and posting a 13-9 record last season.

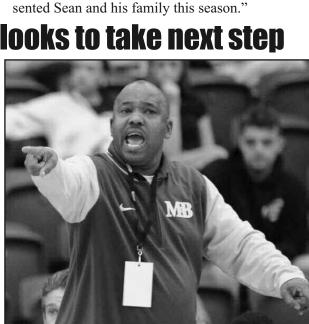
The roster returns several players from last year but many will be in new roles and with higher expectations this season.

"I describe this team as the excitement of the unknown," Lyon says. "Many of the players are expected to carry a load that they have not been asked to before; and we did not invest this summer how we needed to in order to prepare for the upcoming season. We have the potential to be competitive based on how quickly we pick up the system, development in our chemistry and effort that we give when the season begins."

The start of the season has been good as the Seahawks won three of their first four games, picking up wins over Aynor, Marion and Manning with a loss to

The starting lineup includes two seniors and three juniors. Senior guard Mathis Campbell is the top returning scorer, averaging 9.0 points per game last season. Senior Jamarcus Carroll (forward) returns after averaging 8.0 points per game last year while junior Jomarius Miller also starts this season at guard and averaged nearly five points per game last

Rounding out the starting lineup are juniors **Tate**



Head Coach Eric Lyon

Siegmund (forward) and Christian Alston (forward). Several players are expected to contribute off the bench, including seniors Traviyon James (forward) and Kingston French (forward) and juniors

Amare Brown (guard) and Julian Brown (forward). Rounding out the roster are senior forwards **Kai** Lester and Elijah Williams.

"This team will need contributions from everyone to be successful," Lyons said.

The Seahawks hope to be in contention for the region 6-AAAAA title this season. Lyon expects to be contending with St. James, Carolina Forest and Conway for the top spot.

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Saluda boys basketball team still developing

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Saluda – The Saluda High School boys basketball team won three of its first four games, but head coach Jimmy Kinard knows it is far from a finished product. In fact, it can be argued that the Tigers aren't really a basketball team yet.

"All but two of the team members played football so we are still transitioning into basketball mode," Kinard said.

Saluda has just two returning starters from last year's team that went 15-9 overall and 7-4 in Region 2-AA. The Tigers advanced to the state playoffs and went on the road in the first round and lost to **Clinton** 54-49.

Saluda has only two seniors on the roster, but both of them are starters in CJ Springs and Jamiyias Myers. Springs was a member of the **South Carolina Basketball Coaches**

Association AA All-State team last year. They are joined in the starting lineup by sophomore Sandy Springs, junior Jahmeer Myers and junior Jayden Myers.

Junior **Mekhi Linton** is a returning starter but has not been cleared to participate due to an injury he suffered back during the football season.

The Tigers will not begin region play until the second week of January, so that offers some leeway in the development of the squad.

"The team is developing basically the way I would have expected it to," Kinard said. "The key to our success moving forward is to continue to play hard and be coachable. Though we have a young team, many of them have played valuable minutes in the past, so there remains a good deal of experience on the roster."

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ERICSON VASQUEZ WINS REGION FOOTBALL AWARD

Saluda placekicker Ericson Vasquez was selected as the Region 2-AA Special Teams Player of

Seven other Tigers were named to the All-Region 2 team. They were senior quarterback **Brayden** Williams, junior running back Tristan Daniels, senior wide receiver CJ Springs, senior offensive left tackle Bryan Gomez, junior center Sid Shaw, junior tight end Jahmeer Myers and sophomore defensive back Ceddion Springs.

Saluda finished 6-6 in its first season under head coach Greg Woerner. The Tigers were 2-3 in region play, but they were 11 points from an undefeated region season.

They lost the region games in succession, falling to **Ninety Six** 28-27, to eventual state champion **Strom Thurmond** 20-14 and to **Batesburg-**Leesville 35-34 in overtime.

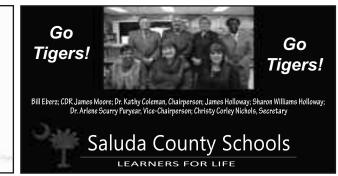
That gave the Tigers the No. 3 seed from the region in the state playoffs. They went on the road and beat Mid-Carolina 33-13 in the first round. They had to go on the road in the second round against then defending state champion Clinton and didn't fare as well, losing by a 35-25 score.

The Tigers led 25-21 entering the fourth quarter before being outscored 14-0.

Williams closed out his career on a high note, completing 13 of 24 passes for 229 yards and three touchdowns while rushing for 96 yards and another touchdown on 14 carries.

CJ Springs caught all three of the touchdown passes, finishing with five catches for 137 yards. Daniels had 19 carries for 74 yards.

The Hair Strand



The season began on a positive note for the Lady

The team will participate in two Christmas tourna-

In the Orangeburg Prep Christmas tournament

starting on December, 22 with a game against top

Warriors on November, 17 with a 38-22 win over

Faith Christian. In that game Carrigg and Carson

each had 12 points with Beard contributing seven

points and seven rebounds. Carson also has six re-

ments over the holidays. They will participate

bounds in the win.

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AJA Girls, continued from pg. 29

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The team is comprised of 9 total players. The Lady Warriors start three juniors and two sophomores. Freshman guard Kiley O'herion contributes a lot off the bench. Sophomore guard Scarlett Mixson is a returning varsity player who has also been recovering form an injury. Freshman guard Kaitlyn Johnson rounds out the roster and she plays a lot also.

One challenge for the team is that they do not have a true point guard. "Bella and Harlo have assumed the role of point guard for us this season," said Coach Boltin. "They are doing a good job learning to play a

McLeod, continued from pg. 21

When asked about managing her time to balance two school loads, sports, and life, McLeod said, I utilize every opportunity to get my NETC work done and use my study hall wisely, then I can finish

Bergman, continued from pg. 21

classes with a teach leading the lecture, but it works better for me as I learn best by reading information or watching videos."

Bergman said, "I'm pretty sure I've mapped it out right and taking these NETC courses should significantly reduce my college class load." He says he's still undecided about a college major but after college he plans to attend law school. He credits the NETC

other work after practice, games, and once home." When asked about a favorite memory from her playing time on the tennis court, McLeod reflected

classes for helping him be better prepared and honed his time management skills. "School work is the priority, I try to do as much as I can during the school day, then after practice and when I get home, I'll finish whatever is not done."

about a player from Darlington High School, they

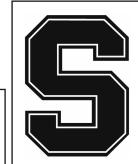
When asked about a favorite memory from his play either on the diamond or the court, Bergman says, "it has to be our 2025 State Championship run and in the

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Cheering on the Tigers! - LeeAnna and Natalie The Hardware Store (864) 445-3472 General Supply Company (864) 445-7412 Punks PB & JAMM (864) 445-3434 Crawford's Contracting Salutes the Tigers! Smith Auto Sales (864) 445-2342 (864) 445-7113 Rowe Automotive (864) 445-3468 Ramey Funeral Home (864) 445-2366 Linda's Styling Salon (864) 445-9262 Trotter Enterprises LLC - (864) 445-2300 Goff's Landscaping Inc. - Go Tigers! Butler & Sons Funeral Home (864) 445-2623

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ranked O-P. On December 29-30 the team will participate in the Colleton Prep tournament and they play CP in the first game.

Prior to these two events the Lady Warriors have games scheduled at Colleton Prep on December, 18 and they are at **Dorchester Academy** on the 19th. Their losses have come against Holly Hill Academy, Curtis Baptist (twice), WSAHS, Patrick Henry and Jefferson Davis Academy.

Coach Boltin is assisted by **Josh Barnes** who is the boy's head coach.

were closely ranked and played each other many times. "In our very last match, we were playing close each set, and it went to tie break. I won."

final game, I'd been the DH all series, we have the lead, and at this point I'm in the dugout watching the other team's batters as we get down to the final out for the game. The batter hits a strong ground ball to our third baseman who fields it and then makes the throw to first base for the final out, thus giving us the State

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Abbeville boys hoops is again a title contender

By David Shelton **Senior Writer**

Abbeville – Abbeville High's boys basketball team enters the 2025-26 season as one of the favorites to win the Class A state title.

The Panthers, coached by **Doug Belcher**, reached the state championship game last season but lost the final game to Denmark-Olar. Abbeville posted a 23-3 record.

Several key players from last year's team are back this season. Abbeville opened the season with an 88-29 win over Ware Shoals on Dec. 12.

Back as the leading scorer is senior **Jaden Baylor,** who averaged 16.8 points and 7.0 rebounds last season. He scored 34 points and grabbed 10 rebounds in the season opener.

Senior **Jaylen Baylor** was the leading rebounder last season, pulling down 9.3 boards per game. He averaged 7.3 points as well. Baylor scored eight points and had 10 rebounds in the opener. Sophomore Jamerion Williams scored 23 points in the opener and junior Corde Hadden had eight points, Sophomore **Jamiere Killingsworth** had seven points in the opening game.

Rounding out this season's roster are seniors Quatavius Silus and Darius Riley, junior Cory Calhoun, sophomore Jamiyus McManus, and sophomore **Jaiden Moss.** Riley averaged 12.2 points per game last season.

Volleyball wins state title; football ends season with playoff loss

On Nov. 8, Abbeville defeated Latta, 3-1, to win their first-ever state championship in the Class A finals at Dreher High School. Abbeville's championship was the perfect ending to a 23-3 season.

"I thought at the start of the season that we had a team capable of winning a championship but you just never know," said second-year head coach Sara Wojtkowski. "We knew we had a great group that would work hard. My goal was to get past the third

round and once we got to the finals, we had a chance

The Panthers had just two starting seniors, Ella Atkins and Lucy Kollman, but their leadership was a key factor.

"Ella was our energy player and Lucy was like our team mom," the coach said. "Both were so important because we had a lot of younger girls. We will miss them greatly but I'm so happy they could win a championship.'

Other members of the team included middle hitter Lauryn Murray, freshman setter Maddy Beiler, senior defensive specialist Kaylee Bundrick, sophomore setter Bella Evans, freshman OPP Sarah Gulley, sophomore defensive specialist Reese Jones, senior OPP Tielle Killingsworth, freshman Libero Rylee Tiller, and junior hitter Laylan Yates.

Abbeville's trek to the title game was a familiar path. They had to get past Lewisville, the team that eliminated them from the playoffs last season, and ended up playing region rival Dixie four times. They beat Dixie in three of the four meetings, including the Upper State championship game.

"Beating Lewisville was huge for our confidence," Wojtkowski said. "Once we got past them, I think our girls started to believe."

No longer the hunter but now the hunted, Abbeville should be a title contender again next season. But, allow the Panthers to enjoy their title for a little while before talking 2026.

"We are definitely excited about the future," Wojtkowski said. "Hopefully we will have the same desire as we had this year."

Abbeville's football team suffered a heart-breaking loss to Lewisville in the second round of the Class A state playoffs. The Panthers could not hold on to a late lead and Lewisville posted a 29-28 win after converting a game-winning two-point conversion. Abbeville finished with a 9-3 record.

Basketball season is underway at Emerald

By Billy G. Baker **Publisher**

Greenwood—After spending five years as an assistant coach with Saluda girls' basketball legend Jeanette Wilder, Garrett Jones is in his first season as the head coach of the Emerald girls' team and with only one senior on the team the squad is young and learning how to play the game.

The starting five players consist of one senior, one sophomore, two freshman and two 8th graders. The team has come out of the gate for the 2025-26 season with a 0-3 record early on.

"I told the girl's after a recent game that our success this season will not be defined about what our record might be at the end of season because the majority of our team are just now learning how to play the game," said Coach Jones. "Our players have such great attitudes, and they give 100 per cent effort, and all of them are eager to learn the fundamentals with a total focus on improvement.

"I honesty think a couple years down the road we can start talking about competing for region titles, but we are not that team yet," said Coach Jones. "These young players are very coaching."

The lone senior on the team is center Latisha Wiley. "She is our leader, and she is really a junior that is going to graduate early," said Coach Jones. "She has assumed a new role as team leader this season. She is the one who is helping set up the program for future success with her lead by example attitude."

Wiley is averaging around two points and five

rebounds a game.

Sophomore Kyrra Wright starts at point guard. "She is working hard at trying to be an extension of me because you hope that your point guard becomes like a coach on the floor," said Coach Jones. "She is getting better handling the ball with game."

Wright is averaging around three points and two assists in a game.

Freshman **Rakiya Burt** is a starting shooting guard. "Her role is to score the basketball," said Coach Jones. "She does a good job at driving to the

Coach Jones describes freshman small forward Camorie Elmore as the team's effort girl. "Her intensity on defense gives us a chance to stay in some games," said Coach Jones. "She really plays great

A starting forward is 8th grader **Chole Butler**. "She is learning to be mentally tough after joining our varsity program straight from a middle school team last year," said Coach Jones.

The team has a total of 9 players. The other four contributing players are sophomore guard Madison Round, sophomore forward Alyshia Gallaher, sophomore small forward Journi Brown, along with junior small forward Ava Smith.

The team will participate in a Holiday FCA tournament hosted by Ware Shoals High between December 18-20. Emerald will play McCormick on the first day of the event.

Kionna Agnew and Shelby Ann Scuggs assist Coach Jones.

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Vikings Football Team Places Six Players On **All-Region Team**

The Vikings football program, under the direction of veteran **Tad Dubose** won their first playoff game since 2017, while compiling a 6-5 record, when they defeated Fountain Inn 44-36 in the first round of the SCHSL AAAA playoffs on November

Emerald football also had six players earn allregion honors led by senior North-South all-star LB Chrsitian Foster (179 tackles, 6 TFL). Sophomore QB **Beau Hite** earned all-region honors after completing 135 passes for 1,845 yards and 19 TD's. Hite added 400 yards and four TD's on the ground. Junior RB Chris Dean earned all-region honors after rushing for 1,418 yards with 12 TD's.

Senior DE Jalon Dunlap was also named allregion (110 tackles, 11.5 TFL) along with senior DB Karson Wright (72 tackles, 6 TFL) and senior OL Tyler Moss.

Lady Chiefs girls hoops look to take next step

By David Shelton **Senior Writer**

Little River – As she enters her third season as the varsity girls basketball coach at North Myrtle Beach, Heather Kearney is looking to take the program to a higher level this season.

The Chiefs won 40 games in her first two seasons, including a 22-3 record last winter. But that season ended with a disappointing loss to Berkeley in the Lower State finals of AAAAA Division II. Kearney's message to her team this season is simple and succinct.

"We want to get better every single day and take one game at a time," the coach says.

The potential to contend for a state title is there as several key players return this season. Early results have been impressive as the Chiefs have reeled off seven straight wins to open the season. Only one game thus far has been close, a three-point win over Laney of North Carolina. The margin of victory in the other six games were by at least 22 points.

The Chiefs had a large senior class last season and there are many new faces on the team this season. But solid talent and experience also returns.

The most experienced performer is junior point guard Madi Vereen, now in her third varsity season. Vereen averaged 13.1 points and 7.4 rebounds per game as a sophomore but will take on more scoring load this season. She has averaged 16 points and 5.4 steals per game in the early going this sea-

The starting lineup includes two seniors. Sophia **Powell** is a forward and is off to a great start this season. Powell is averaging 15.2 points, 8.1 rebounds and 6.2 steals through the first seven games. The other senior starter is **Katlyn Powers**.

Freshman **Aubree Anglin** is having an early impact, averaging 6.4 points and 3.6 steals per game. Junior forward **Jurnee Blye** also is providing a spark offensively, averaging 11.8 points and 6.2 rebounds per game after six outings.

Kearney says the first player off the bench is sophomore KeAisha Bryant, a top-notch defender averaging 5.4 steals and 4.8 points per game.

Other juniors on the roster this season are Jailah Livingston and Zarionna Watson. Rounding out the roster are sophomores Sophie Lewis, Kailey Vereen, Zoe Costella and Tianna Sweeney.

North Myrtle Beach competes in region 6-



Senior Kaitlyn Powers

AAAAA. Carolina Forest is the defending region champion and beat the Chiefs twice last season. Socastee could also be a threat to contend for the region title this season. North Myrtle Beach will get their chances at Carolina Forest on Jan. 13 and Feb.

The boys basketball team has opened the 2025-26 season with three wins in their first seven games The Chiefs have three players averaging in double figures scoring, including two freshmen.

Senior **Primere Lewis** is averaging 10.9 points per game. Freshman Caden Bass averages 13.7 points per game and freshman Mason Walker is scoring 11.9 points per outing. Junior Porter Anglin leads the team in rebounding, averaging eight boards per game. He also scores about six points per

Other seniors on the roster include Eric Lewis, Luke Barrett, Bricey Gore and Owen Phillips. Juniors on the roster are **Dustin Clement**, Chance Floyd, Jayden Chestnut and Reo Stevenson. Rounding out the roster are sophomore **Tavion** Vereen and freshman Taron Scott.

The Chiefs finished with a 13-14 record last sea-

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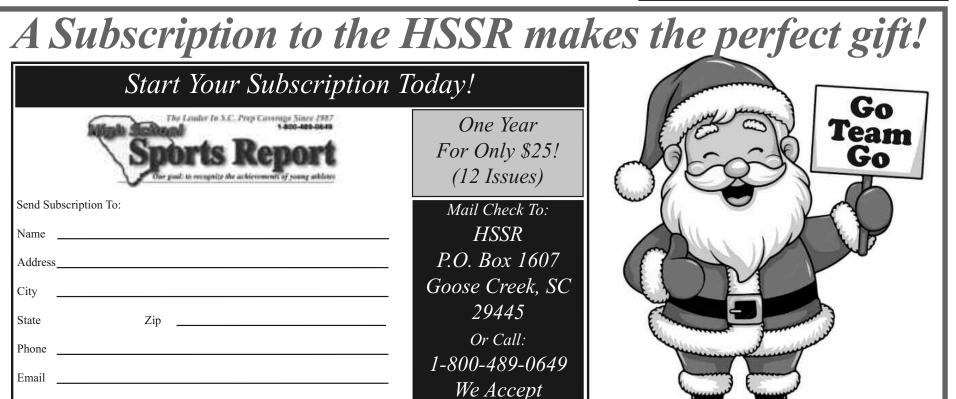


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Geter optimistic about Flashes boys' hoops

By David Shelton **Senior Writer**

Johnsonville – Johnsonville boys basketball coach Casey Geter feels his 2025-26 team can be a playoff contender despite having only one senior on the roster.

The Flashes went 5-13 a year ago but Geter feels this year's team is capable of more. This will be his fourth season as the head coach. He feels his team will be able to pressure opposing teams with their athleticism.

"As a guard heavy, fast team, the potential of this team will be at least a spot in the lower state title game," Geter said. "Most teams in 1A will not be able to handle the amount of pressure we will apply for 32 minutes. The expectation is to win a state title and that will never change. We want to be the top dawg in Class 1A. We will be a sleeper pick when the playoffs roll around. "

The lone senior on the roster is guard **Tahkari Ross**, who is a starter. Juniors **Zaghe Davis** and **Jamere Ross** also start as guards, with juniors **Skylar Montgomery** and Kelhan Timmons starting as forwards. Geter considers his team leaders to be Tahkari Ross and Davis.

First off the bench will be sophomore guard **Brad** Eaddy and sophomore forward Wes Sylvester.

Remaining members of the team are juniors **Ron**drell Livingston, Zykiel Cooper and Shawn Wilson; sophomore Jahkeem Hampton; freshmen Dereon Livingston and Jackson Player; and seventh-grader Caron

The Flashes opened the season with one win in their first five outings but Geter feels his team can use the month of December to come together and define roles heading into region play in January. The coach feels Carver's Bay is the top team in the region but says the rest of the region is pretty even. He expects many close games that will be decided in the fourth quarter.

Johnsonville will have two region games prior to Christmas, taking on Green Sea Floyds on Dec. 16 and Lake View on Dec. 18. Other members of the region include Hannah-Pamplico, Latta and Hemingway.

The girl team went 6-6 in region play last season and had only two seniors. They have started this season at 0-3 overall but again should compete for a playoff spot.

Football team finishes with 9-3 record

The Johnsonville football team finished their season with a 9-3 record, losing in the state playoffs to Cross. The Flashes are 38-15 over the last four seasons.

Senior members of this year's team included Tahkari Ross, Bricen Howell, Jaiden Miles, River Chambers, Dylan Smith, Austin Harrell, Jay McFadden, Jason Brigham and Brayden Baxley.

Three key returning players next season will be quarterback Larkin Powell, running back Zaghe Davis and receiver Jamere Ross. Powell will be a third-year starter and Davis will be a fourth-year varsity player. He gained more than 1,000 yards rushing this season.

Johnsonville's volleyball team also had a successful season, finishing with an 11-5 record. The girls advanced to the third round of the state playoffs before losing to eventual Lower State champion Latta. Three of Johnsonville's losses came to Latta.

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

The Cross Country teams recently competed in the class A state qualifier, hoping to earn a chance in the state meet on Nov. 15.

On the girls team, the top finisher was Alissa Carter in 20th-place overall. **Jadon Miller** finished 29th and Cloe Woodberry finished 30th. Naz Tagoon finished 31st and **Abby Lambert** was 33rd.

Ben Eaddy finished 25th in the boys meet. Emery Harris finished 29th and Ja'Morie Bragdton was 32nd. Colt Grier finished 61st and Richard Threatt finished

The Johnsonville girls tennis team has been one of the more competitive teams in the Class A ranks. But, due to a lack of class A schools fielding girls tennis teams, class A schools are combined with class AA schools in the playoffs.

Johnsonville was a part of the playoff field and posted a win over McBee, a Class A school, in the first round. Round two, however, put the Flashes against AA Academic Magnet and Johnsonville was eliminated in a 6-0 loss. Academic Magnet went on to win the state championship.

Under the leadership of coach **Brian Welch**, the Flashes put in extra effort and play the game with a great attitude. A hallmark of Welch's teams are strong team chemistry, which he develops through team building activities.

The 2025 roster is a mixture of upper and lower classmates with strong leadership from the senior class.

The team is led by four seniors and all four compete for time on the court. Anchoring the squad is No. 1 singles performer Lilly Margaret Driggers, who is in her second season at No. 1.

"All of them have contributed thus far this season. The core of seniors has been the strength of the team," Welch reports. "My one, two and three have not changed throughout the season, and that stability is

Sophomore Julianna Owens is strong at No. 2 and junior Sophia Cook holds down the No. 3 spot. Seniors Ada Howell, Lucy Truesdale and Lexi Hanna have battled all season for a spot in the singles lineup.

"The two captains (Lilly Margaret and Lexi) provide daily leadership to our program on and off of the court. They both go above and beyond what is required of them to make the program better."

Layla Newell is the team's other sophomore and Haidyn Carter is the lone freshman. Rounding out the roster are eighth-grader Sarah Boyd and seventh-grader Sawver Powell.

Latta's Richardson Region Athlete of the Year

By Dennis Brunson

hssr.com Associate Editor

Latta – Running back **Fischer Richardson** was team high five sacks to go with 77 tackles and 13 selected as one the Region 6-Class A Athlete of the Year and was one of eight Latta High School football players on the All-Region team.

Richardson, a senior, rambled for 1,571 yards and 24 touchdowns on 231 carries for the Vikings, who went 8-3 on the season and reached the second round of the state playoffs.

The other All-Region selections were right offensive tackle Javonte Kollock, left guard Zack Page, senior wide receiver Jayden Alford, defensive lineman Zamarion Monroe, linebacker Xy'Mari Bethea, linebacker Rylon Gurley and senior defensive back Adrian McDonald.

Alford caught 21 passes for 379 yards and one touchdown while carrying the ball 33 times for 344 yards and another score.

Gurley led the defense with 89 tackles and 20

tackles for loss to go with three quarterback sacks. Bethea had 82 tackles and 11 TFLs, Monroe had a

two interceptions. Latta head coach **Brandon Iseman** is pleased with the direction of the program.

consistent ground."

TFLs and McDonald had

"I'm proud of the effort and work our players put in this year," Iseman said. "I feel like the state of our program is trending in the right direction and is on soli



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Lady Patriots ready for another title run

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

2025 WW King Knights football

Joshua Oswald (so).

W.W. King celebrates athletic success this fall

Laurens Academy's Hardy, Vaughan honored

By: Gerald Doolittle

Johnston, S.C. - The Wardlaw Academy Lady Patriots coached by Kristina Spurlock are working hard to make another deep run in the SCISA Class A Championship tournament.

Last season the Lady Patriots came up short as they fell to the Curtis Baptist Lady Crusaders in the Championship game.

The Lady Patriots have already faced Curtis Baptist twice in the young 2025-26 season. They defeated Curtis at home 56-43 and lost to Curtis 42-23 on the road. The other loss this season was to **Laurens Academy** 53-32. The Lady Patriots have wins over **Mead Hall** (52-24) and **Jefferson Davis** (47-43).

In the early games Coach Spurlock is getting strong play from her seniors **Taylor Hill**, **Katherine** Trotter and Briana McNeil. Hill is averaging 16 points per game. McNeil is averaging 6 points per game and Trotter follows at 4 points per game.

The remaining roster players are being led by eighth grader Mary Blanche Stark with an 8- point

Batesburg-Leesville, S.C. - The W.W. King

Academy Knights are still on cloud 9 after winning

the **SCISA 8-Man** football Championship. This was

only the second time in school history the football pro-

gram has brought home the title. The 2013 team also

won the title. Also, the 2025 team is the first to go un-

Now, Coach Dennis Gibson is preparing ten of

those football Champions for the 2025-26 basketball

to a SCISA Region 3-A and State titles.

By Dennis Brunson

Lineman of the Year.

one caused fumble.

hssr.com Associate Editor

gion 1 in SCISA 8-man football.

season with hopes of bringing the basketball program

Wyatt Burbank (sr), Bubba Buzhardt (so), Tucker

McGinty (fr), Drayton Wannamaker (fr), Landell

Jackson Hutto (fr), Colby Buzhardt (so) and

Anderson (jr), Brady Goff (fr), Joseph Morse (so),

Laurens – Laurens Academy's Caleb Hardy and

Hardy, a junior, was selected as the region's Defen-

Hardy had 149 tackles and 17 ½ tackles for loss for

the Crusaders, who finished 9-3 on the season and as the

state runner-up for the second consecutive season.

Hardy also had two quarterback sacks, two intercep-

tions, six passes defended, two fumble recoveries and

The 6-foot-5-inch, 300-poun Vaughan, who is a sen-

ior, starred at defensive end and right guard on offense.

to go with 6 ½ sacks. He offered protection and opened

holes for an offense that averaged just shy of 40 points

"Garrison is equally as good, if not better, than he

was a year ago," said LA head coach Jolly Doolittle.

Defensively, he had 102 tackles, 43 of them for a loss,

sive Player of the Year, while Vaughan was named the

Garrison Vaughan received special honors from Re-

The ten players preparing for basketball success is

defeated. They finished the 2025 season with a 12-0

By: Gerald Doolittle

average. Another eighth grader Savannah McNeil has a 6-point average.

Rounding out the Lady Patriots roster Brooklyn Proctor (fr), Trinity Santiago (so), Lillie Stocum (so) and Charlotte Grace Culver (fr).

The Lady Patriots compete in SCISA Region 3-A against W W King Academy, Newberry Academy and Richard Winn Academy. Anderson Christian and Cambridge Academy do not have varsity girls basketball this season.

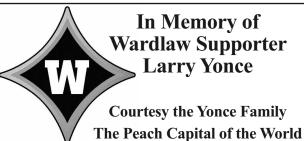
The Wardlaw boys coached by Austin Spurlock is still in rebuilding mode but are showing progress despite a 1-4 start to the 2025-26 season.

Sam Coughenour is the only senior on the Patriot roster. The strength of the Patriots is being pro vided by the five juniors Kale Henderson, Jake Winn, Thomas Proctor, Chandler Thorne and Cooper Davis.

Rounding out the Patriot roster is **Camden** Bracco (fr), Ben Hundo (fr), Liam Fields (fr), Andrew Smith (so) and Jon Rodgers (so).

WARDLAW

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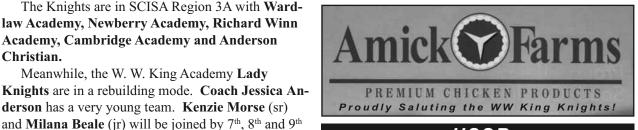


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lots of pancake blocks." Joining them on the All-Region team were freshman outside linebacker Eli Garrett, senior inside linebacker Nathan Bell and junior quarterback Ethan Collins, Collins completed 142 of 208 passes for 1,928 yards

"He's been dominant on the offensive side as well with

Rounding out the roster is Spencer McCormick

(sr), Whitaker Graham (so), Joey Bradley (so),

law Academy, Newberry Academy, Richard Winn

Academy, Cambridge Academy and Anderson

Meanwhile, the W. W. King Academy **Lady**

derson has a very young team. Kenzie Morse (sr)

Those players are Alivia Anderson (fr), Blythe

Buzhardt (8th), Lilly Claire Matthews (8th), Aiden

Amick (8th), Rebecca Hinton (8th), Emma Enlow

(8th)and Lynnlee Watkins (7th).

Tucker Mayyou (so) and Jaydan Deese (fr).

and 24 touchdowns while rushing for 720 yards and 15 touchdowns on 73 carries. Bell had 147 tackles, 25 TFLs, 6 ½ sacks and two

interceptions, while Garrett had 85 tackles, 29 TFLs and



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Three-time state champ under new leadership

Hilton Head Christian overcomes adversity in '25

Tyler Britschge and Alston Adams. Both are

Yeldiz, junior Max Diamond and sophomore

Sammy Middleton are early season starters as

starters and have solid experience. The roster is full

of underclassmen after those two. Sophomore Yusif

Ross Peery is a sophomore transfer from Cross

School and is working his way into the lineup. Sen-

ior Wyatt Harner, sophomore Freddy Moise and

freshmen Mikey Dowling and Ty Eanes also see

"We will play eight or nine guys pretty regu-

larly," Strickland said. "We have a lot of guys with

similar talent and skill level. We just have to work

out some things and define some roles but a lot of

The Dolphins have opened the season with a 3-2

record, with the losses coming to May River and St.

Andrews of Savannah, Georgia. Strickland says the

"Play smart and play together is what I preach

every day," the coach said. "I have no doubt we will

be a better team later in the season than we are right

now. We just need time together to work some

kick returner Tommy Gehm. Those on the first-

team defense were sophomore defensive lineman

sophomore linebacker Chase White and senior

fensive contributor, was the leading pass catcher

with 69 receptions for 1,313 yards and 13 touch-

downs. Richardson had 45 catches for 645 yards

and five scores, while Strum had 31 catches for 415

averaged 21.1 yards per return on 24 attempts. He

Gehm returned two kickoffs for touchdowns and

Hayne Burden, junior linebacker Kres Langhals,

Houpt, who was named HHCA's outstanding of-

team will work hard on consistent defense and

needs to improve their passing as they move for-

significant playing time.

guys will be asked to contribute."

things out. I am very optimistic."

linebacker Finn Ussery.

yards and five scores.

returned six punts for 46 yards.

By David Shelton Senior Writer

Hilton Head – The Hilton Head Prep boys basketball will be seeking a fourth consecutive state championship this season with a new coach and a lot of new players.

Richard Barron stepped down as coach after leading the Dolphins to three state titles and stepping into the role as head coach is Mike Strickland, who was an assistant with Barron at the University of Maine prior to Barron moving South. Strickland has been directing an AAU program out of Charleston before taking over for Barron at Prep. The new coach has only a handful of returning players from last year's title run but not a lot of production returns.

"They had eight seniors last year that did most of the scoring and rebounding so we're pretty inexperienced overall this season," Strickland said. "Our youth leads to inconsistency but I think we're going to be able to compete. I like this team. It's a winning program. We're going to compete but we just need more time on the court. Practices early are very important but I think we have the potential to grow. My expectation is for us to contend again and we will if we improve during these first two months or so."

The top returners from last season are seniors

Bluffton – The 2025 football season was an un-

usual one for the Hilton Head Christian Academy

The Eagles, who had won three SCISA state ti-

tles in the five previous seasons, got off to a 2-5

start. On top of that, starting quarterback Reid Mc-

Collum left the school in the middle of the season.

its first game. However, the Eagles responded with

four consecutive wins, including a 42-20 win over

state playoffs. The season came to an end the next

week with a 50-29 semifinal loss to Wilson Hall.

the way his players rebounded to finish with a 6-6

"I was really proud of our guys, the way they

"It was a very tough season. A lot of guys stood

rallied around the team and each other," Peduzzi

said. "They literally battled the second half of the

up and elevated their games. They had to stand up

and become leaders also, so I was really happy with

HHCA had four players selected to the All-Re-

gion 1-AAA offensive first team in junior wide re-

ceivers Joev Houpt and Jackson Richardson,

sophomore wide receiver Sam Strom and senior

Eagles head coach Ron Peduzzi is happy with

Trinity Collegiate in the first round of the AAA

With the reshuffling, Hilton Head Christian lost

By Dennis Brunson

football team.

record.

year every play.

hssr.com Associate Editor

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Senior running back **Hudson Baker**, sophomore offensive linemen Caleb Altizer and Josh Koepke and sophomore cornerback Keyvon Aiken were selected second-team All-Region

Baker received the team's Coaches Award and Burleson Award, and freshman Max Zwilsky earned the Lunchpail Award.

Peduzzi believes good things await the Eagles in

be juniors next year, so I look forward for to next season," he said. "We do need to elevate the number of players in our program playing, so that's something we'll be working on."



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Burden, who was named Hilton Head Christian's outstanding defensive contributor, led the team in tackles with 105, tackles for loss with 13, quarterback sacks with four and quarterback hurries with

Langhals, who was the quarterback in the second half of the season, had 39 tackles, five TFLs, 2 ½ sacks, two interceptions, two caused fumbles and two fumble recoveries. White, who received HHCA's Sledgehammer Award, had 82 tackles, five TFLs, one sack and one interception. Ussery, who received the team's Captains Award, had 87 tackles. five TFLs, one sack and one interception..

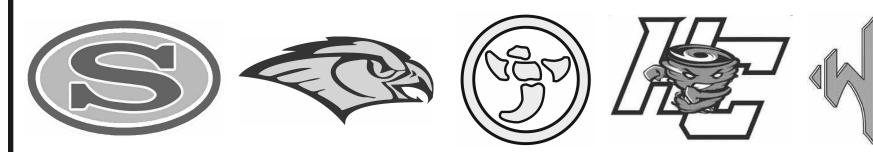
Ussery and Gehm played in the SCISA North-South Seniors All-Star Game, while Houpt, Richardson, Strom, Burden and Langhals played in

palmetto.coop

the Futures contest.

"We have a very large sophomore class that will

SC High School Logo Trivia



What do all of these schools have in common?

Hannah-Pamplico basketball season underway HANNAH-PAMPLICO

By David Shelton

Senior Writer

Pamplico – It's that time of year. The weather is getting colder and the sound of basketballs thumping on the hardwood are in high school gymnasiums

Hannah-Pamplico High has begun their 2025-26 season in boys and girls basketball. Both teams are hoping to improve on last season with more experienced rosters.

Jimmy Williams is in his eighth season as the boys coach while Michael Manning is in his first season directing the girls program.

The boys team finished 8-14 overall last season, posting a 5-7 record in region play. The Raiders won two playoff games before getting eliminated in the third-round of the Class A playoffs.

Williams feels this year can produce better results if and when the team begins to gel. A problem last season was scoring and that is again a major concern this season.

"This team is not absent of talent but we aren't showing up to play (early)," Williams says. "This is basically the same team from last year except losing three seniors to graduation, with one being Tylin Jenkins a top senior and our top scorer.

"Defensively, we are fine but we are again struggling to score and playing four quarters of basketball. This group went three rounds in the playoffs last year and I expect to make the playoffs again this year once we learn how to play as a team and finish

Williams starts two seniors at forward and three

Batesburg-Leesville – The 2025 Batesburg-

Leesville High School football team didn't have the

magical run it had in 2024. That's when the Panthers

B-L "only" went 8-4 this year, finishing second

in the difficult Region 2 with its only loss coming to

eventual state champion Strom Thurmond in over-

time before losing to Chester in the second round of

the playoffs. So, all in all, head coach Greg Lawson

"I'm very pleased with the season," Lawson said.

doesn't have anything bad to say about the team's

"We had a lot of skill people back, but like I told

you at the beginning of the year, when you lose

some players like (starting quarterback) Tanner

are big losses," Lawson said. "Overall, I was

pleased because 8-4 is a pretty good record."

Watkins, who was a big piece of the puzzle, those

Lawson talked about the circumstances sur-

burgl-Leesville fell to then Class A state champion

Abbeville 23-15, giving up 10 points thanks to two turnovers. It fell to AAAA Lower Richland 28-6 in

a game in which the Panthers were missing several

The loss to Strom Thurmond hurt because B-L

extra point. That led to overtime in which the Rebels

scored late to tie the game at 20-20 but missed the

scored a touchdown and a 2-point conversion, but

Batesburg-Leesville couldn't match the conversion.

were good enough where we could have beat th3m.

We just came up short. Based on the way things

"We should have beat them," Lawson said. "We

rounding the three regular-season losses. Bates-

went undefeated in the regular season and advanced

to the quarterfinals of the AA state playoffs before

losing to eventual state champion **Clinton**.

By Dennis Brunson

accomplishments.

hssr.com Associate Editor

Lawson happy with Panthers football this fall

juniors at guard. The forwards are Va'Shon Washington and Dakhi Thomas. Filling starting roles at guard are De'Auje Bacchus, Kolby Hyman and Dylan Smith. Williams says Thomas, Bacchus and Washington are the team leaders. Bacchus is the top scoring threat at 13 points per game. Thomas is a high energy, vocal leader.

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

Seeing time off the bench early this season are senior guard Jordyn Livingston, senior forward Chris Eldridge, junior forward Matthew Richard son, and junior guards Tevin Ellis and Kai'den

Rounding out the roster are seniors Alex Edwards, Stokes Scott and Mahkai Eaddy; and juniors Jaiden Bostick, Aviary Lyerly and Gerald

Manning takes over the girls program that finished 1-16 last season. The coach expects improvement as he changes the culture and brings a winning attitude to the team. He lays out the expectations.

"This young varsity girls basketball team is expected to build its identity on strong defense, maximum effort, and a team-first attitude," he says. "Players commit to learning quickly, communicating on the court, and showing discipline in preparation and practice. They play with toughness, resilience, and high basketball IQ while staying well-conditioned and unselfish. Above all, they will represent the program with class, respect and pride."

Starters as the season begins are sophomore Jakayla Davis and senior JaKiya Wilson at guard, senior Khloe Jones on the wing, junior Jalaya Graham and forward, and sophomore Genesis Freshlev

turned out, Strom Thurmond was meant to win

Year KD Whitt and Offensive Player of the Year

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives Bowl all-star

and 15 touchdowns, had 18 carries for 321 yards

and five more scores and completed 2 of 4 passes

ceiving yards.

a defensive back.

for 30 yards and one TD. He holds the school record

for career touchdown receptions as well as career re-

Whitt scored three other ways as well. He re-

punt and also returned an interception for a score as

Wooden will graduate as the Panthers' career

Amazingly, he wasn't selected to play in either the

He finished one yard shy of a second straight

2,000-yard season. He did it in 215 carries and had

The other All-Region selections were senior of-

fensive guard Moises Gonzales, senior defensive

linemen Travis Gates and JaQuan Corley, senior

defensive end **Tyler Walton** and senior defensive

son likes where the program is at this point.

Bateburg-Leesville is losing 24 seniors, but Law-

"This means we have a chance to rebuild," he

said. "We've got a good junior varsity bunch that's

coming. The JV went 8-2, so we feel good about

25 touchdowns to go with eight catches for 117

leader in rushing yards with over 5,000 yards.

Shrine Bowl or the Touchstone Bowl.

yards and one touchdown.

back Drew Centella.

what's coming.

turned two kickoffs for a touchdown as well as a

The Panthers were led by Region 2 Player of the

Whitt, a senior who was selected to play in the

game, excelled in all phases of the game. Primarily a

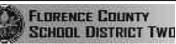
wide receiver, Whitt caught 40 passes for 685 yards

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in the post.

First off the bench are senior guard **Tylaysha** Ross, junior guard ZaMiyah Jones, freshman guard Ava Thomas and freshman post Alayna Burgess.

Rounding out this year's roster are **Zyliria** Lewis, Temperance Smith, Lyndsy Wilson, Isabella Dennis, Jadora Shird, Jamauria Mcfadden and Quan'Teria Eaddy.

BATESBURG-LEESVILLE





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Proudly Saluting the B-L Panthers!

"I'm proud of the program. We've got great coaches and none of the coaches want to go anywhere. We've got a great administration. We're blessed to be where we're at and we just look to continue to see get better."

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Seawell's Midlands Feature Page

As 2025 football season concludes, we rank the best teams

By WORTHY EVANS Special to the HSSR

Columbia - Possibly the biggest prep sports story in the Midlands this year was the likelihood of two class 5A state champions within seven miles of each other, and technically in the same town-**Irmo**. The teams went to battle on Friday and Saturday night of the High School League's State Championship weekend Dec. 5-6 at South Carolina State's Oliver C. Dawson Stadium.

Dutch Fork beat **Summerville** for the second straight time to win the 5A Division 1 state championship—its fourth in a row and 10th in the history of the school, all coming under head coach Tom Knotts.

Unfortunately for the **Yellow Jack**- for the upper state championship. The ets, Northwestern spoiled the team's hopes of winning their first state championship since 1980 with its second straight state-title win over Irmo in the 5A Division 2 final

Nonetheless, Irmo's season was memorable not only noting the team's journey since the last state championship game, but also in the dominating way the Yellow Jackets played in making their way through the regular season and the brackets.

This month we'll take a look at the top Midlands teams after the conclusion of the 2025 season.

Dutch Fork bests Summerville

The Silver Foxes' return to the final game of the season has become a regular event for the Irmo community. Under the leadership of Knotts, who won seven state championships in North Carolina before taking the helm at Dutch Fork in 2010, the Silver Foxes have been in 13 state championships in the last 14 years. With a 40-21 victory over Summerville Dec. 6, Dutch Fork captured its 10th state

Tying Summerville coach John McKissick's and Woodruff coach W.L. Varner's mark of 10 state titles in their careers.

"Well I think it means I'm old, but that's pretty cool," Knotts told the High School Sports Report after the win. "It's special and a great tribute to those players and the great group of supporters we have. I have a lot of respect for Coach McKissick. I've visited him a couple of times and had a great time with him. I learned a little bit from him and I'm honored to be in his company."

For Knotts, who has a 486-89-1 record along with seven North Carolina state championships to his name, winning a 10th South Carolina state title is the continuance of his second

This year's championship didn't

Dutch Fork (12-1) won its first three games before stumbling over Oceanside Collegiate in a 24-20 loss. The 3A Landsharks went on to win their second straight 3A championship and third straight state title

After that defeat, the Silver Foxes breezed through Region 4-5A competition to play Irmo for the region title on Halloween night. The Yellow Jackets rallied for two late scores but the Silver Foxes won the region with a 28-14 win.

With a first-round bye in the 5A Division 1 playoffs, the Silver Foxes blew past **Boiling Springs** 42-7 and shut out Byrnes 21-0 to face Dorman Cavaliers took a 10-0 lead by the midway point of the second quarter, but Dutch Fork scored 30 unanswered points and the defense shut down Dorman in a 30-10 victory to send the team to a state championship rematch with Summerville.

Dutch Fork took a 14-0 lead in the first quarter and held a 14-7 lead at the half. Summerville's Jaiden Kelly-Murray recovered a Silver Foxes fumble and returned it 43 yards for a game-tying touchdown early in the third quarter.

Junior quarterback Jackson Knotts connected with Braydon **Johnson** for a 27-yard touchdown pass to make it 20-14 Silver Foxes late in the third quarter, and while the defense frustrated the Green Wave, the offense scored 20 fourth-quarter points on Knott's TD run, Julian Walker's 19-yard fumble return for a score, and **Kyle Henry's** 1-yard run to

Midlands Football Top Ten

Dutch Fork (12-1, 5-0 Region 4-5A) **Irmo** (12-2, 4-1 Region 4-5A) Gray Collegiate (11-3, 7-0 Region 4-4A) Fairfield Central (10-4, 3-1 Region 4-2A) **A.C. Flora** (11-2, 5-1 Region 3-4A) **Ridge View** (8-4, 5-1 Region 5-5A) White Knoll (8-4, 3-2 Region 4-5A) **Newberry** (12-1, 4-0 Region 4-3A) **Camden** (9-4, 4-2 Region 3-4A) Heathwood Hall (9-4, 4-2 SCISA Region 1-4A

go up 40-24.

"We just played a little more sound defense," Knotts said. "We had to shut down the run. They were handing the ball off left and right and getting big yardage. Once we kind of shored up the run it made them more one dimensional."

After Summerville's Jayvyn Williams scored on a 1-yard touchdown run in the final two minutes, Coach Knotts and the Silver Foxes took the field to celebrate their 10th state title and fourth straight crown.

"Four rings, there aren't that many people in the country who have done that so it shows what a special group this is," Knotts said.

Irmo falls to Northwestern

There was no celebration for Irmo after the 5A Division 2 state championship game Dec. 5. The Yellow Jackets (12-2) had leveled Berkeley 44-6 for their second straight lower state championship, but were on the receiving end of Northwestern's 55-13 romp in the state final.

Trojans quarterback Xavier

Means passed for 188 vards and two touchdowns and rushed for 60 yards and four TDs.

Irmo quarterback Dre'Von Dopson. who came into the game passing for 2,255 yards and 25 touchdowns to just five interceptions, was 12-for-26 with a touchdown but threw two picks.

Northwestern (13-1), which beat Irmo 34-31 on a Matthew Fish field goal in last year's state final, needed no late-game heroics this year. The Trojans led 14-6 after the first quarter but scored 35 points in the second quarter to ease into the locker room with a 49-6 lead

"Sometimes things don't go your way but you still have to stand by the road," Irmo head coach Aaron Brand told the High School Sports Report. "This game doesn't take away the accomplishment of the season or the last three years. This group has won 37 games in that time which is the best three-year span in school history."

This year Irmo took the field without quarterback and Coach Brand's son **A.J. Brand**, who passed for 2,600 yards and 30 TDs and ran for 2,029 yards and 27 scores. The younger Brand is now playing at Virginia

Under Dopson and with Maleek Miller's 50 catches for 883 yards and 9 TDs and Amire White's 1,275 rushing yards and 12 touchdowns, Irmo

See Midlands, pg. 67



Modern Turf Farm Recruiting Feature

HSSR SC 2027-29 Prospects

(Nominate A Player: hsreport@aol.com)

- 1. Joshua Dobson-Catawba Ridge-DB-6-1,174
- 2. Jaiden Kelly-Murray-Summerville-WR-5-10,170
- 3. Jaiden Bryant-Irmo-DE-6-3,245-
- 4. Aiden Manavian-Oceanside Collegiate-QB/SS-6-0,185
- 5. Jayven Williams-Summerville-RB-5-8,165
- 6. Trenton Lynch-Spartanburg-RB-5-9,185
- 7. Chanin Harris-Byrnes-WR-6-1, 165
- 8. Franklin Richardson-Sumter-QB-6-2,220 9. Seth Tillman-South Pointe-DL-6-3,260
- 10. Kendarius "P-nut" Bailey- Gaffney-LB-6-0,215
- 11. David Seqgarra III-Byrnes-RB/FS-5-10,202
- 12. C.J. Brooks-Gaffney-OL-6-4,320 13. Amare Patterson-Bluffton-WR-6-1,190
- 14. Israel "Shank" Harris-James Island-OL-6-3,330
- 15. Michael Strickler-Oceanside Collegiate-FS-6-1,210
- 16. Christian Chancellor-Daniel-DB-5-9,162-Clemson 17. JaQuan Samuel-Hartsville-OL-6-2, 275
- 18. Kaiden Watkins-Rock Hill-CB-5-10,172
- 19. Khsistain Jackson-Ridge-View-WR-5-11, 180
- 20. Nate Carson-Irmo-OL-6-4,271 -
- 21.Jaden Wuerth-Dutch Fork-DL-6-3,270
- 22. Maleek Miller-Irmo-WR-5-11,175
- 23. Dwayne Louallen-Central-QB-6-1,205
- 24. Simeon Jones-North Augusta-DL-6-1,305
- 25. Tajej Watson-Martin-BHP-DB-5-10-162
- 26. Dennis Glenn-Boiling Springs-OL-DT-NG- 6-2, 290
- 27. Kelvion Manning-Dillon-DB-6-3,190 28. Jaylon Watson-TL-Hanna-DB
- 29. Kelyn Durham-Eastside-RB-FS-5-9,180
- 30. Dai'Shion Watkins-Hymes-Dorman-WR-/FS-6-1,190
- 31. Jordan Logan-Orangeburg-Wilkinson-SS-6-1,190 32. Aiden Gibson-Woodruff-RB-6-2,200
- 33. Malik Robinson-South Florence-WR-6-2, 190
- 34. William Geddis-Swansea-MLB-6-0,215
- 35. JaQuan Samuel-Hartsville-OL-6-2,275
- 36. Sam Holiday-Fountain Inn-QB-6-0,195-37. Jack Armstrong-Gray Collegiate-OL/DL-6-2,235
- 38. Josiah Mosely-Wren-RB-5-10,165
- 39. Marguise Andreson-DL-Emerald-5-10,210 40. Calvin McCoy-Greer-RB-5-10,180
- 41. Torian Henry-James Island-DL-6-2,210
- 42. Mari Moody-Demark-Olar-OL-6-4,235-43. Karrem Shaw-Gaffney-B-RB-5-10,180
- 44. Henry Rivers-Berkeley-QB-DB-5-10,170
- 45. Ayden Montgomery-Gaffney-DB-WR-5-10,162
- 46. Karamion Glenn-BHP-DT-5-10,240
- 47. Jerimiah Good-Seneca-OL-6-1, 248
- 48. Johnquis Johnson-South Florence-DB-6-0,180
- 49. Fredick Cooper-South Florence-FS-5-11,171
- 50. Dennis Glenn-Boiling Springs-DT-NG-6-3, 290 51. Makel Stephens-Loris-RB-5-7,190
- 52. Bryson Bowers-James Island-LB-6-0,200
- 53. Caleb Sharo-Ashley Ridge-TE-6-3,215
- 54. Jeffrey Williams-Atlantic Collegiate-DL-6-4,290 55. Xavier Huggins-Powdersville-WR
- 56. Xavier Means-Northwestern-QB-6-0,165
- 57. Micah Adams-Stratford-TE-DE-6-2.265
- 58. Anthony Williams-Bamberg-Ehrhardt-DB-5-11,175
- 59. Luke Penland-JL Mann-OL-DL-6-3,265 60. William Donato-Bishop England-WR
- 61. Malcolm Gordon-Bluffton-LB-6-2,210
- 62. Caleb Feaster-Chester-RB-DB
- 63. Payton Vining-Northwestern-WR-5-10,160 64. Hayes Lyman-Christ Church-RB-5-10,170
- 65. Judd Windham-Christ Church-QB-6-4,210
- 66. Nasir Waldrop-Powdersville-WR
- 67. Shaun Carvalho-JL Mann-LB-6-2,205 68. Than Portee-Broadwater-Spring Valley-Wr-DB-6-0,170
- 69. Mehki Quiller-Fox Creek-LB
- 70. Chandler Guthrie-Gilbert-WR
- 71. Jonny Chong-Greenville-OL-6-3,300
- 73. Joshua Simpkins-North Augusta-DL-6-2,250
- 74. Marquise Anderson-Emerald-DE-5-10,210
- 75. Charles Williams-Hampton County-DE-6-0,215 76. Dre Brown-Silver Bluff-RB-5-7,160
- 77. Brandon Streater-Central-OL-6-4,260
- 78. Cooper Webb-Oceanside Collegiate-WR-5-10,165 79. Myjac McCoy-Marlboro County-LB-6-0,200
- 80. Keshawn Ray-Dillon-TE-LB-6-0,200

HSSR 2028 Class

1. Zion Dawkins-Gaffney-CB/WR-5-11,181-7 D-1 Offers 2. Beau Hite-Emerald-QB-ATH-6-0,165

HSSR 2029 Class

- 1. Emari Jones-Seneca-DL-6-6,325
- 2. Khayei Sam Fong Talia-Dillon-QB-6-2,205 3. Rasean Brown-South Pointe-RB-5-11,170
- 4. Taddrick Gibson-Dutch Fork-DB-5-11,160 5. Malachi Watson-Irmo-OL-5-11,290
- 6. Bishop Allen-WR-5-11, 160 (moved to Arizona?)

Recruiting, continued from Cover

in Irmo. His flip to South Carolina gives the Gamecocks seven in-state players from the 2026 class. The others include number three rated South Pointe DB **J'zavien Currence** (6-3,205) who led the Stallions to the SCHSL AAAA state title re-

South Carolina has also picked up signatures from number four-rated Shrine Bowl offensive lineman **Zyon Guiles** (6-4,295), number 13 rated Cross High TE/DB Caden Ramsey (6-5,200). In the past two seasons Ramsey has 21 interceptions as a free safety but he was offered by the Gamecocks as a tight end candidate. Number 14 rated athlete Tristian Lewis (6-4,200) of Greenwood has signed with the Gamecocks as a defensive back. As the team's quarterback he also passed for over 2,500 yards this past season, while also being the Eagles top ground rusher. Lewis will also play in the upcoming Shrine Bowl.

The number 15 rated prospect who signed with South Carolina is **South Pointe** offensive lineman Anthony Baxter (6-3, 330) and the 7th in-state signees for South Carolina included number 16 Indian Land wide receiver Sequel Patterson (6-

Clemson, who got very involved inviting instate under classmen players to their home games this season, signed two in-state players from the 2026 class. They inked number six rated FS Kentavion Anderson (6-2, 181) from **Dorman** along with number 25 rated DE Michael Foster (6-2,220) of Indian Land.

One development that remained sincere since the HSSR first reported on it back in June was that major college **Western Michigan**, which will play in a bowl game at Coastal Carolina in December, had indeed extended a firm offer to Andrews High DE Chris Stewart (6-4,230). Stewart went to a summer camp at Western Michigan earlier this summer, and the HSSR was informed that the coaches could not believe none of the power five colleges had made Stewart an offer so when they extended him an offer after seeing at camp, they

asked him to keep everything quiet.

Stewart made the North-South all-star game, and the coaches at Western Michigan think he could develop into the next JJ Watt, currently an NFL defensive end of high regard. If Stewart does have an outstanding freshman season up North, he is likely going to be highly sought out in the local region, should he enter the transfer portal. Andrews High head coach Scott Durham told the **HSSR**, "Stewart is extremely hard to block, and his motor runs wide open non-stop all the time," said Coach Durham. "He's the best defensive player I've coached to date."

In the past month, Florida State was able to sign coveted Greenville High defensive linemen Franklin Whitley (6-6,270), rated the number 9 player by the HSSR. The Seminoles were successful in flipping Woodland High Athlete Jaemin Pinckney (6-5,217) from an earlier South Florida

Also, in the past month Greenville DB Jamarion McKinnley (5-10,175) has signed with Cincy as the number 46 player in the 2026 class.

Appalachian State has helped push the major college numbers in South Carolian by signing six 2026 in-state players in December. They are number 18 rated Newberry High tight end Jamel Howze (6-3, 215) who had been committed to South Carolina, along with number 19 rated **Gaffney** offensive lineman **Scotland Dover** (6-5, 305). The Mountaineers also signed number 36 rated Chapin offensive lineman Caden Muskus (6-5,280), number 36 rated **Bluffton** defensive lineman Chris Doyle (6-1, 290), number 44 rated Dorman defensive end Christian Waring (6-4,300) and number 56 rated Oceanside Collegiate defensive end Sawyer Arnold (6-4, 220).

East Carolina signed three 2026 in-state players from South Carolina. They are number 29 Gaffney defensive tackle Kelton Smith (6-5, 290) along with teammate LB **Zyon Ratchford** (6-4, 215), the number 39 over-all prospect. The Pirates

See **Recruiting**, pg. **68**

